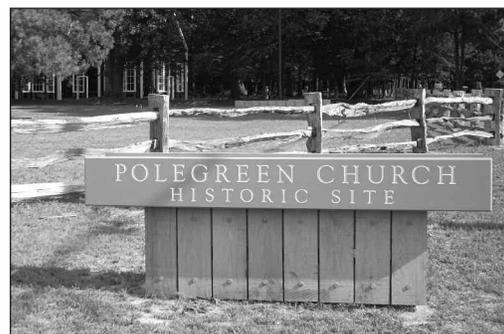


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Another Awakening at Polegreen: Hundreds Celebrate Ribbon Cutting on September 20th!

Most motorists driving the beautiful and historic Rural Point road trace in Hanover County notice our striking silhouette structure peaking out of the wooded grove and wonder what it is. We've heard some call it the "ghost church." Others wonder when the walls and roof will be applied. Those passionate about preserving the historic site as a commemoration of the successful struggle for civil and religious freedom know that it is *Polegreen*. But the Foundation decided that it could not be satisfied until the general public learned more about its rich history. After one year of architectural design, significant planning negotiations, and construction, the initial phase of historic Polegreen Church site enhancements is complete. Now those passersby will see our sign and know it is a historic site and not a church still under construction! The sign design, drawn by our beloved Carlton Abbott and Partners, strives to maintain the viewshed's rural and rustic character fought so hard to protect over these nearly twenty years.



New Polegreen Site Sign

At a ceremony with hundreds in attendance, Kathleen Kilpatrick, Director of Virginia's Department of Historic Resources, presented the Foundation a state highway historic marker on behalf of the DHR and Virginia Department of Transportation.

That September 20th, visitors also took note of our welcome kiosk and the crown jewel of the site enhancements: the timeline of the history of the struggle for religious freedom. The Hanover County Historic Commission's Heritage Preservation Fund made a generous contribution



Historic Highway Marker Dedication

towards this effort. Thank you to Hanover County for making an investment in heritage, history and tourism. On December 5th we will light the structure, enjoy Christmas Fife and Drum and celebrate Dr. Bluford's 90th birthday.



Polegreen guests walking the timeline!

With your help and these simple yet elegant improvements, Polegreen is truly experiencing another awakening. Please come visit us and support our mission.

Parsons Foundation Awards Challenge Grant

The Board of Directors is grateful to the Mary Morton Parsons Foundation for just awarding Polegreen a 3 to 1, \$50,000 Challenge Grant to broaden support for the site enhancements and program development underway. We must raise \$150,000 in new funds to secure the Parsons grant of \$50,000 in six months. The Challenge is part of a \$788,000 plan to enhance the visitor experience at the site, including a new Visitor and Education Center, and, to expand our educational programs and outreach.



Christopher K. Peace, Esq.

From the Executive Director

Greetings! Your Polegreen Foundation continues to move forward making dramatic and exciting progress both on site and as an organization. On a point of personal privilege, I remain humbled to work with Dr. Bob Bluford and share in his legacy-making activities. Equally, our Board is infused with new, talented and energetic spirit, making your Foundation a leading preservation organization in Hanover County.

Under your President's leadership, last fall, Polegreen retained Mary Ellen Stumpf, President of Stumpf & Associates, Inc. to help us conduct an internal assessment of the Foundation and to chart a course for a new strategic plan. After hours of board member interviews and committee work, the Board received the report of recommendations and set out to begin implementation. The Stumpf Report, as we affectionately call it, outlined a number of initial action items including but not limited to revising by-laws and articles of incorporation to support refinements to our leadership structure; updating the mission statement; drafting a vision statement, outlining a plan for program and resource enhancements; and establishing a more comprehensive funding program to build constituency and support our future. Much progress has been made on all fronts.

The Foundation proudly announces its vision and mission for the future along with a new logo and website. You may have already noticed the new logo on the front page of this newsletter. We are systematically revising all collateral material such as the brochure and letterhead to reflect this change. The website (www.historicpolegreen.org) was designed in partnership with APVA Preservation Virginia by Benjamin Knowles, their Information Technology Coordinator. In addition to enhanced events and expanding partnerships, we are embarking on new programs such as Guide By Cell for visitors on site, a short educational film, an oral history project with VCU, and developing school outreach.

The last year of planning, construction and internal reorganization tested our abilities but we learned that we are more than capable of these great or even greater things. The Foundation accomplished its internal goals all while our site enhancement progressed. I hope and trust you will be pleased with our work product and know that the memories of Rev. Samuel Davies and those courageous Hanover Dissenters are ever preserved and interpreted.

