

# Destroyed by 2008 fire,

## landmark structure may soon rise again

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### BAYSIDE

For the better part of 200 years, Bayville Farm manor house graced a gentle rise of land on the Lynnhaven River.

A treasured part of family patriarch Charles F. Burroughs' estate and home to his granddaughter Calvert Tyler and her husband Harry T. Lester, the wooden structure burned to the ground in August 2008. Furnishings and historic memorabilia were consumed in the fire. But according to Eleanor Tyler Stanton, who lives nearby with her husband Bob Stanton, her sister and brother-in-law are rebuilding on the site.

"It has been a painful ordeal for everyone," Stanton said.

The Federal-style plantation home was built by Jacob Hunter in 1826 for Peter Singleton II, who inherited the choice property through his

The following outside sources were used for this story. All can be found in the Local History reference section at the Meyera E. Oberndorf Central Library, 4100 Virginia Beach Blvd.:

- "Virginia Beach: A History of Virginia's Golden Shore," Amy Waters Yarsinke
- "Gone ... But Not Forgotten," A. Shepherd Jordan and James M. Jordan IV
- "Princess Anne County and Virginia Beach," Stephen S. Mansfield

mother, Sukey Thorowgood.

Over the years, the house, also referred to as Bayside Plantation, The Pleasure House and Bayville Manor, enjoyed a colorful history. It was sold to pay a gambling debt, lauded as a hub of Princess Anne County's genteel society and was briefly occupied by Union troops during the Civil War.

It was owned by men who, in turn, farmed the land, in-

stalled a race track for Arabian horses, raised dairy cows and turned the property into a private golf course.

Stanton remembers the house from her childhood, after her maternal grandfather Charles F. Burroughs Sr. purchased the property.

A successful Norfolk businessman, Burroughs bought Bayville Farm in 1919 with an eye to farming and oyster harvesting. Stanton said a health scare prompted a change.

"My grandfather worried about all the children getting tuberculosis from unpasteurized milk," she said. "So he bought a small herd of Guernsey cows and started a milking farm."

In 1933, Burroughs acquired the property at Church Point Farm, and the combined 500 acres became Bayville Farms. Many farm hands and dairy drivers lived in the adjacent neighborhood, now called Beechwood.

"My nanny Cordelia Walton lived there," Stanton said.

Every summer, Stanton said her mother, Mabel Burroughs Tyler, moved them from Norfolk to the manor house at Bayville Farms. She remembers traveling "by

way of the water works road," which is now Northampton Boulevard.

During World War II, German prisoners of war worked

at the dairy.

"One day, we looked up from the swimming pool to see a prisoner peering at us over the bushes," Stanton re-

called. "My mother screamed like a banshee, but the poor fellow said he was only watching us because we reminded him of his own children at home."

Burroughs died in 1960, and the farm eventually was parceled out and sold. "My grandfather left Church Point to my uncle (Charles F. Burroughs Jr.) and gave my mother a mink coat," Stanton said. Church Point was developed in 1992 into residential homes and commercial property.

Through an easement with Virginia Outdoors Foundation and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in 1982, Bayville Farm was protected from development.

In 1995, the farm became Bayville Golf Club. The milking plant was converted into the clubhouse and pro shop. Bayville Farm manor house remained within the course environs, as a stately reminder of the land's long history.

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In this picture dated June 3, 1986, Charles F. Burroughs and Mabel B. Tyler stand in front of the Bayville Farm manor house, which burned down in 2008.