

## Renovation Nears Completion

By Josh Brown and Eric F. Mease

As we begin the New Year, Historic Elk Landing is about to begin a new era... or should that be a "restored" era? After a \$360,000 face-lift, the first floor of the Hollingsworth House is nearly completed. Soon the final touches will be placed on the old center staircase handrail, the last dab of paint will grace the newly plastered walls, and the brand new heating and air conditioning system (HVAC) will be fully calibrated. Finally, after nearly a year of work, the Hollingsworth House will reopen to the public.

Construction manager, Josh Brown, says the foundation is receiving a lot for its money. "In addition to the railings, painting, and HVAC," Josh notes, "the outside walls were restuccoed where necessary. The sagging smoke house was tied back into the main structure, 150 year old wooden floors were refinished (not to brand new, but to a gently used look), wooden sills that meet the roof were replaced, and shutters were refinished or replaced to match century old originals."

Josh says the interior work accounts for most of the effort. "The first floor of the house is divided into 4 zones for the air conditioning and 3 zones for the heating system," Josh points out. "The basement, which was nearly nonexistent, has a new concrete floor, new first floor support columns,

and 3 dehumidifiers all to comply with Historical Trust standards. Many of the 150 year old windows were in bad shape too", Josh remembers. "Kerry Grubb of Grubb Construction, project contractor, took all of the windows out, reglazed and repainted them. Some of them were weatherized as well."

While the chimneys were cleaned and the bricks repointed, Josh explains that the house fireplaces will remain cold. "The kitchen fireplace may work," Josh says, "but probably not right away. We worry a lot about fire. We found an old kettle hook that was once used in the kitchen hearth. When we find a kettle to match, we may reinstall it and try it." As for the other first floor fireplaces, Josh says "the one in the dining room is being used to run ventilation pipes to the outside. The one in the living room will have a new marble mantel based on pieces of the original found in the basement."

Sometime between now and our annual Defender's Day observance in late April, the Hollingsworth House will be reopened to the public in grand style. Keep tabs on the story by checking the web site at [www.elklanding.com](http://www.elklanding.com) for updates and further information.

## President Dixon Steps Down

By Bob Bryson and Eric F. Mease

He started with a dream and a lease on a run-down property at the end of a dead end street in Elkton, Maryland. Now, five years later, Historic Elk Landing Foundation President Mike Dixon steps down from that position after raising over \$1.5 million in funding, supervising the stabilization of the 200 plus year old Stone House and a \$350,000 renovation of the first floor of the equally old Hollingsworth House. Also during his presidency, Mike saw the organization of the foundation board of directors, establishment of the annual observance of Defenders Day in April and British Invasion Day in late August, archaeological research yielding artifacts dating back hundreds of years, the dating of both the Stone House and Hollingsworth House, recovery, cataloguing, and preservation of ancient Hollingsworth family documents, and opening up the property to group tours and numerous special events ranging from family reunions to ghost tours.

Incoming Foundation board president, Judge Kenneth Wilcox, had high praise for his predecessor.

"Those of us who have witnessed and been involved with the Foundation's accomplishments," Judge Wilcox said, "can proudly look back on the phenomenal progress made under Mike's leadership. From the start of the Foundation, there was no question as to the person who should lead the effort; one who had an uncanny grasp and knowledge of things historic, our reason for being; coupled with intellect, good business sense and dedication to the community, called 'community spirit'.

One can appreciate his dedication and contributions during the formative years of what will most certainly become known as a shining example of historic preservation."

Judge Wilcox noted that Mike will remain on the board as Chairman of the Historic Committee.

"No more qualified person could be named to that post. We applaud his past efforts and dedication to the Foundation and look forward to viewing and experiencing the results of his handiwork as chair of the Historic Committee."