



# Huntley Headlines

Friends of Historic Huntley

Spring 2017

## Spring Event

### Discovery Day at Historic Huntley

Saturday, April 22, 1 - 4 p.m.

6918 Harrison Lane, Alexandria

Suggested donation, \$5

Children 10 and under, free

**Calling all History Detectives!**

**Discover Huntley 1825 to the present!**

This year marks the **275th anniversary of Fairfax County**. **Historic Huntley has been around for 192 of those years!** Celebrate this historic moment by visiting Huntley.

Discover what Huntley was and how it changed throughout that time. Learn about its federal-style architecture and service as a country retreat for the wealthy Alexandria mayor who built it; its occupation as a Civil War winter encampment by Union soldiers; its transformation to a dairy farm and residence for the Harrison family; and its post-WWII use as a commuter home for Colonel Ransom Amlong, his wife, and their six children.

**Discovery Day at Historic Huntley** is sponsored by the **Friends of Historic Huntley (FOHH)** with participation from **George Mason's Gunston Hall**, the **Fairfax County Historic Courthouse**, **Friends of Fairfax Archaeology**, historical reenactor **Jon Vrana**, and **John Berfield**, guru of all things Civil War at Huntley.

Enjoy activities for the whole family and refreshments. Come prepared to **slue through Huntley documents, maps, and artifacts; tour the house;**

**participate in old-time Huntley activities** such as ice cream- and butter-making; and **snap a selfie or Facebook pic with Huntley the Cow**. *For more information, call 703.768.2525.* ❖



*Renovation of the Tenant House awaits the final touch: installation of windows presently on back order.*

## Historic Discussions on Huntley: Tenant House Mysteries Saturday, April 1, 1 p.m.

Norma Hoffman Visitor Center

Huntley Meadows Park

Registration fee, \$5

Historic Huntley has always been a site of mystery. For example, its architect remains unknown. And one would like to ask T.F. Mason why he built Huntley's residential ice house to the same scale as the one used for commercial purposes at Gadsby's Tavern.

The ongoing renovation of the Tenant House has demonstrated that even presumed facts about Huntley are incorrect. It was commonly believed that the Tenant House was a late 19th-century structure. Newly disclosed physical details demonstrate that the house was built close in time to Huntley's main villa.

The work has revealed architectural surprises that bring into question the structure's original purpose and use. Maybe it's not a tenant house after all? Learn about renovation findings and join a lively conversation about their meaning led by **Architectural Conservator Sarah Rogers**.

Register at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes). Registration code 3402821601. Call 703.768.2525 for more information. ❖

## Meet Huntley Volunteer:

### Carol Booth

by Stephen F. Kimbel

**Carol Booth** used a short cut to reach her home in the Stoneybrooke neighborhood that took her past the old house on the hill off of Harrison Lane. She has lived nearby since 1979.

In the 1990's townhouses went up and brought sidewalks to the area and she walked by the old house more frequently. When FOHH began raising funds to support the restoration of the house, she made contributions. She still has the refrigerator magnet she received for supporting the drive to bring Huntley back to life.

In 2012, when they held the ceremony celebrating the grand opening of the freshly restored Huntley—the summer villa of Thomson Francis Mason and his family—Carol Booth attended. But it wasn't until several months after she retired from her career as a Defense Department consultant that she felt she had the time to investigate volunteering at Historic Huntley.

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## President's Column:

### A Beacon on the Hill

by Todi Carnes

As I reported in the fall 2016 newsletter, FOHH, Friends of Huntley Meadows Park (FOHMP), and Fairfax County worked together to protect Historic Huntley's viewshed from intrusive structures towering above the trees. An agreement with Dominion Virginia Power to modify its power rebuild project along the southern boundary of Huntley Meadows Park has been approved by the State Corporation Commission.

As promised, FOHH continues to vigilantly monitor ongoing land use planning for potential impacts to Historic Huntley's viewshed. In this regard, I am pleased to note that the county is conducting a high-tech, e-analysis of potential viewshed impacts stemming from planned development along Richmond Highway along the corridor from Lockheed Boulevard to the Woodlawn area. The county's commitment of scarce public funds to this project is a testament to Historic Huntley's value as a cultural resource, and acknowledges that the historic site has many friends, both within and outside local government.

