



# f PRESERVATION focus

Newsletter of the  
Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation

## Virginian Railway Station Restoration

Full steam ahead for Virginian Station renovation! After many years of planning, the Roanoke Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, commenced restoration of the former Virginian Railway passenger station in late February. The Chapter entered a contract with G & H Contracting, Inc. of Salem on January 27th to perform Phase I of the restoration. G & H gave the lowest of five bids at \$493,348.00. According to the contract, Phase I is to be completed by July 20, 2012.

The historic station served the Roanoke Valley from the time it opened in early 1910 until Virginian passenger service was



Progress as of early May on Phase I of the Virginian Railway station restoration.

discontinued in January 1956. The station was severely damaged by fire on January 29, 2001, and has been an eyesore in the community for eleven years. It was

donated to the Chapter in 2005 by Norfolk Southern Corporation. Although progress was unseen most of the time, work continued

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## Gainsboro History Walk

The Gainsboro History Committee of the Gainsboro Southwest Community Organization is working in partnership with the City of Roanoke, Historic Gainsboro, Inc., and the Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation to promote the history of Gainsboro to residents and visitors via a Gainsboro History Walk. This project will promote the historical significance of this neighborhood, listed on both

the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register, through placement of informative, interactive historical information in key strategic locations within the Gainsboro neighborhood. The Gainsboro History Committee and the Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation have actively kept the neighborhood abreast of project updates, attending neighborhood meetings and

participating in events such as Gainsboro Neighborhood Day on May 5, 2012.

The Gainsboro History Walk will recognize the development of Gainsboro from the city's first neighborhood in the mid-1800s to the center of commercial, religious, and social life for Roanoke's African-American community during the first half of the 20th century. The achievements of many residents of Gainsboro are

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## Eight Preservation Awards, Bulldozer Award presented

A highlight of the 2011 Annual Meeting of the Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation in November was the announcement of eight Preservation Awards and one Bulldozer Award. The Preservation Awards encompassed six buildings, an environmental community, and a book. The RVPF presents these awards to raise public awareness of the value of restoring and reusing older structures as well as recognizing individual efforts. The recipients:

After sitting vacant for several years, the Patrick Henry Hotel (previously listed as an endangered site) was restored by developer Ed Walker for 133 apartments and a restaurant.

The Catawba Sustainability Center, an umbrella organization of Virginia Tech, is using the former Catawba Hospital farm (previously listed as an endangered

site) as a teaching instrument for sustainable practices.

Big Lick Junction, a former dry goods warehouse, was renovated for use by the Community High School of Arts and Academics and 15 apartments.

The Salem Museum, housed in the old Williams-Brown House/Store, was renovated including a LEED certified wing sensitively added to the rear of the building.

Meridium, a world-class software company, renovated the warehouse formerly occupied by Mostly Sofas as their headquarters.

The Lake Spring Park Gazebo was accurately restored after it was damaged by a runaway truck.

The Roanoke City Market Building, a Georgian Revival-style building constructed in 1921, was restored to its original appearance with stalls of enameled tile, concrete floors and brick walls.

Michael Pulice, architectural historian, has published a book on the many brick Roanoke Valley buildings constructed by the Deylerles in the mid-19th century.

The RVPF also presents a Bulldozer Award for the unnecessary destruction of historic, cultural, or natural resources. The 2011 recipient was Carilion Clinic for demolishing the 10-story, 60-year-old Carlton Terrace Building. The building had been identified as an endangered site by the RVPF and recently declared eligible for the state and national registers by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

For more information on our recipients, visit the 2011 Preservation Awards album at [www.facebook.com/roanokepreservation](http://www.facebook.com/roanokepreservation).

-George Kegley

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noteworthy and deserving of recognition (early African-American doctors, lawyers, diplomats). Although redevelopment has erased many of the buildings and streets that once fostered this vibrant community, the history is rich, still evident, and needs to be told. The project proposes to tell this important history using plaques and sidewalk markers at both existing and former landmarks throughout the neighborhood to recognize prominent community leaders and important events.

