



# Foundation Agrees to Preserve Shadwell Estate

The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation has signed an agreement guaranteeing in perpetuity the preservation of the Shadwell Estate, the site of Thomas Jefferson's birthplace.

On Sept. 7, Foundation President Daniel P. Jordan and Kathleen S. Kilpatrick, deputy director of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, signed a deed of easement that strictly limits development on the 215-acre tract, located on the southern side of U.S. 250 in Albemarle County about four miles east of Charlottesville.

The Foundation, which owns and operates Jefferson's home, Monticello, has owned the Shadwell property since 1963.

"Stewardship begins at home, and the Foundation wanted to show its commitment to the preservation of the Jefferson legacy by protecting his birthplace for future generations," Jordan said. "In doing so, we are proud to join many other citizens of Albemarle County who have taken steps to preserve the special landscape of this historic region."

Under the terms of the historic-preservation easement, the Department of Historic Resources will ensure that the property will remain undivided and be "maintained, preserved, and protected" in its present state as far as is practical. Included in the deed are restrictions on building, road and utility-line construction; tree and vegetation management; grading and earth removal; and archaeological excavation.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE.

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-  INTERNS RESEARCH
-  JEFFERSON LIBRARY
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-  JEFFERSON & WEST CHRONOLOGY
-  JULY 4 EVENT
-  "MANUAL OF PARLIAMENTARY PRACTICE"
-  MILLENNIUM TRAIL DESIGNATION
-  MONTICELLO'S PRIVIES
-  PRESIDENT'S LETTER
-  "RETIREMENT SERIES" BEGUN
-  SAUNDERS BRIDGE
-  SECRETARY OF STATE
-  WINTER TOUR

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## Shadwell Estate

CONTINUED, PAGE **TWO**,

Wayne Mogielnicki

The agreement does allow for the reconstruction of documented historic buildings and the construction of buildings necessary for use of the property as a historic attraction.

Thomas Jefferson's father, Peter Jefferson,

began acquiring land in the Shadwell area in the mid-1730s, and later brought his wife, Jane Randolph Jefferson, to the property. From 1740 to 1776, Shadwell was the seat of a prosperous tobacco and wheat plantation, worked by the largest slave force in Albemarle County. Peter Jefferson died in 1757; when Jane Jefferson died in 1776, Thomas Jefferson came into full inheritance of the property and added it to his Monticello plantation holdings.

The Shadwell Estate has served as farming or grazing land ever since, except for a brief incarnation as a historic attraction in 1961-62. The tract has not been occupied since the 1940s, and is currently open to the public only on special occasions.

No complete Jefferson-era structures remain on the site, but archaeology on the tract has yielded significant information offering insight into plantation life in mid-18th century Piedmont Virginia.



**Thomas Jefferson was born at Shadwell, the site of Peter Jefferson's plantation, in 1743.**

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