

# The Sounding Board



Historic St. Luke's Church  
Smithfield, Virginia

A National Historic Landmark

Volume 8 Number 1

Spring 2011

## Architectural Firm Chosen To Head Repair

**Bucher/Borges Group**, PLLC, of Easton, Maryland was selected by the board of Historic St. Luke's Church in February to oversee the repair of the almost four century year old building. Managing partner, **W. Ward Bucher**, III, AIA, and his team mate, **John A. Fidler**, International Associate AIA, of Simpson, Gumpertz & Heger, Inc. Los Angeles, CA, began architectural review and investigation immediately.

With over thirty years experience as a registered architect, Mr. Bucher's preservation and architectural services have recently included work at the Decatur House in Washington, DC, under the ownership of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and at the McCormick-Goodhart Mansion in Langley Park, MD - a project designed for Gold LEED certification. He is the author of the *Dictionary of Building Preservation* published by John Wiley & Sons.

John Fidler brings over thirty-three years of experience to the team including serving as Conservation Director for the *English Heritage* with responsibilities for maintenance and repair of 420 historic buildings and archaeological sites such as the World Heritage Sites at Stonehenge and Hadrian's Wall. He has authored numerous scholarly publications, given presentations on the conservation of brick monuments around the world, and has decades of experience advising on preservation and repair of historic churches and places of worship including 17<sup>th</sup> century buildings designed by Sir Christopher Wren.

President of Historic St. Luke's Restoration, Inc., **John B. Edwards**, said the board is delighted to be moving ahead with this long-awaited preservation project. "St. Luke's is our community's most cherished historic structure, and the board takes very seriously our responsibility to protect it for future generations. With the able assistance of the Bucher Borges Group, the work now beginning will ensure this priceless structure is loved by generations yet to come."

The exterior repair on the church – the first since the 1950's — will involve repointing the majority of the building, replacing deteriorating brick, repair of wood in windows and doorways, removing lichen on surfaces, replacing missing or broken roof tiles, and caulking around windows and louver openings. The renovation on the interior of the church will include replacing or repairing wooden window frames and doors, repairing plaster, repainting of the surfaces, and upgrading the electrical wiring and security systems. Before the actual preservation work begins, analysis was performed on the foundation which was determined to be sound.

Historic St. Luke's Church is the recipient of a **Save America's Treasures** grant which has been matched by a gift from the **Smithfield Foods/ Luter Family Foundation** along with individual and corporate donations from residents of Isle of Wight County, surrounding counties in southeast Virginia, and throughout the nation.



## Baptist Adult Choir to Sing

The **Main Street Baptist Church Adult Choir** will sing at St. Luke's on July 10th at 3:00. The 30 voice group was reorganized in 2009 and is composed of members selected from the four adult groups in the church's music ministry. They sing for all of the major festival days during the church year and for other services at churches in the community. The choir was recently invited to perform in Atlanta for the 41st Annual Session of the American Baptist Churches of the South. Under the direction of Jacqueline Cypress and Denise Wilson-Browning, the choir will present a one hour program of psalm and hymn arrangements, and traditional and contemporary gospel selections. Plan to join us!

## Do You Have Old Pictures?

We are asking for your help in locating old photographs of St. Luke's. The architect and engineer in charge of the repair have been fascinated to look through our photographs but they would like to see more. If you have old pictures, drawings, or documents, especially from the 1950's restoration, we would love to see what you have. If it's something we don't have, we would scan and return it to you or we would be happy to accept it as a donation. Call the office at (757) 357-3367 to arrange a time to visit.



## Welcome to the Board

**E. Dana Dickens, III**, of Suffolk, has been elected to Historic St. Luke's Board of Directors. An active and well known citizen of Hampton Roads, Dana currently serves as President and CEO of the **Hampton Roads Partnership** – a non-profit foundation whose mission is to promote and advance regional economic cooperation among the area's localities and industries. The Partnership represents 10 cities, 6 counties and one town (including Smithfield and Isle of Wight County), an area of more than one and a half million residents. Twice elected Mayor of the City of Suffolk, Dana was named by former Governor Timothy Kaine to the Commonwealth Transportation Board, and serves on the Board of Directors of Virginia High Speed Rail Development Committee and the Urban Land Institute. A graduate of Wesleyan College in North Carolina, Dana is married to Linda Rankin Dickens. Welcome!

