



# Huntley Headlines

Friends of Historic Huntley

Spring 2015

## Spring Event: Emancipation Comes to Huntley

Saturday, April 18

1 to 4 p.m. at Historic Huntley

Suggested donation, \$5

Children 10 and under, free

2 p.m. at Woodlawn Faith United  
Methodist Church (next to Huntley)

Special Presentation by  
Char McCargo Bah

As we enter the final months of the Civil War sesquicentennial, this year's Spring Event focuses on Huntley's slave population and the impact of emancipation.

Look for informational tables staffed by local area black history organizations, including the Alexandria Black History Museum, the Freedmen's Cemetery, and the Laurel Grove School Museum. The event also will feature John Vrana's reenactment of Huntley's Civil War-era caretaker, George Johnson; John Berfield's collection of Civil War relics; the Groveton Historians, with recipes from the era; and a display on Huntley's time as Camp Michigan during the winter of 1861-1862.

A special presentation by Char McCargo Bah, professional genealogist, independent historian, writer, and Alexandria "Living Legend," will highlight her research on the slaves listed on an 1859 deed transferring Huntley from Betsey Mason to her sons.

Listen as Ms. Bah reveals her findings about the people on the list—including her efforts at tracking down potential living descendants. The records she used reveal a surprising amount about slaves, slaveholders, and 19th-century Southern society. Discover more about how and when those enslaved learned of their emancipation at the Civil War's conclusion.

Don't miss this final sesquicentennial observance of Civil War Huntley—it will be another half a century until the bicentennial! Directions on page 4. For more information call Huntley Meadows Park, 703.768.2525. ❖

## Success! Huntley Mantel Restoration Campaign

Many thanks to everyone who helped fund the restoration of the mantel in the main room at Huntley.

The mantel is original to the property, and, unfortunately, it looks its age—it is missing a substantial chunk along the lower left side and its beautiful woodwork is hidden under many coats of paint. The Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) lacked funding to repair and restore the mantel when it undertook the house restoration in 2011-2012.

This mantel is handcrafted and much more detailed than any other mantel in the house. While we don't know who carved it, there is evidence of its style. Stephen Ortado, a local master carpenter who has worked at Gunston

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*The mantel being removed for restoration, revealing further historical evidence; photographs courtesy Carolyn Gamble.*

## *President's Column:* **A Call for Research Volunteers**

by *Todi Carnes*

For many years, the primary focus of FOHH has been saving and restoring the house and other structures that comprise the Historic Huntley compound. The initiative to finance and secure the repair of Huntley's main mantel and ongoing efforts to assist and ensure that Fairfax County completes restoration of the Tenant House and other on-site dependencies are continued evidence of this need. By its nature, the preservation and maintenance of an historic house is an infinitely continuing endeavor—a labor of love to which FOHH is forever committed.

With the major restoration of Huntley completed, FOHH now has some freed-up energies to learn more about the Huntley architectural legacy; the lives of those who lived, worked, and socialized at Huntley; and the external factors that affected the use of the structures and grounds. This is the story that visitors to Huntley expect to hear.

Historic Huntley research has been ongoing since the 1960's, beginning with important work by **Edith Sprouse** and **Tony Wrenn**. FOHH past presidents **Susan Escherich** and **Barbara Ballentine** have contributed significantly to our knowledge base, as have other FOHH members and FCPA staff, interns, and consultants. Much is known, but the story is far from complete. There are research leads to follow, documents to transcribe, oral histories to gather, and discoveries to be made and shared.

To excite and encourage a new generation of research about Huntley, FOHH asked **Laura Wickstead**, **director of the Virginia Room at the City of Fairfax Regional Library**, to speak at last fall's annual meeting on historical research. This spring she will be donating time to help FOHH organize, preserve, and make accessible history files stored at

Huntley Meadows Park (HMP). FOHH Secretary Carolyn Gamble is creating a searchable inventory of documents that will be made available to those interested in conducting research.

Once this work is complete, FOHH will identify lines of inquiry to guide research into Huntley and its residents.

**We are seeking Huntley fans to assist with this research.** If you are interested, please contact Carolyn at [carolynjgamble@hotmail.com](mailto:carolynjgamble@hotmail.com).

If you are looking to hone your research skills, the **Virginia Room will be offering a special "Late Night" research program on Friday, April 10, 2015, from 5:30 to 11:00 p.m.** The Virginia Room will be open after hours with staff and volunteers to connect you with resources for independent research, or you may attend classes on genealogical research of Civil War veterans.

Registration is required. Sign up for the "Late Night" event and classes separately. Attendees must arrive before the library closes at 6 p.m., but may depart at any time. For more information and to register, contact the Virginia Room: [va\\_room@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:va_room@fairfaxcounty.gov), 703.293.6227 x 6, [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library). ❖

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### *Member Profile:* **Meet Jane Williams**

Jane is a long-time resident of the Belle View area. She and her husband, Jim, have their hands full keeping up with the antics of their very young and avid squirrel-chasing, snow-loving Jack Russell terrier, Jesse. They are both docents at the Apothecary Shop in Old Town, and Jane also is a docent at Historic Huntley.

