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Historic Richmond Foundation

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HISTORIC RICHMOND FOUNDATION

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of

History and Political Science

University of Richmond

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Ernest H. Mason

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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Visions for Historic Zone	8
Organizational Framework	12
1956-1958	20
Post-1958	36
1963-1965	55
Diagnosis and Prognosis	63

I

INTRODUCTION

Facing northwest in the twenty-four hundred block of East Broad and Grace Streets in Richmond, Virginia is St. John's Church which occupies, with its cemetery and dependent appurtenances, an entire city block or one sixteenth of a square mile. Over the eastern skyline of the city, the building loses its identity; even its spire is hidden by an intricate maze of buildings of less traditional import. The white frame steeple is a nationwide symbol of the active thought and spoken word which led to the American Revolution, for from its chancel to the occupants of its high paneled pews, Patrick Henry made his famous Liberty or Death declaration of war on tyranny, and from its naves walked men with a realistic dream for a new country, the potential of which was beyond the insight of most.

At the time of Henry's fiery declaration, St. John's Church was high on a hill, later known as Church Hill, still in the farming area surrounding Richmond. It did not become the center of a residential area until the early eighteen hundreds when Mrs. Richard Adams I moved in with her family of ten.

To the east of what came to be known as Church Hill another area offered superior housing sites as well as proximity

to St. John's Church. Rising high on a bluff above the James River lowland and west of Chimborazo Park is the Libby Hill area. The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were a transitory period for this hill; also with the Church Hill section, it became an urban area with homes of Federal and Greek Revival architecture.

The entire nineteenth century was the developmental period for complete usurpation from farms by dwellings of Church Hill and Libby Hill, Richmond. Merchants and industrialists of means made what were formerly cow pastures into a flourishing residential area near the growing industrial section of Richmond with its contiguity to the James River.

After having constructed their dwellings, the merchantile developers also built investment property in the rapidly growing section. All were fairly substantial buildings, and many have survived to the present day as exemplified by the Morris Cottages on the corner of Twenty Fifth and Grace Streets.

As time passed and industry which nestled at the foot of the bluff which raised Church Hill from the James River lowland expanded, the more fastidious people who helped make the area an elite section began to make their exodus. Their houses were blackened and sooted by the smoke and smog from the neighboring industrial belchers. Their homes became stifled by the necessity of closed windows in the summer and lack of fresh air in the winter. Concurrent with the industrial

development in the river bottom was the tyrannical pull of business toward the western section of the city and its resultant housing growth in that area.

With the hegira of the wealthy merchant and business families came the influx of lower income bracketed white residents to the hills. This low income group contributed to the beginning of the deterioration of Church Hill and Libby Hill. The large houses with high ceilings and high upkeep costs could not be properly attended by their new occupants. In time these groups also began to make their exit from the area and to put their houses on the market to an even lower income group of Negroes. Often the houses were divided into one room or one bed apartments, thus making the care of the substantial homes of less and less concern to the occupants. It is known that at one time one of the houses had an income of \$300 per month from rentals.

In the 1940's the smog, smell, and smoke situation began to alleviate with the introduction of natural gas and diesel engines. No longer did the citizens have to worry about the by-products of industrial Richmond. However, by this time Church Hill was in a dilapidated situation and no longer a complement to the newly painted white church from which it had radiated and which had been kept in a splendid state of preservation. The area was threatened with the possibility of becoming a slum with the resulting encroachment of

Richmond Re-development and Housing Authority apartments of no architectural similarity to St. John's, or even of good architectural design.

The seemingly irreparable damage to the once exclusive suburb was of great concern for many. The questions about the future of this historical area aroused the interests of certain cultural minded citizens. Coupled with the questions of Church Hill by itself was the plight of pre-Civil War houses throughout Richmond. In the early 1940's there were approximately 1200 pre-Civil War houses in the city. By the 1950's the number had dwindled to from five to six hundred.¹ Of these, the Church Hill section contained twenty-one.

The Greek Revival and pre-Civil War houses were not the only architectural features of the Church Hill area. It was Richmond's transition area from the Federal and Greek Revival designs to the Victorian and Twentieth Century dwellings. This gives distinction to the area, for it is a surviving symbol of architectural change which Miss Mary W. Scott, author of the book, Old Richmond Neighborhoods, said Richmond lagged in, giving only "lip service to classics with strange new features."²

1. Mary W. Scott, Old Richmond Neighborhoods (Richmond: Whittet and Shepperson, 1950). p. 48.

2. Ibid., p. 41.

Other edifices in the vicinity are interesting to students of architectural and social development, of which two types are outstanding. An example of the first type is two houses on Broad Street between Twenty-third and Twenty-second Streets built by business partners as their dwellings, a practice frequently followed in the nineteenth century. The partners would build identical houses adjacent to each other, few of which remain today. The second type is that exemplified by Carrington Row in the 2300 block of East Broad Street. This is a set of row houses built during 1818. They are the earliest extant houses of their kind in Richmond. Though only three in number, their architecture is gracious and appealing.

Synonymous with architectural interests in the deterioration of Church Hill, is the social degradation of the section. The original settlers in Church Hill were people with great cultural interest in the Richmond Community. During the last fifteen years twentieth century Church Hill could boast no remnants of such a background. The art of the houses, the upkeep of the community, and the general overall development of the section was being neglected by its new inhabitants. This condition was an abomination to those who thought of St. John's Church as a cradle of the liberty on which the United States of America was founded, and to those who desire to save Richmond's cultural heritage.

In 1950 the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities began to make moves toward remedying the situation in the Church Hill, Libby Hill vicinity. That year the A. P. V. A. purchased the Ann Adams Carrington house at 2306 East Grace Street and began its restoration.³ With this beginning the members of area branches of the A. P. V. A. and other associations and local residents became interested in the restoration project.

Early indications were that the William Byrd Branch of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities would spearhead the drive to revive Church Hill; that is to bring it back to its once prosperous and cultural leadership. The William Byrd Branch would have to go into debt and would be involved in a program, the success of which could only be speculated. The A. P. V. A. does not allow its branch organizations to go into debt or to take on a big project without its permission. This branch requested permission of the parent organization to go it alone on the restoration and to be allowed to go into debt. Before this process reached completion, certain Richmond citizens decided to incorporate and to take on the restoration project. They were incorporated as a non-profit organization known as Historic Richmond Foundation.

3. Charles Houston, "Church Hill Revives." Virginia Cavalcade, Summer, 1964. Volume XIV, Number 1. pp. 6 - 7.

The officers elected were Dr. Wyndham Blanton, president; Mrs. Ralph T. Catterall, secretary, and Mrs. William C. Bowles, treasurer.

The beginning study of the work of the foundation, its functions, and some examples of its work are outstanding and should be of value to those in other places about to undertake such a project.

II

VISIONS FOR HISTORIC ZONE

Historic Richmond Foundation from its inception was concerned with the revitalization of the culture of Church Hill. As early as May of 1956 the organization was developing its attitude toward the area and what it wished to do in the restoration. In a pamphlet published May, 1956, Why Save the St. John's Church Neighborhood?, the stated aim of Historic Richmond Foundation was to provide a pleasant residential neighborhood reminiscent of the first half of the nineteenth century. There would be no effort to make the area into another Colonial Williamsburg.

By 1958 the idea of purely residential area was somewhat abandoned as Admiral Taylor, Executive-Director of HRF, presented his Master Plan for the area. He envisioned having the historic zone divided into four different sections. The first section would be north of Broad Street. This area would be devoted to small business, hotels, and restaurants. The second section would be Carrington Square, which is the block bounded by Broad, Twenty-third, Grace, and Twenty-fourth Streets. This section would be a residential neighborhood to be developed and owned by Historic Richmond Foundation and the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities. Part three would be desirable types of industry south of Franklin Street.

The fourth zone would be the rest of the historic zone that would be devoted to residence, and restored by Historic Richmond Foundation and private investors.⁴

In the restored sections Historic Richmond Foundation envisioned parks and open spaces which would be conducive adjuncts to attract people to the vicinity.⁵ It was hoped that construction of these areas would induce the Medical College of Virginia or the State Hospital Board to locate some of their facilities in the St. John's zone. One of the first flyers sent by HRF indicated that the State Hospital Board had been approached with the idea that its new facility for disturbed children might be located in the historic zone "near parks and open spaces."⁶

In 1957 Mrs. Overton Dennis, one of the leaders in the restoration project, talked of offering the entire 2600 block East Franklin Street to the State Hospital Board.⁷ In the following year Doctors Sanger and Smith of the Medical

4. Minutes of the Board of Trustees of Historic Richmond Foundation, November 11, 1958. p. 1. (The typewritten minutes of Board meetings are at Historic Richmond Foundation headquarters. They will hereafter be referred to as Minutes of the Board of Trustees.)

