

**HISTORIC
HUGUENOT TRAIL**



**CHESTERFIELD - POWHATAN
VIRGINIA**

FINE CREEK MILL

In 1735 Mr. John Pleasants, a Quaker, leased one acre on the south side of Fine Creek to Edward Scott for 99 years, "... at the rent of one ear of corn yearly...in consideration whereof said Edward Scott binds himself to build at his own cost... a water gristmill." The three-story, 36'x60' mill operated until the late 1930's, but only foundation ruins remain today. Still standing on the 12-acre property is the ferry ticket office (later used as a cheese factory - its walls lined with tin to keep out mice). The sound of Fine Creek's rushing water as it flows toward the James River and Pleasants Island is a tranquil setting for the recently renovated log Miller's Cottage which received Powhatan County Historical Society's Eighth President's Preservation Award in 1995.

CALAIS

French Huguenot Jacques Lafitte is credited with building Calais before 1750. The original structure was a one-and-a-half-story brick house with beautifully carved woodwork done by French artisans. Mr. Lafitte was asked by a friend from France to find a similar property for him, the result of which is Dover, a plantation in Goochland just across the river. Many years ago original paneling in the library at Calais was sold because the owners needed money, not unusual for those days. Sometime in the 19th century the roof was raised to expand the first and second stories. Calais' current owners, Dr. & Mrs. Charles Frederick Beom, who now raise Karakul sheep on the property, restored the original first floor in 1988 and added onto the back.

ST. HELEN'S

What is now the dining room of this home was originally a one-room log cabin with loft built in the late 1700's. Mr. William H. Wesson purchased the property shortly after the Civil War and gave it to his daughter Helen and her husband Dr. Henry Jervey, who had been a surgeon in the Confederate Army. The west wing was added in the early 1800's, and the east wing was built around 1895 by two teenage Jervey boys at the instruction of their 21-year-old brother who was with the U.S. Army Engineers. The owner today is the sixth generation of descendants who have lived in or owned St. Helen's.

SUBLETT'S TAVERN

When the current owner brought Sublett's Tavern in 1974 from a descendant of William Sublett, major renovations were in order; and in the 1980's this home received the first Powhatan County Historical Society's President's Preservation Award. William Sublett opened his "ordinary" in 1813 and ran that portion of the business for many years. This stop was favored by many on their way to or from Richmond, and Mr. Sublett accommodated his guests by providing stables for their horses and pens for the turkeys, cattle, and hogs that they were taking to the Richmond market. The house shows typical tavern construction with social rooms downstairs and private bedrooms up. The floors are the original wide heart pine boards. Over the years the Tavern has been home to Miss Campbell's dancing classes, District No. 4's voting precinct, and was used as a post office for 120 years.

NORWOOD

The original residence, built around 1770 by Major John Harris and named Greenyard, consisted of a full basement with two stories above, and two rooms to a floor, divided by a large hallway opening on front and back porches. It is presumed that the bricks for this beautiful ante-bellum structure were made on this site. The property was purchased in 1813 by Harry Heth whose daughter Lavina married Beverley Randolph. In 1835 the Randolphs added the two-story wings and a grand back hall to connect the wings on both stories. A brick walkway surrounds the entire house, affording light to the English basement. Many portraits adorn the walls, and the china brought from England in 1835 is still used. The home is owned today by Charles Randolph Kennon Jr. and has been in his family for more than 160 years.

MONACAN

The old kitchen on this property is one of the oldest original Huguenot homes standing today, and the corn crib built in 1790 still stands. The frame part of today's main house was built around 1750 by Peter Chastain who at his death left it to his son Peter. The younger Peter Chastain granted the property to Edward Scott in 1729 because of a gambling debt owed Mr. Scott, and the property remained in the Scott family until the late 1930's, more than 200 years. The Scott's added the brick portion which is connected to the frame portion. The current owner, Mrs. Collins Denny Jr. and her husband purchased the property in the early 1940's when it had no heat, electricity, or running water and have preserved and maintained the property in excellent condition.

KESWICK

Originally known as Manor House, Keswick's unusual H-shaped floor plan echoes that of Tuckahoe Plantation directly across the James River. The main clapboard two-story house was built around 1750 by John Clark, but the different floor levels on the second story of Keswick suggest that the entire house may not have been built at one time. Close by is a circular brick slave quarters, reminiscent of the round huts of their native Africa. This structure has a large central chimney with three fireplaces and shows evidence of having had a second floor gallery. Keswick's present owners, Mr. & Mrs. Charles Jacob Keck, purchased the estate in 1972, and in 1974 it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. This 480-acre property is a working farm complete with cattle, sheep, and riding stables.

BELLONA

The building of Bellona (appropriately named after the Roman Goddess of War) was authorized by Congress in 1815. The arsenal consisted of eight buildings set in a quadrangle on a 27-acre tract of land on the James River adjacent to Major John Clark's cannon factory. The five-foot-thick walls of the barracks and the main three-tiered English-Georgian building with its arched entrances, sash windows, and vertically symmetric proportions were made of stone and brick. Two of the buildings flanked the main building and served as officers quarters. The remaining four buildings were connected with a wall seventeen-feet high. The arsenal operated from 1817 until 1856 when it was sold by the Government. Since that time, many of the structures have been removed, but those remaining are used today as part of the privately owned country estate of Bellona.