# Historic St. Luke's News

## From the Director

Dear Friends of Historic St. Luke's –

With all the activities that usually go on around St. Luke's, I think it is clear to say that we have ramped it up a large notch or two in these past few months. Most notably of course, was the selection of **Bucher/Borges** architectural firm to head the long-anticipated repair of the church. The **Building and Grounds Committee** (listed individually in the next column) spent hours in review and discussion narrowing the selection to the four extraordinarily qualified finalists before choosing Bucher/Borges. **Ward Bucher** and teammate **John Fidler** started work immediately to determine the requirements for the repair with their investigations and analyses.

With the architect selected, we changed our focus back to the cemetery software program and started our on-site training. Staff and various board members - even our accountant - sat in on the training and we are gearing up to implement it into the cemetery operating routine. This has been a year long and sometimes complex process, but we are close to achieving our goal of having our cemetery records and operations computerized. The force behind St. Luke's Memorial Park Cemetery's computer system was board member **Alan Monette**, and we will always be grateful to him.

As we gear up for what will undoubtedly be a very busy summer and fall (and winter and spring!), I encourage you to renew your friendship with St. Luke's and come by for a visit. There is so much to learn and so much to appreciate in this beloved and historic structure. We enjoy hearing what you remember and what you have to say. And certainly, we would love to see your old pictures or documents, something that may have been passed down from parents, grandparents or other relatives. We want to see it all.

I extend a very sincere thank you to the board and to my staff for the hard work you have put in to help this old church get to where it is now. We can only succeed if we work together and together we are doing truly remarkable things!

Best to you all -  
Charlotte Klamer

## Edwards Scholarship Recipient



*Nancy Fortier and Verne Edwards with Amanda Pezzuto and Bob Edwards*

The 2011 recipient of the **R. Franklin and Arbee R. Edwards Scholarship** is **Amanda Pezzuto** of Windsor High School. With superior grades and countless extra-curricular activities, Amanda is also the recipient of a **2011 Gates Millennium Scholarship**. She heads to Virginia Tech in the fall to study chemical engineering.

## Thank you, Marie

Long time Assistant-treasurer of Historic St. Luke's Restoration, **Marie Johnson**, is retiring this summer from her duties with St. Luke's Church and Memorial Park Cemetery. It's hard to put into a few sentences the value we have placed on Marie's shoulders all these years, since 1997 to be exact, but suffice it to say she carried us through each and every time. Marie watched over all our accounts, paid the bills from both organizations, told us what to look out for and when, produced monthly reports, and always—always—with a sweet smile and a kind word. In a time when it seems there are more people doing wrong than there are people doing right, we have all known all along how blessed we were to have Marie taking care of our financial records. Thank you, Marie, from all of us on the board and the staff for a job well done and a friendship without comparison.

## Who's Doing What?

Members of the Board of Directors of Historic St. Luke's Restoration make a commitment to actively serve on committees to which they are particularly suited. Recently we have benefited from non-board member participation with the Program Committee and its Chair, Mary Cole and with the ad hoc Marketing Committee. We thought you might be interested to see who is currently serving on our committees. We are so proud of the successes they are helping to achieve through their assignments.

### *Standing Committees*

#### **Building and Grounds**

- Austin Darden, *Chair*
- John Edwards
- Bill Laine
- Alan Monette
- Lawrence Pitt
- Bob Little – ex-officio

#### **Development**

- Maynard Gwaltney, *Chair*
- Lucy Clay
- Dana Dickens
- Peter Knauth
- Mary Ellen Tomlin

#### **Finance**

- Bob Edwards, *Chair*
- Bill Laine
- Alan Monette
- Mary Ellen Tomlin

#### **Governance and Nominating**

- Nancy Fortier, *Chair*
- Lucy Clay
- Maynard Gwaltney
- Peter Knauth

#### **Program**

- |                         |               |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Mary Cole, <i>Chair</i> | Chiles Larson |
| Gary Barker             | Edwin Little  |
| Heidi Bloch             | Edith Raby    |
| Cami Brooks             | Dawn Riddle   |
| Martin Jones            | Sarah Wright  |

### *Ad hoc Committees*

#### **Marketing**

- |                          |              |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| Brian Pack, <i>Chair</i> | Edwin Little |
| Linda Gwaltney           | Alan Monette |
| Chiles Larson            | Judy Winslow |

