

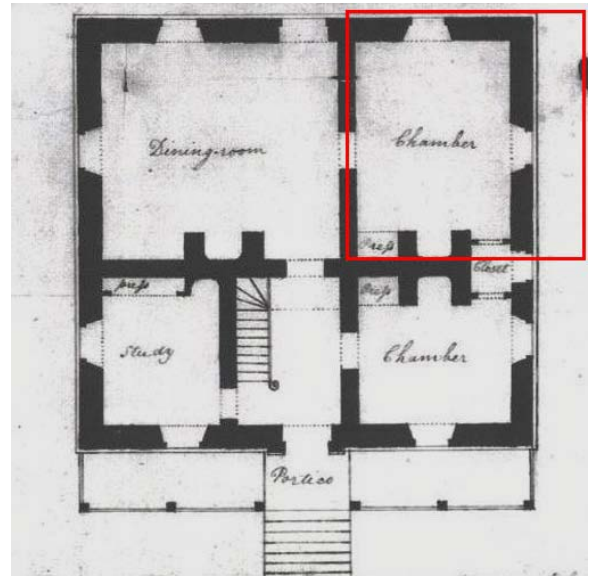
# Menokin Update

April 16, 2009

Spring has sprung and Archaeology is in full effect at Menokin once again! Currently our efforts are concentrated within the "South West Quadrant", comprising the region beyond the cellar entrance to the southwest corner of the ruin, including the vestibule and south west chamber room.

On Monday, the team assembled and immediately assisted in the removal of last year's stone from the lawn of Menokin. The extra man power was also helpful for the relocation of a large roofing assemblage during a particularly rainy afternoon. Within 30 minutes with the effort of 8 people, the assemblage was relocated from the parking lot to the wood barn.

Despite the wind and rain, archaeologists managed to accomplish a lot this week. Many decorative pieces have been recovered, including window, door and beltcourse stones. Some excavation began in the Vestibule and Chamber, including the fire place and a small closet next to the fire place. Work on the "closet" area exposed floorboards sitting atop brick. Interesting artifacts include: a large shard of purple sponge ware, a knife and what appears to be the remnants of a lamp. While working in the chamber, archaeologists investigated the small basement alcove underneath the vestibule, discovering that it spans back around 4 feet, much further than anticipated. Hopefully week 2 will open up this area for further exploration.



Area of excavation, highlighted by the red box



The Southwest Quadrant before excavation



Floorboards emerging in the chamber cabinet



Moving assembly 2005-052 into the wood barn



James and Intern Bryce in the process of screening



Historic Photograph of SW chamber, showing cabinet to the left of the fireplace.



Locating the Door jamb in the rubble

# Menokin Update

May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009

Archaeology on the west wall is coming to a close. We have found that while some of the west wall still remains, most it is rubble stone. Charles Phillips has spent several hours mortaring and grouting to keep the wall standing, which allows us to continue working on the area.

On Tuesday, Archaeologists uncovered a copper alloy button, pictured right. Beth Reavis, Assistant Director of the Menokin Foundation, took the initiative to research the button. She has discovered that it is a Virginia Militia Officer's coat button from the War of 1812. Through her research, we now know that John Tayloe Lomax, Menokin resident from 1809 to 1818, held the rank of Major. It's quite unusual for archaeology to yield specific ownership information, but it seems more than likely that this button was owned by Mr. Lomax.

A watch key was found on Wednesday within the South Chamber. The key is inscribed "Kersey, Richmond Virginia". Some quick research has identified the key's origins to Edward Kersey, hailed "the oldest jeweler in Richmond". His store was located at 1511 E. Main St. Menokin possesses a photograph of the South Chamber with a clock on the mantle. While the association is not definite, it seems probable. Unfortunately, the store where the key was made had been sacrificed for the highway overpass.

Other artifacts of interest discovered this week include: The South Chamber cabinet lock; a complete toothbrush; a bourgeois "ashes of roses" perfume cap and a Richard Hudnut bottle (both have stylistic components reminiscent of "Art Deco", but the age has yet to be confirmed); a 3i medicine bottle; many mother of pearl buttons; a 1915-16 dime; lead fishing weight and yet another large piece of corset busk. Archaeologists have discovered 2 different kinds of corset busk over the past 2 weeks!

The rest of this field season will be concentrated on the Exterior South East of the ruin. Archaeologists have begun to identify individual dressed stones in preparation for the excavation. Hopefully next week will yield much data about the collapse of the south east of Menokin!



1812 officers' button



Visible Exterior West Wall!



"Ashes of Roses" Perfume cap



Thane cleans the firebox the old fashioned way...



Historic photograph featuring a clock on the South Chamber Mantle



Charles Phillips holds a panel from the west door



James cleaning out the South Chamber



Artifacts from left: Toothbrush, Richard Hudnut cologne/perfume bottle, "ashes of roses" cap, Cabinet Lock, Lead fishing weight and 3i medicine bottle.

# Menokin Update

May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009

The spring field season of Archaeology at Menokin has come and gone. The bulk of this week was spent removing decorative stones from the South East portion of the ruin and finishing up work in Room 102.

An amazing discovery occurred on Monday, when a locket (featured right) was discovered sitting below the west window of Room 102. After much deliberation and debate, the locket has been identified by an appraiser at Sotheby's as a 1780's piece. In addition to this rare archaeological find, we also discovered a glass "cameo" jewel, pieces of a nit/lice comb. The south porch has yielded a ton of bottle glass and a "herringbone" brick pattern.

The extraction of material from room 102 sparked some concern about the condition of the South Wall. Luckily, Charles Phillips was on hand to repair the wall. Work in the South East was quick to generate many pallets of decorative stone. Steve lent a hand with his John Deere, liberating a large door jamb piece from the porch, a large portion of water table and the SE corner stone that functions as a shelf for the water table. We have recovered a large amount of decorative stonework from this quadrant, including 17 out of 19 Quoin stones. Over the next few weeks these stones will be evaluated and protected.

Hopefully, funding will be secured for the fall field season and archaeology can continue on the SE corner, wrapping around to the east side of the ruin.



1780's locket. Features blue and gold enameling and purple "jewels" framing the center. Contains yellow hair.



Black glass "cameo".



Pipe Bowl



“Herringbone” pattern of brick discovered on the South Porch

James cleans next to the south wall



Remains of two lice/nit combs.



Room 102, post excavation.



The vestibule, sans rubble.