5. Historic Richmond Foundation, HRF and the Church Hill Project. p. 3.

6. Ibid., p. 3.

7. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, September 17, 1957. p. 1.

College of Virginia gave strong consideration to the purchase of the 2100 and 2200 blocks of East Grace and Broad Streets for residences for Medical College personnel and for possible future commercial renovation.⁸

Strong indications are given to the HRF intention to encourage the "right" people to enter the area to live. A report by Mrs. Louise Catterall and Mrs. Trigg in March, 1957 called for rent free living in HRF owned houses to certain applicants who would work to "contribute to the cultural development of the community" and who were passed upon by the Board of Trustees.⁹ The "Pilot Block" was especially to be so developed, but in 1958 the idea of having an endowed "Pilot Block" in which certain artists, writers, et cetera, would live, rent free, was abandoned. The whole idea of a "Pilot Block" was not abandoned, the ultimate uses of it were altered.¹⁰ The endowed, rent free policy had to be set aside as an impractical financial venture. The idea of

8. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, April 8, 1958.
p. 1.

9. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, March 13, 1957.
p. 1.

10. Minutes of the Executive Committee of Historic Richmond Foundation, April 2, 1956. p. 1. (The typewritten Minutes of the Executive Committee of Historic Richmond Foundation are in the headquarters of Historic Richmond Foundation. They will hereafter be referred to as Minutes of the Executive Committee.)

getting desirable tenants was still very much alive.

The tangible and more practical immediate aims were to develop a neighborhood in the Church Hill and Libby Hill sections which would be a complimentary setting for St. John's Church, and which would induce the type of people to live and work in the area who would appreciate its history and what it had to offer the cultural growth of the City of Richmond.

III

ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Developing goals for HRF was relatively easy, for there was a common understanding by all involved in the project of what was to be attained. However, reaching these goals developed into a formidable task. First there had to be organization. From its beginning the Board of Trustees has been the organization. It carries out the functions necessary to operate the foundation, such as: collecting and spending money, making policy, seeing to the execution of policy, nominating someone to the Architectural Review Commission, and setting up committees and their chairmen.

After three years of existence, the Board of Trustees was reorganized and increased in size to twenty-five. A system of rotation was evolved for members to serve three year terms. At the same time a nominating committee was elected to be a perpetual body; to this group suggestions for new board members would be made in the future.¹¹ As time has passed the number of members on the board has increased until at the beginning of 1965 there were 60 members.

11. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, September 15, 1957. p. 2.

Shortly over a year after incorporation, HRF set up the Executive Committee composed of its officers and two of the board members chosen by the president. This body has become the nucleus of action as its members have increased in number and the number of meetings of the board decreased. It hears and acts on reports from committees and is granted wide authority by the board to act on matters. Though it cannot make policy, it can make to the board recommendations which are based on its thorough investigations and knowledge.

The early officers of HRF were the usual: president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. At varying times new officers were added until, when 1965 elections were held, there were a president-emeritus, a president, four vice-presidents, a secretary, a corresponding secretary, a treasurer and an assistant treasurer. The size of the executive group had been increased to twenty.

As time passed the feeling developed in the Historic Richmond Foundation Board that there was a need to involve more people in Historic Richmond Foundation work. There should be people who were interested, but who did not have the time to devote to being a trustee. In November, 1957, an advisory council was organized.¹² This group was formed to help with liaison work in the community to make recommen-

12. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, November 7, 1957. p. 1.

dations to the board on action it might wish to take.

Mid-1958 saw another advisory group formed. This group came into being on the suggestion of local bankers to several Historic Richmond Foundation members. The bankers felt that a small business advisory group or holding company should operate under the Historic Richmond Foundation Charter to handle financing, real estate, purchases, and sales. It should represent banking, insurance, and real estate interests.¹³ In so doing, the group would be in a particularly good position to help with financing. By July 16, 1958, the group was organized with Mr. Clinton Webb, Mrs. Madison Macon, and Mr. Lee Davis already committed to serve.¹⁴

One of the most active groups in the restoration movement on Church Hill has been the Junior Board of Historic Richmond. In October, 1958, the Board of Trustees authorized the foundation of a junior council of young women. Mrs. Wesley Wright, Jr. and Mrs. Oppenheimer were given authority to work out plans for the group and organize it.¹⁵

p. 2. 13. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, May 14, 1958.

p. 2. 14. Minutes of the Executive Committee, July 16, 1958.

1958. 15. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, October 14,
p.2 .

At the December meeting of the Board of Trustees it was announced that The Church Hill Aides had been formed.¹⁶ In June, 1959, this organization changed its name to the Junior Board.¹⁷

The Junior Board has had a vast array of duties since its inception. At first it planned tours and programs on the restoration project.¹⁸ Later it planned a speakers' bureau which would furnish civic organizations and such with talks on Church Hill. As an aid to this program, it developed sets of slides to accompany the talks.

The Board has also been helpful with preparations for Garden Week and other such tours throughout the area. It furnishes at all times flowers for the Elmira Shelton House, and HRF Headquarters. During very special events such as the tours, Garden Week, or special meetings, the Board serves tea or refreshments.

Through its activities the Board has served a three-fold purpose; it has made money, which it has either turned over to the foundation or used for special projects; it has

16. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, December 10, 1958. p. 1.

17. Minutes of the Executive Committee, June 8, 1959. p. 1.

18. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, December 10, 1958. p. 1.

served as a training ground for future trustees of the foundation; and it has stimulated interest in the rejuvenation of Church Hill.

As with any organization, committees are a vital part of Historic Richmond. In the early days of the organization for each restoration project, Historic Richmond Foundation set up necessary committees, which reported to the Board of Trustees. Finally in 1959 a committee generally responsible for all restorations, was set up with the direction that other committees were to work under it. Mrs. Overton Dennis was first chairman of the group. Other HRF committees include the Furnishings Committee, Grounds and Gardens Committee and Public Relations Committee.

Another group, the public, is of particular importance to Historic Richmond Foundation. Although it does not furnish many workers, it has supplied money, making both, large and small donations. In December, 1962, a drive was started to recognize people of the public who made contributions and to induce others to give to this cause. Letters were sent to approximately ten thousand people, telling of the work of the foundation and inviting them to become members. During 1963, five hundred five donors sent in money amounting to approximately \$6000.¹⁹ In 1964, five hundred seventy new members

19. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, January 29, 1964.
p.3.

contributed \$6,852.²⁰ Many felt that not all people who were contributing were receiving membership recognition, so in April, 1965, it was decided that any person who contributed at least ten dollars, no matter whether it was in response to membership solicitation, should be a member for the next year.²¹ Membership gives one the privilege of visiting the Historic Richmond Foundation, restored buildings, and the like but it does not give one voting privileges.

Besides the organization necessary for attainment of its goals there are the framework and tools essential to its proper functioning, the first of which is the charter of Historic Richmond Foundation, granted July 17, 1956, which gives the organization legal status.

Even more important is the Old and Historic Districts Ordinance XII-A passed by the City Council of Richmond May 13, 1957. This ordinance set aside approximately twenty square blocks of East Richmond around St. John's Church as a Historic Zone. It is in this zone that the work of Historic Richmond is concentrated. In the zone no house may be constructed, reconstructed, or repaired in places on public view without the permission of the Commission of Architectural Review, a

20. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, January 27, 1965.
p. 4.

21. Minutes of the Executive Committee, April 28, 1965.
p. 3.

commission whose membership is named by City Council from nominees presented by Historic Richmond Foundation, by the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, by the American Institute of Architects, by the Real Estate Board, together with a fifth member at large.

Before a building permit can be issued by the city, a certificate must be obtained from the Commission of Architectural Review, which must review all plans for any type of construction, reconstruction, or demolition that is proposed for within the historic zone. It has the power of acceptance or rejection of any plan which will be executed as a part of a structure which can be seen by the public from the street or sidewalk.

The Historic Zone Ordinance gave guidelines for the commission in its consideration of requests for permits regarding general exterior design, arrangement, material, texture of material, and colors to be used in the edifice. It must review the types of windows, doors, lights, signs and other exterior features which are to be in public view. It should be noted that the commission does not have authority over detail design or interior arrangements which are not in public view. Thus, the Historic Zone Ordinance provided the foundation with a control commission which could see that all restorations were in keeping with the architecture and tastes of the mid-nineteenth century, and an area in which to work.

Historic Richmond Foundation working within the framework of its own organization, can, by means of the Historic Zone Ordinance carry out its aims.²²

22.. Richmond Times-Dispatch, May 14, 1957. p. 1.

