Recruiting Top Talent
The University contracts leaders in historic preservation, architecture, landscape architecture and archaeological services.

Annual Ball
Students, alumni and friends dance the night away to restore the Rotunda.

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Rotunda Through Time
A look back at the many permutations of this iconic structure.

Spring 2014
Once Again to Carrara

Project Update

In the fall of 1823, Thomas Jefferson placed an order for Corinthian capitals for the Rotunda, to be carved from marble in Carrara, Italy. Some months later, he received a reply from Thomas Appleton, his agent there, detailing the many complexities of producing capitals of such immense size and weight, including the fact that the sculptors would have to contend with the “many short days” of winter.

Destroyed in the 1895 fire, the original Carrara capitals were replaced in the Stanford White reconstruction with domestic marble, which has since deteriorated. The current renovation calls for returning to the Italian marble; however, even with the benefits of modern lighting and technology, working with this material is a complex process. Craftsmen from the Pedrini Sculpture Studio in Carrara made laser scans of the remnants of the originals last fall to help re-create Jefferson’s design. But, noted Brian Hogg, senior preservation planner in the Office of the Architect for the University, the remnants don’t give the whole picture. “No intact upper half of an original capital exists,” he said, “so what we’re trying to do is replicate the intention of Jefferson’s design.”

Hogg and representatives of the architectural consultants and general contractor gathered in Carrara this past March to view Pedrini’s initial model and work on finalizing design details.

“It was a great collaboration,” Hogg said, “with lots of discussion and tweaking of the design.” Based on the group’s decisions, the Pedrini craftsmen are presenting a second model this spring and, once that is approved, will produce the first full replacement capital in June.

Hogg said that scans will be used to machine carve most of the capitals, but the final details will be hand carved. “We don’t want the finish to be machine driven,” he explained. Each capital will require about 30 days of handwork before completion — a timetable not so different from the one in 1823.
The Rotunda Through Time

Ever since leaving Thomas Jefferson’s drawing board, the Rotunda has been the subject of revision, repair, renovation and restoration. Each of these changes has something to tell us about the culture and the scholarship of its era, said David J. Neuman, Architect for the University, FAIA, LEED BD+C. “You look at each one,” he said, “to get the whole picture.”

A Radical Plan
Although Jefferson based his design on the classical form of the Pantheon, his decision to use a library, instead of a chapel, as the centerpiece for his university was unconventional, a clear departure from university designs of his time. Yet his decision reflected his own Enlightenment thinking and belief in religious freedom.

Growing Pains
By 1850, the need for additional functional space overshadowed any reverence for Jefferson’s architecture. The 150-foot-long Annex, designed by Robert Mills and yoked to the Rotunda by wooden beams, offered what seemed to be the most practical solution — until a catastrophic fire broke out there in October 1895.

Meeting the Public
Civic spaces were enjoying new attention when the University hired Beaux-Arts architect Stanford White of McKim, Mead and White to plan the rebuilding of the Rotunda after the fire. White added a portico and terraces on the north — the street side — of the building, “creating a grand public space,” said Neuman, “and bringing the Rotunda more into the public realm.”

Back to the Founder
As America’s Bicentennial approached, there was a resurgence of appreciation for all of Jefferson’s work. In this context, the University decided to dismantle the Rotunda’s Stanford White-designed interior and reconstruct it based on Jefferson’s original outline and in accordance with the “best scholarship of the time,” said Neuman.

The Walls Do Talk
The next phase of work on the Rotunda focuses on preservation, improved infrastructure and making the building more accessible and usable. The project is not an attempt to restore the historic structure to any one single vision. “If you leave what’s been changed,” Neuman said, “it tells you the story of the building and U.Va.’s culture.” A story that’s to be continued.
From the Rotunda Steps to the U200

It all began at the Rotunda in 1985. Introduced at a party, students Peter Page (Col '88) and Valerie Newton (Col '88) met on the Rotunda steps for their first date.

Now married for 25 years, the Pages treasure their personal connection to the Rotunda and the University itself. Six generations of Peter’s family have attended the University. Valerie, too, has longstanding family ties to U.Va. Their children — Peter M. Page III (Col ’16) and Anne C. Page (Col ’17) — are continuing the tradition.

“The University is part of the fabric of our family,” Peter reflected.

When he and Valerie learned about the University Two Hundred (U200), they knew they wanted to participate. The U200 is a community of donors who pledge $100,000 or more, which can be paid over five years, to complete the effort to renew and restore Thomas Jefferson’s masterpiece.

The $50.6 million project, $7.8 million is yet to be raised.

The University has contracted with leaders in historic preservation, architecture, landscape architecture and archaeological services to consult on this next phase of work. The firms have deep expertise and experience directly relevant to the Rotunda project.

John G. Waite and Associates, Architects, has worked on historic buildings at U.Va. since the 1980s and recently designed the roof replacement project on the Ranges. The company also prepared the Rotunda’s 2007 historic structure report, which informs current and future renovations.

