Between April and August of 2000, Rivanna Archaeological Consulting conducted an archaeological survey of 17 mines and early industry sites along Contrary Creek around the town of Mineral in Louisa County. The archaeological survey was funded by the County of Louisa, the Town of Mineral, the Louisa County Historical Society, and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources through the Commonwealth’s Cost Share Program. The survey identified and assessed the above ground archaeological resources from sites spanning a century of industrial mining history.

The archaeological survey focused on locating, identifying, and documenting the above ground remains at a number of selected sites. At least ten separate sites, or components of sites, were identified as possessing ‘medium’ or ‘high’ archaeological potential and a significant historical context was found to exist for nearly all of the sites within the project area. Most of the above ground features identified were concrete, brick, stone or frame structures related to mineral procurement and processing. At some sites, the domestic residences of mining superintendents were also identified. Other historic features including mining roads, railroad spurs, tailings piles and burial plots were also identified at a number of sites.

Louisa County is currently investigating the potential for interpreting the early industrial history of the Mineral area. One of the possibilities that has emerged is the potential of linking a number of the more significant historic sites with a pedestrian / recreational corridor that would follow an abandoned railroad spur paralleling Contrary Creek. Many of the sites surveyed were located convenient to this potential public access. The railroad spur is in relatively good condition but would require clearing in some areas. This project has the support of the Louisa County Historical Society and several other local and regional preservation organizations.

In terms of the educational and interpretive themes identified at the sites, the opportunities are nearly limitless. To a large degree, the nineteenth and early twentieth century mining and industrial history of the Mineral area centered around the procurement and processing of four minerals: gold, iron, copper and pyrite within what geologists have called the Gold-Pyrite belt of Virginia. Each of these minerals was mined by different processes and served different needs over a nearly one-hundred-year span between 1830 and the mid-1920s. One important interpretive theme would be to highlight the different techniques, tools and labor used to mine these minerals and to document these changes over time. A secondary but related theme would be to interpret the uses for the various minerals mined. Where did the final products go once they left the town of Mineral? How were they used? The persons employed at the mine sites and the labor relations that governed them changed dramatically over the period of study. The earliest gold mining in the Mineral vicinity was carried out by farmers with simple agricultural tools. This progressed into small groups of men who

See Mineral on page 2.
Mineral continued

leased properties along Contrary Creek for their mineral rights. Finally by the mid-nineteenth century, financial backing was obtained by corporate sponsors from larger northern cities including Philadelphia and New York. Prior to the Civil War, slaves were an important labor source in the process of iron production in central Virginia. After the Civil War, it was traditional for mine workers to reside on site in small camps. These camps however were usually segregated. Mine superintendents kept a strict control over the men employed there and maintained a type of corporate paternalism, caring for their needs and paying them in scrip that could only be spent at the company store. Domestic life in a mining camp differed dramatically from domestic life in a superintendent’s household. Comparisons from an archaeological and historical perspective could be made to document these differences. An abundance of intriguing personal stories relating to the history of individual mines also exist. Both William Walton, original owner of the Walton gold mine tract, and William H. Adams, developer of the Arminius pyrite mine, are significant to local mining history. Lastly, the growth and development of Mineral is inextricably linked to the evolution of mining in central Louisa County. No interpretation of mining and early industry along Contrary Creek would be complete without a history of the development of the town of Mineral.

Mineral and its surrounding vicinity now possesses an abundant wealth of a different kind. However this wealth can only be quantified with an historical lens. The type of historical resources in the vicinity of Mineral are not your everyday sanitized version of colonial history. This is the nitty-gritty history of nineteenth century mining and industrial efforts, the history of corporate and technological change, the history and role of slaves in industrial production, the history of iron production in support of the Confederate cause, the history of postbellum labor and class relations, and ultimately the history of the town of Mineral itself. First and foremost these local resources must be considered significant to the history and development of Louisa County. However, just as importantly, these resources clearly document a history of Virginia, one that is infrequently interpreted at regional historic sites and that is of interest to many residents of the Commonwealth and out-of-state visitors to Louisa County.

Abandoned mining equipment in the Mineral vicinity.
Albemarle Historic Preservation Committee

Ashlin Smith

The county’s recently updated roster for its Historic Preservation Committee contains several new names, bringing its total membership to twenty-eight. The committee’s first meeting was on January 8, 2002. By February subcommittees should be formed in order to begin implementing the county’s preservation plan.

The committee is charged with many tasks. Important among them is the compilation and maintenance of a current and comprehensive information base for Albemarle County’s historic resources. It will be consulted in the county’s development review process and will also be readily available to interested citizens. Establishing a formal definition of the term “significant historic resource” is also on the agenda.

Assistance and advice to county citizens will be increased by notifying new owners of historic properties about the significance of their properties and by helping them obtain preservation-related information. For all citizens, preservation will be promoted and encouraged by making available information about state and national register designation procedures, tax incentives, and historic and conservation easements, beginning with the creation of educational brochures.

The committee will work with other organizations to initiate community events for Albemarle County that recognize its historic resources, especially during statewide heritage tourism activities and National Preservation Week.

