

Early Cabin gets a new roof thanks to donations and volunteers



Volunteers roof the Early Cabin in Fincastle

A year ago HFI fund raising efforts were under way to finance the roof for the historic Early cabin. Over the past several weekends the fruits of the funds and volunteer labor, and presto a new roof on the James Matten Early Cabin.

Here is the description of the efforts by HFI to raise the roof and replace it! From Carol Brenner of HFI:

Volunteers for Historic Fincastle, Inc. worked long hours during June to replace the cedar shake roof on the historic James Matten Early Cabin. The cabin was built in the 1790's and in 1982 HFI received a \$25,000 grant from the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission to restore the cabin. It was completed in 1987 with an additional \$53,000 contributed by HFI. To continue to maintain this historic structure, it was vital that the cedar shake roof be replaced. The shingles on the roof had deteriorated over the decades, allowing rain and moisture to cause damage to the historic building

This roof replacement project will cost near \$10,000 for shakes, supplies, and skilled labor. "Raise the Roof", an art sale and social event, was held last year by HFI as a fundraiser for the roof project. The event's art sales, auctions, and purchase of cedar shakes, as well as generous donations from individuals and corporations, raised the majority of the funds needed. HFI was able to complete the project due to the large number of volunteer hours from a small group of dedicated volunteers.

HFI volunteers worked weekends to remove the old shingles from the roof, which proved more difficult than expected. In addition to the volunteer work, professional roofing skills were provided by Jason Lucas and Andrew Brenner to install the new shakes, including roofing felt and underlayment.

The roof replacement committee lead by Kip Burton gives heart-felt thanks to the following volunteers: Carol and Alan Brenner, Brian and Marni Jones, Lyn Burton, Kirk Weiner, Ed McCurdy, Ben Showalter, and Scott VanCleaf. In addition, food and beverage were provided by Wendy Jones, scaffoldings and tools from Lucas Construction and Main Street Home Improvement, and a helpful hand to unload shingles from an unknown man at the county dump. Thanks also to those visitors who stopped by to satisfy their curiosity and provide moral support.

The James Matten Early Cabin is located at the corner of Murray and Water Streets. Tours of the building and town are available from HFI. The organization is grateful to all who for this project and other historic preservation projects provide time, energy, and vision to preserve for the future.

Photo and story by Cathy Benson