Jane was drawn to Huntley before its restoration. She frequently drove to HMP via Lockheed Boulevard to walk her dog. One day, she decided to drive up Harrison Lane to see what was there and where the road went. Huntley suddenly came into view, and she turned in to get a closer look. The grounds were overgrown, a chain-link

fence surrounded the property, and the house was in a state of neglectful disrepair. Nonetheless, Jane concluded that it had strong "bones," an interesting past, and stories to tell. After looking around, she drove on, and life took her to Florida to help care for her mother in her final years.

Returning to the area in 2013, Jane and Jim went to the old house, which Jim had never seen. Much to her amazement, Huntley was totally restored, revealing it as the wonderful gem she'd known it to be. Later she took a tour of the house and a Huntley docent class, and eventually developed her own tour. She serves as a docent and especially enjoys sharing the view from the front porch with visitors, imagining how it looked in the 19th century during T.F. Mason's time. She'd love to meet you and share that view on a Saturday tour this summer! ❖

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### *New! Huntley Notecards*

Our new Historic Huntley notecards are available for purchase! Each packet has four different **images of Historic Huntley painted by local artist and Huntley Meadows Park naturalist Margaret Wohler**.

A set of four 3" x 5" cards is \$10 and a set of 5" x 7" cards is \$15. Look for the notecards at the HMP Visitor Center's "history wall" in the FOHH used book and CD sales area. Proceeds benefit Historic Huntley. ❖

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### **Book & CD Sales Continue**

Check out FOHH's ongoing **sales of used books and CDs** at the HMP Visitor Center to benefit Historic Huntley. The subjects of available books include American historic homes and architecture, Virginia and local regional history, and the Civil War. CD stock focuses on classical music, historical narratives, sounds of nature, and childrens' interest. Most books are \$2; CDs are \$3, two for \$5, or \$2 each for three or more. **To donate books or CDs**, contact Todi Carnes at [todicarnes@verizon.net](mailto:todicarnes@verizon.net). ❖

## *Mantel* continued from page 1

Hall and on the restoration at Huntley, finds elements in the mantel to be similar to those of **William Buckland**, the architect and master carver responsible for designing the interiors at Gunston Hall. The door panel moldings at Huntley are exact matches to those at Gunston. While Buckland died before Huntley was constructed, it is possible, considering Thomson Mason's connection to Gunston Hall, that someone who apprenticed under him carved the mantle at Huntley.

Mr. Ortado is undertaking the restoration of the mantel. In early March he took it to his workshop. There he will strip off the existing layers of paint, carve a new piece of wood to fill in the missing area, and provide appropriate finishes.

This happened only because FOHH members cared enough about Huntley and the artistry and significance of this major asset of the property to donate funds to make it possible. Be sure to **check [www.historichuntley.org](http://www.historichuntley.org)** for details on a **special celebration to unveil the restored mantel when the house reopens to the public in late April.** ❖

## Upcoming Programs

### Citizenship in the Nation Merit Badge

Saturday, June 14, Historic Huntley  
10 a.m.-2 p.m., 10-18 year olds, \$28

### Citizenship in the World Merit Badge

Saturday, April 11, Historic Huntley  
10 a.m.-3 p.m., 10-18 year olds, \$35

### Genealogy Merit Badge

Saturday, April 17, Historic Huntley  
10 a.m.-1 p.m., 10-18 year olds, \$21

### Twilight Hilltop Tour

Fridays, May 15 and 29  
Historic Huntley  
7-8:30 p.m., adults, \$8

For more information and to register:  
Huntley Meadows Park, 703.768.2525  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows-park/calendar.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows-park/calendar.htm) ❖

## Joint FOHH-FOHMP Lifetime Memberships

This year marks the **40th Anniversary of Huntley Meadows Park (HMP)**. **Historic Huntley** shares in this anniversary by virtue of connections between the two properties. T.F. Mason's holdings once joined HMP to Huntley, and the breathtaking view of the park from the house continues the physical connection between the properties. Both sites are managed by HMP staff.

Given this bond, there is good reason for the friends of one to be friends of the other. **The joint lifetime membership promotion is available for a limited time, ending June 30.** To take advantage of this special offer, use the **form below** or **contact Elena Ryan at [friendsofhmp@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofhmp@gmail.com)**. ❖

## *A Salute to Our Newest Lifetime Members*

Neil, Kelly, & Sarah Ames  
Richard & Susan Anderson  
Barbara Ballentine  
Charlotte Brown  
Roberta & James Bucher  
Connie Carpender  
Peter Christensen  
Jere Gibber & J.G. Harrington  
Kathleen Graham  
Gene & Pat Hepner  
Catherine & George Ledec  
Suzanne & Fred Lepple  
Tatiana Lisle  
Bill Lukens  
CV Pardee  
Matt, Elena, & Lorna Ryan  
Patricia Salamone  
Ann Stat  
Scott Surovell  
Bonnie Brown Wilkins

## *Become a Lifetime Member of two Friends groups for the price of one!*

To celebrate 40 years of Huntley Meadows Park, the Friends of Historic Huntley and the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park are jointly offering a special on our lifetime memberships. **The offer runs through June 2015** and applies to lifetime memberships only; annual memberships are not part of this offer.