The county's ongoing analysis of viewshed impacts and the settlement reached with Dominion Virginia Power show that citizens (both private and corporate) and public officials can all work together to move everybody forward. Through these efforts, the small, but grand, villa just outside our nation's capital serves as a positive beacon of the possible in a stormy time. ❖

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## Huntley Team Expands

by Carolyn Gamble

Two new staff members have recently joined **Historical Interpreter and Site Coordinator Cheryl Repetti at Huntley Meadows Park** to work on the Huntley team—

### Jessica Cushman, Programmer

In talking to Jessie, two themes came through loud and strong: being outdoors and building community. Jessie is a part-time programmer who started at Huntley Meadows Park in



November 2016. Her responsibilities include preparing and leading interpretive programs on natural and cultural history and science topics for preschoolers to adults.

This spring she will be taking Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) training to become a certified interpretive guide, and also will receive site training in leading tours at Historic Huntley. Her first program at Huntley will be Discovery Day on April 22. Look for her at the ice cream-making station with Cheryl Repetti.

Jessie grew up in a log cabin in the woods of Prince William County, so working outdoors is natural for her. Last summer she was a farm manager at an organic farm in Nokesville. She loved the job and said it was hard work growing and selling corn, kale, pumpkins, potatoes, and more.

She has a master's degree in agricultural and life sciences, with an education concentration, which she summarizes as "agricultural education." Perhaps FOHH and Jessie could work together to create programs on local farming history. She looks forward to helping the community celebrate its history and hopes to increase citizen pride through expanded knowledge.

When Jessie isn't at Huntley she puts her environmental ideals into action by volunteering with the Arlington Tree Stewards and with the Prince William Soil and Water Conservation District.

### Kathleen O'Shea, Visitor Services Manager

Kathleen is not a new face at Huntley Meadows Park. In 2016, after five

years at the park, she was promoted from volunteer coordinator to visitor services manager. In this new position she is responsible for visitor services operations and facilities management at both the park and Historic Huntley. She is also the official liaison to FOHH.

Kathleen graduated in 2004 with an anthropology degree from James Madison University, with a minor in historical archaeology. Her love of the outdoors is demonstrated by her work history, starting with high



school when she spent four summers working at Lake Accotink Park. In college she taught field school during the summers at Shenandoah National Park and worked on Phase III archaeology at James Madison's Montpelier.

After college she spent eight years as a cultural resource management contractor in Alabama, Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Montana, North Carolina, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Virginia, Washington, and Wyoming. Phew! She says "It was a good way to spend my twenties." Before she started at Huntley Meadows Park, she spent two years as FCPA's field director for prehistoric investigation at Colchester.

Kathleen is excited about the Tenant House renovation. She says it will bring new options for on-site programs, including those highlighting Mason-style entertaining. She also shared her desire to link together the "pockets of history" in our area to create a clearer

picture of what the community was like. Van tours focusing on different themes such as dairy farming, ice wells, and viewsheds could be offered.

In her “free” time, Kathleen is the proud mom of one-year-old and future-outdoor-enthusiast Silas. ❖

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## **Carol Booth**

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Born in Pittsburgh, Carol grew up around French and Indian War history with school trips to visit Fort Pitt and George Washington’s Fort Necessity. After graduating from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, she received a master’s degree in mathematics from West Virginia University. She taught in the Fort LeBoeuf School District, named for the French fort that was the destination

of a young George Washington on his first diplomatic mission for the Royal Governor of Virginia.

Like everything she takes up, Carol puts lots of time and effort into welcoming visitors to the old house on the hill near her home. During her first season at Historic Huntley she racked up 38 hours greeting tourists, quite an accomplishment considering Huntley was only open for tours on Saturdays from April through October.

Carol’s favorite Huntley feature is the ice well. She marvels at its size and wonders about the number of guests who must have attended the sumptuous parties Thomson Francis and his wife Betsey hosted at their villa on hot and humid summer evenings.

Attracting more visitors to Huntley is one of Carol’s goals. She’d like to see

brochures made available at area hotels and motels, in addition to area libraries and other county parks and historic sites.

