

# Narrative Description of Activities

Reliving History, Inc. was organized exclusively for educational and charitable purposes. As an organization of volunteers, we will bring history to life and enable citizens to make cultural heritage a valuable part of their lives. We support the ca. 1751 Peter Burr House (oldest wood frame structure in the state of West Virginia) owned by the Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission. A rare treasure, the house reflects cultural roots that are intertwined in a fabric of our American heritage and offers a rich and valuable opportunity for learners of all ages.

Our vision is to excel in providing the highest possible quality of living history experience. We have a mission to help others comprehend the past by reliving it through the eyes and experiences of those who were there, and to get beyond judging the past solely in terms of present-day norms and values. We will utilize lessons from the past as useful tools to modern decision-making. History is only useful if it helps us to better understand ourselves and others and as it helps us to choose our paths into the future.

Our primary objective is to bring the rare treasure to its rightful place of honored respect through interpretive history. With a primary focus on the time period of 1750-1800, we also realize the historic house has seen history in the making from all time frames since 1751 and should not be excluded from inclusion in some educational programming reflecting those times. As bi-products of the educational programming, we will:

- Build a historic backdrop that will help to better define the historic house in context with lives that connected to it;
- Through educational programming, assist the local agency that owns the house by generating support for restoration and preservation of the house in perpetuity;
- Endear the community to the house by weaving charitable service into the educational programming to reflect the cultural values of early settlers.

Reliving History, Inc. seeks to share the oldest surviving wood-frame house in West Virginia with the public by making it a center of focus reflecting the local cultures of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. In sharing the historic house, we hope to increase public support for the house to insure its preservation and restoration well into the future for generations to come.

## **Problem:**

One of the most valuable historic treasures in the state of West Virginia has existed for 258 years but (until recently) has gone largely unnoticed. It is not the home of a Virginia plantation owner, but instead of a yeoman farmer, a hard-working family man, who like others today are among the bedrock of society. The Peter Burr House is owned and protected by a local government agency that normally allocates a budget of about \$15,000-\$20,000 per year for preservation and minimum restoration of the property. This amount is not enough to keep the property open to the public for educational experience except on very infrequent occasions. Lack of funds to further restore the property to maximum benefit for the public also limits educational value. While preservation and restoration of the rare historic property is under the jurisdiction of the local agency, raising the status of the property to a position of inherent value in the community

belongs to those within the general public who would come to treasure the property via meaningful experiential use. Reliving History, Inc. therefore has organized as an independent non-profit organization to focus specifically on interpretive education and charitable service. “Neighbors helping neighbors” was a cultural necessity in new frontiers as early settlers survived common challenges together.

Reliving History, Inc. is not a unit of the governmental agency that owns the property and has no members of our board in decision-making positions in that agency. We share an interest in the same piece of public property, and because of that shared interest are supportive of each other on an informal basis. Reliving History, Inc. must seek approval from the owner for any plans that in any way might affect the physical condition of the property. Likewise, with the permission of that agency, Reliving History, Inc. will cooperate in building public support and seeking mutually beneficial resources to further make the facilities compatible for educational programming and charitable service.

### **Significance of the Property to Society:**

The Peter Burr House, located in Jefferson County, West Virginia, was built ca. 1751 and today is the oldest surviving wood-frame house in the state. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places since April 09, 1982 (NRHP Reference#: 82004322), the property is owned and preserved by the Jefferson County (WV) Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC).

The site is significant for a number of reasons and deserves organized support for the purpose of educating the public of its value in a meaningful way that translates into on-going benefits to society. The significance of the property spans centuries and has roots in history, culture, agriculture, politics, and even current environmental issues.

Quoting Carmen Creamer, current president of the Jefferson County Historical Society, the Peter Burr House “constructed around 1751, only twenty years after the arrival of the first white settlers,” is significant for the following reasons:

1. It “is one of less than a dozen structures in the state that survive from the pre-1760 period.”
2. It “is associated with the prominent Burr family, being built by Peter Burr, an early settler from Connecticut and a cousin of Aaron Burr.”
3. It “is an extremely rare example of an early settlement homestead; the remaining 5 structures of this period in Jefferson County are stone or partially stone and are more representative of the manor house or large estate-oriented building.”
4. “A 1988 survey conducted by Dr. Charles Hulse indicates the presence of significant archaeological deposits on the site of the house.”

