

MENOKIN



A FIELD

A periodic newsletter chronicling the preservation of Menokin Plantation.



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Summer sunshine and fall festivals may lie ahead for most Virginians, but at Menokin the work is intensifying:

* In July we will break ground for Menokin's new conservation building/visitors' center. Preparations for this project occupy a lot of our time and effort these days, and, once the groundbreaking is behind us, even more time and energy will be focused on construction. We want to bring Menokin's historic woodwork home to the new building by early 2004.

* Stabilization and conservation work on the ruin also gets underway this summer.

* And, as usual, we are spending a lot of time and energy on fund raising. We are seeking donations, grants, and the time of expert volunteers to help match the \$366,000 *Save America's Treasures* grant awarded Menokin by the National Park Service. I reported to you last December that our goal for 2003 is to raise \$250,000 to help match the grant. To date we have

Summer 2003

raised approximately \$150,000, and we have six months to get the rest of the job done.

We have never faced a more challenging time at Menokin – or a more promising and exciting one.

In April we presented the Menokin story to a gathering of more than 100 people in Alexandria, Virginia, at the beautiful home of John and Leslie Ariail. In the months ahead we hope to travel and tell the Menokin story throughout Virginia. Please invite us!

Many, many thanks to all of our wonderful friends and supporters. In this issue of the newsletter we honor you for your help and continuing commitment.

Come see us!

Martin K. King, president

ARCHAEOLOGY AT MENOKIN

Menokin's 21st century architect has a lot in common with some 18th century residents of the Menokin plantation. They picked the same site to build on!

But the 21st century people are going to find another location.

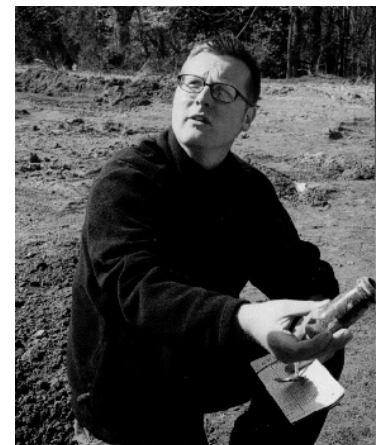
In March, when architect Carlton Abbott chose a site for Menokin's new conservation center, the Foundation enlisted archaeologist Matt Laird of the James River Institute of Archaeology to conduct a survey of the area to determine that we were not intruding on a significant archaeological resource. What Dr. Laird found were features in

the soil that led him to think our chosen site was the probable location of 18th century slave dwellings.

Members of Menokin's Advisory Committee, including archaeologists from Mount Vernon, Monticello, and Mary Washington College confirmed this belief, and helped to map and identify the features.

The Foundation is delighted with the discovery, which helps us better understand the Menokin story, and underscores Menokin's rich and wonderful resources. But, after mapping, photographing, and recording the features, we are, under the direction of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, re-burying them, and will mark the location and interpret it for visitors to Menokin in the future. Some day we hope to have the funds to excavate, research, and record the site more completely.

Meanwhile Dr. Laird and his colleagues are looking for another location for the new building that is not in an archaeologically sensitive area.



Dr. Matthew R. Laird of James River Institute for Archaeology holds part of a wine bottle (1780s or '90s) found in probable slave area at Menokin.

