

“Old houses are preserved and restored because someone has loved them”.

– G. Edwin Brumbaugh

Dear Brinton family members and friends of the William Brinton 1704 House,

Last year I wrote that each year is a milestone in the story of the 1704 House. This year is no exception, indeed it will be marked as one of the most fortunate for the House and Historic Site.

60 years ago, members of the Brinton Family Association engaged restoration architect G. Edwin Brumbaugh to restore the 1704 House to its earliest and most authentic appearance. The project took four years. Using architectural, archaeological, and historical evidence, Brumbaugh discovered elements of the original 18th century structure that remained hidden beneath an elaborate mask of 19th century alterations. Brumbaugh’s meticulous research resulted in an accurate restoration of the House and provided the BAA with a wonderful opportunity, and obligation, to share this piece of Early American history with the public. 60 years later, the physical fabric of the historic structure that Brumbaugh so carefully restored is in need of significant conservation and repair.

Recently the BAA Board of Directors has wrestled with the responsibility of balancing limited resources between a continuous flow of necessary maintenance projects and arbor work needed to keep the House and grounds secure, and updating our programs in an historically accurate and relevant way – our obligation to the public. In the midst of this debate, a series of remarkable opportunities were presented to us.

John Milner, a new member of the BAA Board of Directors, admirer of Brumbaugh’s work, and preservation architect himself, offered to conduct a needs assessment of the House.

In specifying this work, John closely adhered to Mr. Brumbaugh’s original architectural drawings. He proposed a comprehensive scope of restoration and conservation work that included replacing the roof, painting exterior woodwork and siding, restoring leaded glass windows, repairing window frames, sash, cornice, dormer siding and flashing, replacing hardware,

pointing chimneys, gables and exterior stone walls, stuccoing the foundation, replacing wooden steps, basement doors and the well enclosure, repairing the privy cornice, replacing the privy doors and roof, a thermographic review of the electrical system, and replacing the gas furnace, AC system and dehumidifier; a needed but massive list.

John suggested we apply for a grant from the William B. Dietrich Foundation, a private foundation that is unusual in that it funds primarily historic restoration projects. Fortunately, they found the structure of the 1704 House worthy of preservation, and in July we received a substantial grant that, along with generous Board participation, will cover all of the restoration items outlined in John's scope of work.

We are indeed unusually fortunate that, thanks to the funding we received from the William B. Dietrich Foundation, the restoration and conservation issues facing us are being addressed, offering us an exceptional opportunity to focus our resources on improving our current programs, developing new initiatives, and raising the presentation and reputation of the House to a new level. So as you consider an Annual Appeal gift this year, I hope you will recognize the rare opportunity we have all been given, and help us build on that good fortune.