

# Tabby Tatler

Dataw Historic Foundation Newsletter

Volume III, Spring 2007

Featuring **"Interpretive Features Added to Sams' Plantation House"  
and "Antebellum Garden Completed"**



### From the President. . .

Welcome to the first 2007 issue of our DHF semi-annual newsletter. This issue will feature several extensive preservation projects plus a complete report on our membership as of the end of April.

After only four months into 2007, I sense a wonderful momentum in the number of our new projects and strong membership support. I believe we are well on our way to making 2007 the most successful in DHF's twelve plus-year history.

On the membership front, I am proud to report that our membership drive (begun in January) coupled with the success of the March Oyster Roast has resulted in a new record of 342 DHF members. My hope is that by the end of 2007 we will exceed a milestone of 350 members, the largest group on Dataw and close to 45% of resident homes. With this wonderful support, DHF has been able to raise a record \$17,000+ to fund new preservation projects.

In this issue, you will read about some of these exciting projects: The Antebellum Gardens near the ruins was made possible by joint efforts between the DIOA, our landscaping team and the DHF. Interesting new interpretive features have been added at the plantation site. We are in the beginning stages of an ambitious project that will collect, categorize and protect all of our artifacts and archives. With DIC Board approval, some improvements have been made in how the artifacts are displayed in the upstairs exhibit cases in the clubhouse. From all of this has come a major project to computerize archive files, and it is hoped that some day our historic records can be accessed and enjoyed by DHF members.

These are truly exciting times for the DHF. We are pleased that more and more residents (particularly new residents) are becoming aware that the Dataw plantation ruins are a unique treasure which help to make Dataw a special place to live.

I thank all our DHF members for your financial and volunteer support. For those of you who have yet to become members, I encourage you to join us because a healthy and growing DHF membership is vitally important to preserving Dataw's wonderful plantation history.

*Jack Brown*

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The Family Tree of  
Arthur Raoul Sams, Jr. & Martha Isabel McNeely Sams  
Margaret (Hill) Sams Fuller • Elizabeth (Hex) Sams Hay

President Jack Brown has recently completed a second family tree for the Sams family. He has now documented the lineage of lifetime DHF member Arthur Raoul Sams beginning with Bonum Sams, who migrated to Wadmalaw Island from England in 1681.

This "tree" along with the one for T. Reeve Sams, Jeanne Sams Aimar and Therese Sams Colquhoun is framed and on display on the second floor of the Clubhouse.

Don't miss the the new look to the display cases along with the model by Jerry Hubbard, which has been returned from on-loan to Historic Beaufort Foundation.

The Family Tree of  
T. Reeve Sams, S. Jeanne Sams Aimar & Therese C. Sams Colquhoun

### DHF Membership Info

DHF seeks support from all Island residents. If you are not currently a member, please return the form on the back of this newsletter.

# 2007 Oyster Roast

**Great food, good friends, good fun highlight the evening!  
Your enthusiastic support appreciated.**



*New chairs, Leslie Holbrook and Carol Looney*



*Kevin & Betsy Rhatigan and sons*

On March 12 at the ruins, over 240 DHF members enjoyed fine weather, plenty of fresh, "tasty" steamed oysters, a great selection of food and drink, good music and an array of delicious desserts at the 8th Annual Oyster Roast. All proved to be a perfect combination.

In addition to oysters, the new chairs of this sold-out event, Leslie Holbrook and Carol Looney, made sure that there was plenty of gumbo, corn bread, potato salad, 3-bean salad, chips and grilled hot dogs. Lynn Scoville coordinated the volunteers who made the fantastic desserts, which were served with coffee in the cannery.

DHF President Jack Brown welcomed attendees and introduced John Colgan who got activities rolling with a brief dedication of the new Antebellum Garden located near the ruins. (See article p. 3.)

Highlighting the evening was the drawing for five extraordinary raffle prizes. Many thanks go to Gloria Otley for putting together this profitable portion of the event. **Raffle winners were:**

- Oil painting of the cannery done by Tricia Gardner--Cris Mason*
- Photograph of egret taken by Jim Williams--Lee & Walker Merrill*
- "Sea Island Cotton" book donated by Bill Bush--Judy & Dick Foley*
- Chair custom-made by Ed Jerue--Peggy Lantelme*
- Potted palm donated by Cathy Crocker--Pat Young*

Music was provided by Jim Harper, and caterer Michael Reeves provided, prepared and served the oysters.

