



Preservation Piedmont

Newsletter

Preservation Alliance of Virginia Member

Fall 2002

Blue Ridge Sanatorium: Preserving the Landscape of Healing

Daniel Bluestone

The Piedmont enjoys a highly regarded reputation for its historic sites and its world-class preservation practices. The well-preserved homes of presidents and extraordinary examples of architecture, known worldwide, dominate our landscape. We see daily the many ways in which preservation work enriches the lives of people who live in, work in, and visit our community. Numerous residents in the Piedmont understand quite well the cultural value and importance of historic preservation.

Despite this reality, the Piedmont can also prove to be surprisingly infertile ground for preservation. The very prominence of well-preserved sites in our locale at times militates against the development of a broad based preservation movement. Some community leaders and residents suggest that we have already taken care of historic preservation; places that do not rise to the level of a presidential home or fit comfortably into the accepted canon of high-style architecture seem suspect when preservation is advocated. Yet the history that is accessible through presidential homes and high-style architecture is severely constricted and leaves huge swaths of past experience and culture beyond reach. To the extent that history and preservation help shape current understandings of, and actions in, the world, a narrow preservation movement translates into truncated possibilities for an informed citizenry.

Efforts over the last fifteen years to preserve parts of the Blue Ridge Tuberculosis Sanatorium, located on a site below Monticello and Michie Tavern, highlight some of the difficulties inherent in pursuing a broader preservation agenda. At Blue Ridge, the Commonwealth of Virginia, with close cooperation of the University of Virginia, opened its premier public tuberculosis sanatorium in 1920. In an in-

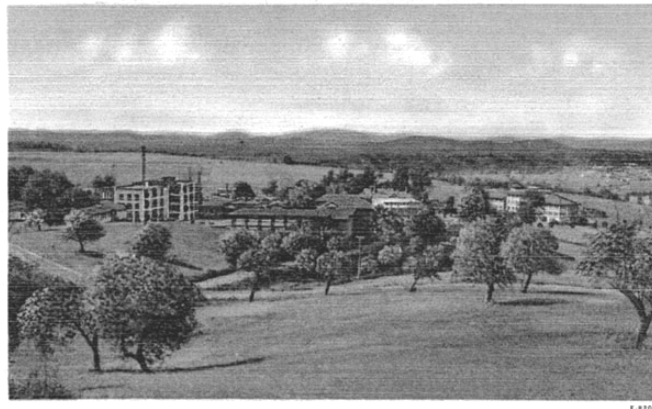
novative architectural and landscape setting, patients followed a strict regimen of bed rest, fresh air, and good nutrition. Combating a deadly epidemic, patients and staff built a community of strength and perseverance. With the success of antibiotic treatments, the sanatorium closed in

1978 and the Commonwealth transferred ownership of the site to the University of Virginia. The site's buildings reveal changing approaches to tuberculosis treatment and help frame important lessons of the ways in which government officials and citizens can unite to confront creatively a major community crisis. Today, researchers and designers are exploring the relationships between land-

scape and healing. They have in the sanatorium a very important precedent.

The building of the sanatorium was a monument of community effort. The University contributed its medical and research expertise. The Charlottesville and Albemarle business community contributed thousands of dollars toward purchase of the site. Committed and courageous local residents worked among the afflicted. Private citizens and organizations contributed generously. In 1927, the Masons constructed the Wright Pavilion, one of the site's major buildings for treating patients. Paul McIntire contributed to the fund to build a handsome chapel. Local ministers rotated through the chapel providing religious services. Interestingly, when the Board of Public Health considered names for the Sanatorium if came close to naming the place the Monticello Tuberculosis Sanatorium. It thus sought to link this institution to the area's most celebrated local figure. Indeed, the sanatorium came to enjoy its own celebrity. Buildings at the sanatorium were named after sit-

C-35 OVERLOOKING BLUE RIDGE SANATORIUM, CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA.



Postcard from the mid-twentieth century

See **Blue Ridge** on page 2.

Blue Ridge *continued*



Lyman Mansion

rium buildings. When adaptive re-use possibilities were raised, Monticello equivocated. They did so even though twelve years earlier they had aggressively advocated preservation at Blue Ridge.