The Monticello Viewshed will be protected by formalizing a procedure that begins early in the planning process to encourage cooperation between the Thomas Jefferson Foundation and developers of property within the viewshed.

In the event that demolition or major adaptive reuse or renovation of a significant historic resource must occur the committee will require thorough documentation of the resource before any changes can be made.


Barboursville Threatened by Proposed Mining Operation

Bryan Wright & Clara Colby

General Shale LLC, a brick-making company owned by the Wienerberger Group, an Austrian conglomerate, has applied for a Special Use Permit (SUP) to strip-mine 89 acres of a 139-acre parcel near Barboursville. The site, which General Shale calls “isolated”, is surrounded by the homes of about 50 families, many of whom have owned their property for over 100 years. Some of these houses lie within 70 feet of the proposed excavation which may exceed 50 feet in depth, according to the SUP. The nearest of these are in Careytown, a predominantly African-American community. Many of the residents of Careytown are descendants of the slaves who worked on nearby plantations, whose families have owned this land since emancipation. Mary Ann French describes Careytown’s historical significance as a precious example of the kind of ‘freetown’ that formerly enslaved people of African descent built shortly after the Civil War ended, when they were eager – and sometimes forced – to leave the plantations where they had lived and worked. These small communities, which were once common to the Piedmont and other parts of the South, are increasingly hard to find. They may still exist in the name of a place, or the ghost of a memory, but seldom do you find a settlement like Careytown which has been continuously inhabited by the same families since Emancipation.

Barboursville is one of the anchors of the Madison-Barbour Rural Historic District (National Register of Historic Places), which Virginia’s Department of Historic Resources calls “one of Virginia’s most intact cultural landscapes”. The proposed mine site is bracketted by two of the Historic District’s contributing properties, Burlington and The Brownland. Two of Orange County’s most popular tourist attractions are nearby, the Barboursville Winery (site of the ruins of the Barbour mansion, designed by Thomas Jefferson for Governor James Barbour) and the Horton Winery. At the other end of the district lies Montpelier, home of James Madison. Near the Barboursville end of the district, General Shale proposes to level 89 acres, turning the material of these rolling hills into bricks.

The proposed mining operation would send 30-50 dump truck loads of material per day from the site out onto the quiet, residential, and narrow route 738, across a railroad track and up route 20 to an existing brick manufacturing plant in Somerset. The Virginia Department of Transportation has recommended extensive road work to accommodate this heavy industrial traffic.

Preservation Piedmont wrote a letter to the Orange County Planning Commission, expressing opposition to the proposed mine. You can find additional information about the proposed mine and the community opposition to it on the Friends of Barboursville website (http://www.b-ville.net).
Liz Sargent appeared before Charlottesville City Council on November 5 to address Preservation Piedmont’s concerns about the disposition of Jefferson School and our hope that she could proceed with the nomination for the school’s placement on the National Register of Historic places. At that time, the title of the property was still held by the Charlottesville School Board. The Mayor indicated that Council intended to hold a public hearing at their regular meeting on November 26.

Mary Hill Caperton spoke for Preservation Piedmont at the City Council meeting on November 26, and asked that Council give the approval to apply for listing on the National Register. The ground work for nomination to the Register has been done by Julie Gronlund and Genevieve Keller, past board members of Preservation Piedmont. The application cannot be completed without authorization by the owners of the property. The School Board is in the process of transferring ownership to the city. Several members of council had voiced concerns about whether historic designation would discourage developers from approaching the property. It was restated to Council that the Virginia Department of Historic Resources has offered to send someone to answer any questions Council may have.

Most of the comments at the public hearing concerned the pre-school. Many of the Alumni of the old Jefferson School spoke about their hope that the neighborhood and the African American community would not lose one of the few landmarks still remaining after the Urban Renewal project of the ‘60s. They want to be sure this very important symbol is left to remind their children and grandchildren of their heritage.

To our surprise, Council and staff had prepared an extensive list of “Preservation and Redevelopment Guiding Principles for Evaluation of Proposals” for Jefferson School. These guidelines are as follows:

**JEFFERSON SCHOOL**

Preservation and Redevelopment Guiding Principles for evaluation of proposals

- The Historic Phase I of the buildings will be redeveloped with the original building facade kept in place with entrance from Commerce Street.
- A Preschool facility in Jefferson School or on the Site may be preferred. (School Board is discussing this as an option)
- The auditorium level and surrounding classrooms will be retained as a public area for the use of the community.
  - The auditorium area will be reconfigured to provide a community meeting room for meetings, stage events, dances, class reunions and for use of the citizens of Charlottesville.
  - The classrooms around the auditorium will be devoted to displays of the historical and cultural heritage of African Americans who attended the school and the Vinegar Hill Community. A small catering kitchen facility will be developed to facilitate the catering of food for meetings at the Cultural Center.
- The gymnasium facility will be refurbished at its present location or a new facility will be built on site.
- The City is interested in a residential presence on site and developers may propose residential uses on a new floor above phase II and III of Jefferson School.
  - Any new construction on site will be configured to maintain the prominence of the Commerce Street Entrance to Jefferson School.
  - All parking requirements for proposed development must be contained on site.
  - All proposed new buildings must be of similar architectural scale and be compatible with existing building.
- The City will cooperate with developers to maximize the use of the Federal, State and Local Historic Tax Credits and Historic designations if desired.
- The site will be developed consistent with urban design principals with emphasis on pedestrian friendly street edges and landscaping.
- Any net proceeds for the sale of the property will be devoted to the School Capital Projects.
  - In order to protect and preserve the Historic and Cultural significance of Jefferson School, Phase I, the city will require perpetual ownership of the facade and the auditorium level.
  - Consideration should be given to an African Cultural Arts Center below the auditorium level for artist studios.

