America's Magnificent Ruin

The Living History of Rosewell
America’s Magnificent Ruins
The Living History of Rosewell
America’s Magnificent Ruins
The Bolide Event - 35,000,000 Years Ago

The Living History of Rosewell
America’s Magnificent Ruins
(Lower) Potomac Aquifer System

Figure 32. Simulated water levels for 1978-80 in the lower Potomac aquifer.
“The Water “Rose Well” to the surface year-round in the size of a man’s arm.”
1607 (ish)
Captain John Smith, Powhatan, & Matoaka

The Living History of Rosewell
America’s Magnificent Ruins
The Story of Rosewell is a story of The Page Family of Virginia

- Francis Page, Bedfont, England
- English merchant family with a history in the masonry trade
- Maintained an interest in “The Virginia Company”
The “Rosewell” Page Family:

(Col) John Page I 1627 Born in Bedfont England
1653 Emigrated to Virginia at age 26

1650’s Middle Plantation
America's Magnificent Ruin

The Palisade Wall:

The Living History of Rosewell
America’s Magnificent Ruins
The “Rosewell” Page Family:

Multiple Business Entities:
1. Owned three merchant ships:
   * Augustine, East India Merchant, Jeffreys
2. Had a business interest in
   * The Virginia Company
3. Had a business interest in
   * The Royal African Trading Company
4. Successful tobacco planter & merchant
5. Virginia Land Baron
Bruton Parish Church:

In April of 1678 Col. John Page donated land and money to fund the building of the original Bruton Parish Church on The Duke of Gloucester Street site.
Page’s Bruton Parish Gravesite Marker
The Founding of The College of William & Mary

In 1690 Col. John Page facilitated the discussions around the need for a formal school and college. It is believed Page donated both land and money towards the establishment of The College of Williams & Mary.

“To begin then, as the fountains of some noble Rivers are unknown, So it must be confessed that the first original of this Project, consisting in private talk and discourse of the great want of education in this Countrey, and the necessity of a free school for that purpose is in a great measure unknown. The first publick consultation about it was at a meeting of some private Gentlemen at James City in the moneth of february 1690. The person that had the cheif honour to be the first mover in procureing such a meeting was the Honbie Colonell Page; to whom and his family this great work has been exceedingly beholding.”

(Graduation) Speeches to the College by Students

May 1699
Virginia Land Barons:

By the time of his death in 1692 at the age of 65, Col. John Page was one of the elite, wealthy land owners in Virginia - making him one of the wealthiest men in Colonial America. His land ownership interest at the time of his death exceeded 7000 acres.
2nd Generation – “Rosewell” Page Family

(Col.) John Page’s second son – Matthew Page

- Born in 1659
- Grew up in Middle Plantation
- Married Mary Mann of Timberneck (in Gloucester) in 1689
  - Matthew Page and Mary Mann lived at “Timberneck” with the in-laws and had two children, Elizabeth (1690) and Mann (1691)
  - The Matthew Page family took over Timberneck in 1694 upon the death of his father-in-law.
  - Circa 1700 Matthew Page identified the western most 2000 Timberneck acres as the location for the construction of the Family Home – Rosewell
3rd Generation “Rosewell” Page Family
Mann Page I

Son of Mathew and Mary Mann

- Born 1691 @ Timberneck
- Educated in London from ages 14 - 20
- Educated at Eton College
- Returned to Virginia in 1711 and staked his claim for the inheritance from his father
- After the death of his first wife - marries Judith Carter – daughter of Robert (King) Carter from Kilmarnock

1721- the designs were being finalized to establish “the handsomest home” in Virginia
1725 – Construction begins on Rosewell
The Great Fire of London

- September 1666
- Destroyed over 15,000 structures
- Created a massive rebuilding & redesign initiative in London
Sir Christopher Wren
1632 – 1723
One of the most-highly acclaimed English architects in history

- Designed & rebuilt 52 churches in London after the great fire – including St. Paul’s Cathedral
- Credited with the architectural redesign of London private residences during the rebuild
The Wren Design Influence on Rosewell

- Emphasis on Verticality
  - Window Heights which diminished from the ground floor up
- Proportional Dimensions
  - 5 Bay width by 3 Bay Height
- Windows with Arched Heads
- Ornate Window Keystones
- Cupolas
- Belt courses separating floors
- Spectacular Chimney usage
- Deck on Hip Roof
Governor’s Mansion
Built in 1709
The Rosewell Bricks