A year ago, thirteen students at the University of Virginia School of Architecture undertook a major study to explore the history, design, and adaptive re-use possibilities on the Blue Ridge Hospital site. They succeeded in significantly increasing community awareness and enthusiasm for the preservation possibilities at the site. Their methods may well prove useful in other Piedmont preservation campaigns that may encounter either apathy or hostility, simply because they stand in a realm apart from presidential homes and high-style architecture.

The keystone of student work involved developing a compelling narrative concerning the site. They did this by doing intensive research and by getting in touch with former staff and patients at the sanatorium. They established a rather moving narrative that made the site and its significance comprehensible. Understanding a place, establishing its story, helps move people and institutions from apathy towards engagement. Finding people associated with the site helped tremendously in making the story more palpable. People who had worked at Blue Ridge turned out to have kept scrapbooks filled with important documents and photographs – testimony in and of itself to the significance they assigned to the place. The archives of the Virginia Board of Public Health turned up little known aspects of the site history. Looking at the site closely helped the researchers decide where aspects of the history could be most usefully embedded into the remaining buildings and landscapes.

Once a command of the history developed the challenge turned to diffusion of the work. Here the students developed an ambitious agenda. They published a guidebook. They set up an internet-web site devoted to the history and adaptive re-use proposals for the sanatorium (www.faculty.virginia.edu/blueridgesanatorium). They also gave public lectures and walking tours to community organizations that might help guide the future of the site. They designed an exhibit on Blue Ridge that the Albemarle County Historical Society put on display.



Chapel

Using these means of diffusion, students sought both to share their historical findings and to mobilize a preservation campaign. In this effort, the coverage of local newspapers, radio and television stations proved especially important. The Blue Ridge history could easily inspire broad interest. The hook that most readily engaged reporters, editors, and producers was the apparent duplicity of the University of Virginia and Monticello. Here were institutions apparently abandoning their decades of responsible stewardship of historic sites to pursue a rather destructive and unimaginative development agenda. Institutions that daily endorsed the significance of preservation were unwilling to extend their stewardship beyond Jeffersonian resources. Needless to say this sad story made for great news – the *C'ville*

ting governors and other prominent politicians. Thousands of Virginia residents participated in Masonic parades to mark the dedication of the new buildings. Major Virginia architects were responsible for the designs of buildings on the site.

Despite the obvious historical significance of the site and individual buildings, the University of Virginia and its Foundation have for many years followed a policy of demolition by neglect. They have also explored especially unimaginative and wasteful redevelopment plans that anticipate the demolition, rather than the adaptive re-use, of historic buildings. Anxious to open a new visitors' center and main parking area, Monticello signed a preliminary agreement to pay up to 3 million dollars toward the demolition of the sanato-



Lyman Mansion, exterior detail

See **Blue Ridge** on page 3.

Blue Ridge *continued*

Weekly headline reported: "History threatened, in the name of History. Bulldozers will jeopardize an Albemarle landmark. Tom Jefferson will be at the wheel."

The students also met with officials of both Monticello and the University of Virginia Foundation to share their understanding of the significance of the site and their ideas about the future. They argued that preservation and redevelopment were compatible and that the plans for a visitors' center and a research office park would be made more valuable and distinct by recycling buildings and featuring the rich layers of the site history. Their work has also succeeded in drawing the interest and attention of local officials who will ultimately be involved in making the decisions about the use of the site. Moreover, their work has prompted the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to take renewed interest in the preservation issues at the Blue Ridge site. As of this writing, the University is continuing to let buildings on the site deteriorate. Monticello is rumored to be seriously considering withdrawing from the

development of the site and from their commitment to fund demolition of buildings there. Despite this hopeful sign, there is still much to be done. A member of Albemarle County's officially appointed historic preservation committee recently declared that as far as he was concerned the place could be "blown to smithereens." Local preservationists will need to continue pursuing a broad-based historic preservation strategy. In the Piedmont, the presence of presidential homes and high-style architecture should inspire, rather than limit, our preservation of the past.

