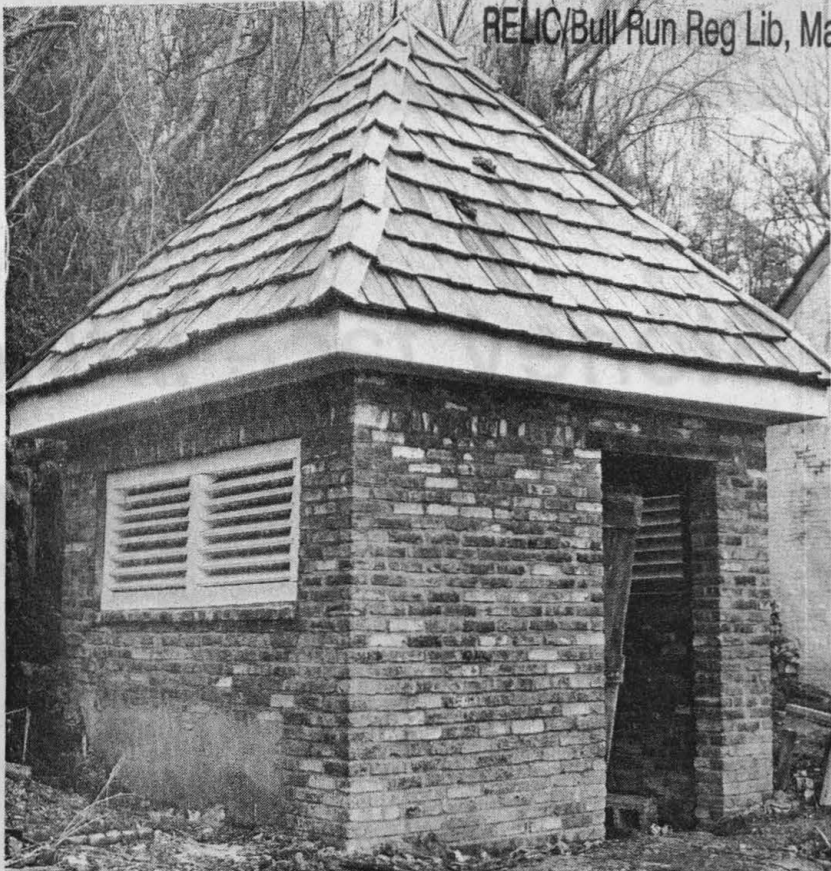


HISTORIC SITE FILE: *Rockledge*
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1750 Mansion
 was showing its age

Stoney face-lifting



Springhouse has new roof, wood vents.

Breathing life into stone seems a contradiction in terms until one sees the daily restoration of Rockledge, the 1750 mansion towering over the Town and River of Occoquan.

Since purchasing the historic landmark last Christmas Eve, Donald Sonner has presided over its transformation. The home had fallen prey to vandals since vacated by former owners. Blasting from the nearby quarry had shaken plaster loose, cracked the mortar and caused floors to sag.

Armed with an extra strength concrete called gunnite, Sonner's workers propped up the roof and floors and began filling in the cracks. Windows and trim (replicas of the period) were added and the roof finished with cedar shakes.

With major structural work complete, master workmen have been busy applying creamy white plaster over the gunnite. Ceiling molding and graceful circular

molding around the chandelier bases have been sculpted in the formal living room and sitting room on the first floor. In both rooms the brick fireplaces have been restored, one with mantle and one without.

Rugged stone juts from ceiling to floor to form the fireplace on one wall of the formal dining room. Smooth plaster there too forms a contrast to the stone and wooden window panes. The adjacent kitchen walls and hearth remain unfinished in solid red brick.

The entrance foyer is yet undone, but a modern bath has been added lean-to fashion off the landing. When complete, the 8 by 10 foot modern convenience will be easily accessible from both first and second floors.

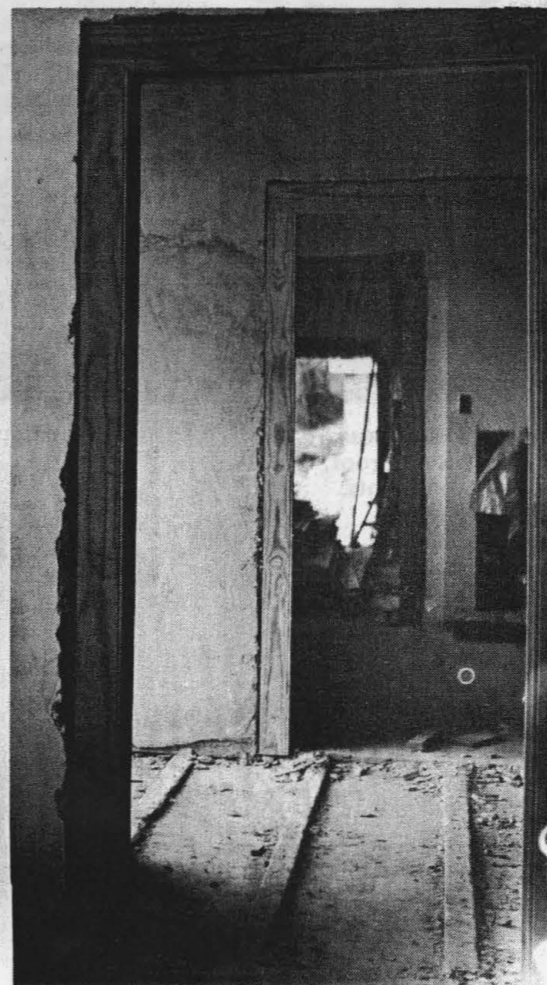
Plaster work has also been finished in the master bedroom complete with small fireplace. The first coat of paint is being applied to the second floor bedroom windows. Half of the remaining

bedrooms now have plaster work complete. Once all plastering is finished, interior decorating will begin.

Outside, most of the debris and overgrowth of weeds and vines have been cleared. Outlines of terraced lawns sloping down to Mill Street are clearly visible. Boxwood hedges and flower gardens can easily be envisioned as part of the landscaping planned.

Already completed is the springhouse with new roof and wood-slat vents. New molding awaits the painter's brush.

As the face lifting continues, one can almost envision gracious ladies in elegant skirts showing guests into the formal "blue room"....gentlemen with split tail coats and knee pants enjoying tobacco and brandy in the study...and horse drawn carriages waiting at the foot of the incline to glide off in the night with their master and mistress.



Freshly plastered walls and door trim echo through the many rooms



Fireplace in sitting room is of used brick

End kitchen is awaiting re. toration

Potomac People

Staff photos and Story by: CARON McCONNOR



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