Ms. Creamer also quotes other references: “. . . editors of a pictorial guide to the historic sites of the state . . . list the Peter Burr house immediately after Harpers Ferry as one of the most significant historic buildings in the county” (Cohen and Pauley 1985). The house also is “Recognized as significant . . . by the National Park Service, who completed an Historic American Building Survey (HABS) on the buildings in 1983.” (Source: Creamer, Carmen Weber. *The Stabilization of the Peter Burr House.* See Attachment G)

The family that built and inhabited the house represents a culture that was bedrock among the early settlers but not the culture normally depicted in history books. Peter Burr’s history, in the

Northern Neck of the Colony of Virginia, was at a site of documented accounts that connect with George Washington and other well-noted people in American history. The house is a rare example of architecture not normally found in the wilderness of new frontier west of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Archaeology has unearthed artifacts from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century that aide in helping us to better understand the people who lived in the house. Peter Burr, Sr. was a brother to an original founder the College of New Jersey, now known Princeton University, and uncle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President of the United States. Through this connection, some of the Burr family was closely connected to Rev. Jonathan Edwards and the Great Awakening. By the Revolutionary War period, Peter Burr, Jr. was providing supplies to the Continental Army, while his cousin Thaddeus Burr was busy in Fairfield, CT assisting George Washington's Culper Spy Ring. Like his religious ancestors before him, Peter Burr, Jr. was an original founder of two surviving churches in today's Jefferson County. The central location of the Peter Burr property in the county today also makes it a logical site for administrating a historical focus. Other features on the property add to its educational value to the community.

These reflect only a part of the history and current relevance that is represented by a house that some have called "one of West Virginia's most important historic treasures." The above only begins to address reasons why the efforts of Reliving History, Inc. and other entities should come together in support of this fine surviving piece of Americana. For a detailed summary of why the property is so valuable see attachments F & G: "*Historical Significance of the Peter Burr House and Property*," by Joyce Cole and "*The Stabilization of the Peter Burr House*," by Carmen Weber Creamer.

### **Process:**

Unless interpretive programming adequately defines the importance of the property, the Peter Burr House could continue (as it has for the last 258 years) to be of unknown value. A symbiotic relationship is needed between the general public and the public's awareness, appreciation, and on-going use of the property. That symbiotic relationship will be driven by interpretive programming and charitable service to the community. As individuals experience and benefit from the programming in meaningful ways, their support for the property and programming will increase. People are drawn to that which meets their needs, and in return they benefit from the sustainability of the program and that which is of value to them.

Therefore, while preservation and restoration of the historic property is the responsibility of the local Historic Landmarks Commission, interpretive programming is a priority of Reliving History, Inc., formed specifically and exclusively for charitable and educational purposes related to advancing the community's appreciation for the historic treasure.

### **Who, What, When, Where, and How:**

Reliving History, Inc. is the result of planning that began in November 2008 (following the first homecoming of Burr family descendants in 200 years) and culminated in official organization on June 24, 2009. We are very small and very new, but we have a well-laid plan and are driven by an uncommon passion. Some of our members have DNA common to the early settler who built the house, and though in most cases our most recent common ancestor lived some 7 generations ago, our passion is rooted in a value that is far less temporal than many people experience in this society.

Planning and delivery of our first year's activities has taken a back seat out of necessity to the laying of our foundation: i.e. the formal process of incorporating and seeking tax exempt status. With these tasks nearly accomplished in our first year, the plans will soon turn toward greater volunteer recruitment and program delivery. And here we meet with a conundrum. How exactly do we describe planned activities that are still highly in a planning stage? Aware that we will be able to further define anticipated new projects each year with our annual reporting, it is our desire here to describe our most immediate plans which are highly reflective of what our general plans for the future will be and to utilize the annual Form 990 or 990-EZ process for continued safeguards to assure that we stay within acceptable guidelines. The following activities are rooted in representative past events but reflect feasible yet challenging future success dependent primarily on the ability to raise the needed funds. Public support and public benefit become the symbiotic mechanism that drives the exempt purpose of Reliving History, Inc.

