



Preservation Work at Kingsley Plantation

Structural Work on Main House and Kitchen House

The Kitchen House (c. 1820) and Main House (c. 1798) at Kingsley Plantation will have work underway. The Main House and Kitchen House are integral parts of the complex associated with the plantation life in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and with the life of Zephaniah Kingsley.

When?

Work will first be concentrated on the Kitchen House during 2005 in order to accommodate the new exhibits for the site, anticipated in 2006. Structural repairs during 2005 on the Main House will also begin.



Historic photograph of the plantation house

Why?

The damage was caused largely by termite infestation. The integrity of the structural members, both vertical and horizontal, was compromised. Much of the material is damaged beyond repair and must be replaced.

How?

During the course of the project, the affected portion of the structures will be raised, and supported with jacks and other supports in order to replace the sill beams. Repairs will include selective replacement of sill beams, vertical supports and other framing members. Once structural integrity is re-established, utilities will be upgraded and finish work will commence, focusing on the public and exhibits spaces, so that the structure can be reopened.

Historic materials will be repaired where possible, and badly deteriorated non-historic components will be replaced. Replacement materials will match as much as possible the original materials. The sill beams and other framing members will be replaced in kind with cypress, heart pine, or other like materials. Historic Structures Reports were completed in 2005, and will serve as the guiding documents for the preservation and repair of these structures.



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Work at the Slave Quarters

The ruins of 25 of the original 32 slave cabins are an integral part of Kingsley Plantation, a National Park Service site registered on the National Register of Historic Places as one of the most intact examples of the plantation system in Florida.

Stabilization Project

This stabilization project at the slave quarters began in 2003. The process will be on-going, as funding permits. Kingsley Plantation facility management and preservation staff will perform the work. Experts and professionals within the preservation field were consulted at the outset of the project to determine the best course of action.

The historic fabric of the cabins is being compromised as most of the cabins have little or no finish coat remaining. The exposed tabby is deteriorating at an accelerated rate due to environmental (water infiltration, wind erosion, encroaching roots, biological growth) and human (vandalism and touching the buildings) factors.

Stabilization of the cabins will entail the removal of foreign matter such as pollutants or biological growth. A lime wash, consisting of hydraulic lime and water is applied to stabilize the friable surfaces. A lime render coat that resembles the finish coat applied to the slave cabins during their initial construction in the early 19th century is then applied. The render coat is a protective layer of material, which will serve to shed water and deter biological growth on the historic fabric. These applications are reversible, and work to preserve the historic tabby construction from human and environmental factors.



Historic photograph of the slave quarters

Roof Rehabilitation at Slave Cabin E1

Slave cabin “E1,” the first cabin on the east side of the road in the semi-circle of slave cabins, is the only cabin that is fully erected at Kingsley Plantation. Recently, Kingsley Plantation facility management and preservation staff replaced the roof.

The project involved replacing existing roof frame package and wood shingles to match historic period construction. The roof was reframed and cedar shakes were removed and replaced with cedar shingles. The Portland cement patches above the doors and windows were removed and repaired with lime putty.

Before work began, the preservation team utilized existing documentation and historic photographs to design a historically accurate roof framing system. Door and window openings were rehabilitated. Typical shutters and doors, including hand wrought iron hinges and handles, will be fabricated and installed upon completion.