Vision Statement

By 2018, the 275th Anniversary of the founding of Polegreen Church, the Foundation will be recognized for its leadership in the historic interpretation of civil and religious freedom in Colonial Virginia through preservation of the site, community outreach and educational programs.

Mission Statement

To preserve the historic Polegreen Church site and commemorate the struggle for civil and religious freedom in Colonial Virginia by the Reverend Samuel Davies and the Hanover Dissenters. By accomplishing this mission, we preserve the memory of Hanover Dissenters who struggled courageously and successfully for civil and religious freedom in Virginia and in so doing increase appreciation for the liberties that we enjoy today in the United States.



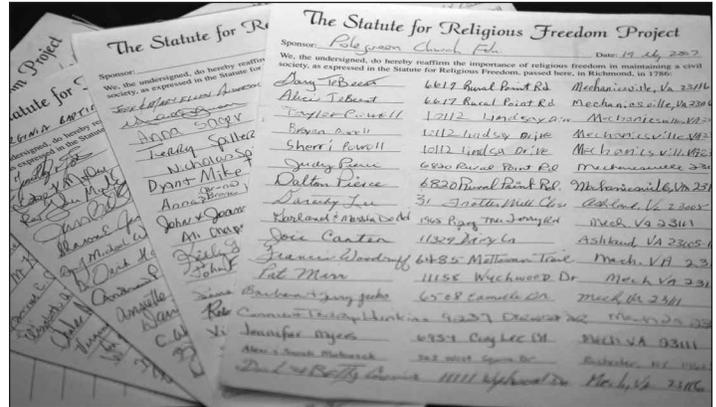
Timeline and Flagpole

Please Contact Foundation Staff
P.O. Box 2111
Mechanicsville, VA 23116
(804) 261-3837
director@historicpolegreen.org

2008 Programs in Review

The Consortium for Richmond's Religious History—a partnership of nine cultural and religious organizations from the Richmond region—celebrated the 222nd anniversary of the passage of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom by presenting to Governor Kaine over 1,200 signatures from Virginians who enthusiastically offered their name as a reaffirmation of the importance of religious freedom. The Governor added his name as well. Representatives of Virginia Baptist Historical Society, Beth Ahahbah Museum and Archives, Soka Gakkai, Interfaith Council of Greater Richmond, Council for America's First Freedom, Historic Polegreen Church Foundation, St. John's Foundation, A More Perfect Union, 6th Mt. Zion Baptist Church were present.

222 years ago, on the 16th of January in 1786, the Virginia General Assembly passed into law what is now recognized as a seminal piece of legislation, The Statute for Religious Freedom. The statute was drafted in its earliest form back in 1777 by Thomas Jefferson and was shepherded through the House of Delegates by James Madison while Jefferson was serving as American Minister to France. For generations, Virginians had known only a state-sponsored church. Those who "dissented" were obliged to seek permission from the government to worship. The statute changed all that: "That no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall . . .



Signatures of those Reaffirming the Statute's Principles

suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess . . . their opinion in matters of Religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish enlarge, or affect their civil capacities."

The cornerstone of religious freedom is in part thanks to Rev. Samuel Davies and the Hanover Dissenters who engaged the culture and inspired politicians like James Madison to pass this seminal piece of legislation. The principles of the statute ultimately made their way into the United States Constitution as part of the First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

Polegreen Shows its Hokie Colors



Flag Hangs in Memory of those Lost at Virginia Tech

On April 16th, the Polegreen Foundation joined with the Virginia Tech community to reflect on the vibrant lives of the 32 students and faculty who were tragically taken a year ago. At our site we paid tribute to each and every person lost.

The Road to Revolution Continues On!

On April 8th and 9th, the Road to Revolution State Heritage Trail Consortium hosted a travel writer's press event. With the support of the Greater Richmond Convention and Visitor's Bureau, the Virginia Tourism Corporation and Dominion Power, approximately twenty writers from at least five states along the Atlantic coast were greeted in true southern style and treated to living history interpretations of Patrick Henry's Parson's Cause and the Give me Liberty or Give me Death speech at St. John's Church, and a day long bus tour of the Trail route through Hanover County. Polegreen received feature recognition in recent articles in both the *Mechanicsville Local* and the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, Connecting the dots of Patrick Henry's life/Motor route visits sites - many in Hanover - key to patriot's activities, by Bill Lohmann, May 4, 2008.