IV

1956-1958

One of the major efforts of the foundation has been to set an example of what can be done with the old houses and entire blocks on Church Hill. This has meant that Historic Richmond Foundation has either purchased or accepted donations of old houses. Its first ambition was to obtain and to restore an entire block before working in another zone. It was hoped that a few of these blocks could be endowed so that certain persons of cultural interests could live in the houses rent free. This proved impractical and to a certain degree was altered.²³

When Historic Richmond Foundation decided to abandon the idea of whole block restoration and an endowed "Pilot Block,"²⁴ it made the more practical decision to buy, restore, and rent houses as advantageously as possible, but to keep pulling toward a directive "Pilot Block." The "Pilot Block" idea presented by Mrs. James Cabell in 1957, was to be the example and the main objective of the foundation. In her presentation she showed it as the twenty-three hundred block

²³. HRF and the Church Hill Project: History of St. John's Area, p. 3.

²⁴. Minutes of the Executive Committee, April 2, 1958. p. 1.

between East Grace and Broad Streets. The block would be restored and the modern homes kept, with alterations done to make their architecture harmonize with the earlier houses. She envisioned the exterior of the block as enclosed gardens with maintenance men to care for them. She dubbed the area Patrick Henry Park.²⁵ On July 8, 1958, HRF officially knighted the block Carrington Square, because four extant houses in the block were built by Carringtons.²⁶

In 1959 Mrs. Cabell's plans for the gardens were somewhat altered by Mr. James Bush-Brown, who presented a plan for an avenue of trees, shrubs, and grass on each side of the alley. Each house would have its individual garden.²⁷

To finance the gardens, the Garden Club of Virginia was approached with a request for Garden Week Funds.²⁸ The Boxwood Garden Club of Richmond immediately offered \$150 minimum a year for three years for the planting of the Carrington Square Gardens.²⁹ In 1964 the Garden Club of Virginia

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- p. 1. 25. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, May 20, 1957.
- p. 2. 26. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, July 8, 1958.
- p. 1. 27. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, January 20, 1959.
- p. 2. 28. Minutes of the Executive Committee, June 25, 1958.
1959. p. 1. 29. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, February 17,

announced its acceptance of responsibility for construction of Mr. Bush-Brown's proposed mews on the Square.³⁰

The most important item in the Pilot Block for Historic Richmond Foundation was the procuring of houses and their ultimate restoration. Because of the nature of the block, which contains the Carrington Row homes, it was hoped that the foundation could obtain title to all the buildings. It was feared that individual speculation in the block might interfere with future development and gifts.³¹ It was decided that private ownership of houses "in friendly hands" would not prevent development of the central core of the block as a park.

There seemed little to worry about except funds, on purchases at the time, for Mrs. James Parsons purchased a house for Historic Richmond Foundation; and the foundation owned a house and was about to purchase another with a First and Merchants loan. However, because of lack of funds, 2308 East Grace Street had to be turned over to the William Byrd Branch of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities to restore.³² Houses rented by Historic Richmond

p. 2. 30. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, May 27, 1964.

p. 1. 31. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, June 5, 1957.

p. 1. 32. Minutes of the Executive Committee, September 8,

Foundation in the Square carried in their leases the provision that the houses would be open to the public at least twice a year.³³

Outside the Pilot Block, Historic Richmond Foundation set goals for itself, corporations, and individuals. Even before the Master Plan was devised in 1958, the Foundation had begun to work arousing interest in its projects. As noted in the Master Plan of 1958, the area outside the Pilot Block on Church Hill and Libby Hill would be good for private investors.³⁴ A major function of Historic Richmond Foundation was to interest large industrial investors or corporations in buying houses and restoring them. It was hoped that some of these houses would be turned over to the foundation. These would make a sizeable tax deduction since gifts to the foundation are tax deductible.³⁵

In order to give a picture of the neighborhood in its investment entirety, detailed maps were necessary to show tax assessment and appraised values on each house.³⁶ Mrs. Humel-

33. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, July 8, 1958.
p. 2.

34. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, November 11, 1958.
p. 1.

35. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, March 13, 1957.
p. 2.

36. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, March 29, 1957.
p. 1.

sine, Director of Colonial Williamsburg, advised that along with this. Historic Richmond Foundation. in order to interest people in its project, should make clear its aims by studying them, and then writing them for presentation in a coherent, attractive manner.³⁷

Historic Richmond Foundation made efforts to keep close relations with the city officials and other persons in positions who could be of service to the Church Hill project. The passage of the Historic Zone Ordinance in 1957 was the result of close cooperation between the two groups. In 1958 small meetings with selected members of the Foundation were held for members of the Central Richmond Association, City Council, and City Planning Commission. It was hoped that these meetings would be a basis for a fund raising campaign. If they did not result in all that was wanted, they certainly developed a better rapport between the groups.

In 1959, Richmond's Mayor, A. Scott Anderson, and City Council were guests of Historic Richmond Foundation at the Elmira Shelton House. This meeting was to help build understanding of the present and future plans of the foundation. It was also designed to discuss the maintenance of the proposed park in the 2400 block of East Broad Street. This park,

p. 1. 37. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, July 25, 1957.

the Patrick Henry, was to be the result of joint efforts of the Foundation, the City of Richmond and the Commonwealth of Virginia.³⁸

Mrs. John Garland Pollard headed the foundation's committee which worked for the construction of the park.³⁹ Her group was instrumental in getting the General Assembly in 1958 to allocate five thousand dollars toward the purchase of a parking lot across from St. John's Church. In 1959 Historic Richmond Foundation applied for \$125,000 from state funds, which was to be the basic beginning of the \$175,000 estimated as necessary for the construction of the park.⁴⁰ Before this application was made, the city had agreed to maintenance and support of the state owned park.⁴¹

The East End Businessmen's Association supported the Foundation in its efforts to get the Partick Henry Park constructed, and beyond this the organization agreed that it could be of service to Historic Richmond Foundation by getting desirable owners of houses to continue living in the area.

38. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, May 15, 1959.
p. 1.

39. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, July 8, 1958.
p. 2.

40. Minutes of the Executive Committee, September 8, 1959. p. 1.

41. Minutes of the Executive Committee, July 15, 1959.
p. 1.

They also agreed to try to encourage renting to desirable tenants.⁴² Out of this businessmen's association there developed a unit which incorporated itself as an investment organization to sell ten thousand shares of stock at ten dollars a share to purchase and restore old houses. Little seems to have been accomplished through this undertaking.

To further its fund raising campaign, Historic Richmond Foundation in 1958 got twenty outstanding young men with suitable qualifications to help raise one hundred thousand dollars in ten days from selected large business firms in the city.⁴³ In October of this year the Business Advisory Committee spearheaded the drive to interest key business and community leaders in the program for Church Hill. It also suggested that local real estate firms might be interested in Church Hill property renovation as an investment, but that assessments and appraisals of the property would be necessary as well as a report on the conditions of houses and the status of owners and surroundings.⁴⁴

42. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, June 27, 1957.
p. 2.

43. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, December 10, 1958.
p. 1.

44. Minutes of the Executive Committee, October 8, 1958.
p. 1.

Close relations with industry and with men of business acumen paid off for the Foundation in its early years. In 1958 Miller and Rhoads department store gave the full-time services for six months of Mrs. Edward Bryson as Executive-Secretary to the foundation.⁴⁵ In the same year this local firm gave to the undertaking ten thousand dollars to be used for any purpose the foundation wished.⁴⁶

Also it should be noted specifically as is generally done elsewhere that the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, and many Virginia Garden Clubs became outstandingly active in the restoration of the area. The Three Chopt Garden Club of Richmond gave the money necessary for the restoration of the garden of the Elmira Shelton House.⁴⁷ In 1958 the Boxwood Garden Club of the city was recognized for its gift of seven hundred dollars to be used in the development of the Carrington Square Gardens.⁴⁸

1958. 45. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, February 26, p. 1.

p. 1. 46. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, December 10, 1958.

1958. 47. Minutes of the Executive Committee, April 2, p. 2.

1958. 48. Minutes of the Executive Committee, September 8, p. 2.

It also gave four hundred dollars toward the restoration and improvement of 2308 East Grace Street.⁴⁹

The exact amount contributed to the Church Hill restoration by the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities is not known.⁵⁰ However it is known that the twelve thousand dollars for the purchase of the Shelton House was given by this association and that during the restoration in 1959 of 2302 East Grace Street a gift of eight thousand dollars was made.⁵¹ The William Byrd Branch, APVA, was given the title to 2308 East Grace if it would restore this house. Other gifts from the association in the form of houses and money make the figure of their total donations outstanding in amount.

Mr. Morton G. Thalhimer's office, taking care of rentals, repairs, and the accounting of the items, served as a real estate firm for Historic Richmond Foundation for a very nominal fee. The firm also provided its personnel as research people for the foundation. Mr. Thalhimer as has been noted, was one of the first members of Historic Richmond Foundation.

p. 1. 49. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, October 14, 1958.

p. 1. 50. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, November 7, 1957.

p. 1. 51. Minutes of the Executive Committee, April 15, 1959.