The key to Reliving History, Inc's programming is to blend educational with charitable service through development of a cast of characters who will reflect the historic culture, life-style, and values of the family who built and lived in the Peter Burr House. This cast of characters will be the spirit of the Burr family in the area. The volunteers will be taught 18<sup>th</sup> life-style skills including but not limited to agricultural and survival skills. They will be dressed in period clothing and will in essence become representatives from the 18<sup>th</sup> century living, breathing, and walking in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. They will plan and deliver educational events and programs on-site at the Peter Burr property and other historic sites of the time period. While in period clothing, volunteers will also deliver charitable services in the community, going to the people, meeting real needs, and drawing them back to the property. Like visitors from another time, they will become a recognized "presence" in Jefferson County, WV and on occasions in surrounding areas. Off-site activities are designed to take cultural heritage values and life-style awareness to the people of Jefferson County, WV and the area we consider local (See Part II-5 – Bylaws in Attachments).

In addition to on-site and off-site activities, Reliving History, Inc. is committed to networking with other historic sites that help to define an accurate interpretation of the 1748-1800 times locally. By helping to create a historically-correct backdrop of the local area, our educational delivery can benefit from the larger visual and experiential context. This is an important factor that has been seriously lacking locally in the past. The history is rich yet fragmented; the pieces have not been connected in such a way as to bring into focus an accurate perspective.

## **Recent and Future Events**

### **I. Cast of Characters in period dress.**

Characters in period dress will be a primary delivery vehicle for the majority of the programming for Reliving History, Inc. The characters will portray family and friends of Peter Burr and historic characters of the time. They will develop a "presence" in the community reflective of the times and culture of the yeoman farm family. Whether on-site or off-site, they will become synonymous with the Peter Burr property similar to the way Mickey Mouse is synonymous with Disneyland. In period dress, these volunteers (and in time possibly AmeriCorps members) will conduct educational activities on-site at the Peter

Burr House and off-site in schools, the community, and various settings. They will also reflect the 18<sup>th</sup> century culture of people helping each other as early settlers did when trying to survive under difficult circumstances.

## II. On-Site Workshops and Programs at the Peter Burr House

- A. **Clothing Workshops and Period Sewing Guilds.** To expect volunteers to dress consistently accurate in clothing of the times, clothing workshops and sewing guilds will be needed. In 2009, our 18th century life-style specialist (Dr. Deborah Rochefort) dressed a Barbie doll to demonstrate to children the numerous underclothes worn by the 18th century women. This doll was a big hit with young girls at the Heritage Day event. Dr. Rochefort with the help of other skilled volunteers (as available) will launch clothing workshops and hopefully a sewing guild on-site at the Peter Burr House. Volunteers will also work on garments at home as needed. These workshops will include making buttons by hand and other necessities for use on period clothing. The first button-making workshop was conducted in Oct 2009 at the Peter Burr House and produced the first of the buttons that will be needed for the men's period shirts and waistcoats. Expenses for these workshops will include fairly costly, difficult-to-secure fabrics and expert guidance in technique. The clothing sewn by hand will also require considerable time. Funds will have to be raised and little opportunity for cost recovery on this element of the program is foreseen.
- B. **Colonial Cooking Workshops and Programming.** A past event included serving an 18<sup>th</sup> century "supper" consisting of ham boiled in apple cider, stew seasoned with wine (alcohol cooked out), fresh-milled apple cider, apple butter, brick-oven-baked artisan sourdough bread, home-churned butter, apple dumplings, and bread pudding flavored with rose water. Future focuses will also explore assembling cookbooks with period recipes, and tasting and sampling of colonial "fixins" at various events. Expenses will include costs of food and period-correct utensils for cooking. Both can be costly as many colonial ingredients are no longer easily available and 18<sup>th</sup> century cooking equipment is now priced at antique prices. There is potential for some cost recovery via sale of samples, canned foods, or cookbooks.
- C. **Brick-Over Bread Baking Classes.** Dr Theriault, our vice chairman, has long taught the craft of artisan bread baking in the reconstructed brick oven at the Peter Burr House. His willingness to teach our volunteers will allow them to bake bread, soft pretzels, and specialty rolls for resale as well as to demonstrate the mainstay of food for families in the mid to late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Expenses for this project are relatively low as the brick oven already exists and the main ingredients can be purchased in grocery stores. This project is valuable for its interpretive benefits but also for fund-raising possibilities. The artisan bread sells easily.
- D. **Life-Style and Crafts.** In addition to classes for volunteers to learn 18<sup>th</sup> century skills, period workshops and classes on-site at the Peter Burr House for the public will be provided. These will vary with a view of continually introducing new life-style skills, culture, and other history. An event tentatively planned for spring 2010 will include an 8 ft x 8 ft Lincoln Log cabin to be assembled by youth in a day-long event focused on