• Some Rosewell walls are 3 feet thick with interlacing (Flemish bond) brickwork
• Arguably the finest example of Flemish bond masonry in American history.
• Largest collection of shaped brick in American masonry history
• About 2.5 million bricks
• All kilned on site
• Local Clay mined on site and mixed with river sand
• Bricks closest to the fire were the strongest and were used for structural applications
• Softer bricks were used for non-structural applications
The Rosewell Masonry

The Living History of Rosewell
America’s Magnificent Ruins
The Interior

- Imported marble tile floors
- Hand-carved marble fireplace mantles
- Imported mahogany paneling (throughout)
- Hand-carved staircase railings
- 20 working Fireplace
The English Gardens:

“The Governor in Williamsburg – With no mean garden at the palace in Williamsburg, is said to have been Green with Envy when he saw the Rosewell Garden”
Drainage Tunnels:

Under the ground’s surface, extending in some places for over one thousand feet, there exist an elaborate brick drainage tunnel system.
The Page Family Cemetery:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Birth</th>
<th>Death</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Col. Matthew Page</td>
<td>1659</td>
<td>1703</td>
<td>Headstone at Abingdon Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man Page I</td>
<td>1691</td>
<td>1730</td>
<td>Headstone at Abingdon Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judith Wormeley Page</td>
<td>1695</td>
<td>1716</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judith Carter Page</td>
<td>1695</td>
<td>1750</td>
<td>Headstone at Abingdon Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Mann Page</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>1707</td>
<td>Headstone at Abingdon Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Page</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>1702</td>
<td>Headstone at Abingdon Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ralph Page</td>
<td>1713</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mann Page</td>
<td></td>
<td>1716</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mann Page</td>
<td>1718</td>
<td>1780</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice Grymes Page</td>
<td>1724</td>
<td>1746</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carter Page</td>
<td>1724</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Page</td>
<td>1726</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant Page</td>
<td>1728</td>
<td></td>
<td>Daughter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frances Burwell Page</td>
<td>1747</td>
<td>1784</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tayloe Page</td>
<td>1755</td>
<td>1760</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Page</td>
<td>1773</td>
<td>1784</td>
<td>Drowned in Carter's Creek</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(Gov.) John Page II
1743 - 1808

• Born at Rosewell
• Educated at The Abingdon Church Glebe school
• Age of 13 enrolled in the grammar school operated by The College of William & Mary
• Age of 18 enrolled in the College of William & Mary as a law student
• Had a fond appreciation and passion for mathematics & astronomy
(young) Thomas Jefferson (1743 – 1826)

- Entered The College of W&M at the same time as (young) John Page II.
- Page & Jefferson immediately began a lifelong friendship.
- Jefferson became a regular and lifelong visitor to Rosewell.
Letters between (young) Page & (young) Jefferson

You cannot conceive the satisfaction it would give me to have a letter from you: Write me very circumstantially everything which happened at the wedding. Was she there? Because if she was I ought to have been at the devil for not being there too. If there is any news stirring in town or country, such as deaths, courtships and marriages in the circle of my acquaintance let me know it. Remember me affectionately to all the young ladies of my acquaintance, particularly the Miss Burwells and Miss Potters, and tell them that though that heavy earthly part of me, my body, be absent, the better half of me, my soul, is ever with them, and that my best wishes shall ever attend them. Tell Miss Alice Corbin that I verily believe the rats knew I was to win a pair of garters from her, or they never would have been so cruel as to carry mine away. This very consideration makes me so sure of the bet that I shall ask every body I see from that part of the world what pretty gentleman is making his addresses to her. I would fain ask the favor of Miss Becca Burwell to give me another watch paper, of her own cutting which I should esteem much more though it were a plain round one, than the nicest in the world cut by other hands: however I am afraid she would think this presumption after my suffering the other to get spoiled. If you think you can excuse me to her for this I should be glad if you would ask her. Tell Miss Suckey Potter that I heard just before I came out of town that she was offended with me about something: what it is I know not: but this I know, that I never was guilty of the least disrespect to her in my life either in word or deed: as far from it as it has been possible for me to be: I suppose when we meet next she will be endeavoring to repay an imaginary affront with a real one: but she may save herself the trouble, for nothing that she can say or do to me shall ever lessen her in my esteem. And I am determined always to look upon her as the same honest-hearted good-humored agreeable lady I ever did. Tell—tell—in short tell them all ten thousand things more than either you or I can now or ever shall think of as long as we live.