Two other local companies also making sizeable contributions to the restoration were the Life Insurance Company of Virginia, with a donation of one thousand dollars, the Albemarle Paper Company with its gift of five thousand dollars, both of which went to the purchase of 2308 East Grace Street.⁵²

However, in spite of the above generous gifts, the major funds for Historic Richmond Foundation home purchasing and restoration came from individual donations. In some instances houses were purchased by the individual and given to the Foundation, in others the individual gave money specified for a certain project or gave funds not marked for any special purpose; and still others gave their services. As the Foundation had hoped, some persons purchased homes, restored them and rented or lived in them themselves.

The year 1958 saw the worst financial crisis in the history of the foundation brought on by the obvious necessity, the purchase of houses, and by what seemed excessive costs of restorations because of the lack of sufficient coordination on the projects. Early restorations, done with one committee for each project, along with rush work on some projects, pushed costs extremely high. In February 1958 the treasurer reported

52. Minutes of the Executive Committee, November 4, 1958. p. 1.

assets of \$15,500 with obligations of approximately \$30,000.⁵³ A loan of \$7,000 from State-Planters Bank at 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ % interest helped. By June the treasurer reported \$13,987 on hand with obligations double that amount.⁵⁴ By December the working fund was down to \$738.77 with outstanding bills for completion of the Shelton House "far in excess of this."⁵⁵

It was during this period (December) that the fund raising drive for Historic Richmond Foundation was held. By March, 1959, the fund for general purposes, \$14,320, was in the bank with restricted funds amounting to \$7,000. State-Planters Bank had made a loan amounting to \$12,500.⁵⁶ By May the bank account showed a total of \$17,229.23. The net worth of the foundation was \$145,000 as compared to a gross worth of \$207,000.⁵⁷

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1958. 53. Minutes of the Executive Committee, February 5,
p. 1.
- p. 1. 54. Minutes of the Executive Committee, June 8, 1958.
1958. 55. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, December 10,
p. 1.
1959. 56. Minutes of the Executive Committee, March 11,
p. 1.
- p. 1. 57. Minutes of the Executive Committee, May 15, 1957.

Out of the experience of low bank accounts and high debts came new policies. In January, 1959, the following policy on restorations was passed by the foundation's governing board:

1. No piece of property is to be purchased or restored by Historic Richmond Foundation until adequate money for that project is in the bank or pledged.
2. A committee of three, appointed by the President, is to be in charge of and responsible for each restoration.
3. Before work begins on a restoration an estimate of costs must be approved by the Foundation's Executive Committee or its Board of Trustees.
4. If cost of the restoration project exceeds one hundred dollars the Executive Committee or the board must approve.⁵⁸

As shown in the Master Plan some houses would be private investments. The above rules did not preclude Historic Richmond Foundation's purchase and resale of any houses. The following recommendation made by Mrs. Catterall and approved by the board of trustees and the executive committee, clearly gives the Foundation's attitudes toward private investments: (When this report was given, the Foundation had procured a large number of houses in the restoration area.)

⁵⁸. Minutes of the Executive Committee, January 14, 1959. p. 1.

1. Not to be sold: Elmira Shelton House.
(Historic Richmond Foundation Headquarters.)
2. Not to be sold except to William Byrd Branch of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities with agreement by them to restore and to maintain these houses in cooperation with the Historic Richmond Foundation:
 - A. All houses on Carrington Square.
 - B. 207 North Twenty-fifth Street.
 - C. 2500 East Grace Street.
3. To be sold under special conditions approved by the board of trustees:
 - A. Sell only if purchaser agrees to certain standards of maintenance and occupation. Provide by will or gift for eventual return to the Foundation: 2520 East Franklin Street.
 - B. Sell if for desirable use and with option for the Foundation to repurchase at a fair market value:
 - 2801 East Grace Street
 - 2717 East Grace Street
 - 2605 East Franklin Street
 - 2611 East Franklin Street
 - 2617 East Franklin Street
 - 2401 East Grace Street
4. Sell outright:
 - 2214 East Broad Street⁵⁹

1958. 59. Minutes of the Executive Committee, September 8,
p. 2.

As indicated in the above report some houses would be in the hands of Historic Richmond Foundation, thus "per se" made the Foundation a landlord. A pre-requisite for prospective tenants was that they must be an asset in the cultural restoration of the area. As pointed out heretofore one idea abandoned as financially impractical had been to give only artists, writers, and others of like calibre free dwelling in certain Pilot Block houses. Since the houses must be kept in repair and do need work, foundation tenants pay rental fees each month.

Rentals were handled by Thalhimer's rental office. It was agreed in 1959 that before a house was rented, the Committee on Rentals and Restorations would inspect the house and make recommendations on any needed repairs. Under fifty dollar repairs could be handled by the committee; over fifty dollars must be approved by the board. After occupancy of a house, if repairs were needed, Thalhimer's office would handle all costing fifty dollars or less while repairs over fifty dollars would be referred to Mrs. Pershing, Chairman of the Committee on Rentals, for presentation to the Board. Monthly statements were to be given by the rental office to the board on sums received and expended.⁶⁰ This was changed to provide

60. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, January 15, 1958. p. 1.

for separate accounts for each house with statements to come every six months.⁶¹ It should be noted that in 1958 separate committees, one for purchases and sales and one for restorations were established.⁶²

Some houses owned or restored by Historic Richmond Foundation required furnishings. The interior tone of those owned by the foundation is in keeping with that of the mid-nineteenth century. To furnish the headquarters of the foundation located in the Elmira Shelton House, a Shelton House Furnishings Committee was set up. In December, 1958, and January, 1959, this committee reported furnishings given or purchased for the house and money donated to care for costs of certain furnishings. Before this Mrs. Harriet Laws Crewe Summers had lent furniture for the building, as had some shops in town.⁶³

Historic Richmond Foundation is not only a landowner, and a landlord, but also a catalyst, in that it stimulates interest and response to the Church Hill restoration. Its seal of two concentric circles with HISTORIC RICHMOND FOUN-

61. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, March 17, 1959.
p. 1.

62. Minutes of the Executive Committee, June 25, 1958.
p. 1.

63. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, December 10, 1958.
p. 2.

DATION 1956 between them, and the word SEAL inside the inner circle, is quite familiar to many people of Richmond; the Commonwealth of Virginia; and the United States. This project is a symbol for it is the first and only full nineteenth century restoration project in America; and at the same time it is performing an individual urban renewal task.

POST-1958

If 1958 seemed the year of financial failure for Historic Richmond Foundation, in contrast, the next years were bright spots in the history of the organization. The financial picture began to brighten with the not totally unsuccessful campaign for funds around the Christmas holiday season of 1958.

It is quite possible that the fund drive during this period exhibited three things which foretold the success of the foundation project: financial interest on the part of businesses and individuals; a rise in the demand for dwellings on Church Hill; and personal enthusiasm on the part of foundation members, whose self-confidence generated active interests.

Another method for assuring success was the appearance which newly restored houses began to give the area. The Shelton House, the Carrington House, and the Morris Cottages were giving the area a flavor that those who saw admired, the importance of which should not be minimized by the foundation and its friends. When even one place looks well in a blighted community with potential such as the St. John's Church area has, an interest is generated which exudes fervor for further improvement, which has been a major factor in all of the

historic zone.

After 1958 the major experimentation of house restoration was over, the leaders had learned by now what would have to be done to carry through a project. The foundation had a real idea of just how much work, what amount of money and time would be involved in the undertaking. The large sums of money and human energies spent on the Shelton House had given the group an idea of the exact steps to be taken in each restoration project. They knew the houses better and could speak with more exacting authority on the needs. Even though the restorations of the foundation had not of necessity been planned in detail, each undertaking provided a guide for future planning.

Evidence is quite obvious that in 1958-59, Historic Richmond Foundation began to see that this was a colossal task. Mrs. Wyndham Blanton, widow of one of the founders, mentioned that apparently Dr. Blanton did not realize the major undertaking which he had helped to initiate in 1956. Financial needs and other problems of that year focused the attention of those concerned on the vast scope of an undertaking into which they had probably entered with lighter hearts as they featured in their mind's eye the completed goal with much less concentration on the means of achievement. Their consequential determination to succeed with the project has never waned.

The necessity for efficiency housing in both 1958 and 1965 labels the project as a success. The demand for the type of dwelling to support a certain type of life was met with the Church Hill restoration project. When advantages of life in the area spread to new prospective owners and tenants, the idea caught on.

The proposed park across Broad Street from St. John's Church focused not only city but state wide interest on the rejuvenation attempt in Church Hill. The state was in the process of granting funds for use in establishing the open area and the city was also involved since it helped finance, design, and care for the park. The proposed new firehouse across from the projected park also helped to stimulate thinking about the project.