WINDSOR

Windsor sits on a hill with spectacular views of the James River and lush pastures and fields. The house which exists today is the second home built because the original one, built in the late 1700's, burned in the first half of the 1800's. In 1860 General Robert E. Lee's brother Charles Carter Lee bought Windsor. On April 14, 1865, on his way to Richmond following the surrender at Appomattox, General Lee, not wanting to put his brother out, pitched his tent for the last time on property nearby. This act was typical of the General; he probably knew of the poor condition of his brother's estate, for in a few years Charles Carter Lee appeared in court records as insolvent. Nevertheless, the home remained in that family until Mr. Lee's granddaughter sold it in 1943.

GREYWALLS

Greywalls is a gated community with estates of two or more acres overlooking the falls of Fine Creek, lakes, rolling hills, and manicured fairways.

ST. LUKE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Built in 1844 with bricks made on the site, St. Luke's is much the same as it was 150 years ago. In 1890 the addition of the recessed chancel added 12 feet to the original 32'x36' size, and at that time the stained glass windows in the nave and the beautiful and rare octo-circular rose window in the chancel were installed. The small choir and vestry room wings were appended in 1915, and an adjoining two acres to the already existing 1.5 acres was given in 1922. When visiting the churchyard one wonders, "Is there another cemetery this size in America with as many historic names?", for the epitaphs read like pages from a history book. St. Luke's Church is on the National Register of Historic Places and is described as having "... symmetry and harmony, but above all simplicity."

THE FOUNDRY

Shortly after the War of 1812, four local citizens undertook the construction of a foundry at the site of the falls on Fine Creek. Rock was quarried from the large outcropping of granite on the property, and a large stone structure with caretaker's home was begun. Because the unfinished project was abandoned, the walls of the structure lay in ruins for approximately 150 years. In the 1940's Julian Binford, an accomplished Virginia artist, bought this site and transformed those ruins into a beautiful home incorporating a wonderful studio imbued with natural light. Mr. Binford sold The Foundry in 1990, and today it serves as the clubhouse for The Foundry Golf Club.

MILLWOOD

The original part of this farm-type house which sits high on a hill was built between 1725-1750 by the Harris family; the detached second section was built in 1805; and eventually two wings were added, one to connect the two main parts and the other for "balancing." The result is an unusual roof line of varying pitches and angles, surmounted by large chimneys. The two main sections have basements of stone and brick, and their top floors are half-stories with dormer windows. Much of the original heart pine floor remains in excellent condition. The integrity of the original detached kitchen, which has a large open fireplace, was not compromised when it was enlarged for use as a guest cottage. This home stayed in the family of the original owner until the mid-1900's. The Hakala family currently resides here.

HUGUENOT SPRINGS CONFEDERATE CEMETERY

Approximately 250 Confederate soldiers who died at nearby Huguenot Springs Confederate Hospital are buried here. Few people today have heard of Huguenot Springs, but in the middle of the nineteenth century many Richmonders flocked to the medicinal springs and luxury hotel to escape the heat of the city. The local citizenry converted this popular resort into a Confederate convalescent hospital during the Civil War. Only until recently were any of the soldiers identified, and there are now approximately 100 named markers. The Jeb Stuart Camp of the Sons of Confederate Veterans took over the maintenance of the cemetery from the United Daughters of the Confederacy in the late 1980's. In 1915 the UDC erected a monument in the center of the cemetery in memory of these men who were destined never to return to wives or children, nor to be buried with their families.