The Oyster Roast is the major fundraiser for the DHF, and this year a record of nearly \$5,000 was raised to help fund projects. Thanks to all who donated raffle items, all who volunteered to assist, all who bought raffle tickets and all who participated in the fun.



*Gloria & Victor Otley set up special raffle items.*



*John Colgan dedicates the Antebellum Garden*



## Other Recent DHF Projects



April 16. Cathy Crocker, Jack Brown and John Colgan timmed the overgrown weeds from the remains (chimney base) of the Lewis Reeve Sams house by the Morgan River. The house was destroyed in the 1893 hurricane.



March 5-6. Barbara Clinkenbeard and Jane Griffith discuss artifact mending, storage and display techniques along with identification and classification methods with Carol Poplin (center). Carol is a consultant for small museums from Charleston.



**Mending artifacts**



## Antebellum Gardens by John Colgan



*Christie showing Jeanne Sams Aimar the new Antebellum Gardens*

Among the many positive changes that Dataw Historic Foundation has effected over this past year is the new Antebellum Gardens. They add great beauty and their own history to the B. B. Sams Plantation ruins. If you haven't visited the ruins lately, please stop by and take a look. There is even a bench there for you to relax and enjoy the sweet fragrances and peaceful surroundings.

An inviting new curved pathway leads from the parking lot to the main house area. Visitors enter through a simple rough-hewn atrium, covered with flowering native cross vines dating from 1783. Surrounding the posts of the atrium are cast iron plants, which originated in China and were imported to this area in 1824.

Along the path, the eyes are drawn to native flowering dogwoods dating to 1771, crepe myrtle trees first imported from China in 1807, azaleas imported from Japan in 1845 and native azaleas dating to 1804.

In all, DHF, with the enthusiastic support of Christie Henry and her excellent landscaping team has planted over 40 different species of bushes and trees, all of which pre-date the Civil War.

Last year, when Christie first proposed removing the tangle of overgrowth next to the rest room, DHF suggested that, given its proximity to the plantation ruins, the area be replanted in landscaping that reflected the historic nature of the area. "What would B. B. Sams have planted?" we asked.

Christie started to research this and soon discovered the rich horticultural history of plantation life! Planters and their families regularly bought plants which appeared in English and American garden catalogs and exchanged clippings with one another all along the Southeastern coast. Coastal vessels delivered "mail order" plants along with ice, and the many other essentials which made life pleasant in the Antebellum south.

As the work proceeded, DHF approached Christie and the DIOA with a proposal to extend the Antebellum Gardens to include the area between the parking lot and the entry to the plantation ruins. DHF agreed to provide \$2,600 to fund the purchase and shipping costs of trees and plants, the purchase of descriptive plant tags, the purchase of pressure-treated posts for the atrium and the creation of a pathway. DIOA agreed to install irrigation and to plant and maintain the area.



*The atrium with the flowering native cross vines which marks the pathway into the ruins.*



*An example of the descriptive plant tags labeling each of the species.*

We think that this is a "win, win" arrangement that enhances the appeal of the plantation ruins and benefits the entire island!

Our thanks go to Christie Henry and her wonderful landscaping team for their hard work and dedication to the beautification of the ruins as well as all of Dataw Island.





# 2007 DHF Members

## Membership Categories

- **Lifetime Members.** Those whose lifetime contribution to the DHF is \$2,500 or more.
- **Honorary Members.** Limited to those with an ancestral connection to Dataw Island. This includes Sams family descendants and family descendents of other prior owners of Dataw Island.
- **Friends of DHF.** Those who have made a significant contribution to or have a special connection to DHF.
- **Benefactors (\$250)**    • **Patrons (\$100)**    • **Supporters (\$50)**    • **Members (\$30)**

### Lifetime Members

Arthur R. & Martha Sams, Jr.