Since the financial status was the most rapid tangible growth of this development after 1958, it should be broken into three parts so that the actual responsibilities of Historic Richmond Foundation can be seen.

The first part of this financial growth was in rentals. In October, 1959, the Board of Trustees was told by those in charge of rentals that by January 1, 1960, monthly rental income would be \$545.⁶⁴ Also in October of 1959, the rent on

64. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, October 20, 1959. p. 1.

2308 and 2407 East Grace Street was increased by five dollars per month.⁶⁵ One year later, 1960, the total income on seven restored houses and three unrestored houses was \$720 which meant a net annual rent of \$6,724.⁶⁶ By September, 1961, the annual rentals had risen to \$8,212 excluding repairs, and not including tenants recently acquired in Broad Street purchases.⁶⁷

By 1962, the Foundation owned twenty-four houses, ten of which were vacant. The rentals from the others were broken down on a monthly basis thus:

6 restored houses - 10 rental units	\$637.50 mo.
2 partly restored houses	70.00 mo.
5 caretaker houses	170.00 mo.
1 slum tenant	<u>70.00 mo.</u>
Total rentals	\$947.50 mo.

This rental program grossed \$11,370.50 for the year, 1962, and netted \$6,500.95.⁶⁸

1959. 65. Minutes of the Executive Committee, October 14, p. 1.

1960. 66. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, October 20, p. 2.

1961. 67. Minutes of the Executive Committee, September 10, p. 3.

1963. 68. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, January 31, p. 1.

Descriptive financial growth of Historic Richmond Foundation is exemplified in the operating funds of the organization. The foundation operated on a month to month balance of working funds divided into two parts, namely, the "working" and "restricted" funds. The "working" fund was that money obtained with no specific charge for its use, and the foundation could use this money as the Board of Trustees or the Executive Committee saw necessity for its use. The "restricted" fund consisted of contributions, the use of which the donor specified; such as, for the restoration of certain houses, for landscaping a specified yard, or for some other specific purpose.

The "restricted" funds have been a major asset in the work Historic Richmond Foundation, being most helpful in the purchase of houses. For example, an anonymous donor gave \$8,500 for the purchase of the Ligon House. He specified that if the Ligon family itself gave enough money to pay for the Ligon House, then HRF could use this money in other ways.⁶⁹ In 1961, the Boccock Trust gave \$7,900 for the purchase of 314 North Twenty-fourth Street. Others making large and important donations for purchases were Mrs. John Parsons, Mrs. Richard Reynolds, Mrs. John Boccock and Mrs. William T. Reed. Then

69. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, November 17, 196 . p.1.

there were others contributing when a house was available at a fair price.

"Restricted" funds served tremendous purposes in aiding preservations and restorations. In 1960 Mrs. John Boccock gave \$5,000 toward the restoration of the Hardgrove House.⁷⁰ Gifts by Dr. and Mrs. Bruce English amounting to \$6,000 were also used for the restoration of this house.⁷¹ In December, 1960, the Boccock Trust gave \$5,000 for restoration of the former servant's quarters at the Hardgrove House.⁷² This total of \$16,000 in gifts was a major portion of the necessary funds for its restoration.

When the foundation purchased the Adams House at Twenty-fifth and Grace Streets, enough repairs were made so that part of it would be suitable for occupancy without complete restoration being undertaken. Mrs. Wyndham Blanton gave \$7,500 for the general preservation of this building.⁷³

An analysis of "working" and "restricted" funds could be mis-leading if one did not understand that "restricted"

p. 1. 70. Minutes of the Executive Committee, July 8, 1960.

1960. p. 1. 71. Minutes of the Executive Committee, October 18,

1960. p. 1. 72. Minutes of the Executive Committee, December 13,

p. 1. 73. Minutes of the Executive Committee, July 6, 1961.

funds, in particular, were spent when the commodity was available. This meant that the funds could come in and go out almost immediately, thus not showing on the end of the monthly balance. A glance at the purchases made in any time would indicate how rapidly this money could be disbursed. Current bills for restoration projects consumed large amounts during the month and would show better in the receipt and disbursed columns. For example, in October, 1959, the treasurer showed a restricted fund balance of \$7,559.41; the working fund balance showed \$1,736. This showed a total monthly fund balance for operations of approximately \$9,300.⁷⁴ In October, 1960, the total operating fund balance was down to approximately \$7,000, but more purchases were being made and increased restoration projects kept the reserves down for the time.⁷⁵ At the annual meeting in January, 1962, the treasurer reported the cash balance as \$12,227.⁷⁶ At the end of 1963, the cash balance for Historic Richmond Foundation was \$12,849.25. During 1964 the total receipts were \$120,315.01, while expenditures amounted to \$118,919.31 and at the end of

1959. 74. Minutes of the Executive Committee, October 14, p. 1.

1960. 75. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, October 26, p. 1.

1965. 76. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, January 27, p. 1.

1964 the cash balance was \$14,244.95.⁷⁷

Historic Richmond Foundation also grew in its total worth during the post-1958 years so that by 1960 the net worth of the Foundation was \$204,783.79.⁷⁸ By the end of the year \$204,568 of the then net worth had been invested in ten houses which were rented, seven of which were restored and three unrestored. From these ten buildings the rent amounted to \$6,724.41 annually or about a 3% yield after the deduction of repairs and insurance.⁷⁹ By November, 1961, the total assets were \$339,181.24 with liabilities of \$77,554.33 making the net worth \$261,626.91 which included a land and improvements value of \$321,105.⁸⁰

Individual and corporate donations to the foundation were of sizeable proportions in the early 1960's. The gifts of Boccock and English were but a few of the large contributions. From July, 1956, to January, 1961, gifts from organi-

1965. 77. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, January 27, p. 1.

1960. 78. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, October 26, p. 1.

1961. 79. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, January 31, p. 1.

1961. 80. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, November 15, p. 1.

zations and businesses alone amounted to \$66,570.⁸¹ A \$5,000 donation was given by Mrs. R. S. Reynolds in 1961; also in early 1961 the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (William Byrd Branch) gave \$2,000, Mrs. W. T. Reed for Mrs. Boccock \$1,500, and there were anonymous donations of \$4,350.⁸² In mid-1961 gifts from Mr. Stuart Christian and from Mrs. T. Foster Witt amounted to \$4,233 and in the autumn of the same year these two gave \$5,555 making the total contributions for 1961 \$48,797.⁸³ In January, 1963, the total donations were \$5,876.42.

One of the largest donations to Historic Richmond Foundation came from State-Planters Bank. When land was purchased for Patrick Henry Park to be built, State-Planters received from this for its property \$16,500 which it immediately gave back to the foundation, part to be used for Hargrove House restoration and part on purchases.⁸⁴

During the first two years of the 1960 decade a number of purchases of importance were made, such as that of the

1961. 81. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, January 31, p. 1.

1961. 82. Minutes of the Executive Committee, February 17, p. 1.

1961. 83. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, September 20, p. 1.

p. 2. 84. Minutes of the Executive Committee, July 6, 1961.

Adams House in May at a cost of \$9,750.⁸⁵ This purchase contains a small store, formerly an apothecary shop, in the basement with two dwellings of two floors each above it. The hope of the foundation is to make this building, especially the shop a memorial to Dr. Wyndham Blanton, as a reminder of his contributions to HRF as its first president and a founder. As has been noted some work to preserve the building was done, and a tenant-caretaker remained in one of the dwellings.⁸⁶

In the Carrington Square Pilot Block, 2314 East Grace Street was purchased as well as 2311 East Grace Street. On the Broad Street side of the block, 2301, 2303, 2315, and 2315 East Broad Street came into the possession of Historic Richmond Foundation. These helped to bring the total number of houses owned by the foundation to eighteen by the end of 1960.⁸⁷ While one year later the total properties owned were twenty-three. By the end of 1961, friends of the foundation had purchased eight houses and had begun restoration of several of them.⁸⁸

p. 2 . 85. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, May 4, 1960.

86. Conversation with Mrs. Edward Bryson.

p. 2 . 87. Minutes of the Executive Committee, July 6, 1961.

1962. p. 1 . 88. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, January 30.

In 1964 some important purchases were made either for or by the foundation. Mrs. William T. Reed purchased houses on Twenty-sixth Street between the Blanton House and the Reed House which by her request were demolished and the property landscaped. The foundation is charged with the upkeep of the property now. Again we note that Mrs. John H. Bocock purchased for the Foundation 2203, 2205 and 2209 East Broad Street.⁸⁹

Two physical developments, a fire house and a park, in the area of St. John's Church were an impetus to the re-development of the section. In 1960 the city of Richmond began proceedings to build a new fire house in the vicinity. The city consulted Historic Richmond Foundation in 1960 for their suggestions about the location of the edifice resulting in the agreement that the north-west corner of Twenty-fourth and Broad Streets would be suitable.⁹⁰ The completed station is a very successful effort on the part of the city to have its construction in the area in keeping with the architecture of the vicinity. Also, the firehouse shelters a fireman's museum of relics from the history of the Richmond Fire Department.

