



A periodic newsletter chronicling the preservation of Menokin Plantation.

Fall 2003



Trustees take turns breaking the ground

## MENOKIN BREAKS GROUND FOR ITS FUTURE!

Supporters, guests, Board members and staff turned out at Menokin on July 17 - a near perfect summer day - to take part in the groundbreaking ceremony for the Foundation's first new structure, a building that will not only become the permanent home for the 18th century woodwork currently stored in a barn in Surry County, but will also serve as Menokin's new visitors' center and library.

The site was a Menokin field rich in soybeans, except for the closely mown section by the east woods where the new building will be erected. The archaeological testing had been concluded, and the area had been mapped and recorded and submitted to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources for approval. The architect was present with the floor plans and elevations.

Guests sat under a large white tent and faced a stage - a draped rectangular board with a microphone attached -- with a backdrop of Colonial era flags rippling in the breeze. Executive Director Doris Lackey welcomed guests and turned the meeting over to Menokin President Martin King to begin the ceremony that would open the door to Menokin's future.

But there was an interruption: Menokin Secretary-Treasurer Judge Harry T. "Tuck" Taliaferro III rose, asked for a special privilege, and took the mike. He kept it until near the event's conclusion and used it to announce that the Board of Trustees, at a meeting earlier in the day without the President present, had voted unanimously to name the new building the "Martin Kirwan King Conservation and Visitors' Center". Then the Secretary-Treasurer pulled off the drape to reveal a sign reading "Future home of the Martin Kirwan King Conservation and Visitors' Center".



Judge "Tuck" Taliaferro, master of ceremonies

The naming, Taliaferro said, was a tribute from the Board to Martin King for his years of dedicated work — first for his part in saving the Menokin ruin and property in 1995 and helping establish The Menokin Foundation to care for the property; then for his personal and his family's significant financial support and contribution over the years; for his tireless physical labors in clearing a half century's worth of brambles and bushes from around the house; for spearheading the fund raising efforts to put the protective roof over the still standing structure; and for nurturing the development of a Foundation and extraordinary Board

of Trustees that is working diligently to fulfill Menokin's mission to educate and preserve.

The project to construct the conservation and visitors' center is supported in part by a *Save America's Treasures* grant from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.

### The Speakers

Martin King and Tuck Taliaferro weren't the only speakers on groundbreaking day. Menokin was honored to have Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources W. Tayloe Murphy, Jr. address the gathering, underscoring the importance of the historic property and its conservation. Both Secretary Murphy and his wife, Helen, who is a Menokin trustee, have been active in the effort to save and preserve Menokin since the early eighties.

Kathleen Kilpatrick, Director of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, talked about Martin King's hard work and diligence in supporting preservation efforts in Virginia. Guests also heard from the Northern Neck's delegate to the General Assembly, Albert Pollard, and heard a tribute to King from APVA director, Elizabeth Kostelny.

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The Honorable W. Tayloe Murphy, Jr.