Daniel Bluestone is an Associate Professor and Director of the Preservation Program, Department of Architectural History at the UVA School of Architecture.

Illustrations for this article are drawn from the website presenting the studies done by Profesor Bluestone's students:

<http://www.faculty.virginia.edu/blueridgesanatorium>

Jefferson School News

Helena Devereux

Members of Preservation Piedmont have supported the preservation of Jefferson School for several years. A few recent developments will play a role in the lengthy process of creating a plan for the future of the building.

On August 30, Ron Hutchinson, Charlottesville's Superintendent of Schools, turned the keys of the school over to the new owner, the City of Charlottesville. The building will not be used for educational purposes during this school year. The pre-school program and the adult education programs which had been in the school were moved to other locations during the summer. On August 29, Hutchinson conducted a walk-through of the building to verify that the school programs had completed their move (only a few boxes of books and school items remained) and to inspect the condition of the building.

Rochelle Small-Toney, Assistant City Manager, was also present for the walk-through, as were representatives of the city schools and city public services and maintenance. Julie Gronlund was there as a representative of the School Board. Mr. Hutchinson had invited some members of the community including Ann Carter, an alumna of Jefferson School, and Genevieve Keller and Helena Devereux, who are members of Preservation Piedmont and Citizens for Jefferson School.

With the building almost completely empty, the architectural features of the classrooms stood out clearly. Many of the rooms have the original cloakrooms, original windows, original finish on the woodwork and original light fixtures. The alumna of Jefferson School who was present thought

that the only change in the auditorium was the replacement of folding chairs with chairs which are bolted to the floor. The stage is unaltered. The present building gives a very good picture of the school as it was when it was built in 1926.

The Citizens for Jefferson School, a group of volunteers working for the preservation of the school, have asked the City to use great care in performing maintenance work in the school. They have requested that the building be treated as an historic building even though it has not yet been designated as such, and that no changes be made to the interior finishes, the windows, the doors, and other prominent architectural features until the Jefferson School Task Force and the City Council have developed a plan for the future of the structure.

On Labor Day weekend, the Jefferson School Alumni held some of their reunion events in the school. Their affection for their high school was very evident and many expressed delight to see the school looking much the same as they remembered it. That same weekend, the Jefferson School Oral History Project began interviewing graduates of the school as part of an effort to document social and educational aspects of the school's history. Some veterans of the Ridge Street Oral History Project will be helping with the Jefferson School Oral History.

Jefferson School has significance for people who are interested in architecture, the history of education in Virginia and the South, and U.S. social history.

114 Lankford Avenue: Where It Stands and What's at Stake

Aaron Wunsch

By now, most readers are aware of the controversy surrounding 114 Lankford Avenue in Charlottesville. That address belongs to an unprepossessing house erected by Robert Goins, one of the city's first free black landowners. Regardless of the building's ultimate fate, the case raises theoretical and procedural issues of broad interest to the area's preservation community. The following essay highlights those issues after outlining the significance of the site.

During the mid nineteenth century, a new settlement took root behind Ridge Street, an artery running southwest from Charlottesville's core. The development of Ridge Street itself comprises an important chapter in the city's physical and social history. There, starting in the 1840s, wealthy white merchants erected impressive brick houses, while east of Ridge a different sort of enclave arose. It consisted of wooden buildings inhabited exclusively by free blacks and grew up around a three-acre parcel belonging to Robert Goins.*

Historians have identified Goins as one of the first African-Americans in Charlottesville to own a substantial amount of land. His original purchase east of Ridge occurred in 1845. Four years later, he and his wife Patsy had erected a "log-bodied dwelling house" on the property, along with "a stable planked upright and other similar buildings"; in 1860, Goins extended his land holdings and appears to have built a second house. Remarkably, both houses still stand. Although there has been some confusion regarding their chronology, a recent survey suggests that 114 Lankford Avenue is the earlier of the two (the other candidate is 116). All the more unfortunate, then, that the building has been at the eye of the storm.

Last spring, Dale Ludwig of Palmyra, VA, acquired 114 Lankford and applied for a demolition permit. Aware of the building's local landmark status (conferred in 1997), Ludwig nonetheless had reason to believe his application would be approved. A previous owner's neglect and unfinished renovations had left the house a vacant eyesore, and the city's building inspector had condemned it earlier in the year. These conflicting imperatives – preservation and demolition – have been at the root of this case ever since.