1964. 89. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, September 30, p. 5.

1960. 90. Minutes of the Executive Committee, February 10, p. 1.

The second physical feature of importance to Church Hill was the building of Patrick Henry Memorial Park. This park, as placed before the city Planning Commission in 1960 by Mrs. Louise Catterall, would consist of one half of the block between Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth Streets on Broad Street.⁹¹ This would be directly across Broad Street from St. John's Church. The completed park as pointed out earlier, was a joint venture of Historic Richmond Foundation, the city of Richmond and the state of Virginia. The Commonwealth of Virginia gave \$62,500 from its funds in the late 1950's, but before the State Budget Director could release this money, \$112,500 had to be put up by other agencies.

The problems presented in raising this money were many; first, it was a large sum to raise quickly; second, the properties to be purchased had been optioned to the foundation and options were expiring; third, some places not optioned could be purchased or would be available for purchase before the transactions for municipal funds were completed.

Mrs. Louise Catterall and Mr. John Riely were given the job of exploring possibilities for alleviating the problem. In their report dated April 13, 1960, it was suggested that the city be asked to advance \$125,000 for the park with

91. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, May 4, 1960.
p. 2.

collateral being the bequest Mr. J. Fulmer Bright, a former Mayor of Richmond, made to the city for a park.⁹² There were complications in the matter, since the will of the late Mayor of Richmond specified that the park was to be built after the death of his then living sisters. In order for a change to be made in the terms of the will, Chancery Court would have to give its approval.

The City Council of Richmond gave its approval of the arrangement in the autumn of 1960.⁹³ After which, Chancery Court was approached for its approval. Some of the relatives of Mr. Bright did not approve of the contract, but the court ordered the change made so city funds could be released, all of which was done by May 31, 1961.⁹⁴

With the park project well on its way, the contract with the city was signed and \$112,500 was deposited in a special fund. State funds were released by the Governor, and owners of involved property were contracted for options or sale. By September 20, 1961, purchases for the park had been

1960. 92. Minutes of the Executive Committee, April 13, p. 2.

1960. 93. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, October 26, p. 1.

p. 1. 94. Minutes of the Executive Committee, May 31, 1961.

completed at a cost of \$94,388.75.⁹⁵ Before the park was completed, the city had to furnish about \$40,000 more which put the total cost of the park at approximately \$215,000.

When the park was completed, it received very little favorable comment, which seriously concerned the foundation. The park had been built in two sections, one contained an alley of trees facing a plaque and a fountain set on a high pool; and the other half was a brick walled garden with benches and small shrubbery. The Foundation hired Mr. Ralph Griswold, a landscape architect, to help make the park into a more useful as well as a beautiful facility.⁹⁶ Mr. Griswold suggested new plantings and a new fountain, the plans for which were completed by March, 1965.⁹⁷ This park means added beauty and attractiveness across from St. John's Church and the new firehouse.

Stimulated enthusiasm and financial growth of Historic Richmond Foundation called for an expansion of the organization's office staff. Speakers were needed to contact groups and individuals and to act as a liaison between the foundation

1961. 95. Minutes of the Executive Committee, September 20, p. 1.

1964. 96. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, September 30, p. 5.

1965. 97. Minutes of the Executive Committee, March 31, p.3.

and the community. The physical growth of the foundation necessitated having someone to oversee the care of properties and rent collection as well as a person to list potentials for funds. There was a need for someone who could become an expert on what other restoration areas were doing to preserve their sections, so as to get ideas that the foundation might use. With these activities in mind the Foundation hired Mr. J. H. Donaldson as Executive Secretary in April, 1960, with a salary set at \$5,400 per annum. At the same time it was decided to hire a part-time secretary for the office in order to release the Executive Secretary for field and other work.⁹⁸

Mr. Donaldson resigned his job in September of 1960, and for a period of time the only office staff member was the secretary, an arrangement which was continued until July, 1961 when Mrs. Edward Bryson was elected Executive Secretary.⁹⁹ Together with the afore-mentioned duties, Mrs. Bryson would add the co-ordination of activities of Historic Richmond Foundation and work with officers and committees with a salary of \$6,500 annually.

At the same time Mrs. Bryson was chosen, the office secretary was put on a five day week, six hours per day schedule

1960. 98. Minutes of the Executive Committee, April 27, p. 2.

1960. 99. Minutes of the Executive Committee, August 10, p. 1.

with a salary of \$220.00 per month. An effort was made to keep the office budget to \$10,000 per year.¹⁰⁰ Mrs. Bryson served until November, 1964, when the office was again left in care of the office secretary, Mrs. Kathrine French.

For thorough understanding of the detailed work and study involved in the project on Church Hill, the estimated figures for a completed project and the actual figures on a house restoration should be studied. In 1959, Historic Richmond Foundation made a study of the minimum needs to purchase and to restore the property adjacent to St. John's Church which would involve the blocks on Grace, Broad, Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth Streets, the areas which are the nuclei of the restoration project, since their appearance reflects on that of St. John's Church.

The 2300 block established as the Pilot Block for the Foundation, came under its closest scrutiny, since it hoped to own the major portion of the houses in that block. The total estimated cost of restoration of the block was \$300,000, which included the following itemized estimates:

2300 East Grace (purchase and restorations)	\$103,000
23rd Street (two houses to demolish)	17,000
2300 East Broad (purchase and restoration)	165,000

100. Minutes of the Executive Committee, July 6, 1961.
p. 3.

Gardens	<u>15,000</u>
Total	\$300,000

The estimates of the other areas were:

2400 Block East Grace (purchase and restoration)	\$141,000
209 and 211 North Twenty-fifth Street (purchase and restoration)	11,500
Adams House (Twenty-fifth and Grace) (restoration)	35,000
2502 Block East Broad (9 houses)	180,000
Broad Street Park (Actual Cost over \$215,000)	<u>75,000</u>
Estimated total costs	\$752,500 ¹⁰¹

By October, 1961, the work completed on the Pilot Block had lowered the estimated need to \$136,570.¹⁰²

When the Hardgrove House was restored by the foundation, Dr. Bruce English provided the foundation with almost total supervision, making frequent reports to the Executive Committee and the trustees on the project. Because of his closeness to the project, he was able to make wise recommendations on the restoration thereby keeping costs at a minimum.

101. Historic Richmond Foundation, Summary of Minimum Need for Purchase and Restoration. p. 1-2.

102. Historic Richmond Foundation, Minimum Goals. October 1961. p. 1.

Restoring of a house and its appurtenances involved preparation of the building to be the dwelling of more than one family. The houses are large enough so that they can be made into more than one or into duplex apartments. In most of the houses, new wiring, heating, plumbing, and woodwork had to be installed. If the house is to be a duplex, it must have separate bathrooms and heating for such apartment, which, as stated by Mrs. Blanton, must be the best. If so much money is invested and the proper tenants are to be attracted, he must give them the privacy and individual care that they wish, and the rentals must compete with other rentals throughout the area.¹⁰³

The top two floors of the Hardgrove House were prepared as a single living unit at a cost of \$15,000, to make the basement into an apartment, the cost was \$5,000; behind the house, the two-story servants' quarters were restored at a cost of \$8,000; and the first floor of the main house was restored at a cost of \$2,000, is the headquarters of the Junior Board of Historic Richmond, and thus does not bring in rent. This means that the total cost of purchase and restoration of the Hardgrove House was \$42,500 (\$12,500 purchase and \$30,000 restoration). The income from the three rented units

103. Conversation with Mrs. Wyndham Blanton.

produce \$7,100 yearly. Dr. English had estimated that the cost of replacing the four-story building and its cottage would be \$110,000.¹⁰⁴

The great difficulty in giving tangible recognition to those whose work made Historic Richmond Foundation succeed could not be overcome; but it was decided to give recognition to donors of large sums of money which were used in a specific manner. The awards are made in three different categories: the top award is a bronze plaque attached to a house for which a donation for both the purchase and the restoration is given; a smaller plaque is designed for those who donate money for either a purchase or a restoration; a frame scroll at the Shelton House bears the names of large donors during the first five years of the Foundation. A book is kept up to date for each year, lists all the donors.¹⁰⁵

The post-1958 years were fruitful for Historic Richmond, having seen its success assured and having given better physical appearance to the area which would draw the attention of the public to what a tremendous work the people of Historic Richmond Foundation have accomplished.

104. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, January 30, 1962. p. 2.