For the landscape spaces surrounding the Rotunda, OLIN, a Philadelphia-based landscape architecture and urban design firm, will lend its expertise. Founding partner, Laurie Olin, received the American Society of Landscape Architect’s Gold Medal and the 2013 Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medal in Architecture, U.Va.’s top honor.

The current Rotunda renovation — which will ensure the building’s future and safeguard the features that make it part of a World Heritage Site — entered the next phase of work May 19. This phase will continue for two years, during which time the Rotunda will be closed to the public.

The $42.5 million second phase includes updates to utility systems for better safety and accessibility; improved temperature and humidity control; restoration of historical features, including column capitals; and renewal of the Rotunda’s landscape spaces. The entire renovation is funded through private philanthropy and state appropriations. Of the original $50.6 million project, $7.8 million is yet to be raised.

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Joining Olin will be Patricia O’Donnell, founder and principal of Vermont-based Heritage Landscapes. O’Donnell led the preparation in 2013 of the University’s first-ever cultural landscape report for the Academical Village.

Rounding out the team of experts is Rivanna Archaeological Services, based in Charlottesville, which provides archaeological and historical research and cultural resource management for its clients. Principals Benjamin P. Ford and Stephen M. Thompson hold doctorates from U.Va. in anthropology and archaeology, respectively.

Waite, Olin, O’Donnell and Thompson joined Architect for the University David J. Neuman as distinguished panelists at the Jefferson’s Circle event held May 14.

(From left to right) Panelists at the May 14 Jefferson’s Circle event included John G. Waite, Steve Thompson, Laurie Olin, Patricia O’Donnell and David J. Neuman.

Top Consultants Join Rotunda Effort

Peter’s memories of the Jeffersonian Grounds are also central to his student experience. Recalling his favorite class with his favorite professor — legendary music professor, the late Ernest C. “Boots” Mead — Peter credits Mead with teaching him about the genius behind Jefferson’s design.

“Professor Mead’s seminar met in Pavilion X. We discussed how the University was designed,” Peter said. “It was exciting to be part of that. I will never forget the view from his Cabell Hall office, with a window that looked out on the Lawn. You could see Cocke Hall, the pavilions and — at the far end — the Rotunda.”

Once the Rotunda project is completed, the University will recognize the generosity of the Pages and all other U200 members with a prominent plaque in the Rotunda bearing their names. Valerie appreciates being part of this once-in-a-lifetime effort to care for the Rotunda.

“This great opportunity won’t come around again,” she said. “We realized that our gift means having an impact forever on the Rotunda. We couldn’t not do it.”

To date, more than 83 individuals, families, foundations and organizations have pledged nearly $12 million toward the renovation. For more information about the U200, contact Amy Yancey, executive director for development, Jeffersonian Grounds Initiative, at 434-924-7750 or ayancey@virginia.edu.

The University’s top honor.

The university

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Students, alumni and friends of the University of Virginia enjoyed a night of dancing and music at the 51st Annual Restoration Ball, held March 22 under a large tent on Peabody Lawn. The black-tie affair is a spring tradition that brings together students and alumni from across the University to support the Rotunda renovation. Sponsored by the Jefferson Literary and Debating Society, the University Guide Service and other organizations, the ball has been held annually since 1963.

This year some 800 tickets were sold for the event, which raised more than $7,000 for the Rotunda renovation project. The renovation entered the next major, two-year phase of work in May. This $42.5 million second phase includes updates to utility systems for better safety and accessibility; restoration of exterior historical features, including the column capitals; and renewal of the Rotunda’s landscape spaces. The entire renovation is funded through a combination of private philanthropy and state appropriations. Of the original $50.6 million project, $7.8 million remains to be raised.

Pippa Mason, Restoration Ball chair, found the wide-ranging community support for the Rotunda particularly inspiring. “A major goal for this year was to expand the scope of organizations that sponsor the ball,” she said. “We had a wide range of sponsors from Student Council, the LGBTQ center and the Salsa Club to the InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. We also saw large support from the Greek community, with eight fraternity and sorority sponsors. One of the great things about the Restoration Ball is that it’s open to the entire student body.”

Mason described the planning for the ball as a key part of the U.Va. student experience. “What I found really powerful about planning the ball was the level of responsibility that the University administration entrusted to me as a student,” she said. “I knew that the ball was entirely student run prior to committing to the chair position, but I was blown away by the autonomy and respect granted to me. ‘Student self-governance’ is not just a buzzword here.”

The Restoration Ball’s generous sponsors included the following organizations:

**Gold Sponsors**
- Sigma Kappa, Student Council, Gamma Phi Beta, International Relations Organization, Sigma Delta Tau, Beta Theta Pi, Sigma Nu, Salsa Club, Vietnamese Student Association, Virginia Tent Rental, University of Virginia Dining and the U.Va. Office of Advancement

**Silver Sponsors**
- College Council, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship

**Bronze Sponsors**
- Chi Omega, LGBTQ Center, Sustained Dialogue, University Guide Service, Kappa Kappa Gamma, Echols Council, St. Elmo Hall and Second Year Council

Dancing the Night Away for the Rotunda