In the months since Ludwig's initial application, several shortcomings of local preservation law and practice became clear. First, it appears that no bureaucratic safety mechanism prevents the condemnation of historic buildings or requires special review in such cases. The Goins house was condemned simply because it was open to trespassers and the elements, not because of structural problems. Had the inspector known of the building's significance, he might never have issued the order. Second, as the Board of Architectural Review deliberated on Ludwig's request, they repeatedly came up against the limits of their

power in such cases. The BAR's jurisdiction over local landmarks governs only those features visible from a public right-of-way. Since the original log structure lies buried behind later additions, did the BAR have any say over its fate? Third, there was the (unstated) question of how much responsibility the city bears for bringing preservation cases into the public eye. The Goins House saga received widespread media coverage only after the City contacted Monticello in hopes of finding a party willing to reconstruct the log section of the building at a new location.

Finally, one might question the appropriateness of such reconstruction schemes and the city's role in advancing them. Most preservation literature of the last ten years has stressed the importance of place. Yet the city felt free to broker an entirely placeless solution – at once understandable (given the city's embarrassing predicament) and particularly ill-suited to a house whose builder helped spawn the surrounding community. Luckily, this effort failed.

At present, the Goins House remains intact. After having his application postponed and then denied by the BAR this summer, Dale Ludwig turned to City Council for relief. His appeal was rejected unanimously on October 7th. Yet preservationists should consider these promising decisions as the start of their work, not the end. By law, Mr. Ludwig may demolish 114 Lankford in six months if he makes a bona fide (and unsuccessful) attempt to sell the building in that period. Moreover, the house remains empty and far from water-tight. Further neglect could ultimately amount to slow demolition unless the city steps in (the powers afforded by nuisance laws might afford some protection but are obviously a double-edged sword). In the short run, those concerned about the building's fate should try to keep abreast of Ludwig's plans. Perhaps he could be convinced to apply caulk and tar paper where needed, or to allow volunteers this privilege. In the long run, preservationists must aim to close the more obvious loopholes raised by this case. Better communication between branches of city government might be the place to start.

* Sources: Leslie A Giles and J. Daniel Pezzoni, "Cultural Resources Survey of the Ridge Street Expansion Area" (1997); "Survey of the Ridge Street Historic District and Proposal for Local Designation" (1994). Both reports are on file in the city's planning office.

Preservation Piedmont Annual Meeting

Thursday, December 12, 5:30 p.m.
422 Second Street NE

Mr. & Mrs. David Morris welcome us
to "The Old Manse", their Federal Era house.

Marshall-Parrish Store in Nortonville Undergoing Renovation and Restoration

Ashlin Smith

In the northern tip of Albemarle County and very close to the Greene County line rests the village of Nortonville. It is a place apart and very few know the story behind the small cluster of buildings on either side of Route 810.

The center of Nortonville is marked by a general store and outbuilding complex known as the Marshall-Parrish Store. It was recently bought by Mike Richardson who is a native of England and an independent radio journalist who focuses on environmental issues. Richardson has had experience living in and renovating historic buildings in both England and France, including a twelfth-century timber framed Kentish yeoman's house, a Georgian manor house, and a late eighteenth-century manor farm complex in Britany that is built of granite. Richardson also currently owns a 200-year-old blacksmith's cottage in southwest France. News of Richardson's Nortonville project reached Preservation Piedmont this summer through former board member, Jodie Webber.

On the afternoon of September 15, several members of Preservation Piedmont and representatives from the Albemarle County Planning Department and the Historic Preservation Committee met with Richardson and his family as well as with descendants of the Parrish family. Memorabilia including old photo albums and newspaper clippings belonging to the Parrishes were exhibited, and stories were shared by Frances Gibson, the oldest living member of the Parrish family as well as by Jack and Marjorie Parrish.