105. Ibid., p. 2.

VI

1963-1965

The years 1963 through 1965 have been the years of fulfillment for Historic Richmond. Though not all the aims were reached, a new spring of accomplishment and pride was aroused as the Pilot Block moved nearer completion; new work was in the planning stage for the Shelton House, the 2300 Club was formed, and the Handwork Shop was opened. Simultaneous with these, a backlog of prospective tenants began to grow. All were indications that new restorations were going to take place in order to keep up with the demands. The Foundation could also begin to center its attention on the future educational and research role in Nineteenth Century life on Church Hill.

By January, 1962, the Grace Street half of Carrington Square had been completely restored, and all but one house on the Broad Street side had been purchased. A look into the future indicated that the Broad Street restoration would cost \$100,000 to \$110,000. After restoration the additional income from these buildings would be \$10,000 or more annually.¹⁰⁶

106. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, January 30, 1962. p. 1..

The main objective on the Broad Street side, which would include the three Carrington Row houses and a few others, was to have the street floors of the buildings made into small shops, while the other floors would be restored as apartments. The house at 2315 East Broad Street was, accordingly, sold to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Schneider whose plans are to eventually open the first floor as a gift shop specializing in imported gift products and unusual gift items. From the sale of these items, they have indicated a willingness to return ten percent of the profits to Historic Richmond Foundation.¹⁰⁷

On the other side of Carrington Row, the Grey House, which is owned by HRF will house an art gallery. Behind the house, which the Eric Schindler Gallery will occupy, a walled garden for sculpture exhibition will be constructed.¹⁰⁸ This will adjoin the Mews, which is now under construction.

Between the art gallery and the gift shop is Carrington Row, on which restoration work is now being done; however, in keeping with the Foundation's policy of doing restoration only as money is available, this is a slow process. The collapse of the front wall of 2309 East Broad Street on May 12, 1964

1965. 107. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, January 24, p. 2.

108. Richmond Times-Dispatch, June 27, 1965. p. 4L.

slowed down construction but it did not mean the end of the project; however, on September 25, 1963, Mrs. William T. Reed, Mrs. Ralph Catterall, Mrs. Overton Dennis and Dr. Bruce English were appointed as a special committee on the restoration of Carrington Row.¹⁰⁹ Their purpose was to carry out the eventual aim of making the Row into three shops, two basement apartments, and three duplex apartments.¹¹⁰ Work was first started on the exterior in order that protection might be given to the interior sections if money gave out or work had to be stopped for a while. The exterior would also be the part seen by the public, which might influence investors to consider property on Church Hill. When the 2309 East Broad wall gave away, foundation money had to be used to get it reconstructed, which slowed plans for interior work, because of a suit which had to be adjudicated to get the insurance company to pay for the damage. By October, 1964, the facades were close enough to completion for installation of the railings as the finishing items on the front of the houses.¹¹¹

1963. 109. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, September 25, p. 1.

1964. 110. Minutes of the Executive Committee, March 25, p. 3.

1964. 111. Minutes of the Executive Committee, October 26, p. 2.

Landscaping of the back yards of the Broad Street houses presented problems also. When the Garden Clubs of Virginia began planning the Mews, the back yards and parking areas for the houses had to complement and conform to the architecture of the Mews. The Boxwood Garden Club was also in process of constructing a parking lot at the corner of Broad Street and Twenty-third Streets on the Carrington Square block. Mr. James Park, landscape architect, drew plans for the lot and the club wished to use brick from the demolition of 207 North Twenty-third Street for the lot.¹¹² With the Mews, Carrington Row, and the shops all under construction at the same time, HRF saw a need for someone to be in charge of this program to see that all harmonized and so in September, 1964, Dr. Bruce English was appointed Chairman of the Carrington Square Committee. He was to manage the construction of the Mews and Carrington Row.¹¹³

By September 30, 1964, \$71,076.¹¹⁴ of the Foundation's hard earned money had been spent on Carrington Row.¹¹⁴ In February, 1963, plans were begun to raise \$100,000 for Carring-

1964. 112. Minutes of the Executive Committee, June 24, p. 3.

1964. 113. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, September 30, p. 4.

1964. 114. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, September 30, p. 1.

ton Square between May 6 and May 20 of that year.¹¹⁵ A film entitled Restoration Is Good Business was prepared for use in the drive.¹¹⁶ Workers mailed out many letters; speeches were made; and the film was shown. By May 29, 1963, one hundred fifteen people had pledged \$51,781.55.¹¹⁷ This represented twenty-five per cent of the cards issued. By June the total sum had climbed to \$57,366; and by January, 1964, \$69,789 had been realized; and by September, 1964, \$72,301.30 had been collected.¹¹⁸ With hope of completing the job soon, in March, 1965, \$10,000 was transferred from the general account of HRF to the Carrington Row account, which, it is hoped, will be reimbursed after the insurance company pays for the damage to 2309 East Broad Street.

Possibly the most exciting news for Historic Richmond came in 1964 when the Garden Clubs of Virginia decided to finance and sponsor the Mews. The foundation had made plans for these gardens, but the financing was difficult. As planned, the News will run from Twenty-third to Twenty-fourth Streets;

115. Minutes of the Executive Committee, February 27, 1963. p. 2.

116. Minutes of the Executive Committee, March 27, 1963. p. 2.

117. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, May 29, 1963. p. 2.

118. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, September 30, 1964. p. 1.

and on each side of the cobblestone alley, gardens will be planted and trees and shrubbery set to give the appearance it might have had when used by coaches in previous era. The design of the Mews is being drawn by Mr. Ralph Griswold, landscape architect. The gardens behind each of the houses on Grace Street will open onto the Mews, but each will remain an individual garden. Those gardens behind the Broad Street houses are to complement the Mews if not a direct part of them.¹¹⁹

At a meeting of the Executive Committee of HRF on December 29, 1961, Mrs. John H. Boccock suggested that the Foundation might interest some individuals to invest their funds in a "glamorous private club" in the area of St John's. She suggested that the club should have a superior restaurant as well as other facilities. Her further suggestion was that membership fees might be used to restore the house.¹²⁰

Three years later Mrs. Boccock's suggestion became the reality of the 2300 Club. Dr. English announced the formation of this club in March, 1964, stating that the membership fee twenty-three dollars and the annual dues would be twenty-

119. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, September 30, 1964. p. 2.

120. Minutes of the Executive Committee, December 29, 1961. p. 1.

three dollars.¹²¹ At the next executive meeting it was announced that the club, which would be at 2300 East Broad, would have two lounges, a dining room, a board room, a bar and other facilities in addition to containing two apartments.¹²² The club opened on October 23, 1964, and by January 27, 1965, had four hundred fifty members.¹²³

A great boon to the arts in Richmond has been the Hand Work-Shop at 316 North Twenty-fourth Street. Since its opening in the spring of 1963, it has been a constant drawing card for bringing people to Church Hill. Housed in the white framed Whitlock House, the shop actually serves as a retail outlet for all forms of handcraft, featuring scheduled exhibits in weaving, pottery, sewing, and glass work, as well as other forms of hand art.¹²⁴

One of the most impressive accomplishments of HRF on the interior of a house was the redecoration of the Elmira Shelton House. In December, 1964, the Chairman of the House and Restoration Committee announced that her group was being

1964. 121. Minutes of the Executive Committee, March 25, p. 2.

1964. 122. Minutes of the Executive Committee, April 29, p. 3.

1965. 123. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, January 29, p. 3.

1963. 124. Minutes of the Executive Committee, February 27, p. 3

divided into three sub-committees; one to see that the Shelton House was properly maintained, a second to furnish adequate historical data on the house, and a third to determine decoration type and plan. She later announced that a plan for redecoration of the house would soon be proposed.¹²⁵

In January, 1965, \$1,000 was given in honor of Mr. and Mrs. John B. Welsh, by their daughter, to redecorate the first floor of the Shelton House.¹²⁶ An estimate of \$900 having been given for paint, new electrical outlets, refinishing floors and plumbing, the work was authorized and started with efforts to have it completed by Garden Week in April. It was completed but at an approximate cost of \$2,000 with new furniture and curtains having been added. Soft greens and white used on new rooms are typical of all the work of Historic Richmond Foundation. Mrs. Wesley Wright, Jr., mentioned that someone had said how nice it was to be in these bright rooms when the dreary rain was falling outside. One might paraphrase: "How nice to be in the freshly restored historic zone, since the area outside it is so depressing and gloomy."

125. Minutes of the Executive Committee, December 2, 1964. p. 4.

126. Minutes of the Board of Trustees, January 27, 1965. p. 5.

VII

DIAGNOSIS AND PROGNOSIS

Advice can only be given other groups who might be interested in modern private urban-renewal-restoration programs on the basis of past knowledge of such undertakings.