With Fairfax County celebrating its 275th anniversary this year, Historic Huntley will be exploring ways to help its neighbors preserve the historic documents they may have around the house. Carol has an example from her own family history.

Carol describes her mother as “a thrower-outer.” But she says her mother-in-law was “a keeper.” For instance, she saved all four yearbooks from her daughter’s high school years and when Carol presented them to the high school librarian, she identified one of them as the only volume missing from the school’s otherwise complete collection of class yearbooks. Friends of Historic Huntley all agree: Carol Booth “is a keeper!” ❖

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## **FCCA Programs at Historic Huntley**

### **Toys at Historic Huntley**

*April 30, 2 - 3 p.m., for families*

\$7, registration code: 5782832601

Enjoy toys and games from the past as children who lived at Huntley may have. Adults may tour the house while the kids are occupied.

### **Taux Trail**

*May 2, 1 - 3 p.m.,*

*for homeschoolers ages 6-12*

\$12, registration code: 3402023701

Students immerse themselves in the life of Virginia Indians 400 years ago by taking part in corn grinding, clay pot making, and corn darts activities.

### **Mason, Custis, and Lee Family Tour**

*May 11, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.,*

*for ages 16 - adults*

\$60, registration code: 5782930201

Discover the family and friends of Historic 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. Pack a bag lunch.

### **Delicious Dairy at Historic Huntley**

*May 20, 1 - 3 p.m., for families*

\$8, registration code: 5782827201

Churn your own butter and taste fresh cheese you can make at home. Tour the house and discover how Huntley, once a summer home for the wealthy, became a dairy farm.

### **Twilight Hilltop Tour at Historic Huntley**

*May 26, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m., for adults*

\$5, registration code: 5782833901

*June 10, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m., for adults*

\$5, registration code: 5782833902

Enjoy the stunning view of the entire Hybla Valley as the sun dramatically sets. See Huntley in a different light! Light refreshments served afterward.

### **Bread and Butter Tea**

**at Historic Huntley**

*May 27, 1 - 2:30 p.m., for families*

\$8, registration code: 5782037901

The Huntley villa must have hosted many afternoon teas, but probably not one where guests were asked to churn their own fresh butter while hearing stories about families who lived there. Teddy bears and favorite dolls and trucks are welcome to partake of the simple fare of bread and butter, fruit, homemade pot cheese, and a selection of traditional and herbal teas. Includes a tour of Historic Huntley.

### **Hardtack and Johnnycakes**

*June 3, 1:30 - 2:30 p.m., for families*

\$7, registration code: 5782038001

Sample the Civil War soldier’s fare of hardtack and freshly made johnnycake. Join an interpreter in period dress and discover which sides of the conflict the Masons and other residents of Huntley chose and how those decisions affected the property.

*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). ❖*

## **Book & CD Sales**

Check out FOHH’s ongoing **sales of used books and CDs at the Huntley Meadows Park Visitor Center** to benefit Historic Huntley. Books focus on American historic homes and architecture, Virginia and local regional history, and the Civil War. CD stock focuses on classical music and historical narratives. 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). ❖

# FRIENDS OF HISTORIC HUNTLEY

P.O. Box 7241

Alexandria, VA 22307-0241

Address correction requested

## Save the Dates:

*Historic Discussions - April 1*

*Discovery Day at Huntley - April 22*

*Educational programs for all ages*

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## Huntley-Related Web Sites

www.historichuntley.org

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/histhunt/

www.friendsofhuntleymeadows.org

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## New Board Member

FOHH is pleased to announce a new member on its Board of Directors: **Karen Connair**. Ms. Connair is a lifetime member of both FOHH and FOHMP.

She works as a technical information specialist at the Defense Technical Information Center at Fort Belvoir. Previously she served as a librarian with the Naval Historical Center Library and Smithsonian Libraries.

She has been a volunteer researcher at Historic Huntley, as well as a docent at both Frying Pan Farm Park and the Ball-Sellers House. Welcome aboard Karen! ❖

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## Tours of Historic Huntley

Enjoy southern Fairfax County's most scenic outlook at **Historic Huntley, the small house with a big view.** Tours on Saturdays, April 30 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 from March to November.

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.

*For more information, call Huntley Meadows Park, 703.768.2525. ❖*

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

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### ***Address changes:***

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