A tour of the the late nineteenth-century rural store buildings and related complexes revealed a spacious two story general store that also provided storage and living quarters for the owners and living and office space for a doctor. An additional residence was built a few feet from the store at a later date. The narrow space between the side of the old store and the newer house was recently closed in by Richardson to connect the buildings. The result is an attractive two story interior courtyard enhanced by retaining most of the original exterior surfaces.

Other structures in the complex include a combination well and dairy house very close to the store and road and a smaller spring house in an adjoining field. Also in close proximity is a cluster of structures consisting of a smoke house, chicken house, combination barn and mill and two school houses built during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In a more distant location is the site of the old homeplace of the Norton family for whom the village is named and the cemetery for the Hamm family who were also early owners of the property.

"This is an unusually extensive and complete store and outbuilding complex (and correspondingly, a massive res-

toration / renovation project)" writes Ann Miller*. "Rural store buildings / related complexes, particularly ones in fairly original condition, are a dwindling resource. These resource types were important economic and social elements in their day; as such, these are worthy of study, recordation, and preservation as feasible." Because its state is relatively unaltered the Marshall-Parrish Store can yield considerable information about regional vernacular building practices and technologies as well as suggest more precise dates of construction.

In a recent letter Mike Richardson stated, "It is our intention to copy photographs, etc. and hold a 'round table' taped conversation with the surviving family members and to put on permanent record life at Nortonville from 1917-1982. We shall strive to put together the history of the Norton and Hamm families who lived here, with others, before that time."

Those who gathered at the Marshall-Parrish Store on that rainy September afternoon were indeed impressed by the existence of such a complete community of vernacular buildings in Albemarle County. Preservation Piedmont supports and encourages the ongoing restoration and renovation of each structure. We greatly appreciate the willingness of Mike Richardson and his family to pursue such a daunting project and to collect and record the history of the families that have lived there before them. May this be an inspiration to others.

Ann Miller is an architectural historian employed by the Virginia Transportation Research Council. In addition to many monographs about Virginia's historic bridges and early road orders, she has also written **Antebellum Orange: the pre-Civil War homes, public buildings and historic sites of Orange County, Virginia.*

Historic Charlottesville Tour Book Now Available

The *Historic Charlottesville Tour Book* is a convenient 200-page paperback that features walking and driving tours around Charlottesville. Although it will be great for tourists, it is also fun browsing for locals. The book was prepared by Charlottesville's Historic Resources Task Force and published by the Albemarle County Historical Society. Preservation Piedmont also provided financial support to the publication.

Historic Charlottesville is available at the Albemarle County Historical Society's headquarters and at local bookstores and gift shops.

Maplewood Sketches

Maud Coleman Woods (1877-1901) Charlottesville's Reluctant "Miss America"

Lois McKenzie

(with thanks to Rick Britton and David Maurer)



The words, "How small a part of time they share, that are so wondrous sweet and fair", inscribed on the back of Maud Woods' tombstone at Maplewood Cemetery, are barely visible, having almost been worn away by wind and rain. The grave itself is littered with debris blown there by the wind. On the front of the gravestone, beneath a carved bouquet of lillies, is inscribed just the bare minimum: "Aug. 23, 1877–Aug. 24, 1901" followed by "Blessed are the Pure in heart for they shall see God."

Who was Maud Woods? She was the daughter of local commonwealth's attorney Micajah Woods. Although the young woman was known for her musical talents, grace and charm, she was also known for her beauty. In fact, she later became so well known for her beauty that she left her home in Charlottesville to escape extensive unwanted attention because of that beauty, and journeyed to her Mother's family home in Hanover County, whereupon she contracted typhoid and died one day after her twenty-fourth birthday.

Several events precipitated Maud's flight from her High Street home. At the 1898 reunion of Southern veterans, Maud was chosen to be photographed as one of the beauties in the "Rosebud Garden of Girls", which was considered a high honor for a Southern girl. Her photograph was then seen by New York photographer Alexander Black, who came to Charlottesville himself to photograph the young beauty. Permission was granted with the stipulation that any published photographs would not reveal Maud's name.

