

# Virginia's Most Endangered Historic Places for 2002

**M**ore than forty nominations were submitted from preservation organizations and private citizens across Virginia for this year's listing. Each nomination was thoroughly discussed and given equal consideration. Diversity of property types, historical significance, geographic distribution, and imminence of threat were all factored into the selection process.

The challenge for the Alliance was to create a concise list of those endangered sites most representative of Virginia's cultural, architectural and historical heritage. The committee selected the ten most threatened properties. Hopefully, the efforts of preservationists and concerned citizens will result in success stories for these Virginia treasures.



*Byrd Park Pump House*

## Byrd Park Pump House

Constructed from 1881 to 1883 of granite locally quarried in Richmond, the Gothic Revival waterworks is romantically situated on the Three-Mile Locks of the nation's first canal system. The building was uniquely designed to house not only machinery to pump water for an entire city, but a dancehall pavilion for turn-of-the-century partygoers.

Abandoned since 1924, funds have never been

appropriated to fully restore the waterworks for an adaptive reuse. Historic Richmond Foundation, Friends of the Pump House, James River Park, and a core group of dedicated volunteers have been involved in preservation efforts. Nevertheless, money has yet to materialize to stabilize and restore the Byrd Park Pump House. An imminent danger of ceiling and roof collapse currently exists.

## The Canals of Virginia

Canals are extremely important components of Virginia's historic landscape. In fact, the James River and Kanawha Canal was the nation's first canal system. The advent of railroads phased out the canals, and they remain as relics of our transportation and navigation history. Neglect endangers these resources; of particular note is the Upper



*The Canals of Virginia*

## Virginia Most Endangered Historic Places for 2002

- Byrd Park Pump House, Richmond
- The Canals of Virginia, statewide
- DeJarnette Center, Staunton
- Herbert House, Hampton
- Jackson Ward National Historic Landmark District, Richmond
- Jeffersonton and Lincoln, Northern Virginia
- McDowell Battlefield Corridor, Highland County
- New Point Comfort Lighthouse, Mathews County
- Oak Hill, Delaplane
- Virginian Railway Station, Roanoke

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Appomattox Canal. Repairs are desperately needed to stabilize it. The five-mile long Upper Appomattox Canal was completed in 1807, and is one of the very few early American canals still partially navigable. Although we focus on this resource, many Virginia canals and their locks face similar threats. Locks on the Rappahannock Navigation, Goose Creek and Little River Navigation, and the Rivanna Navigation, as well as structures along the James River and Kanawha Canal, deserve our attention.



*DeJarnette Center*

### **DeJarnette Center**

Once a leading state mental institution, the DeJarnette Center was constructed in two phases from 1929 to 1938. Architecturally, the complex relates to Staunton's strong tradition of classically-inspired institutional buildings and campuses. The buildings are prominently located at the entry corridor to the City of Staunton. The Frontier Culture Museum acquired the DeJarnette Center and surrounding property to expand museum exhibits and develop a consistent source of income. The development plans of the Frontier Culture Museum do not necessarily call for the preservation of the DeJarnette Center. They would support either demolition and redevelopment or an adaptive reuse. The property is currently on the market for retail development.

### **Herbert House**

The Herbert House (1757) was built by local shipwright John Herbert just west of the spot where Blackbeard's head was displayed on a spike in 1718 to deter pirates. It is the oldest surviving house in Hampton and was used by seafarers as a navigation landmark to make the turn from Hampton Roads into the Hampton River. Now populated by condominiums and a marina, the house's site has been significantly altered over time. The marina owns the Herbert House and wishes to expand. Although the owners consider the house an obstacle, they are open to working with preservationists who provide a creative, viable solution.



*Herbert House*



*Jackson Ward*

### **Jackson Ward National Historic Landmark District**

The National Trust listed Jackson Ward as one of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places in 2001. Called the "Harlem of the South," the Second Street commercial area was once an entertainment mecca, bursting with prosperity. Jackson Ward was home to the first African-American bank in the country and Maggie Walker, America's first female president of a chartered bank. Its cast-iron porches are rivaled only by New Orleans. The neighborhood was victim to highway construction in the 1950s, and significant demolition occurred during urban renewal projects of the 1970s and 80s. A newly expanded convention center threatens to overwhelm the district. Jackson Ward has the support of preservationists and the city, but a renaissance will require sustained investment and local protection measures.