We may be encouraged by City Council’s proposals but would still like to see this property on the National Register.
Board of Directors 2001

Ashlin Smith, President
293-6435
Ben Ford, Vice-President
977-0415
Clara Colby, Secretary
842-3006
Clarence McClymonds, Treasurer
977-2919

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Chris Madrid French  Lindsay Nolting
293-2872  842-3049
Mary Ann French  Liz Sargent
293-5672  296-2564
Margaret Maliszewski  Carol Troxell
296-5823 ext. 3276 (O)  295-2552 (O)

Welcome to New Members

Preservation Piedmont welcomes new members Gina Haney and Glenn Foulds of Stanardsville, Charles and Mary Edwards of Schuyler, Jane Berkeley and Lindsay Nolting of Fluvanna County, Harry and Anne Porter of Charlottesville and Fluvanna County, Ross L. Stevens of Greenwood, and Corinne Nettleton of Charlottesville.

New Board Members Elected

At the annual meeting on December 13, three new members were elected to the Preservation Piedmont board. Christine Madrid French holds an M.F.A. in architectural history from U.Va., and works for the George Washington Papers project at U.Va. She has actively worked for the preservation of Richard Neutra’s Cyclorama at Gettysburg and is looking forward to helping with preservation issues at the local level. Mary Ann French, a veteran journalist and a doctoral student in history at the University, comes from a family whose Orange County roots extend back many generations. Lindsay Nolting is an artist who has deep roots in central Virginia and lives in a well-preserved eighteenth-century Fluvanna house. Mary Hill Caperton, our outgoing president, was also elected to serve another term on the board.

Officers for the coming year, elected at the annual meeting, are Ashlin Smith, President; Benjamin Ford, Vice-President; Clarence McClymonds, Treasurer; and Clara Colby, Secretary.

We thank outgoing board members Jodie Webber and Gabe Silverman for their contributions.

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. Although based in Charlottesville, the organization also serves the County of Albemarle and bordering counties.

Name: ___________________________
Street: ___________________________
City, State, Zip: ___________________
Phone: ___________________________
Email: ___________________________

___ Student $5
___ Individual $10
___ Family $20
___ Patron $100
___ Life $300
___ Non-Profit Organization $25
___ Business $50
___ Business Patron $300

___ New Member
___ Membership Renewal

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 ‘02 or later, then it is time to renew your membership. (*=Life Membership.)
Each year we have requests for support of preservation projects in our area. Preservation Piedmont has sent money to the Orange County Courthouse Loggia Restoration Fund. We write letters, attend critical meetings, and generally try to be vigilant. We are still watching the three buildings on the downtown mall; the sale of the bank has placed that project on hold.

Several members of Preservation Piedmont are working with the City Planning Department to rewrite the Zoning Ordinance. Some of the articles are 30 years out of date and have just had amendments slapped on.

In May, Liz Sargent and Julie Gronlund arranged a tour of the Jefferson School with enthusiastic alumni as guides. We were amazed to see that the property is so fully utilized by the pre-school, Piedmont Virginia Community College classes, ESL classes, Adult Literacy classes, a Recreation Center and more.

In September, at the First Presbyterian Church on Park Street, Preservation Piedmont, the Albemarle County Historical Society and the African American Genealogy Group co-hosted a talk about cemeteries owned by the city of Charlottesville. Scot French of the Carter G. Woodson Institute gave a presentation about “African-Americans & Charlottesville’s Segregated Cemeteries, 1865-1965.” Then we walked over to Maplewood Cemetery where Sue Weber and others from the Neighborhood Association showed us the damage done by oversized mowers and weed-eaters. Preservation Piedmont, the Neighborhood Association and the City’s Historic Resources Task Force have been urging the city to designate this cemetery and Oakwood Cemetery as part of the Historic Design Control District. Our hope is that such designation will keep future city leaders aware of the historic value of these interesting places.

The last event of 2001 was held December 13 at the home of Annie Harris Massie on Park Street. Ms. Massie generously allowed us to tour her interesting 1859 Italianate Villa Style home, including a trip to the basement, a favorite pastime of many preservationists, where we could see early uses and several critical changes made to the house.

We ask you, the members, to keep your eyes and ears open and to bring preservation concerns to our attention. We do not have authority, but we do have a voice.