Visit www.roadtorevolution.org



Visitors pray together at the church unity station. Photo by Ken Odor; Courtesy The Mechanicsville Local

National Day of Prayer Celebrated at Site

Due to the enthusiasm of the local residents, the mission of our non-profit has grown to interpret Davies and the dissenter's role in the evolution of our 1st amendment religious and civil freedoms. As part of this mission, Polegreen welcomes its role as a community gathering place. On May 1st, Polegreen hosted the Hanover Church of the Nazarene and approximately 35 area residents and elected leaders to commemorate the National Day of Prayer. The National Day of Prayer is an annual observance held on the first Thursday of May, inviting people of all faiths to pray for the nation. It was created in 1952 by a joint resolution of the United States Congress, and signed into law by President Harry S. Truman.

This ecumenical request is a great recognition of our Foundation's efforts over the past two years to reach out into the local community and share our mission. Organizers presented each guest with a packet which included history of Polegreen and a map. The opening prayer asked for God's continual blessing on our mission. We had State Senator Ryan McDougle, Commonwealth's Attorney Trip Chalkley, Supervisor Bob Setliff and Planning commissioner Wade King in attendance as well as the local newspaper editor who pictures.

Most recently, Dr. Bluford hosted visitors on June 1st to commemorate the demise of the Polegreen Church during the events that led up to the Battle of Cold Harbor during the American Civil War. Our Foundation recognizes that our historic site bore witness to the sacrifices of many Americans for the sake of freedom. We will continue to highlight this important part of our story.



The Richmond Howitzers Return to Cultivate Site

Even members of the Richmond Howitzer living history unit volunteer time regularly to cut grass, weed the trench line and church silhouette, rake leaves and pick up trash off the property. Unfortunately, due to our proximity to the road, we get our fair share of litter. The Richmond Howitzer unit portrays the very outfit responsible for firing on the church on June 1st, 1864 causing its destruction. Their group has regular living history programs for Richmond National Battlefield Park.

If you are interested in an Adopt a Highway program and are willing to volunteer regularly please contact us at 804-261-3837 or at director@historicpolegreen.org.



Lecture Series: Dr. Jan Swearingen & Union Seminarians

In September 2nd, Polegreen welcomed students from Union Seminary to our campus for a picnic and lecture on the origins of the Presbytery. Dr. Jan Swearingen, an Advisory Board member and member of the faculty at Texas A&M, brought us a presentation on the significance of rhetoric in the colonial era by comparing Patrick Henry and the man who inspired his oratory, Rev. Samuel Davies.

Memorial Service for Friends of Polegreen

In October 26th, Dr. Bob Bluford convened a gathering of relatives and friends of those most instrumental to the formation of Polegreen. With approximately fifty guests huddled in the confines of the church structure enjoying harp music performed by Ms. Jeanne Bluford, the Foundation honored the memory of those most dear to us with a homily and the acappella rendition of the famous spiritual penned on site "Lord, I want to be a Christian in my heart." The singers came to us from All Souls Presbyterian Church in Richmond, Virginia. Here are the names of those honored that day and forever more: *Margaret Rucker, Bill Wingfield, Henry Spencer, Donald Appich, John Mapp, Sam Newell, Douglas Fleet, Clint Webb, Charlie Appich, John Madden, Jack Thomas, and Taylor Dickenson.*



Welcome our New Board Members and Advisors

The Historic Polegreen Church Foundation proudly announces four new Directors to its Board. These individuals are extremely accomplished persons who bring a wealth of experience to the governance and future of Polegreen. Polegreen also welcomes its first Advisory Board class with the addition of nine members.

Barbara-lyn Morris, an educator, served as principal of Richmond Community High School. Mrs. Morris had lately lived in Abingdon while her husband, Dr. Thomas Morris, served as president of Emory & Henry College. When Dr. Morris became Virginia's Secretary of Education, the family returned to Richmond.

Kenneth M. Perry currently serves on the boards of the Richmond Symphony, Richmond SPCA, Windsor Foundation Trust, Get Lost MD Foundation, and the Advisory Boards of Hilliard House and Henricus Foundation. Mr. Perry has served as President or Chairman of various organizations, including the American Supply Association; West Richmond Rotary; Henricus Foundation; Ruling Elder, First Presbyterian Church; Fellow, American Society of Civil Engineers. Mr. Perry is a civil engineer and Chairman of the Board at VAMAC, INC., a plumbing distributor, headquartered in Richmond. He is married to Bettie Christopher Perry 1954 with three children and six grandchildren.