*Arthur is direct paternal great,  
great grandson of B. B. Sams*

### Honorary Members

Dr. Charles & Jeanne (Sams) Aimar\*\*

Charles & Virginia Aimar\*\*

Tom & Susan Sams Allen\*\*

Therese Colquhoun

Marvin & Cilla Dukes\*\*\*

John & Jeanne Rogers\*\*\*

Dr. Larry & Margot Rowland\*\*

T. Reeve & Betty Sams

### Friends of DHF

Dr. Herb & Beryl Arnold

Sonny & Mary Bishop

Colin & Jane (Bruce) Brooker

Lois Cochrane\*\*

Marj Dehls\*\*\*

Martha (John) Hamilton\*\*\*\*

Jerry & Linda Hubbard

Brenda (James) Norris\*

Dr. Eric & Carol Poplin

Rick & Mary Wightman\*\*\*\*

\* also Benefactors

\*\* also Patrons

\*\*\* also Supporters

\*\*\*\* also Members

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David & Barbara Clinkenbeard

Thomas & Cathy Crocker

James & Anne Kistler

Dr. Alan & Sheila Korhammer

Bill & Henrietta Lowndes

John & Anita Mahoney

John & Cece Megrue

### Patrons

Sal & Dorothy Calvi

Douglas & Katie Campbell

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Bryant & Mary Beth Day

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Scribner & Ann Fauver

Thomas & Ann Fischer

Joyce Foley

Larry & Billie Gaenzle

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Robert Greene

Charles & Pamela Hammel

Joan Hedley

Joel & Ann Holden

Michael & Maureen Hynes

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Kenneth & Susan Pepper

George & Gail Roberts

Peter & Sherry Ruys

Herman & Kathee Schmit

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Barbara Titus

Fargo & Nina Thompson

Jan & Judy Turner

Keith & Karen Waldrop

Taylor & Robin Weeman

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Roger & Blythe Finlay

William & Nancy Foley

Robbie Foote & James Gurnham

Joseph & Mary Ann Foutch

George & June Gans

Jan & Mern Gouza

Alex & Lee Greene

Robert & Jane Griffith

Joseph & Merle Happe

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G. William Hill

Chipper & Peggy Hoff

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Paul & Susan Jorgensen

Dr. Peter & Ruthie King



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Jim & Pat Lewis  
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Richard & Dottie Marsh  
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Robert & Roberta Gunderson  
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Continued

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Marvin & Charlotte Melton  
Don & Lynn Meyer  
Gardner & Norma Miller  
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Roy & Margaret Moore III  
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Arthur & Barbara Morrow  
Ben & Betty Muncil  
Francis & Joell Newton  
Norman & Cissy Nichols  
Bob & Dorothy North

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Douglas & Denise Ogden  
Victor & Gloria Otley  
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William & Jan Perry  
Michael & Joanna Petrie  
Robert & Micki Pogachnick  
Gertrude Potters  
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Rod & Marcia Rohrbaugh  
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Charles & Collette Russell  
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Lewis & Beverly White  
James & Dorothy White  
Thomas & Ellie White  
Barbara Wietfeldt  
Jim & Anne Williams  
Fred & Nancy Willson  
Robert Wishart & Dale Martin  
Al & Terry Wood  
Kenneth & Bonnie Wright  
David & Beverly Yoder

### Research Begins on Cotton Dike Cemetery

At the suggestion of (and in conjunction with) Mr. Andrew Robinson (who at one time lived on Dataw), DHF, under the direction of John Colgan, is doing family name research in order to try to identify those buried in the cemetery known as the "Slave Cemetery" at the end of Cotton Dike Road.

This historical burial ground may be the final resting place of 18th and 19th century African slaves, free African-Americans and their descendents who greatly contributed to the commerce, social and religious life of Datha Island and the greater Beaufort area.

The Cotton Dike Cemetery is a tangible reminder of area plantation farmers' dependence on slave labor from the mid-1700s to 1864. It is a reflection of the traditions of the African-American slave population. Death rituals and burial practices formed an important part of those traditions, and death itself carried great significance among slaves throughout the South.

The Cotton Dike Cemetery was much larger than it appears today. Over the years, erosion has reduced the cemetery to its present size. Last year, DHF employed ground penetration radar to try to determine the number and position of the remaining graves. A total of 38 possible/probable graves were discovered.

Once the research is concluded, a sign will be erected that will rededicate this area to those who rest there.

### Historic Committee Busy

Under the direction of Barbara Clinkenbeard, the committee has undertaken a monumental task. Over the past two years, they have collected all the Dataw artifacts from attics and garages all over the island (the subject of a future story), and have been methodically working toward two goals:

**1) Collect, mark and create a basic catalog** of all the artifacts dug and found on the Island. There have been three professional digs carried out since the founding of Dataw, each with a different numbering and designation system. They are putting these into one catalog--starting with "number one"; currently they are well over number 500--and still going! Some minute pieces have four sets of numbers on them!

