



Huntley Headlines

Friends of Historic Huntley

Fall 2017

Historic Discussions at Huntley: Tenant House Reveal!

Saturday, October 7, 2–4 p.m.

6918 Harrison Lane, Alexandria

\$5 registration fee, ages 16-adult

At long last, **renovation of Historic Huntley's Tenant House is complete.** It will now serve as the site's welcome center and programming hub.

Site Interpreter Cheryl Repetti will discuss the architectural discoveries made during the renovation. **Summer Intern Michael Sullivan** will share his research findings about a likely early occupant of the house, **T. F. Mason's overseer, Slighter Smith** (see *Michael Sullivan's article, page 2*). As a special bonus, participants will **tour the upper story of the Tenant House**, which will be used for park staff office space.

Space is limited to 25 participants. Register at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes, registration code 5784821601 or call 703.222.4664. For more information, call 703.768.2525. ❖



Renovation of the Tenant House completed.



May 2002; Norma was the greeter at most of the twice annual FOHH open houses from 1993–2010.

The Frightful Science of Mary Shelley

Friday, October 13, 7–8:30 p.m.

6918 Harrison Lane, Alexandria

\$25 registration fee, ages 18-adult

For adults looking to celebrate the Halloween season in historical fashion, get your **Friday the 13th chills and thrills** at Historic Huntley. Explore ***The Frightful Science of Mary Shelly: A Living History Presentation on Electricity and Galvanism*** led by **Historical Reenactor and Natural Philosopher Dean Howarth**, bringing to life (pun intended) Dr. Frankenstein's experiments animating the dead. As a professional reenactor, Howarth portrays a broad range of

continued on page 2

Norma Hoffman: Remembering FOHH's Founding Mother

June 23, 1925–June 11, 2017

by Carolyn Gamble

Remarkable, feisty, persistent, kind, gracious, positive, curious, optimistic, politically savvy, charming, organized, courageous, helpful, well spoken, driven, adorable, fun loving, caring, intelligent, generous . . .

continued on page 2

FOHH Annual Meeting plus Talk on Jonathan Roberts: Civil War Quaker Scout

Sunday, October 22, 2 p.m.

Sherwood Regional Library, free

2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria

Annual meeting speaker **Gregory Wilson, author and descendant of Jonathan Roberts: The Civil War's Quaker Scout and Sheriff**, received the **2015 Ross Netherton Achievement Award** for this work from the Fairfax County History Commission. Part of the pre-Civil War Quaker migration into southern Fairfax County, Roberts knew Dr. Mason of Oakley and his positions included sheriff of Fairfax County, Union scout, and land surveyor.

Join us for this special presentation and the annual election of FOHH Board members. If you haven't already, please renew your FOHH membership—only members in good standing may vote. For your convenience, a membership renewal form can be found on page 4. ❖

President's Column

by Todi Carnes

In this newsletter, Carolyn Gamble shares with us a remembrance of the late **Norma Hoffman**, who was instrumental in both the acquisition of Historic Huntley and establishing the Friends of Historic Huntley (FOHH). She recalls Norma's humanity towards others and her commanding presence. While bricks and mortar and viewshed are our first thoughts of Huntley, we should always also remember the community both brought together by and standing behind Huntley, as exemplified by Norma. **People build parks and parks build and enhance communities of people** around and drawn to them.

In an era when phones are given more facetime than friends in the flesh, much of life is "lived" online. As artificial intelligence promises to assume many occupational roles, communities of real people in real places (i.e., parks) will become ever more important.

I invite you to step up your role in the Huntley human community. Join FOHH if you haven't already. If you already are a member, become more active as a tour greeter, docent, activities planner, camp chaperone. Or just attend one of the many upcoming programs at Huntley. Reaching out to and joining with others is how Norma succeeded in saving Huntley and establishing FOHH. And it's the best way to preserve these organizations, as well as our humanity and communities in the digital era. ❖



Norma Hoffman *continued ...*

So many wonderful adjectives have been assigned to Norma. Let's just say only one "Norma Hoffman" comes along in a lifetime. I figured that out soon after meeting her in 1983, when I was a Huntley Meadows Park naturalist. That's when Norma signed up to be a volunteer at Huntley Meadows Park. Of course I already knew of her, because of her opposition to the road through Huntley Meadows Park. I had heard Fairfax County officials describe her with adjectives that were strikingly different from the ones listed above! I actually was kind of afraid to meet her. But after one meeting I knew Norma was the one in the "white hat." She has been my hero ever since.