Jefferson to Page
December 25th 1762 (age 19)
The Bruton Parish Bell Tower Rumor

The Living History of Rosewell
America’s Magnificent Ruins
The college aged revolutionary banter between (young) Page and (young) Jefferson @ Rosewell
The Declaration of Independence
To George Washington from John Page, 14 February 1774

From John Page
Febry 14th 1774

Dear Sir,
I have at last purchas’d Mr John Rootes’s Land for you. He this Day assign’d the Governors Warrant for it, to me, for your Use. I don’t chuse to inclose it, for fear my Letter may miscarry, and am in hopes it will suit your Purpose as well, to receive it at Fredericksburg, the first Day of April; when I expect to have the Pleasure of meeting with you there. No Money will be requir’d of you, ’til I see you, and you think the Land sufficiently secur’d.

I am Sir, Your very Servt
John Page
Post Revolutionary Public Service
Careers for Page & Jefferson

Page:
• President of the Virginia Council of State
• 1780 - Member of the Virginia House of Delegates
• 1789 – 1797 Member of U.S. House of Representatives
• 1802 – 1805 13th Governor of Virginia

Jefferson:
• Delegate to the Second Continental Congress
• 2nd Governor of Virginia
• Virginia delegate to the Congress of Confederation
• U.S. Ambassador to France
• 1st U.S. Secretary of State
• 2nd Vice President of the U.S.
• 3rd President of the U.S.
Post Revolutionary War Economy:
1. Large landowners indebted themselves to finance the War effort
2. The quality and quantity of the tobacco had diminished
3. Just lost their biggest customer

In 1836 The Page Family sold Rosewell with the remaining land to Thomas Booth
The Civil War:
1862 Siege at Yorktown &
Union Occupancy of Gloucester County
Union Army raids on Rosewell
20th Century
The Fire
April 1916
21st Century Rosewell:

https://sketchfab.com/models/ee9b7229f90848a6a481c44cc57557c4
21st Century: Saving Rosewell

The Living History of Rosewell
America’s Magnificent Ruins

Blueprint for Preservation of the Ruins at Rosewell, Gloucester, Virginia
Stabilization Plan

Vanishing History
Ruins in Virginia

By Henry J. Brown
Photography by Kevin McNeill
State & National Park Service

The Living History of Rosewell
America’s Magnificent Ruins

Werowocomoco National Park

Middle Peninsula State Park – Timberneck & Rosewell Divisions

USA Land
The Future of Rosewell: 21st Century Strategic Initiatives

- 3MM x 300 Capital Campaign
- Long Term Preservation and Stabilization of the Ruins
- National and State Park Integration
- Create a “Park-Like” experience for visitors
- Re-establish the Page Family Gravesite
- Revisit and create an interactive Slave life educational experience
- Expand the 3 dimensional virtual Rosewell and create a model simulation walking tour of the exterior and interior of the great mansion
Saving Rosewell
How can you help?

- Get Involved
  Financially
  Leadership
- Add your name to the mailing list so you can stay up-to-date on all events and progress towards saving Rosewell.
- Personally get involved with the initiative to “Save Rosewell”
Walking Rosewell Tour – Scavenger Hunt

Architectural Features:
- Verticality of Windows
- Proportional Dimensions
- Arched Windows
- Window Keystones
- Belt Coursing
- Chimneys
- Water Table

Site Features:
- Kitchen Foundation Site
- Pocahontas’ Spring
- Drainage Tunnels
- English Basement
- Wine Cellar
- Ice House
- English Gardens
- Page Family Gravesite
- Blue Room
- Wharf
- Evidence of the Fire of 1916

Masonry Features
- Flemish Bond
- Water Table Band
- Exterior brick quality
- Fill brick
- Laddering
- Multiple brick shapes & styles
- Wall thickness
- Interior Walls
- Fireplaces

The Living History of Rosewell
America’s Magnificent Ruins