period activities connected to frontier life-style when modern innovation was not yet thought of. During colonial days, friends and family assembled to build houses and barns together. Men often did the construction as women cooked. Work would be followed by food, games, and celebrating. These experiences will be designed for period authenticity by volunteers such as: Dr William Theriault and Dr. Rochefort. We have talked with representatives of a Native American organization about providing demos that reflect life on the VA frontier prior to the French and Indian War. We plan later in the season to invite some representatives from the WV Humanities Council's History Alive program to visit. These events will be open to the general public, but especially designed for school children. The activities could have considerable expense depending on types of activities and supplies needed. The activities also have cost-recovery potential if admissions or fees are charged.

- E. **Archaeology.** Archaeology conducted by our archaeologist (Kristen Marino) is especially interesting, as the artifacts were found on the property and include buttons and marbles that reflect children most likely at play. Two 1700s coins are particularly interesting. Middle school children were recruited to help in 2003 with an archaeological dig where artifacts were unearthed and never processed. Kristen has organized cleaning and processing events with volunteer assistance and is currently recruiting high school students to help. A portable exhibit is anticipated by spring 2010. This program has little or no foreseeable cost recovery. Volunteer assistance in processing but other expenses are costly because archival containers and special display cases are needed. The bread baker's guild has designated all their income for 2009 for the archaeology program.
- F. **Agricultural.** The 9.5 acre Peter Burr property has value to youth who could use the property to further their interests in agriculture via a working relationship between local 4-H clubs, FHA, and Reliving History, Inc. This focus needs to be developed. Plans have been initiated for planting period plants and crops that can provide workshop resources such as bird house gourds, heirloom sunflowers and pumpkins for interpretative activities. Plans have been initiated for planting a "3-sisters" garden demonstrating the early American process of planting corn, beans, and pumpkins intermingled with each plant existing symbiotically for efficient use of the land. An 18<sup>th</sup> century kitchen garden currently is maintained by Master Gardeners. A small heirloom orchard has not had appropriate care and new focus is needed to keep out the deer that damage the trees. While Reliving History, Inc. is relatively new, some of our volunteers have previously volunteered time on the property. The kitchen garden has long had an appeal at the Peter Burr House, but new focus is now needed as past volunteers have lost interest. Long-range plans include a desire to have a small, manageable number, of animals on the farm either seasonally or permanently. Appropriate housing and care for animals will be costly and will likely require considerable time before the same can occur. Past, present and future agricultural activities are educational in nature and potential for some cost recovery exists. Agriculture can be labor intensive and much is needed to utilize potential in these larger areas of agricultural programming.
- G. **American Chestnut Trees.** An American Chestnut Tree Demonstration project has been approved by the American Chestnut Foundation and is scheduled to begin in spring 2010.

This project has wonderful potential if volunteers can provide the care the trees need. The American chestnut tree was almost totally lost almost 100 years ago due to a blight that was brought into the country. Early settlers knew the value of the vastly abundant trees. Not only will the almost extinct American chestnut trees be returned to our property, but also if we are able to make the trees live, we will be able to demonstrate the value of the trees as they were understood by the early settlers. While this project will begin in 2010, it will be 7-10 years before we can get a sufficient supply of the nuts to demonstrate “chestnuts roasting on an open fire.” The project is highly historic and educational and has potential for good community support. The regional office of the American Chestnut Foundation at Penn State will provide guidance and 20 chestnut trees. The Potomac Valley Master Naturalists Society has agreed to assist in providing manpower and other assistance. Otherwise funded by volunteer service and contributions, this project is not anticipated to be very costly. While it will bring great joy, it also will have little potential to bring in income until 8-10 in the future.