Norma started speaking to county officials about Historic Huntley in the 1980's. She repeatedly brought up her concerns about deterioration and encouraged the county to purchase the property. I have no doubt that her lobbying efforts, particularly with Supervisor Kauffman, played a major role in the county finally finding funds to purchase the house in 1989.

And she didn't stop there. In 1990 she spearheaded the formation of Friends of Historic Huntley. She wrote the articles of incorporation and the bylaws. She served as vice president and later as treasurer. Norma served on the FOHH board for 27 years, the last four years in emeritus status.

Through the years she provided guidance to all the FOHH presidents on local government, procedures, recordkeeping, and the very important thank-you note. Many of us benefitted from her positive encouragement, cheering us on to do more than we thought we could.

Remarkable Woman. Dear Friend. Founding Mother. Norma Hoffman will always be the strong foundation of the Friends of Historic Huntley. ❖

Docent Coordinator Goeffrey Cohrs, Smithsonian American Art Museum, explains artwork typical of the Mason period to FOHH members participating in last spring's members'-only tour.



Frightful Science *continued ...*

scientists and innovators (*see* <http://livinghistoriesofscience.com>).

The 19th-century "galvanists" took their electro-medical experiments to the extreme by proposing that electric shocks could revive the dead. Their macabre public experiment led them to become known as the "resurrectionists," horrifying audiences and inspiring Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Howarth's performance commemorates the bicentennial of Shelley's haunting work, in which Dr. Victor Frankenstein employs electricity to create a new-age being from inanimate matter.

This program is not for the faint of heart! Register at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktates, registration code 5784053601 or call 703.222.4664. For more information, call 703.768.2525. ❖

Historic Huntley Summer Intern: Michael Sullivan

My name is **Michael Sullivan**, and **I served as the 2017 historic site interpretation intern.** I am a rising sophomore at American University, currently pursuing a degree in history. I am working to better understand the people who lived at Historic Huntley, with a particular interest in the freshly renovated **Tenant House** and **Slighter Smith**.

Smith was one of the few Mason-era people who could genuinely and voluntarily call Huntley his home. He served as T.F. Mason's year-round overseer, a white man in charge of

managing Mason's slaves. Overseers were accused of many things, including racism, cruelty, incompetence, and self-indulgence. Through my research, I've discovered that, at times, Smith conforms to these descriptions. At others, he exhibits marked departures from them. For example, he liberated his slaves through his last will and testament. I will be discussing my research on Slighter Smith at the upcoming **October 7** program, **Historic Discussions at Huntley: Tenant House Reveal!** (see page 1).

Additionally, I will be adding new information to the docent manual and have been learning more about childhood education and development through my work with some of Huntley Meadows Park's summer camps. I would like to thank the Friends of Historic Huntley for providing me with this opportunity. ❖



Access Services Librarian Samantha Snyder, at Mount Vernon's Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington, accepts two volumes from FOHH for accession into the collection. Used book sale items are screened for volumes of potential interest to Mount Vernon's Library. The donations were made in remembrance of the service of Betsey Mason (original occupant of Huntley) as a member of the Mount Vernon Ladies Association during the last year of her life and in honor of George Washington as a neighbor holding property immediately adjacent to Huntley's historical southern boundary.

FCPA Programs at Historic Huntley

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

Fall Season (register now!)

American Civics for Homeschoolers

September 21, 5 weeks, 1-3 p.m., ages 12-18, \$84. Covers key political institutions and policies from the colonial period to Reconstruction.

Ice Cream at Historic Huntley

September 23, 11 a.m.-12 p.m., October 28, 1-2 p.m., ages 2-adult, \$8, includes a tour of Historic Huntley. Make and enjoy hand-cranked ice cream as Huntley's Harrison family may have done.

Bread and Butter Tea at Historic Huntley

October 7, 1-2:30 p.m., ages 4-adult, \$8, includes a tour of Historic Huntley. The villa must have hosted many afternoon teas. Learn how to churn butter and enjoy a simple fare of bread and butter, fruit, and pot cheese. Teddy bears, dolls, and trucks are welcomed!

Mason, Custis, and Lee Family Tour

November 3, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m., ages 16-adult, \$65, includes van transportation and admissions. Pack a bag lunch and discover the family and friends of Huntley owners Thomson and Betsey Mason, including Nelly Custis, Robert E. Lee, and George Mason. The tour includes Historic Huntley, Woodlawn, Gunston Hall, and the Lee-Fendall House.