For any program of this type it is important to start with a blueprint or a master plan as a guide. This gives the prospective investor a degree of assurance that something is really being planned for the area, which was probably the greatest mistake in the beginning for HRF. It did not do enough research nor plan enough on paper before it started its work, which was most essential in carrying out either small or large restoration projects. The following are essential:

1. A master plan of what is proposed.
2. Things available to fulfill the plan, such as; stores, houses, open spaces, possible park areas, schools, restaurants, or other tools for development.
3. Information about tools:
 - a. Assessments and taxes
 - b. Appraised values
 - c. Possible uses for buildings
 - d. Approximate purchase costs and availability to market
 - e. Approximate restoration costs and work to be done
 - f. Approximate restored value
 - g. Possible incomes from property
 - h. Access to business, industry, etc.
 - i. Availability of tenants or investors
 - j. Cultural advantages

4. Available finances, such as; interested banks governmental aid or foundation help.
5. What the catalytic agent (foundation) proposes to do.

Where an organization or foundation is doing much work on restoration, there should be one committee in charge of clearance of all restoration plans, costs, and necessities. Subcommittees for each individual project are helpful, but one should be over all. HRF's experiences with the Shelton House and 2308 East Grace Street point out this need.

Concurrent with the above should be a complete survey of restoration cost estimates before any project contract is signed. The itemized estimate must be obtained, and there should be a clear understanding on the part of all parties concerned. This itemized statement should include conditions, needed repairs, and costs on at least the following; foundations; inside and outside walls; floor, roof and porch supports; heating; wiring; plumbing; accessories; i.e., locks and hinges, trimming, window stools, window facings, doors, door frames, cabinets; roof; flooring; light fixtures; decorations; insulation; landscaping; and other things.

To hurry into a project and get it done is dangerous! HRF's work has been very quiet and quite slow, which could easily result from the fact that not much extreme speculative pricing has taken place. (It has been able to operate in such a manner as to keep a condition of uncertainty about the

success of the whole project; as a result, there has been very little quick buying for resale to HRF or its friends.)

The preceding ideas indicate the outstanding need for research before starting any such undertaking. To avoid blunders get all the possible data! The HRF House and Restoration Committee, now stressing research, in December, 1964, took the first small step in this direction when it divided into three sub-committees, one to set up guidelines to determine the type of gifts to be accepted by HRF; another to provide an accurate history of the area and the houses in the historic zone; and a third to find out how the houses had originally been decorated. These groups were to keep their findings as guidelines for future restorations in Church Hill.¹²⁷

An evaluation of the Church Hill project must be based on its benefits to the individual and to the community, on a cultural and social level; in other words, does it fulfill the intentions of its founder, which would depend upon whether the house occupants, the architecture, and the neighborhood had compatible personalities. It would be only wise to feel that if such an area did not offer what a person wanted, he would not consider becoming a resident of it. As far as is feasible in a different period of time, HRF has attempted to

127. Minutes of the Executive Committee, December 2, 1964. p. 3.

return the community to its original nineteenth century status, socially and culturally, with its drawing card of efficient gracious living plus contiguous shopping areas. For convenience to the heart of Richmond. Church Hill cannot be matched.

Those who are seeking the different type of life Church Hill has to offer are mainly professional people such as; nurses, doctors, writers, photographers, teachers, and a Chamber of Commerce employee, to name a few, all of whom are definite assets to the community. As an example of how they, themselves, feel about the area, one of them said that it is like living in a small rural community but having the comforts and conveniences of the city. These homes, being uncramped in their architecture, lend themselves to spacious living.

The occupants of restored homes are forming a closely knit neighborhood with a community warmth all its own. They live close socially, doing such as sponsoring their own picnics, cook-outs, parties, and fun; for the large yards and houses offer outstanding advantages for this type of life to develop.¹²⁸

Not only are the tenants near the city, but their view of the city and its environs is unsurpassed. To the south, the James River flows among the trees, islands, and industries; to the west, the night lights of the city are attractive and

128. Conversation with Mr. John Cooke, May 4, 1965.

scintillating, exemplifying the attempts of the city founders to choose residential locations well.

However glowing the advantages are, they do not attract in restorers rapidly. For some while there has been a question as to the worthwhileness of an investment on Church Hill. The present president of HRF feels that it could be ten years before the work of restoration is completed. He feels that the park and Mews will help accelerate the growth of the project.¹²⁹ One of the tenants in the area feels that the 2300 Club will be a big stimulus to growth.¹³⁰

Others have suggested interesting things which could hasten the renovation of the entire Church Hill area, thus restoring it to a place of prominence in Richmond. Mrs. Walter Moncure, a city assessor, suggested apartments on the 2100 block East Grace and garden apartments (i.e. Chatham Square) in Chimborazo Park would be a definite asset to future development.¹³¹

Another asset to growth would be to make an investment financially sound. At the present time rents are lower than efficiency apartments elsewhere. When the influx of people

129. Conversation with Mr. Walton Turnbull, April 1, 1965.

130. Conversation with Mr. John Cooke, May 4, 1965.

131. Conversation with Mr. W. R. D. Moncure, II, May 5, 1965.

bring in enough to make it financially sound to go up on rents; then more people will become interested in investments. A number of the tenants in the area are now buying property as an investment because of the low sale prices; however they feel that future returns will be good; for example Mrs. Blanton feels that future demand will be great, since Richmond is going toward a population of a million soon and houses will be needed. She further states that the more that is done in the area the more desirable it becomes.¹³²

Another help in the completion of the restored area is the work done outside the historic zone. The city is strengthening enforcement for improvements in the Jefferson Park and Fairmont areas; therefore the property has risen in value. In the area contiguous to the restored zone Father O'Kane of St. Patricks Church has been instrumental in trying to lead the people to develop their own "anti-poverty" campaign. He has tried to stimulate and educate the inhabitants in taking more pride in their community, and in getting out of their poverty. His leadership has taken them to the point that what is done now is up to them.¹³³

Also a stimulant to redevelopment could be a selective urban renewal program in the area outside the historic zone.

132. Conversation with Mrs. Wyndham Blanton, May 4, 1965.

133. Conversation with Father O'Kane, March 27, 1965.

Up by the courts that once an area renewal project was undertaken, the only means of doing it was by way of complete demolition. Recent amendments to the laws have allowed improvements with a minimum of selective clearance. Were this undertaken outside an expanded historic zone with the following requisitions, a very effective community could be built:

1. Salvation of all possible houses which could have economic and/or architectural assets.
2. Creation of parks in sufficient number and convenience for everyone.
3. High calibre architectural design of town houses where demolition had to take place.
4. A review commission to pass on all designs and renovations in places of public view.

A city employee and a Catholic Father expressed the idea that the work on the hill is just a "drop in the bucket." There is the entire East End area to consider. Mr. Walton Turnbull, President of HRF, sees that the major role of HRF is to develop the interest of the people, not only just in the zone but in the entire area. He feels that the historic zone will be a nucleus for redevelopment of the entire section.

However, it will be difficult to stimulate this interest in redevelopment. Mr. Frederick Fay, of the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, says that lower income tenants are not interested in the area. Father O'Kane expressed the feeling that this is because the people have no roots in the area; since they do not own their homes, they do not care

about the up-keep of them.¹³⁴

Mr. Moncure, the assessor, estimates that in the last ten years the city has lost two or three million dollars in tax revenue from Church Hill. At the present time land values are holding, but house values are not. The influx of low income tenants makes the value of the property go down.¹³⁵ Where restoration has taken place, house value has risen. Even so, the city is not yet seeing a great amount of return in real estate tax revenues because of the non-taxable status of HRF property. This is now off-setting the rise in revenue from privately owned restorations. In the future, the city's revenue should increase considerably.

A comparison of taxable values in 1958 and 1965 would indicate the potential extra tax revenue when private restorations exceed HRF ownerships. It should be considered that the city's evaluation rate ran about 80% in 1958 and is running 85% to 90% in 1965. The following comparisons include both land and improvements:

	1958	1965
2801 East Grace	\$6,880	\$21,500
2314 East Grace	5,220	13,100

134. Conversation with Mr. Frederick Fay, May 4, 1965.

135. Conversation with Mr. W. R. D. Moncure, II, May 5, 1965.

2312 East Grace	5,220	17,900
2300 East Broad (2300 Club)	7,880	40,000
2520 East Franklin	4,540	16,500
2401 East Grace	5,820	22,200
2519 East Grace	4,900	22,500
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Totals	\$40,460	\$153,700

From these seven houses the city received taxes of \$113,20 more in 1965 than it did in 1958, which is indicative of what the higher tax income will be for the city when the area is restored.

It is only logical to conclude that the restoration has already begun to show both its cultural and social effects in addition to some economic gain. The new inhabitants are making a definite contribution to the cultural life of the city and have given Church Hill a higher social standing in the community. To the City of Richmond tax department, the greater effects are to come after more progress is made in restoration.

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