



Huntley Headlines

Friends of Historic Huntley

Spring 2019

**Flight Day at
Historic Huntley**
Saturday, April 13, 1 - 3 p.m.
6918 Harrison Lane, Alexandria
Ages 4-adult, Code: 283.5007
Registration fee, \$10

Did you know that Huntley's farm lands were once projected to be a large-scale airport for both commercial air planes and dirigibles? That was the dream of **Henry Woodhouse** who, in the 1920's, owned what is, in large measure, today's Huntley Meadows Park. Although his project was not successful, Woodhouse got so far as to declare the opening of the "George Washington Air Junction."

With Huntley's aviation history in mind, get ready to spread your wings and see what it's like to fly into spring! This is your opportunity to become a test pilot, flying different paper airplane designs. Kids can build a blimp, learn about hot air balloons, and try on a pair of wings to fly like a bird. History buffs can delve into the fascinating story of Henry Woodhouse and his dream to make Huntley part of the world's largest airport. And everyone can enjoy a bird's eye view of Huntley Meadows Park.

This event is great for families, homeschoolers, and scout groups. Registration is limited, so sign up through Parktakes now! *For more information, call 703.768.2525 or go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes/.* ❖



Image from the collection of the Alexandria Library.

Huntley's Neighbor, Groveton Elementary, in History's Spotlight

The School Board, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), has begun a project to **document the histories of 200 Fairfax County public schools**. Groveton Elementary School is one of the schools with a well-documented history, according to **Jeff Clark** of the FCPS Office of Communications and Community Relations. With the assistance of **Rene Harry and Meredith Lydon**, Jeff has been tasked with the herculean job of researching the histories of these schools. The research will also include the origins of the names of each school—Groveton being one of the more obscure.

Two Historic Huntley board members and natives of the Groveton area, **Patty Young and Charlotte Brown**, author of *Images of America, Groveton*, were asked to support Jeff in his research. Charlotte has an impressive historical knowledge of the area and

was able to provide photographs and information about Groveton School and the Groveton community, including a reference to "This desirable Groveton Farm," written by John Collard in the 1860 *Alexandria Gazette*, the earliest reference to the name Groveton.

As an historian and video producer, Jeff has skillfully reached back over a century and amassed documents, photographs, and written text, breathing life into Groveton's past. Jeff commented, "Some schools, like Groveton, have a wealth of information available. I have found that is not the case county-wide because so many schools have misplaced, lost, thrown away, or never collected photographs or written histories. Having a wonderful community like Groveton to work with is a dream!"

To enjoy the Groveton Elementary School history and a video go to <https://grovetones.fcps.edu/about/history>. To see more informative, educational, and enjoyable histories of other Fairfax County Public Schools go to www.fcps.edu/about-fcps/history. ❖

Tea at Huntley



The HH parking lot is routinely filling up for sold-out Tea at Huntley programs!

President's Column

by Todi Carnes

I am pleased to report that this past February the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors **unanimously voted not to build proposed pathways through areas of Huntley Meadows Park.** These pathways would have threatened both known and potential cultural resources associated with Historic Huntley. Thank you to all who helped achieve this success by providing testimony and evidence showcasing the park's cultural (and natural) resources!

This campaign was a joint effort of the Friends of Historic Huntley (FOHH) and the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park (FOHMP), united in the spirit of their common co-founder, the late Norma Hoffman, and her counsel to exercise "eternal vigilance" over the park. **FOHMP President Cathy Ledec led the way**, putting countless hours into amassing evidence, publicizing public hearings, conducting outreach, and speaking out on behalf of the park's natural and cultural resources. **Carolyn Gamble took the lead for FOHH.** All friends of Huntley are indebted to these two leaders!

Last year an informal meeting of FOHH Board and Advisory Council members concluded that **Historic Huntley and Huntley Meadows Park should be promoted as a single park**—just as they are viewed and serviced by Fairfax County Park Authority staff. The successful track record of FOHH and FOHMP in jointly protecting Historic Huntley-related resources both "on the hill" and around it—in the face of threats several years ago by Dominion's powerline rebuild and by the proposed park pathways—indicates the wisdom of the single-park sentiment.