Unbeknownst to the family, one of Black's photographs of Maud would later appear on the cover of a book entitled "Miss America", which included two more pictures of Maud as well as photographs of other beauties. This event was accepted with grace by the young Maud Woods and her family because her identity had not been revealed. Unknown to the family, Black later submitted Maud's photograph to a national newspaper contest, which was eventually won by Maud and another young woman. Maud had been chosen as the most beautiful representative of North America, and when news of this accomplishment was published, her identity was revealed.

Her picture would appear in all the leading newspapers. Maud was shocked! "Oh Papa . . . I'm so mortified", she apparently sobbed. Telegrams and letters deluged the young girl and her family. She was besieged and humiliated by unwanted attention. The unhappy Maud refused all requests for publicity and photographs, and sought refuge with her Mother

See Woods on next page.

Top: Photo of Maud Coleman Woods from a 1901 newspaper. Courtesy of "Doing the Pan . . ." web site (<http://panam1901.bfn.org/index.html>) where you can also see images of Raphael Beck's 1901 Pan Am Exposition logo with the personification of North America based on Miss Wood. Center & Bottom: Miss Woods' tomb in Maplewood Cemetery, Charlottesville.



Clara Colby



Clara Colby

Woods *continued*

and sisters at the Hanover County family home. The doctors could do nothing about the typhoid that struck Maud down in August of 1901.

Her obituary remembered her as "little more than grown, her death occurring on the night of her birthday. She had brown hair, deep blue eyes, and fair skin, with delicate roses in her cheeks. She was of medium height, rather slender, and her every movement was full of grace."

Although the headstone at the grave of our first "Miss America" is intact, the carved urn at the foot of the grave has been smashed into three pieces. The pieces have been rudely piled upside down, one on top of another. How or when the urn was knocked over and broken is a mystery. No attempt appears to have been made to repair the urn.

This is the second in a series of sketches of interesting people buried in Maplewood and Oakwood Cemeteries.

Welcome to New Members

Preservation Piedmont welcomes the following new members: George Worthington, IV, Joanne Sedlenick, Gene Barnes and Betty Black from the Charlottesville-Albemarle area; the Mary Ann French family, Barboursville; Rebecca Gilmore Coleman, Orange County; Kelly Remington, Fredericksburg, Virginia; and Thomas P. Hughes, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

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Membership Form

Preservation Piedmont is a non-profit corporation dedicated to protecting old buildings, sites and neighborhoods, as well as traditional routes and open spaces. We do this in order to create an appreciation for the historic resources of the region. Based in Charlottesville, we also serve the County of Albemarle and bordering counties.

Name: _____

Street: _____

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- Student \$5
- Individual \$10
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- New Member
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Please make dues payable to Preservation Piedmont and mail to

Preservation Piedmont
P.O. Box 2803
Charlottesville, VA 22902

We Need Your Support! Please Join Today!
Thank You!

NOTE: If the number by your address is not '03 or later, then it is time to renew your membership. (*=Life Membership.)

Barboursville Perseveres

No mining has yet occurred on the parcel of Orange County land purchased last summer by brick manufacturer General Shale. The company has not received the necessary state mining permit, and extensive road improvements would have to be in place to accommodate the additional heavy truck traffic (up to 16,200 loads per year) before mining operations could begin. The Friends of Barboursville are working on many fronts to ensure that mining does not occur there.

As part of the Section 106 Review of the proposed mine, a Phase I Cultural Resources Survey was conducted. The Virginia Department of Historic Resources found the survey inadequate and recommended that a more detailed study be conducted that would consider the impacts of the proposed mine on the Madison-Barbour Rural Historic District and on the adjacent historic resources, including the African-American community of Careytown.

A lawsuit brought by Friends of Barboursville against General Shale and the County is going forward on three counts, charging violations of zoning law, arbitrary and capricious decision-making, and violations of the equal protection guarantee of the Fourteenth Amendment.

The Friends of Barboursville are grateful for the generous financial support they have received from the community.



Maud Coleman Woods, daughter of local commonwealth's attorney Micajah Woods was the inspiration for this image of North America in Raphael Beck's design for the logo of the 1901 Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York. See the related story on page 6. Image courtesy of "Doing the Pan . . ." web site (<http://panam1901.bfn.org/>).



Preservation Piedmont

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