

# Huntley Headlines

Friends of Historic Huntley

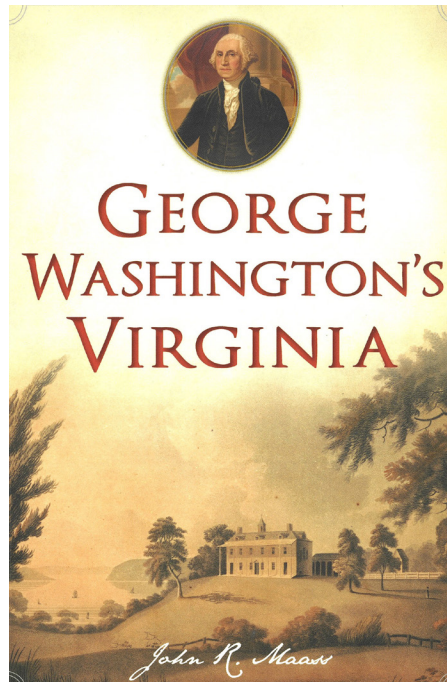
Fall 2018

## Historic Discussions at Huntley

### John Maass: Virginia Sites Related to George Washington Saturday, September 29, 2 p.m.

6918 Harrison Lane, Alexandria  
Registration fee, \$5

Join us as **Author John R. Maass, Ph.D.** discusses **Virginia sites related to George Washington**, particularly those within Historic Huntley's expansive viewshed. Dr. Maass is a historian at the U.S. Army Center of Military History, an adjunct professor of history at Norwich University, and the author of *The French and Indian War in North Carolina: The Spreading Flames of War*; *Defending a New Nation, 1783-1811*; *The Road to Yorktown: Jefferson, Lafayette and the British Invasion of Virginia*; and, most recently, *George Washington's Virginia*. Register at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows/classes-camps](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows/classes-camps). For more information, call 703.768.2525. ❖



## FOHH Annual Meeting

### Jessie MacLeod: Betsey Mason's Letter Saturday, November 3, 2 p.m.

Martha Washington Library, free  
6614 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria

Annual meeting speaker **Associate Curator Jessie MacLeod**, from George Washington's Mount Vernon, will provide a presentation: **"Thank God it is now in your hands": Unpacking Betsey C. Mason's Letter to John Augustine Washington III.**

Ms. MacLeod will connect Mason's letter with a key journal entry by Magistrate John Augustine Washington III on the 1845 trial of five enslaved men from Huntley for trespassing. Washington's journal is held by Mount Vernon, while Mason's letter was recently purchased at auction by FOHH.

The letter shows concern for the fair treatment of "her negroes" during the trial. The incident suggests how enslaved people endeavored to maintain family and social networks across different plantations. Ms. MacLeod will place this local historical event into the broader context of the **Lives Bound Together** exhibit at Mount Vernon, where the letter will be on display through September 2019.

*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. ❖*



## Thank You, C. Richard Bierce!

Farewell and thank you to **C. Richard Bierce, AIA!** After living in this area for many years, he has moved back to his home state of Arizona. A historical architect and preservation consultant, Mr. Bierce served on the Fairfax County Architectural Review Board for 30 years, administering the regulations of the county's historic overlay districts, including Huntley's. He worked on the bicentennial restoration projects of both

*continued on page 2*

## President's Column

by Todi Carnes

It's a bit of irony that so many people today seem to isolate themselves from others by becoming "lost" in their smart phones—a device whose purpose is connection with others.

While it is just as easy to lose yourself in the mesmerizing sight of Historic Huntley's multiple federal-style structures, its hillside setting tells us that it was all about making connections. Intentionally situated on high ground so that its owners could see others across the Hybla Valley, its elevated location also ensured that others would be able to view the villa. Huntley was not built in isolation, but within this connected community.

This newsletter showcases how FOHH seeks to revitalize those connections. Board Members Erica Hershler and Patty Young have been doing just that at Gunston Hall (home to George Mason IV, grandfather of Huntley's builder, T.F. Mason, and T.F. Mason's birthplace)—see *Digitizing T.F. Mason's Law Papers* on this page.

A product of this strengthened relationship was an alert by Gunston Hall staff to FOHH that a letter authored by Betsey Mason, Huntley's original mistress, was scheduled for auction. FOHH acquired the letter.

