Bostwick House, MD 2018    September 9 - November 4, 2018

PROJECT PARTNERS: University of Maryland school of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, the Town of Bladensburg, and the George A. & Carmel D. Aman Memorial Trust.

PROJECT SITE DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY:

Bostwick House set a new record for HistoriCorps: constructed in 1746, this was the oldest building we’ve ever worked on. Thirty years before the Declaration of Independence, Christopher Lowndes built this 2 1/2-story brick structure in colonial Bladensburg, Maryland to take advantage of the trade the nearby port provided. The stupendous buttress against the house’s chimney was added in 1793. During the building’s 270 years of life, a number of period-specific details have been added, including its prominent 19th century porch. Bostwick House is on the National Register of Historic Places and a celebrated feature of the town of Bladensburg.

In 2012, the Washington Post published “Bladensburg battles to preserve historic Bostwick House” that shares the story of how this energetic community is working to save a cultural icon.
Early American history buffs can dig deep into an 18th century timeline of the goings-on of the community and family of Bostwick House here. Some of the more interesting details include a record of ads placed by Mr. Lowndes, many of them for runaway horses and servants. An excerpt from this extensive timeline is below:

“Nov. 8, 1745:
Another notice posted by Lowndes, this time regarding a runaway servant, appeared in the Maryland Gazette for three consecutive weeks.

“Run away from the Subscriber, living at Bladensburg in Prince George’s County, the 28th of October last, a Servant Man name John Bateman, by trade a Stone Mason or Bricklayer, born in Cheshire, speaks broad English, and is very much addicted to Drinking. He had on when he went away a snuff colour’d Broad cloth Coat, a blue Waist-coat, with white Metal Buttons, and Leather Breeches of an Olive Colour, his Head lately close shaved, and neither Cap nor Wig with him. Whoever brings the said Servant to the Subscriber, shall have Forty Shillings more than the Law allows, paid by CHRISTOPHER LOWNDES.

“This servant was very likely involved in the construction of Bostwick House. The house’s architectural details, particularly the original pilasters which flanked the front entrance, resembled those found on Overton, a Lowndes family home in Cheshire, England. The similar stonework that once adorned the front façade of Bostwick may have been the handiwork of a native Cheshire stone mason – such as John Bateman.” (source)

We were excited to have worked with members from the Association for Preservation Technology – Washington, D.C. chapter on this project!

**SCOPE OF WORK:** Volunteers develop their preservation skills by working with expert field staff to accomplish the following tasks:

- Rehabilitate porch columns on the house and kitchen, floor, ceiling, and trim repairs on both porches: 40%
- Install new roofing on both porches, make repairs to roof framing as needed: 40%
• Scraping and painting both porches: 15%
• Repair existing brick piers and build additional pier for increased porch support: 5%

WHERE: This project site was easily accessible by public transportation coming from Washington, D.C. and other regional hubs! Bostwick House is located at 3901 48th Street, Bladensburg, Prince George’s County, Maryland (map).

LOCAL AND AREA TOURISM: Volunteers did not have to travel far to enjoy the wealth of attractions in Prince George's County, the site of our project. Wonderful local options were available at www.experienceprincegeorges.com. Some made time for a trip to the Bladensburg Waterfront Park & Battle of Bladensburg Visitor Center, as well as the Maryland Milestones/Anacostia Trails Heritage Area.

This region is rich with both modern and historical cultural tourism activities. Volunteers had access to a wide variety of recreational activities, from museums to restaurants to movies to shows near the project site. You could drive just beyond Bladensburg’s boundaries for bucket-list visits to our nation’s capital of Washington, D.C. – only 20 minutes away – and visit such famous sites as the National Mall, Smithsonian Institution, the White House, and much, much more. Don’t forget to sample the world-famous seafood of the Chesapeake Bay, and drop in on Baltimore and Annapolis while you’re in the area – both are also less than 30 minutes away!

For those more adventurous, some didn’t miss out on excellent mountain biking and rails-to-trails rides in the area. Lastly, make sure to save time for a trip to the incredible Shenandoah National Park, just 2 hours from the Bostwick House!