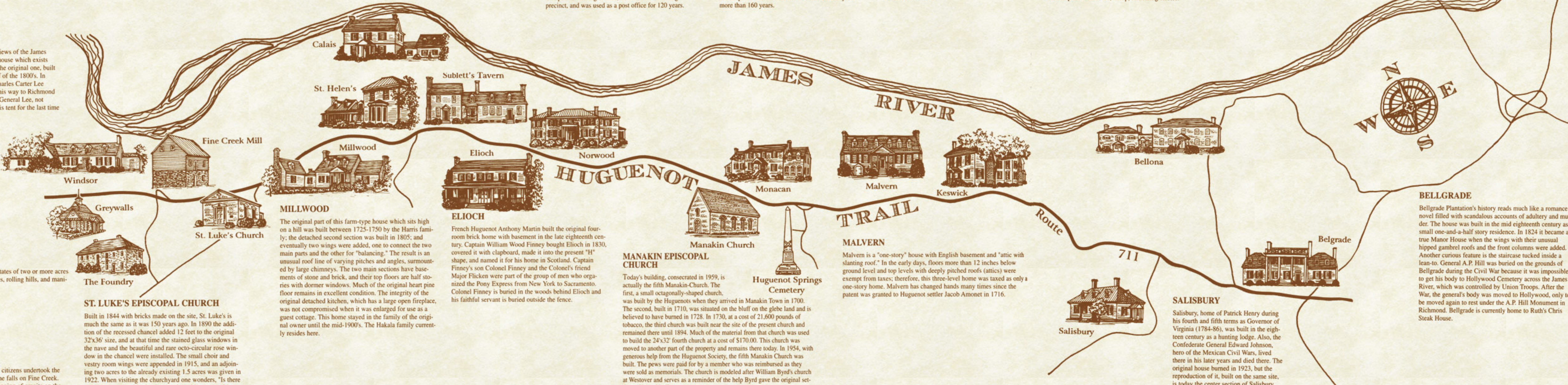
ELIOCH

French Huguenot Anthony Martin built the original four-room brick home with basement in the late eighteenth century. Captain William Wood Finney bought Eliocho in 1830, covered it with clapboard, made it into the present "H" shape, and named it for his home in Scotland. Captain Finney's son Colonel Finney and the Colonel's friend Major Flicker were part of the group of men who organized the Pony Express from New York to Sacramento. Colonel Finney is buried in the woods behind Eliocho and his faithful servant is buried outside the fence.

MANAKIN EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Today's building, consecrated in 1959, is actually the fifth Manakin Church. The first, a small octagonally-shaped church, was built by the Huguenots when they arrived in Manakin Town in 1700. The second, built in 1710, was situated on the bluff on the glebe land and is believed to have burned in 1728. In 1730, at a cost of 21,600 pounds of tobacco, the third church was built near the site of the present church and remained there until 1894. Much of the material from that church was used to build the 24'x32' fourth church at a cost of \$170.00. This church was moved to another part of the property and remains there today. In 1954, with generous help from the Huguenot Society, the fifth Manakin Church was built. The pews were paid for by a member who was reimbursed as they were sold as memorials. The church is modeled after William Byrd's church at Westover and serves as a reminder of the help Byrd gave the original settlers of Manakin Town.

Huguenot Springs Cemetery



BELLGRADE

Bellgrade Plantation's history reads much like a romance novel filled with scandalous accounts of adultery and murder. The house was built in the mid eighteenth century as a small one-and-a-half story residence. In 1824 it became a true Manor House when the wings with their unusual hipped gambrel roofs and the front columns were added. Another curious feature is the staircase tucked inside a lean-to. General A.P. Hill was buried on the grounds of Bellgrade during the Civil War because it was impossible to get his body to Hollywood Cemetery across the James River, which was controlled by Union Troops. After the War, the general's body was moved to Hollywood, only to be moved again to rest under the A.P. Hill Monument in Richmond. Bellgrade is currently home to Ruth's Chris Steak House.

SALISBURY

Salisbury, home of Patrick Henry during his fourth and fifth terms as Governor of Virginia (1784-86), was built in the eighteenth century as a hunting lodge. Also, the Confederate General Edward Johnson, hero of the Mexican Civil Wars, lived there in his later years and died there. The original house burned in 1923, but the reproduction of it, built on the same site, is today the center section of Salisbury Country Club.

MIDLOTHIAN COAL MINES

The Huguenots are credited with the discovery of this coal deposit around 1701 near their Manakin Town settlement, but their mining efforts were abandoned because of the difficulty of getting the product to the market. When the operation moved to Midlothian in the early 1700's, the coal industry in America was born. Gas manufactured from the Midlothian coal lighted the streets of Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, and Boston. During the Revolutionary War, Midlothian supplied the coal to the Westham Foundry for the production of arms and munitions for Washington's army. The combination of plentiful coal and its proximity to Bellona Foundry and Arsenal on the James River and the Tredagar Iron Works in Richmond was a major factor considered when the capital of the Confederacy was moved from Montgomery, Alabama to Richmond in 1861. This coal supply was critical for the manufacture of cannons, gun carriages, shot, shell, small arms, torpedo parts, and heavy machinery at these two locations. The decline of mining after the War, costly explosions, and coal being mined more cheaply in Virginia, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and West Virginia led to the gradual closing of this mine near the turn of the century. Though this coal field lies dormant today, it remains one of the richest in the 185-mile triassic Richmond Coal Basin.

FRENCH HUGUENOTS - MANAKINTOWNE

In 1700 King William of England gave 10,000 acres to the Huguenots, Protestant French Refugees escaping the tyranny of Louis XIV in France. This eleven-and-a-half-mile long parcel of land, formerly occupied by the Monacan Indians who were defeated by Nathaniel Bacon twenty-five years earlier, wound in serpentine fashion along the southern bank of the James River and varied in width from one to three miles. It became known as Manakintowne. There were 207 French Huguenot men, women, and children who settled here, most of whom were master craftsmen, skilled artisans in lace making, gloves millinery, jewelry, metals, and ceramics. Their industrious settlers left an enduring mark not only on the Powhatan community but on the Commonwealth of Virginia as well. The Virginia Chapter of the Huguenot Society of the Founders of Manakin in the Colony of Virginia is an active organization today with a membership approximating 275 descendants.

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