Although largely a wetlands today, the lands of Huntley Meadows Park comprise Historic Huntley's original farm fields below the villa and, to its west, the estate of Richard C. Mason, brother of Historic Huntley's builder, Thomson F. Mason. It was "all in the family" then, and it's all in "the park" today, with FOHH and FOHMP one big "Huntley" family maintaining eternal vigilance over it. ❖

Meet Bob Keegan

by Robbie McNeil

Congratulations to **Bob Keegan for being named a "Very Important Volunteer (VIV)!"** This is an FCPA-level award to recognize the hard work and dedication of volunteers. Bob came to Historic Huntley shortly after he retired from the federal government. He spent his last 25 years as a trial lawyer for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. When he attended a session at RSVP (The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program), Historic Huntley was one of places mentioned. He gave it a try, and the rest, is, well, history!

Bob received his bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Maryland, and his law degree from Catholic University. He enjoys his time at Historic Huntley because he likes talking about history to people, and Huntley offers a lot of options for discussion. Talking about the ice well, its size, possible age, and all the "whys" of it is one of his favorite topics at Huntley.

Cheryl Repetti, the historical interpreter and site coordinator for Historic Huntley, offered the following description of Bob: "Bob has been extraordinarily dedicated and enthusiastic. We actually need more volunteer docents, but you wouldn't



Bob Keegan at his favorite locale on a summer Saturday.

know it, because Bob was willing to be there every Saturday we didn't have someone scheduled. That's how he put in so many hours in a relatively short time. But it's not just that Bob showed up, he jumped into learning about Huntley and into being a docent with both feet. He did research and he compiled a great tablet presentation to accompany his tours. Folks have stopped in after the tours to say how much they enjoyed it. And when we ended our tour season, Bob moved on to Sully and is now a docent there. But he has already told them that he can't do tours there on the Saturdays when he will be back at Huntley."

In addition to Sully, Bob will be working as a docent at the Carlyle House in Alexandria, but will definitely be at Huntley this spring. Plan to stop by and treat yourself to a tour with Bob Keegan. ❖

Book and CD Sales

FOHH's 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.** ❖

Summer Historical Interpretation Internship at Huntley: Apply Now!

Award: \$3,000

Period: 12 weeks, 40 hours a week, May 28-August 16, 2019

Location: Huntley Meadows Park

Applicants: College students or graduates, preferably with a major in public history, education, museum studies, history, or archaeology

Duties: Interpretive programs and planning, research project, tours

For additional information and to apply, contact Cheryl Repetti, Ph.D., 703.765.2525, cheryl-ann.repetti@fairfaxcounty.gov. ❖

Historic Huntley's Staff Team Changes

by Carolyn Gamble

Last September, former Huntley Meadows Park Visitor Services Manager and FOHH liaison **Kathleen O'Shea** moved to the Richmond area with her husband and son. We extend our heartfelt thanks to Kathleen, and wish her well with her new endeavors!

Replacing Kathleen as the new visitor services manager and FOHH liaison is **Casey Pittrizzi**. Casey is a native of Fairfax County and has been an interpreter and environmental educator locally for nearly 15 years. Casey received a bachelor of science degree in health, fitness, and recreation resources with a concentration in parks and outdoor recreation from George Mason University. He has worked for Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA), Northern Virginia Regional Parks, and at Penn State's Nature Center Shaver's Creek Environmental Center.

His work for FCPA included working at Huntley Meadows Park as weekend staff and as a programmer at the Visitor Center and Historic Huntley from 2015-2017. Casey lives in Fairfax with his wife and his basset hound Penny. In his spare time he enjoys hiking, birding, learning, and spending time with his family.

Casey joins the Historic Huntley staff team, which also includes Historical Interpreter and Site Coordinator **Cheryl Repetti**, and Naturalist/Historian **Malcolm McNeil**, a former FOHH summer intern. ❖



FCPA Programs at Historic Huntley

All programs meet at Historic Huntley, 6918 Harrison Lane, Alexandria, unless otherwise specified. Look for signs with directions when you arrive at Huntley. For more information and to register, call 703.222.4664 or go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes/.

Little Historians

Connect your preschool children to their community and traditions through stories, crafts, songs, and activities. Different topics each month. 10-10:45 a.m., ages 3-5, \$8.