- H. **Wetland Project.** Environmental focuses were important to early settlers. Peter Burr chose the site of his farm for its location at the head waters of Elk Branch Run. Today the same location is the site of a recognized federal wetland, which is also valued by a local elementary school adjacent to the property. The wetland divides the property and creates as much challenge for the historic property as it provides benefit to the environment. Initial steps have been taken to secure assistance and funding to manage the wetland boundaries and utilize the environmental opportunities while also linking how the environment motivated settlers to choose certain lands near water supplies. While Reliving History, Inc. has significant future plans for utilizing the wetlands in educational programming, the same may be further in the future due to considerable costs and logistical issues that currently need to be seriously addressed. We are currently consulting with the Fresh Water Institute and the Potomac Valley Master Naturalists on this. The Potomac Valley Audubon Society has also agreed to help with this.
- I. **Burr Family and Friends Homecoming.** A week-long homecoming is scheduled for Oct 2010. This event began in 2008 and all agreed it would be continued each even-numbered year. Reliving History, Inc. grew out of energy and passion generated by the 2008 event. The upcoming event has strong educational and fund-raising value as descendants of Peter Burr are invited to assemble from nationwide to focus on the existing property where distant ancestors lived or visited. Local citizens will be invited to participate in community programming as descendants are allowed to see and experience the value of the property. A residual benefit will be the building of a support base for the house and organization via descendants of Peter Burr’s children (each of whom were born in the house) and for descendants of his relatives and friends who likely visited in the house. Registration fees will be charged for cost recovery purposes and hopefully the event will generate contributions.

### III. **Off-Site Local Events and Community Service.**

In addition to educational delivery, the cast of characters and other volunteers will deliver charitable service to the community as a means of personifying the charitable culture of the host family. Peter Burr, Jr. was a product of the Great Awakening. He helped to start two

Presbyterian Churches that continue to hold services in Jefferson County today. He did not believe in owning slaves. He believed in hard work and charity. He also was an off-shoot from a family historically very supportive of education. Off-site events will focus on taking the “presence” of the Peter Burr family into the community for educational and charitable purposes consistent with their culture.

- A. Charitable Service.** Service activities will be in the form of delivering meals to the elderly and infirmed; helping the elderly with maintenance or errands; volunteering in non-profit daycares, etc. while in the 18<sup>th</sup> century dress and characterization of the Burr family. With the service, they will deliver information about life in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. These planned activities will be considered educational for volunteers, for active and passive participants, as well as charitable and educational for the community. Collaboration with local non-profit organizations will be sought as a means of letting our volunteers help deliver the manpower for functioning through their community outreach. Any activity expenses will be funded by money raised, cash and in-kind contributions, and grants.
- B. Classroom and community demonstrations.** Educational programming will be taken into classrooms and community settings by the cast of characters and other trained volunteers. One presentation that has already been useful in classrooms (delivered by Dr William Theriault) is a “Wheat to Bread” demonstration that has been popular with teachers and students. Another anticipated demonstration is a “Flax to Clothing” demo. Less well-trained volunteers will be able to read to children and help in classrooms while dressed in period clothing. These demonstrations and services can be relatively inexpensive and will be funded by volunteerism, money raised, cash and in-kind contributions, and grants.
- C. Charles Town Heritage Day and Open-air Farmers Markets.** The Charles Towns Heritage Day Celebration in Sept 2009 is reflective of other activities in planning stages for the future. In period clothing we participated all day from and around a booth where we sold artisan sourdough soft pretzels and dried heirloom poppy heads. We distributed samples of 18<sup>th</sup> century schrewsbury cakes made with rosewater. Dr. Rochefort demonstrated spinning on an 18<sup>th</sup> century spinning wheel and answered audience questions. She also sang period songs as she spun and gathered a nice audience. We displayed two portable cases of artifacts found and processed at the Peter Burr House. This past event is reflective of weekly farmers markets and other events we plan to participate in next year. We will sell period items (colonial recipes and ingredients, hand made items, etc.) while also playing period music, demonstrating other period skills and conducting period games. The objectives are to recover the cost of conducting the events but primarily to create a pleasant and frequently anticipated “presence” as volunteers take education and culture to the public. Through interaction with the general public, we will promote and invite the public to educational events at the Peter Burr House. These activities will be funded by volunteer time, contributed expenses, sell of related goods, and funds accrued through general programming.

