

# SAVE MARY'S MEADOWS

## *A National Historic Treasure*

### What is Mary's Meadows?

Known today as The Meadows, Mary's Meadows is a historic plantation located in Abingdon. Once 3,000 acres, the Town of Abingdon owns 40 acres which includes the mansion house and outbuildings. Mary's Meadows' history covers the pre-colonial, colonial, antebellum, slavery, Civil War, and Reconstruction eras.

### Where is Mary's Meadows?



In order to appreciate Mary's Meadows, one must see it. It is only a ten-minute walk from the beginning of the Creeper Trail in Abingdon. Walk past the Railroad "Y" Park. From the far end of the "Y" park go to the bench that reads "In Loving Memory of Dick and Patti Pepin..." Just a few feet further you will see Mary's Meadows through an opening in the trees to the right side of the trail. In the distance you will see the mansion house's upper stories. Mary's Meadows includes not only the mansion, but outbuildings and 40 acres of beautiful rolling landscape. From where the farm road crosses the trail and beyond, the meadows, mansion, a former slave cottage, silo and barns can be seen through the trees. **This is what we need to save!**

### Why Save Mary's Meadows?

A recent archaeological study recommends that the mansion, outbuildings (including former slave quarters), and surrounding landscape features are eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, which contributes fittingly to Abingdon's identity and to the tourism that drives its economic future.

- Home of former Virginia Governor Wyndham Robertson, a direct descendant of Pocahontas, and his son, Francis Smith Robertson, an aide to General J.E.B. Stuart during the Civil War.
- It borders our world famous Virginia Creeper National Recreation Trail.
- It houses a multitude of wildlife, springs, creeks, ponds and plant life.
- Further archaeological excavation could yield artifacts from Native and African American cultures, the Southern slave trade, and the colonial, Civil War and antebellum eras.
- It is the site of Camp Glenrochie, the first girls' camp in the United States.
- It goes almost to the interstate and is the only green space left between the Trail and the interstate.

## Why is Mary's Meadows in Jeopardy?

The Town Council of Abingdon has voted to bury Mary's Meadows under tons of dirt. It will then be leveled for a sports complex. Better, less costly, more accessible, and healthier sites are available that conform to the current Comprehensive Plan. Tons of asphalt will be required to build the entrance roads, exit roads, and parking lots. There is no need to destroy the ambiance of the Creeper Trail or Mary's Meadows. Consequences of destroying Mary's Meadows to build a sports complex would include:

- Increased traffic and congestion from exit 17 down Green Spring Road.
- Destruction of fragile water sources and wildlife.
- Artificial lights and noise would destroy the tranquility of the Creeper Trail and neighborhood forever.
- A costly commitment, including **borrowing \$10 million in bonds and inevitably higher taxes for us all.**

**ABOUT 1817, CAPTAIN FRANCIS SMITH AND HIS WIFE BOUGHT THE PROPERTY AND NAMED IT MARY'S MEADOWS IN HONOR OF THEIR FIVE-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER. IN 1831, AT THE AGE OF 19, MARY MARRIED WYNDHAM ROBERTSON, A DIRECT DECENDANT OF POCAHONTAS, WHO BECAME THE 27<sup>th</sup> GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA.**

**MARY'S MEADOWS IS A PROPERTY OF NOT ONLY LOCAL BUT NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE. IT MUST BE PRESERVED, IN ITS ENTIRETY, FOR CURRENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS. NOT JUST A HOUSE. THE MANSION HOUSE, OUTBUILDINGS AND PROPERTY TOGETHER ARE MARY'S MEADOWS.**

## What Can You Do TO SAVE Mary's Meadows?

Sign the petition requesting that Abingdon Town Council SAVE MARY'S MEADOWS.

Write or e-mail your town council members expressing your desire to SAVE MARY'S MEADOWS. Speak at Town Council meetings.

Join Friends of Abingdon, Inc., a citizens' group that works for open, responsible, and responsive local government. Come to the group's meetings.

Request SAVE MARY'S MEADOWS yard signs and bumper stickers. Call Karen or Michael (276) 274-3196.

For more information contact:

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