Dotty C. Robinson is currently a principal in Commonwealth Grant Consultants offering grant writing, prospect research, and development services to the non-profit community. As staff for the Maymont Foundation she held positions as Annual Fund Manager, Restoration Manager for Maymont's

Servant Life Exhibit, and Manager of Historical Collections. She has also served on Maymont's Board of Directors representing their volunteer guild. Dotty is originally from SC and graduated from the University of South Carolina with a BA in Business Administration.

Margaret Thomas, a member of River Road Presbyterian Church, is a graduate of William & Mary and enjoys history. Mrs. Thomas is a professional travel agent for world cultures. Her passion for the mission of Polegreen brought her to the Board.

New Advisory Board Members

Advisory Board Members include Charles F. Bryan, Jr., CEO of the Virginia Historical Society; Martha Newell, an early supporter of the Historic Polegreen Church Foundation in 1991; Tommy P. Baer, a well-known attorney in Richmond active in community, national, and international organizations for religious and individual liberties; Hugh Gouldthorpe, Owens and Minor executive; Ivor Massey Jr., lawyer, businessman and investor; Sumpter T. Priddy, Jr., retired Virginia Retail Merchants executive and lobbyist; W. Taylor Reveley, III, interim president of The College of William and Mary; the Rev. Jack Sadler of Montreat, NC and Professor C. Jan Swearingen of Texas A&M University.



*Dr. Bluford at New Board Member Site Orientation
Pictured from Left to Right:
Robinson; Morris; Perry;
Not pictured: Thomas*

Polegreen Founder Recognized Nationally for Richmond Area Preservation Efforts

At The Civil War Preservation Trust's (CWPT) annual conference April 17 - 20, 2008 in Springfield, Mo., Richmond native Dr. Bob Bluford won the Carrington Williams Battlefield Preservationist of the Year Award, named after its first chairman. CWPT announced winners of its 2008 Preservation Awards which were created to honor individuals and organizations for their exemplary dedication to the cause of Civil War preservation. Dr. Bluford is well known in the metro Richmond area for his work in battlefield and other historic preservation. Specifically, Bluford has saved over 110 acres at the historic Polegreen Church site in Hanover County, VA.

Over the years, CWPT has honored a wide variety of individuals and groups for their work to preserve endangered Civil War battlefields. Previous winners include historians, celebrities and even residential development firms. Despite such disparate backgrounds, all have made unique and lasting contributions to historic preservation. CWPT President James Lighthizer remarked that "We are engaged in a struggle to save America's Civil War legacy...Without the kind of commitment displayed by this year's recipients, many Civil War sites will be little more than a memory within a few years."



Rev. Bob Bluford, 2008 recipient of the Civil War Preservation Trust's Carrington Williams Battlefield Preservationist of the Year Award, and CWPT president Jim Lighthizer during the organization's annual conference in Springfield, Mo., April 19, 2008.

Photo by Bruce Guthrie for CWPT.

The Annual Giving Fund

Your generosity greatly enhances this organization's ability to advance its mission: To preserve the historic Polegreen Church site and commemorate the struggle for civil and religious freedom in Colonial Virginia by Rev. Samuel Davies and the Hanover Dissenters. Gifts of all sizes help us in this important work.

As the pages of this newsletter attest, much is happening at Polegreen. As our efforts continue we will need even more support, both in time, talent and treasure. Please help us share our Polegreen story with the metro Richmond community. Your tax-deductible contribution will help us develop critical educational and collaborative programs recounting the evolution of freedom in America. For example, we are currently interviewing for an educator who will develop specifically tailored lessons plans for all grade levels.

Yes! Please accept my gift to preserve Polegreen and to help develop programs celebrating its significance in our American heritage of religious and civil liberty. You may charge your gift online at www.historicpolegreen.org/give.

Your Support is Needed. Please give to The 2008 Annual Giving Fund:

- Samuel Davies Society for gifts of \$500/\$1,000/\$2,500+
- Patrick Henry Circle for gifts of \$250 - \$499
- Samuel Morris Meeting House Club for gifts of \$100 - \$249
- Friends of Dissenters for gifts of \$1 - \$99
- Please contact me regarding a tax-wise gift of securities or estate planning.
- I would like to help Polegreen as a volunteer. Please contact me!

Thank you for supporting the Historic Polegreen Church Foundation. Your tax-deductible support will help us meet our mission needs on a daily basis.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Contact information _____

Historic Polegreen Church Foundation
Post Office Box 2111
Mechanicsville, Virginia 23116

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