- D. 2010 Pack Horse Ford River Walk.** Reliving History, Inc. has agreed to weave historic interpretation into the annual event at the location near Shepherdstown where early settlers crossed the Potomac River on foot and by horseback as they entered the Virginia Colony in the area that is today Shepherdstown, WV. Plans are still in early stages, but period dress and re-enactments will be included. Costs for the programming of this event should be low, and some items may be sold for cost recovery and to benefit the larger program.
- E. The Great Pumpkin Flood.** Reliving History, Inc. is currently attempting to overcome some significant obstacles to deliver what could be a large fund-raising event in the next 2-3 years. We plan to re-enact the 1753 Pumpkin Flood that occurred on the Potomac River one month before George Washington delivered the message that launched the French and Indian War. A scaled down demonstration version of this unique event may be ready by fall of 2010 and has capacity to tell a historic story in a memorable way that opens doors for learning through an innovative experience. People are often amazed to learn that ripened pumpkins float extremely well. While the experience has historic value, it also includes numerous other educational elements such as the science of why and how pumpkins float, the value of our rivers, and the environmental significance of respecting the river by getting the pumpkins out. Numerous obstacles may prevent the event from occurring as soon as desired. Among other issues is the cost of trying to get a large number of pumpkins out of the Potomac River in order to protect the environment. Once we've solved the major problem of how to get the pumpkins out of the river, then such an event has potential for becoming an annual event wherein partnering organizations can share fund-raising opportunities and public relations. This is a future event with large educational, fund-raising, community service, and networking benefits. The program would be funded by volunteerism, contributions, sponsorships, registration or participation fees and sell of items (such as pumpkins, food, and related items) for cost recovery.

#### **IV. Auxiliary and Support Programs**

- A. Library.** A small lending library has been started containing contributed books and period: clothing patterns, games, music, and miscellaneous items for use as program resources. A volunteer will assist in overseeing the lending library. This program has educational and program support benefits. Items to date have been contributed by volunteers. When funding is available, items will likely be purchased as appropriate.
- B. Clothes Closet.** Period clothing is a major expense. One female outfit made by hand costs approximately \$200 for fabrics and notions alone. This is before shoes or accessories (such as period eye-glasses) are added. Men's clothing can be a little less or more expensive depending on several choices, but accessories or implements normally worn on a man's attire can also be more costly. For this reason, we cannot expect volunteers to front the cost. Reliving History, Inc. will seek funding primarily through grants if possible to pay for period clothing and then will maintain a clothes closet for the purpose of helping to outfit new volunteers. This focus has much cost with little cost recovery except for the significant benefit of being appropriately dressed.

- C. **Museum.** Acquisition of historic furniture, tools, antiques, and museum-quality resources for interpretive purposes are being sought. Accomplishing this task will be long-range and probably take many years. This is a future on-going activity with great educational and experiential benefit. Most acquisitions will likely be funded by contributions and possible some programming funds. Some purchases may be justified to build authenticity for period interpretation.
- D. **Tourism.** During the 2008 Burr Family Homecoming, a day-long tour (within a 10 mile radius of the Peter Burr House) was conducted to sites where historic events occurred during Peter Burr's life time. From that tour an invitation was issued to give a presentation at a retirement community genealogy club. While that was a one-time event, its potential is being explored not only as a method for educating participants in an experiential off-site setting, but also to provide an income source via fees for services. Historic education via guided tours can not only help promote the Peter Burr House, but also help set the historic stage and provide a fund-raising source through fees for service. This project can be done with little cost if purchase of a vehicle is not needed. Alternate methods of delivering a guided tour would be to use electronic devices to record and play back information about various sites. This effort could be funded by volunteerism, contributions, fees for cost recovery, and may generate some fundraising for organizational programming.
- E. **Education through Technology and Intellectual Property.** Production of electronic presentations and intellectual property (such as books and other publications) are in the plans for such time that expertise can be recruited. Use of modern technology can be useful in bringing the past to life in vivid details in such a way that is growing in popularity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This focus is much desired but volunteers skilled in appropriate technology have not yet been secured. When volunteers are secured, then the programming can be funded by volunteerism, contributions, and sales for cost recovery with potential for generating some programming funds.
- F. **Eastern West Virginia Community Foundation.** A Legacy Fund has been started with contributions from supporters. This fund is to grow and eventually to help protect the continued existence of the Peter Burr House and other related historic sites in the area. It is a way for out-of-state descendants of Peter Burr to bequeath and otherwise support the efforts of RHI. This fund will be supported primarily by contributions.

