

# FRIENDS OF THE HOLLOW

## NEWS

Spring 1997

The Friends of the Hollow have had a very busy year. We have continued our quest to preserve, restore and protect The Hollow for the benefit of future generations. We have greatly increased the overall awareness of the site and its significance; but the bulk of the work is yet to come. Some of our recent accomplishments and objectives are described below.

### Dendrochronological Dating

In 1996, we commissioned a professional dendrochronological (tree ring) analysis to determine the precise construction date of The Hollow so that any lingering doubt about its authenticity would be put to rest. All historical records show that Thomas Marshall came to live with his family at The Hollow in 1765 and that he lived there, for the most part, until 1773, when he and his family moved to "Oak Hill" several miles to the east. The scientific dendrochronological analysis, performed by Dr. Herman J. Heikkenen of Dendrochronology, Inc., concluded that the red and white oak timbers (ten different ones) were cut at the end of the 1763 growing season but before the 1764 season. Naturally, this, along with other available information such as the 1765 deed for the land on which The Hollow is located, provide conclusive evidence of its place in John Marshall's life.

### New Web Site

In September 1996, we initiated a Friends of the Hollow World Wide Web site (<http://www.further.com/hollow/>). The home page of the Friends of the Hollow provides detailed information, history and photographs of The Hollow, as well as hyperlinks to other historical and genealogical web sites. It is indexed in most of the available World Wide Web search engines and we hear often from interested visitors and descendants from far away.

We would especially like to thank Scott Allard of [Further Productions](#) for providing a permanent home for our Web site and Peter Orłowski of [Dream Smith Software Design](#) for the design of the site.

### Richmond Times-Dispatch Article

As a result of our press release mailings and follow-up, the Richmond Times-Dispatch published a very favorable [article](#) on The Hollow in the December 1, 1996 edition. The article included a current photograph and Friends of the Hollow membership information. This article has effectively doubled the membership by spreading the word that The Hollow still exists and can be preserved. We have also been working with reporters from The Washington Post to obtain favorable coverage in an upcoming issue.

### The John Marshall Foundation

### William & Mary Law Student Clean-up Day

Among the interest generated by the Richmond Times-Dispatch article was a group of students from the Marshall-Wyeth School of Law at the College of William and Mary. On January 25, 1997, Michael Drewry, David Johansen, Debbie Olin and Greg Romano, all law students, spent a full day working to clear debris from the inside and brush from the outside of The Hollow and to protect it from the elements. Their efforts included covering the exposed windows, doors and other openings with pressure-treated plywood (supplied by us) to keep the inside dry. We greatly appreciate their good work and enthusiasm.

Fortunately, the tin roof is currently in excellent condition, having been replaced by the Friends in the 1980's.

### Drawings

Architectural drawings of The Hollow were made by Dee McCarthy under contract with the Center for Historic Preservation at Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg. These drawings, made at no cost to the Friends, are an important part of preserving the architectural history of The Hollow if anything were to happen to the structure before we can secure the site for permanent preservation.

### Corporate Funding

We have initiated an effort to secure corporate donations and possible corporate sponsorship for our efforts. Our initial efforts have been focused on Virginia-based corporations.

### Dell Upton

In September, 1996, we wrote to Dell Upton, the vernacular architect who performed a

We have been in touch with the President of the John Marshall Foundation regarding assistance in our efforts to preserve The Hollow. The John Marshall Foundation, founded through a joint effort between the Virginia Bar Association and the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, was primarily created to preserve, restore and interpret the former Chief Justice's home in Richmond, Virginia. The Foundation has been extremely successful in its efforts there and also has produced an excellent film about John Marshall that is made available for public broadcasting and to schools, as well as to private purchasers.

The John Marshall Foundation decided at its January 1997 Board meeting to include a separate Hollow contribution option in its new fund raising campaign to restore John Marshall's grave site in Shockoe Cemetery. Funds raised by its campaign will be accumulated until we can secure a purchase contract for the site. For more information, contact the John Marshall Foundation, 701 E. Franklin Street, Suite 1120, Richmond, VA 23219, Tel: 804-644-0041.

## **Negotiations with Landowner**

The Hollow is included in a large parcel of land (322 acres) that is being held by foreign interests for future development potential. The site is located very close to an undeveloped Interstate Route 66 interchange at Markham, Virginia. The current owners paid a premium for the land in the late 1980's when the real estate boom was peaking. Since then, the land has probably become less valuable. From our discussions with the owner's agent, commercial development is the expectation. As you might imagine, Thomas Marshall built his house on the best site available in his original 330 acre leasehold (which is, by far, also the best building site available on the owner's current tract) so The Hollow is not easily separated from the owner's current holding. Nevertheless, it would be possible to purchase a minimum amount of land while leaving the remaining parcel commercially viable. The owner's agent has indicated that the owner would consider such an offer.

brief analysis of The Hollow for the Friends in 1982, to inform him of the new dendrochronological findings and to request that he comment on how these findings would affect his 1982 analysis. We included a copy of a commentary on his report written by Triplet Russell also in 1982. By way of background, Dell Upton's 1982 report stated that "there is nothing about the original section that precludes its being the house the Marshalls occupied" though he found no reason to believe, independently, that "it dated earlier than ca. 1790."

## **Promotional Brochure**

We are preparing a Friends of the Hollow promotional brochure for widespread distribution and mailing. A Washington, D.C. public relations firm, WKA Communications, is contributing the expertise and expense of producing this new brochure. If you are near a particular location where you could arrange for the brochure to be displayed for interested persons, please contact Read deButts of WKA Communications at (202) 898-7833.

## **Membership**

Current membership in the Friends of the Hollow stands at 40. This represents an increase of 185% over last year's 14.

## **Annual Meeting**

The 1997 annual meeting of the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Hollow, Inc. will be held on Sunday, June 15, 1997 at 3:00 pm at the Old Stone Church ("Markham Methodist Church") in Markham, Virginia.

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The Friends of the Hollow, Inc. is a Virginia non-stock, non-profit charitable corporation formed in 1981 with the express purpose of preservation and restoration of the boyhood home of Chief Justice John Marshall known as The Hollow.

Basic membership dues are \$10.00 per year and sustaining membership is \$25.00 per year. Additional donations are welcome. Dues and contributions are fully tax deductible.

Please make checks payable to Friends of the Hollow, Inc. and mail to Alexander C. Green, Treasurer, P.O. Box 125, Markham, VA 22643.



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