Phase I of the project will include the installation of 'history panels' on the existing pedestrian plaza across from the Hotel



Site of Phase I's 'history panels' on Wells Avenue across from the Hotel Roanoke.

Roanoke on Wells Avenue, serving as the starting point for the larger neighborhood tour. In addition to the panels, a walking tour brochure will be produced. Phase II will include inset panels in the Wells Avenue sidewalk going towards Henry Street. Finally,

Phases III and IV will extend the walk to the Gainsboro Library, the former Claytor Clinic, and the residential neighborhood along east and west Gilmer Avenue. The total project cost is estimated at \$103,000.

- Alison Blanton

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during the entire period to comply with extensive local, state and federal regulations. The Chapter and its restoration partners Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation and Friends of the Virginian Railway have raised over \$ 1.2 million for the reconstruction from public and private sources.

“The plan is to conduct the restoration in two phases,” said James Cosby, Chapter treasurer and chairman of the Restoration Committee. “Phase I includes abatement of the substantial asbestos and lead paint contamination on site, building stabilization and replacement of the terra cotta roof. We hope to go seamlessly into Phase II and complete the interior of the two buildings involved, landscaping and the parking lot within a year.”

“Many people have contributed to this project over the years,” said Jeffrey Sanders, Chapter president. “We thank the many chapter members, our restoration partners, grantors and donors of the funds raised, Norfolk Southern and the many public officials and employees who have helped us over the last eleven years.

Skip Salmon, Chapter secretary and president of Friends of the Virginian Railway, said, “Many of the Friends of the Virginian are retired railroad employees who once worked for the Virginian. They are delighted that the reconstruction has begun.”

-Alison Blanton (quotes from RC-NRHS Press Release, 3/7/12)

## RVPF hires Coordinator

The RVPF welcomes a new face to the organization! Maribeth Mills is working as our Coordinator, an important position which supports the Board of Trustees and acts as our community liaison. Maribeth has degrees from the University of Mary Washington and the University of Virginia in historic preservation and urban and environmental planning. Formerly a Planner with the City of Roanoke and Bedford County, Maribeth comes to us with a wealth of knowledge and experience in the historic preservation and conservation arenas. She has already had an enormous impact on the RVPF’s ability to establish and accomplish goals in the coming year and is working hard to update our brand. We look forward to a successful relationship in the months ahead.

In addition to helping set goals for the RVPF, Maribeth is working to update our website by adding



current events and information. We are actively working as an advocate for historic preservation and conservation and want our website to reflect the latest happenings and serve as an information clearing house for citizens seeking assistance with their preservation questions. Thanks to Maribeth, you can also find us on Facebook and Twitter for even more up-to-the minute information. Please support our efforts by visiting us online and signing up for email alerts, liking us on Facebook, or following us on Twitter so that we can share information with residents throughout the Roanoke Valley!

- Jeanne Bollendorf

## Endangered Sites

On May 24, 2012, seven nominations for the annual Endangered Sites List of the Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation will be announced. One endangered site in our area has already received state-wide attention. The RVPF nominated the Boones Mill Train Depot to Preservation Virginia’s Endangered Sites List and it was selected along with nine other



Boones Mill Train Depot

sites from around the Commonwealth. The depot will be demolished by Norfolk Southern if funds cannot be raised to relocate the building to a site further from the railroad tracks.

-Maribeth Mills



*The Past & Future of the Virginian Railway Station  
and Announcement of the 2012 Endangered Sites List*

Thursday, May 24, 2012 at 6:00 p.m.  
Trackside Gallery & Theater - O. Winston Link Museum  
101 Shenandoah Avenue N.E. Roanoke, Virginia 24016

Please join the Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation in celebrating National Preservation Month! The evening will begin with a reception followed by an announcement of the 2012 Endangered Sites List and the 'Past and Future of the Virginian Station' presented by Skip Salmon, President of the Friends of the Virginian Railway. This event is free!



Sponsored by Anne Stuart Beckett, Architectural Historian



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