Book and CD Sales

FOHH's ongoing sales of used books and CDs at the Huntley Meadows Park Visitor Center benefit Historic Huntley. Books focus on historic homes and architecture, local and regional history, and the Civil War. CD stock focuses on classical music and historical narratives. Most books are \$2 or \$3; 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. ❖

Hardtack and Johnnycakes

November 5, 1-2:30 p.m., ages 4-adult, \$7. Join an interpreter in period dress to discover Huntley during the Civil War. Get a taste of a soldier's life as you sample hardtack and freshly made johnnycake.

The Art of the Book: Calligraphy

December 2, 1-2 p.m., ages 12-adult, \$7. In honor of Huntley residents who loved books and art, this class explores the art of beautiful writing with a variety of pens and brushes.

Civil War Christmas at Huntley

December 16, 4:30-6 p.m., ages 4-adult, \$8. Huntley was a Union encampment. Learn about the experiences of civilians and soldiers during the Civil War. Enjoy a glass of hot cider and shortbread cookies and make a small gift for a loved one.

Winter Season

(registration starts November 21)

American Civics for

Homeschoolers, January 10, 6 weeks, 2 p.m., ages 12-18, \$106

The Art of the Book:

Calligraphy, January 28, 1 p.m.

Paper, February 11, 12 p.m.

Bindings, March 17, 10 a.m., ages 11-adult, \$7

Make Old Fashioned Toys at

Huntley, February 3, 11 a.m., ages 3-adult, \$7

Scout Programs:

Tiger Elective Adventure:

Family Stories, January 13, 10 a.m., ages 5-8, \$9

Citizenship in the Nation Merit Badge, January 13, 10 a.m., ages 10-18, \$30

JGS: Detective, January 20, 10 a.m., ages 9-12, \$11

Genealogy Merit Badge, January 20, 11 a.m., ages 10-18, \$23

JGS: Playing the Past, February 4, 2 p.m., ages 9-12, \$9

Webelo/AOL Elective Adventure: Looking Back/Forward,

February 25, 2 p.m., ages 8-11, \$9

BGS: My Family Story, March 11, 2 p.m., ages 6-10, \$9

Citizenship in the World Badge, March 25, 12 p.m., ages 10-18, \$38 ❖

FRIENDS OF HISTORIC HUNTLEY

P.O. Box 7241

Alexandria, VA 22307-0241

Address correction requested

Save the Dates:

Historic Discussions—October 7

Frightful Science—October 13

Talk and Annual Meeting—October 22

Educational programs for all ages

Huntley-Related Web Sites

www.historichuntley.org

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/histhunt/

www.friendsofhuntleymeadows.org

Tour Historic Huntley

Enjoy southern Fairfax County's most scenic outlook at **Historic Huntley, the small house with a big view.** A Fairfax County Park Authority site, the property is on the National Register of Historic Places, the Virginia Landmarks Register, and the Fairfax County Inventory of Historic Sites. Tour on Saturdays through October, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and by appointment. *\$5 adults; \$3 children and seniors; under 5, free.* The grounds are open from dawn to

dusk through November. *For more information, call Huntley Meadows Park, 703.768.2525. ♦*

FOHH as a Beneficiary

Have you thought of leaving something to FOHH in your will or part or all of the remains of a retirement account? While FOHH can accept small donations, the Fairfax County Park Foundation—www.fairfaxparkfoundation.org—is best-equipped to handle larger ones. It is a nonprofit dedicated to raising

funds for and distributing them to the Fairfax County Park Authority, which owns Historic Huntley. To ensure your funds will only be used in support of Historic Huntley, have your estate planning attorney expressly include this limitation on the gift. For more information, contact Roberta "Bobbi" Longworth at roberta.longworth@fairfaxcounty.gov or 703.324.8581. As they say, "You can't take it with you"—but you can leave a legacy to Historic Huntley through the Fairfax County Park Foundation. ♦

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 preserve Historic Huntley and related cultural resources through advocacy and education.

Board of Directors: Todi Carnes, President • Charles O. Davis, Vice President • Carolyn Gamble, Secretary • Jere Gibber, Treasurer • Erica Hersher, Publicity • Charlotte Brown • Peter Christensen • Karen Connair • Harry Glasgow • Stephen F. Kimbel • Patty Young • Susan Escherich, Emeritus • Todi Carnes, HMHOA Representative • Connie Carpender, FOHMP Representative • Bruce Dilks, Woodlawn Faith United Methodist Church Representative

Advisors: Barbara B. 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.