

Visit Fluvanna County and the Pleasant Grove House



Open House Planned for Old Farm Day on Saturday, October 4

One of Fluvanna County's treasures, the Pleasant Grove House, has now been restored and expanded in a mutual effort by Fluvanna County, the Fluvanna Historical Society and the Fluvanna Heritage Trail Foundation. "This project has taken many years of planning and cooperation between our local government and Fluvanna's non-profit organizations, and it is a major addition to accomplishing one of our primary goals – celebrating our heritage and inviting others to enjoy it," said Mozell Booker, Chair of the Fluvanna Board of Supervisors.

Pleasant Grove is a historic home located along the Rivanna River on land purchased by Fluvanna County in 1994. It was built in 1854, and is a two-story, five bay, brick dwelling with a low hipped roof. It features a four bay pedimented front porch, a mousetooth cornice, architrave moldings, and a delicate stair. Also nearby are the restored summer kitchen and the Haden family cemetery. At the request of the Fluvanna Historical Society the County placed the house, the cemetery and the adjoining five acres on the National Register of Historic Places in 2004 having been declared eligible based on the vernacular architecture and history of the building.

Preceding the current restoration project, the County, the Historical Society and the Fluvanna Heritage Trail Foundation successfully competed for grant funding from the Virginia Department of Transportation to restore the historic summer kitchen adjacent to the house. The non-profits assisted with the funding by paying for part of the 20 percent match required by the grant. The summer kitchen has since been used by the Heritage Trail as its eastern trailhead and as a small museum providing information on Pleasant Grove, its house and the trail system. The Heritage Trail system at Pleasant Grove was designed and installed initially by volunteers.

Working together on planning the house restoration for many years, the group applied for a series of grants from the Commonwealth of Virginia and private foundations. The Historical Society wrote grants to those organizations which did not provide funding to local governments. Eventually the County and the Historical Society raised a total of \$873,750 for restoring Pleasant Grove House. In addition, the Heritage Trail contributed another \$7,500. This money has resulted in over 70 percent of the project cost being paid from sources other than Fluvanna County.

Plans call for the Pleasant Grove House to serve as a Welcome Center for visitors to our County. It will also contain exhibits relating to the history of transportation in Fluvanna including its reliance over the early years on the Rivanna and James rivers for commerce and movement of our agricultural production to Richmond and points east. To accommodate these uses, the County had a historically accurate two-story addition joined to the original building. The addition contains a catering facility, an elevator providing access for people with disabilities as well as office space. The top floor of the original structure will be used as office space for the Fluvanna Department of Parks and Recreation. Currently the exhibits for the Welcome Center and the museum are being installed. Fluvanna County has authorized funding for two part-time assistants to staff the Welcome Center.

The Historical Society is also working with the County on a new project – the construction of a Farm Heritage Museum to be located behind the new parking area for Pleasant Grove House. This museum will contain antique farm equipment donated by John May, one of the founders of Old Farm Day and from other local farmers. In addition to funds allocated by the County, the Historical Society is contributing its own money for the project and raising additional contributions from area foundations.

The County plans to have the Pleasant Grove House open to the public on Old Farm Day, Saturday, October 4. A formal grand opening will be held on November 6.



SOURCE: fluvannacounty.org/services/parks-and-recreation.

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