#### **Operations (Cemetery Software)**

- Alan Monette, *Chair*
- John Edwards
- Bob Little

#### **Scholarship**

- Nancy Fortier, *Chair*
- Verne Edwards
- Sarah Wright

#### **Advisory Council**

- Roddy Delk, *Chair*
- John Edwards
- James Godwin
- Bill Laine

## Pilgrimage - 2011



*Locrian Consort performs for the 54th Annual Pilgrimage*

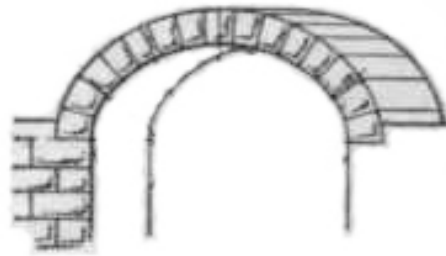
The **Program Committee** produced a terrific old-fashioned home-coming in May to celebrate St. Luke's 54th Annual Pilgrimage. Guest speaker Michael Podesta spoke on spiritual seeking. With the rain cooperating, everyone celebrated the event in brightly decorated tents and with box-suppers prepared by committee member **Edwin Little**. Thanks to all who worked



*Marion Wilson, Demere Bates, Ricks Wilson, John Bates and Bob McGreevy*

## Interesting Discoveries

While carefully investigating the foundation on the north side of the church tower this spring, engineers made two fascinating discoveries. First was the unearthing of a "relieving arch," an architectural feature found in many solid mass masonry foundations in the 17<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. They are also found, according to brick expert and architect John Fidler, in the Roman Baths of Caracalla and in the Parthenon drum walls in ancient Rome. Used where heavy weight is distributed, there is probably another corresponding arch on the south side of the tower. Another arch was discovered over the doorway on the second floor which "relieves" the massive pressure from the weight of the bricks above the insignificant oak lintels.



The second discovery was alongside the arch in the form of underground stairs. Old stories of a Sunday School classroom under the church have been talked about for years, but this clearly provides evidence that the underground room was indeed part of the church's history at least in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## Our Nicole



Back in the summer of 2006, a new graduate of Smithfield High School came to St. Luke's as a summer intern before leaving to attend the Savannah College of Art and Design. Little did we know then that **Nicole Esser** would begin, with that summer job, a relationship that would benefit St. Luke's for generations to come. Nicole came back most summers during college as a docent but also worked on projects including mapping and photographing the historic cemetery, organizing summer camps, participating - in costume - in reenactment programs, photographing and cataloguing artifacts, and gaining a devoted following of students and tourists alike.

Newlyweds Nicole and husband **Grady Eason** are moving out of state this summer to begin the next step of their lives. Thank you beyond measure, Nicole, for your hard work and commitment to St. Luke's. We will miss you terribly.

### Historic St. Luke's Restoration, Inc.

Historic St. Luke's Restoration, Inc. is a non-profit organization. With your support, we are able to continue to keep this historic and spiritual landmark open to the public. All gifts are tax deductible.

Donors of \$40 and above receive a 10% discount on all purchases from our Gift Shop.



#### GIFT LEVELS

- \$1000 Benefactor
- \$500 Sponsor
- \$300 Associate
- \$100 Friend
- \$40 Member
- Other

(PLEASE PRINT)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: Historic St. Luke's Restoration, Inc., 14477 Benn's Church Blvd., Smithfield, VA 23430

My gift is:

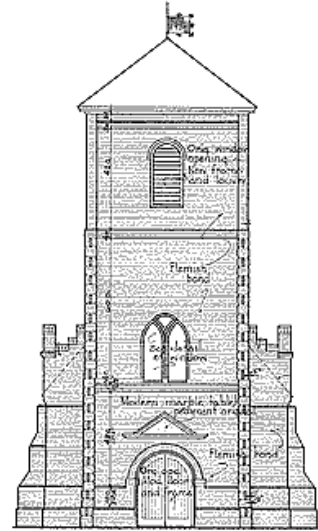
Designated for Repair of Church

Unrestricted

# SUMMER – FALL 2011

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- JULY 10            MAIN STREET BAPTIST CHURCH  
ADULT CHOIR  
3:00 PM
- JULY 31            CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
SERVICE  
11:00 AM
- AUGUST 13        HOLY CROSS ANGLICAN  
CHURCH SERVICE  
10:00 AM
- SEPT 7             SMITHFIELD/ISLE OF WIGHT  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
ANNUAL MEETING  
6:00 PM
- OCTOBER 2        BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS  
2:00 PM



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