

# Fauquier Times-Democrat

# WEEKEND

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## Artifacts displayed in Bealeton

An exhibit on the Elk Run Anglican Church Site preservation project in southern Fauquier County is currently on display at the Bealeton Library, 10877 Willow Drive North, (540) 439-9728.

The exhibit includes photos, a small case displaying some of the artifacts found at the site, and a 10-minute documentary, "Finding Our Foundation: The Preservation of the Elk Run Anglican Church Site."

In the documentary, Ed Dandar, chairman of the Elk Run Church Site Preservation Committee, founded in 1999, and Jackie Lee, a volunteer historian, explain the history of the site.

The church began as a wooden structure in the 1740s and was later rebuilt in brick with a four-foot-wide stone foundation. The unearthed foundation revealed the church was built in the form of a Greek cross.

The church congregation declined after the Revolutionary War, and, once abandoned in the early 1800s, local villagers used its fallen bricks, wood and stones in the building of their homes. The site was overgrown until recently, and the church's foundation and artifacts were hidden from view for about 200 years.

By the time the site's historical marker was dedicated in 2000, colonial church historian Carl Lounsbury of the Williamsburg Foundation said, "I am deeply awed by all of you for creating history here."

The documentary shows the church site being excavated by volunteers, many of whom have ancestral ties to the area. Under the direction of archaeologist John Eddins, himself a volunteer, teams have discovered many artifacts, including hand-wrought iron nails, earthenware, window glass, prehistoric arrowheads and a prehistoric quartz scraper.

The committee is raising funds to convert the dig site to a historic church park. Plans include outlining the foundation with a colonial brick walkway, building a year-round shelter for public viewing of a segment of the church foundation, and erecting interpretive signs.

Copies of "Finding Our Foundation" were donated to the library and to the county's elementary schools. The library's copy is available to check out. The committee also has an extensive Web site at <http://elkrunchurch.org> that includes historic maps, photos of the site and artifacts, and genealogical information.