March 12: Homes and Communities
Code: D93.846F

April 9: Plants on the Farm
Code: D93.CBB1

May 14: Cows
Code: D93.B126

The Women of Historic Huntley

March 14, 1-2 p.m., ages 16-adult, \$15,
Code: F12.0626

A society matron, an enslaved wife and mother, a farmer's daughter, a military wife—Huntley has been home to interesting women and seen the lives of women change dramatically since the house was built in 1825. See Huntley from a different view as you stroll the house and grounds.

Mason Tea

Adults, \$28
March 14, 2-4 p.m.,
Code: 87A.EAA2
May 13, 1:30-3:30 p.m.,
Code 87A.4C21

Enjoy an 1830-style afternoon tea much as Betsey Mason would have with the gleam of polished silver and proper etiquette. Sample a menu of period-appropriate tasty treats in an historic setting as you brush up on your tea history.

Huntley in the 20th Century

April 11, 1-2:30 p.m., adults, \$9,
Code: 31C.8F7E

Meet and then car pool to see traces of Huntley Meadows Park's 20th-century history. Discover Huntley's role in the nation's defense. Learn about the schemer who accidentally made the park possible and the dreamer who defended it. The tour includes a mile stroll on easy ground.

Ice Cream at Historic Huntley

Ages 2-adult, \$8
April 14, 2:30-3:30 p.m.,
Code: 633.11D0
May 4, 11 a.m.-12 noon,
Code: 633.CB03

Make and enjoy hand-cranked ice cream as Huntley's Harris family may have done. Discover how the histories of ice cream and Huntley follow a similar path from elite luxury to family fare. Ice well and Historic House tour included. Children must be accompanied by a registered adult.

Twilight Hilltop Tour

7:30-8:30 p.m., adults, \$8
April 26, Code: D3E.799F
May 17, Code: D3E.ED46

Historic Huntley sits high upon a hill overlooking Hybla Valley and Huntley Meadows Park. Its dramatic setting made is all the more stunning by the setting sun. Join us for a special after-hours tour and see the house in a different way. Light refreshments served afterward. Dress appropriately for the weather.

Bread and Butter Tea

April 28, 2-3 p.m., ages 4-adult, \$8,
Code F8A.8B81

The Huntley villa must have hosted many afternoon teas, but probably not one like this where the guests are asked to make their own fresh butter while we share stories about families who lived here. Teddy bears and favorite dolls or trucks are welcome to partake of the simple fare of bread and butter, fruit, homemade pot cheese, and a selection of teas. Includes tour of Huntley House and grounds.

House Detective

May 9, 1-2 p.m., adults, \$8,
Code: 7A9.2547

What clues reveal the story of a house? What can architectural details and styles tell us? Examine photographs, artifacts, and the buildings of Historic Huntley and see if you can resolve some of the enduring mysteries of this place.

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FRIENDS OF HISTORIC HUNTLEY

P.O. Box 7241

Alexandria, VA 22307-0241

Address correction requested

Save the Dates:

Flight Day at Historic Huntley—April 13

Educational programs for all ages

Huntley-Related Web Sites

www.historichuntley.org

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/historic-huntley

www.friendsofhuntleymeadows.org

FCPA Programs *continued...*

Storytime on the Hill

May 25, 6:30-7:30 p.m., ages 2-12, \$8, Code: 3BB.2E12

Bundle up in your jammies and bring blankets to sit on and snuggle in as you listen to stories from long ago, the way the Mason family may have once done. Enjoy the sunset and spectacular view from Historic Huntley. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Mount Vernon and Huntley: Lives Bound Together Tour

May 30, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., adults, \$64, Code: 4F4.13F0

Includes van transportation and admission; lunch in the Mount Vernon cafeteria not included. A letter from Huntley is on exhibit at Mount Vernon! See the letter and discover how slavery links Huntley and Mount

Vernon. Includes tours of the slave quarters at Mount Vernon, as well as the mansion houses. ❖

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 from the end of April through October and by appointment. *\$8 adults; \$6 children and seniors; under 5, free.* The grounds are open from dawn to dusk from March through November. *For more information: 703.768.2525, www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/historic-huntley.* ❖

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.