**Benefits** • Be an advocate for preservation of the environment and historic sites • Membership dues are tax deductible • Receive newsletters from two Friends groups • Discounts on Friends merchandise sold at HMP • Invitations to members-only events • Vote for the groups' board members and officers

**Already a member of one of Friends groups? Join the other group for only \$50!**

- \$150 I would like to become a lifetime member of the Friends of Historic Huntley and the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park
- \$50 I already am a lifetime member of Friends of Historic Huntley; please add me to the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park
- \$50 I already am a lifetime member of Friends of Huntley Meadows Park; please add me to the Friends of Historic Huntley

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_ Tel \_\_\_\_\_

Checks payable to **FOHMP** or **credit card**:  Visa  MasterCard

Card number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

*Drop off the membership form at the Huntley Meadows Park Visitor Center or mail with your payment to:*

Friends of Huntley Meadows Park  
3701 Lockheed Blvd., Alexandria, VA 22306

# FRIENDS OF HISTORIC HUNTLEY

P.O. Box 7241

Alexandria, VA 22307-0241

Address correction requested

## Save the Dates:

**Emancipation Comes to Huntley:**

**April 18**

**Tours resume April 25**

**More dates inside!**

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## Huntley-Related Web Sites

www.historichuntley.org

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/histhunt/

www.friendsofhuntleymeadows.org

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## Huntley Open Hours

The grounds are open from dawn to dusk. Tours of the house are available by appointment and on Saturdays from April 25 through the end of October at 10:30 a.m., noon, and 1:30 p.m. For more information call Huntley Meadows Park, 703.768.2525.

Historic Huntley is a Fairfax County Park Authority site and is on the National Register of Historic Places, the Virginia

Landmarks Register, and the Fairfax County Inventory of Historic Sites.

**Directions:** From the Beltway, follow Route 1/Richmond Highway south for 3-1/2 miles. Right on Lockheed Blvd. for half a mile. Right on Harrison Lane and continue for half a mile. Special event parking available at the church on the left. Entrance to the house and handicap permit parking from Huntley Meadows Lane. ❖

## New Board Members

FOHH is pleased to announce two new members on its Board of Directors: **Bruce Dilks** and **Peter Christensen**. Mr. Dilks represents **Woodlawn Faith United Methodist Church**, Huntley's next-door neighbor. Mr. Christensen brings invaluable experience as chair of both the Woodlawn/Pope-Leighey Advisory Council and the Fairfax County Sidewalk and Trails Committee. A very warm welcome to both Bruce and Peter! ❖

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## Join Friends of Historic Huntley today!

Support Historic Huntley by joining this group of history- and historic preservation-minded people. Members receive the newsletter, an invitation to a members-only event, and a 10% discount on FOHH merchandise. FOHH is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. Membership dues and contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. With your volunteer efforts and financial support, we can make a difference.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Tel \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ May we email *Huntley Headlines*? \_\_\_\_\_

\$15 Individual     \$20 Family     \$10 Student/Senior

\$150 Lifetime Membership     Additional donation \_\_\_\_\_

New Member     Renewing Member    Total enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

### I'm interested in volunteering in the following area(s):

HH (work with staff at HMP):  Docent  Greeter  Research

FOHH:  Fundraising  Program Planning  Public Relations  Special Events

**Send completed form with check payable to *Friends of Historic Huntley* to:**  
FOHH, P.O. Box 7241, Alexandria, VA 22307-0241

*Huntley Headlines* is produced by Friends of Historic Huntley, a local citizens group formed to assist Fairfax County in the restoration, preservation and utilization of Huntley and to enhance the public's knowledge of this historic villa.

**Board of Directors:** Todi Carnes, President • Charles O. Davis, Vice President • Carolyn Gamble, Secretary • Jere Gibber, Treasurer • Erica Hershler, Publicity • Charlotte Brown • Peter Christensen • Harry Glasgow • Stephen F. Kimbel • Ann Linblom • Beth Swartz • Patty Young • Susan Escherich and Norma Hoffman, Emeritus • Todi Carnes, HMHOA Representative • Connie Carpenter, FOHMP Representative • Bruce Dilks, Woodlawn Faith United Methodist Church Representative

**Advisors:** Annabel Baer • Barbara Ballentine • C. Richard Bierce, AIA • Susan Hellman • Robbie McNeil

### *Address changes:*

Please send your mailing label with corrections to the address above or to FOHHuntley@aol.com.