*Jeffersonton*



*Lincoln*

### Jeffersonton and Lincoln

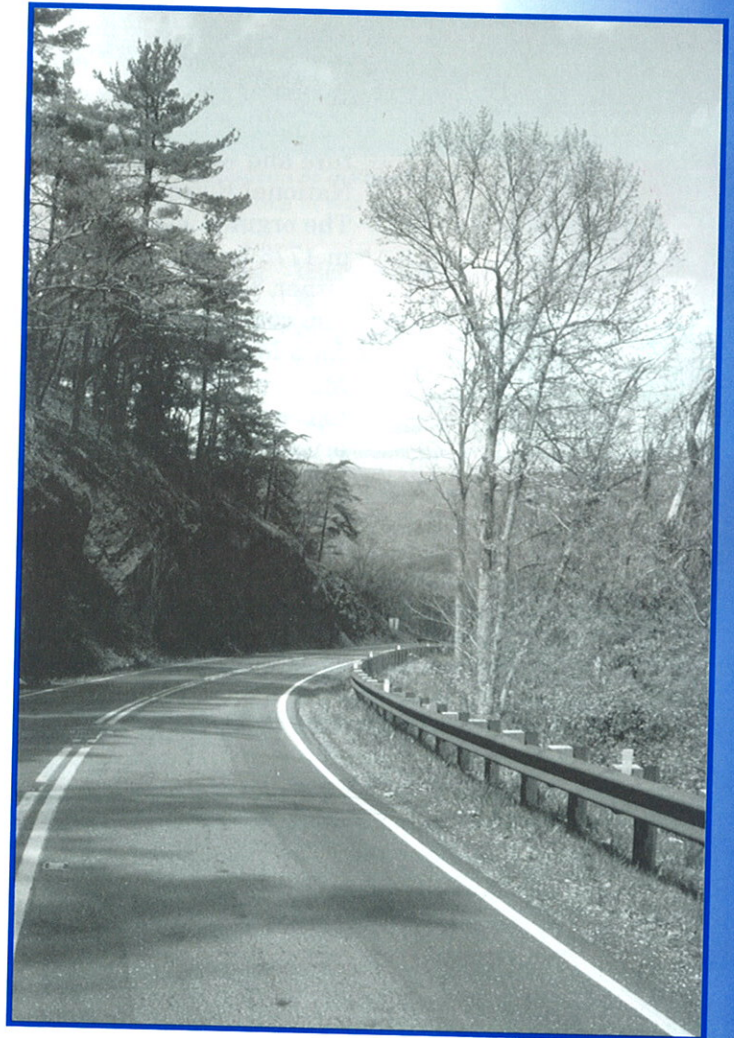
Currently, the core of Jeffersonton, a small village in Culpeper County, is free of modern intrusions. Jeffersonton's fabric retains an unbroken continuity to its earliest days. As one of Loudon County's earliest and most intact rural villages, Lincoln also maintains much of its original charm and vitality. Its historic buildings and rich Quaker heritage distinguish Lincoln. However, these two villages in Northern Virginia are threatened by encroaching development. They are representative of the many villages and areas endangered by Washington suburban sprawl and draw attention to a much larger issue—the rapid, intense development of Northern Virginia. This part of the state is losing much of its historic character.



### McDowell Battlefield Corridor

The McDowell Battlefield Corridor extends from the east side of Shenandoah Mountain west across Bullpasture Mountain to Sitlington's

Hill and the village of McDowell in Highland County. The main engagement at McDowell, on May 8, 1862, was the first battle of Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign. This Civil War site is one of Virginia's most pristinely preserved, having seen no large-scale development in 140 years. For Highland, a county with a small population and limited economic opportunity, the McDowell Battlefield could be a significant tourist attraction. VDOT, however, plans to expand U. S. Route 250 and build a three- and four-lane highway over Bullpasture Mountain, forever scarring the battlefield and scenic landscape. Local citizen groups and the Preservation Alliance view the project as vastly over designed for the traffic density of the road.



*McDowell Battlefield Corridor*



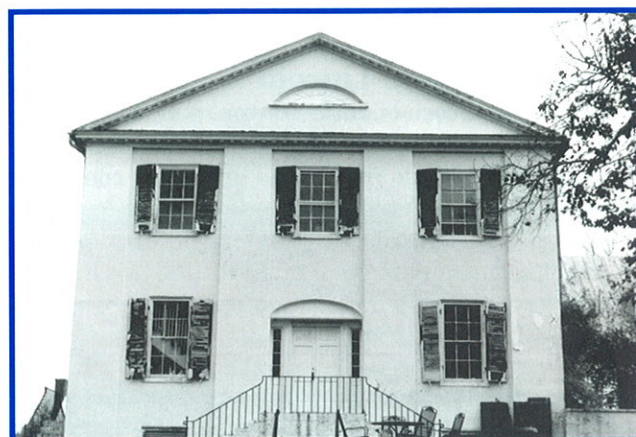
*New Point Comfort Lighthouse*

### **New Point Comfort Lighthouse**

The New Point Comfort Lighthouse is located on the Chesapeake Bay at the southern tip of Mathews County. It began operation in January of 1805 and is one of the oldest American lighthouses still standing. Being involved in naval engagements of both the War of 1812 and the Civil War adds a unique component to the lighthouse's history. The lighthouse continued as an active station until 1963 and is currently owned by Mathews County. Coastal erosion now seriously threatens the structure. Over time, the lighthouse's island has been diminished from 230 acres to an area less than one-quarter of an acre. The New Point Preservation Task Force was formed to develop a plan to stabilize the island and preserve the lighthouse. These concerned citizens hope to discover the solution for saving this beacon of Virginia's past.

### **Oak Hill**

Oak Hill is the 18th century home of John Marshall, the third U.S. Supreme Court Justice. It is also an excellent example of colonial architecture and was listed on the National Register in 1973. The original house was built in 1773 by John Marshall's father, Thomas, with an addition constructed in 1818 by John Marshall for his son. Many of the outbuildings date to the period of the house's



*Oak Hill*

original construction. The house has been subdivided into multiple rental units, with architecturally insensitive additions of kitchens and baths. Historic outbuildings have had significant sections of their siding removed, exposing them to weather. The normal maintenance of the building is not being performed to the degree necessary to protect the historic fabric. The Northern Virginia Chapter, AIA, believes the complex of buildings is in severe jeopardy of losing its historic integrity and would like easements placed on the property to insure its protection. The current owner of Oak Hill is supportive of the Most Endangered listing.



*Roanoke's Virginian Railway Station*

### **Virginian Railway Station**

Roanoke's Virginian Railway Station, built in 1909, was that railroad's premier passenger terminal until it closed in 1958 as the result of a merger with Norfolk & Western, now Norfolk Southern. The station is the only remaining structure in Roanoke of the Virginian Railway and is an excellent example of early 20th century station design. The unused building was severely damaged by fire in January 2001. The station was included in the Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation's (RVPF) Most Endangered List in 2000 and the Great American Station Foundation's 2001 List of Most Endangered Stations. Norfolk Southern, the station's owner, has entered into discussions with local preservationists to find a solution for the building. ■