## V. **Networking and Collaboration.**

The Peter Burr House has survived for 258 years, yet few in the local area know about it. The reason is that while the colonial period in the local area is extremely rich with significant events of importance in American history, these events occurred before systematic records systems were in place and at a time when survival was more important than record keeping. Local historic documentation exists but is fragmented. Facts have to be dug out of dusty archives in different locations, and some expertise has to be applied in trying to read, understand, or piece the fragments together. For this reason, collaboration with other organizations with bits and pieces of the puzzle can be beneficial to all in putting together an accurate picture of the historic period. Reliving History, Inc. believes that before any historic

site can become fully appreciated the historic significance must be made known in context with the whole of history. If we help other historic sites from our same time period to successfully tell their stories, then enlargement of the whole picture aides in people appreciating the value of the Peter Burr House that has survived against all other odds longer than any dwelling of its type in the state.

- A. **Building the Backdrop.** Networking with related organizations is needed to build and strengthen a local backdrop against which to provide context for greater understanding. Networking will include loaning our cast of characters and providing support as appropriate to historic organizations of the time period to strengthen the effectiveness of their events. Networking will include inviting other organizations to period training, building the historic context, and sharing appropriate support that will allow each of us to succeed at telling our shared historic stories. Of major importance currently is the networking that has evolved between Reliving History, Inc. and the president of Friends of Happy Retreat, a 501(c)(3) organization supporting the purchase of the home of George Washington's brother, Charles. Our support for this organization involves recently loaning one of our interpreters to their special event. The president of their board is a member-at-large on the board of Reliving History, Inc and has provided various useful resources in-kind including frequent use of tables for our artifacts cleaning, etc. Networking has also been productive with organizers of an annual event (the Pack Horse Ford River Walk) at an important historic site in Shepherdstown. Building the backdrop is an ongoing focus that will be funded by volunteer time and innovation and other funds raised through grants, program cost recovery, and fund-raising projects.
- B. **Collaborating with educational organizations.** Numerous meetings have occurred and communications exchanged with local public schools, the school board, and the home school network for the purpose of exploring ways the resources at the Peter Burr House can be of use in curriculum objectives. This focus has educational and community service benefit with minimum costs and is funded by volunteer time, expertise, and programming funds.
- C. **Collaboration with Historic Landmarks Commission.** While the Peter Burr property is the only property totally owned by the HLC, over 90 other historic properties in the county have been identified, listed, and/or assisted as appropriate by the Commission. Some of these date back to the mid to late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Collaborating with this government commission provides two-way benefits. Reliving History, Inc. will offer support to the HLC by offering our cast of characters to them for use in promoting or supporting their agenda and also in service to help improve the Peter Burr House and property. Because they own the Peter Burr House, their interest is served as we increase support for the house. Community service in the form of volunteerism and manpower for physical tasks needed to aid the Historic Landmarks Commission with any of their objectives will be available.

The extent to which future events can be achieved will depend largely on volunteer recruitment and funds raised. Each of these depends largely on the other and balance is needed in the process of growing.

Reliving History, Inc. is currently run entirely by volunteers. If AmeriCorps or other substantial funding can be secured, an executive director will be hired along with possible support staff. Volunteer time and services, cash and in-kind contributions, and grant funding will be our main source of income. Some admissions or fees when appropriate will be charged for cost recovery. Specific fund raising events will be considered and implemented as appropriate. Sell of period or program-related merchandise will be utilized. These sells may take the form of books, electronic or video tour guides, interactive CDs, and other such intellectual properties.

A legacy fund has been set up with the Eastern West Virginia Community Foundation for the purpose of receiving bequeaths and other contributions including any gifts that require compliance with special regulations. (See Attachment D: Contract with Eastern West Virginia Community Foundation)

The Peter Burr House is currently open to the public on an appointment basis only and during infrequent advertised events. Hopefully, resources will provide a way to keep the property open on a scheduled basis soon.

The website for Reliving History, Inc. (<http://www.RelivingHistoryInc.org>) features historical and genealogical data; information about the Peter Burr House, all of Peter Burr's children, and some of his descendants and ancestors; a calendar of events; contact info and a map to locate the property; archaeological information; many related links; and even a page on a 2009 ghost hunt that serves best to entertain or intrigue some. There is no advertising on the website.

The Founder's Blog (<http://www.relivinghistoryinc.blogspot.com/>) contains miscellaneous information and thoughts that might be of interest to readers.