**2) Create a working archive system** for all historic and current papers, maps, photos, etc. Jane Griffith is slowly getting a "handle" on vast amounts of material. She has culled, filed and refiled.

Ultimately, they hope to have all artifacts effectively displayed or systematically stored in one place; and have the catalog, along with all related materials, electronically stored so that these resources would be available to DHF members.

Joel Holden has been assisting the committee in the search for appropriate software to enable efficient data input and produce desired results.

# Interpretive Features Added to Sams' Plantation House

by Cathy Crocker



*Sill beams*

In DHF's on-going effort to portray the B. B. Sams house as the center of plantation life on Dataw between 1786 and 1861, we have added two components to the house.

Floor joists have been installed in the east and west wings which indicate the

height of the floor when the house was rebuilt and the wings were added in 1819. The joists, which weigh approximately 250 lbs. each, were put in place by Rick Wightman and some of his associates. First Rick had to put in sill beams upon which the joists would rest. After the joists were in place, he had to pack them with tabby cement so that they would remain firmly in place.



*Main entrance stairway*



*West wing floor joists*

Thirteen tags have been attached to the house which identify architectural features such as the door to the original house, chimney bases and tabby pour lines. On the back side, the main entrance stairway, an area few observers would recognize, is tagged. We hope these tags will help visitors to more clearly interpret what they are seeing.



*Rick Wightman*



*Support for porch which linked the two wings.*

This summer, the walls surrounding the Sams family cemetery will be repaired. Parts of the stucco finish have broken off leaving gaps where moisture enters and causes more damage.



**Original house built circa 1786**

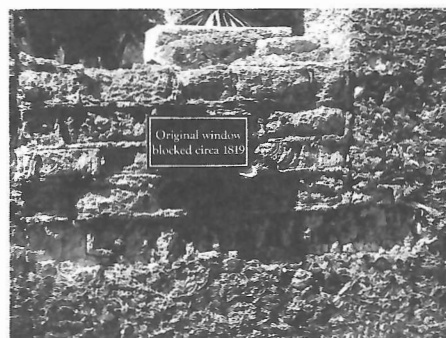
*The original section of the house is identified.*

Two other projects are also in the works. Another interpretive sign, this one an isometric view of the house showing framing timbers and partially restored wall sections will clearly define the layout of this historic building. Finally, we will display a "cradle" mold which was used in the formation of tabby building blocks. A mixture of sand, lime, water and oyster shells would have been poured into the mold where it would harden to form the building blocks for the foundation and walls.



*Chimney base in lower-level storage area.*

Your membership and support for special events and projects has made this work possible.



*A window in the original house was filled in when the wings were added.*



Watch for a new 2007  
**DHF Christmas Card**  
 The special photograph taken in the ruins by Dick Golobic reflects the spirit of the season. Available this fall.

Save the date!  
**Fall DHF Fishfry**  
 Monday, October 15



**Check out the Redesigned DHF Display Cases in the Clubhouse**

Barbara Clinkenbeard and Jane Griffith have painstakingly redone the display cases on the second floor of the Clubhouse. Museum consultant Carol Poplin assisted with the project. See if you can identify the story line captured in each of the cases:

- Architecture of the plantation (tabby, brick column, metal hinges, pintels, etc.)
- Sams family (portraits, finer china & glassware, buttons, parts of a harmonica buckles, a dress and shaw, etc.)
- Slaves (the work, their lives)
- Rev. James Julius Sams, who wrote the diary that shed so much light on plantation life here at Dataw (his Bible and the family Coat-of-Arms)
- Kate Gleason (an old framed newspaper article)
- DHF awards (HBF Danner award and Live Oak Society certificate)

**Also take some time to appreciate:**

- Scale model of Sams Plantation house done by Jerry Hubbard
- Two framed Sams family trees done by Jack Brown
- Case depicting plantation time line



**There's still time to become a 2007 member of the DHF.**



Membership entitles you to attend DHF special functions; and, most importantly, it helps fund those projects which enable the rich Dataw Island history to become an important part of the total Dataw experience.

*Your membership is tax deductible as we are a 501 C3 organization.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$250 (Benefactor) \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 (Patron) \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 (Supporter) \_\_\_\_\_ \$30 (Member)

Return this form to Pat Bell, Membership Chair, 226 Locust Fence **OR** mail it to  
**Dataw Historic Foundation • P.O. Box 819 • Beaufort, SC 29901**