That purchase helped revitalize the relationship with George Washington's Mount Vernon. (In the last year of her life, Betsey Mason served with the Mount Vernon Ladies Association as Vice-Regent of Virginia.) As noted on page 1, Betsey's letter will be on loan



*Betsey C. Mason: image from the collection of George Washington's Mount Vernon.*

for an exhibition at Mount Vernon and their Associate Curator Jessie MacLeod will speak at FOHH's annual meeting.

Expect to see more FOHH endeavors aimed at revitalizing connections. More than simply physical places, a complex social fabric existed between those who lived and worked in the area—one that we are looking to rebuild. Through their good works as ambassadors, Ms. Hershler and Ms. Young have taken Huntley far beyond Harrison Lane to Gunston Hall, Mount Vernon, and the hearts of others.

If you'd like to break isolating phone behaviors and serve as a Huntley ambassador to other locations, please contact me at [todicarnes@verizon.net](mailto:todicarnes@verizon.net). ❖

## C. Richard Bierce *continued ...*

Carlyle House and Gadsby's Tavern in Alexandria.

Mr. Bierce first toured the Historic Huntley site in the 1970's and served on the FOHH Advisory Council since its inception. He researched and wrote the 2002 *Historic Structures Report* for Huntley in conjunction with Shaffer, Wilson, Sarver & Gray, P.C., a document that has informed many restoration decisions.

An outstanding friend among Friends, we are grateful for Mr. Bierce's many dedicated years of support through public and scholarly presentations, consultations, and applied expertise. *Richard, we wish you all the best in Arizona and look forward to seeing you on visits back to Virginia.* ❖

## 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](mailto:todicarnes@verizon.net). ❖

## Digitizing T.F. Mason's Law Papers

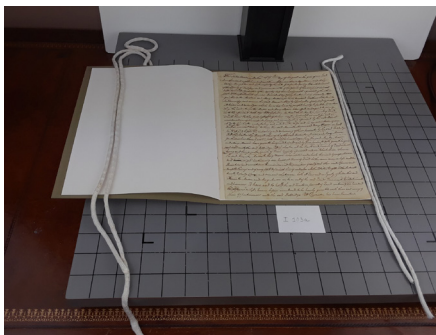
Long before building the villa and other structures at Historic Huntley, Thomson Francis ("T.F.") Mason was, in 1807, a newly minted graduate of the College of New Jersey (Princeton University). This honor student had a plan to establish a law practice in his home state of Virginia.



*Patty Young and Erica Hershler present information on their T.F. Mason archival project to members of Gunston Hall's Board of Regents in April 2018.*

In 2017, more than two centuries later, **eleven archival boxes containing more than 4,000 documents from the law office of T.F. Mason** arrived at stately Gunston Hall, home of T.F.'s grandfather, George Mason IV. Having participated in Huntley's 2017 Discovery Day, Gunston Hall knew just where to turn for volunteers to help with digitizing and making publicly available this documentary treasure trove: FOHH. **Board members Erica Hershler and Patty Young** eagerly seized this opportunity to uncover more of the T.F.'s personal and professional life.

For the past year, these two volunteers have diligently journeyed to Gunston Hall one day a week to carefully position and photograph each of the thousands of irreplaceable and often fragile documents. They also have been simultaneously cross-checking and verifying document identification



*Nonflat pages held down by book snakes.*

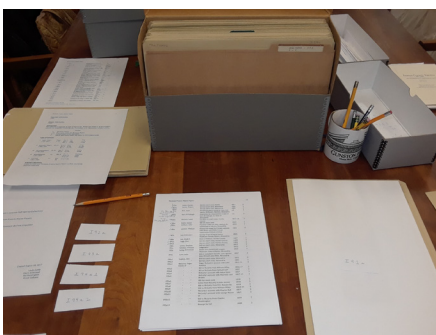
and data entry, which will make the documents accessible for retrieval and use.

Given the number of documents and the time-consuming nature of their task, these volunteers have been unable to stop and read them. However, occasionally they catch interesting tidbits. One was the mystery as to why T.F. would order only one shoe at a time, until they remembered that horseshoes were in common use—and not necessarily needed in pairs.

Ms. Hershler and Ms. Young are optimistic that the documents will be digitally available by spring 2019. ❖



*Document photography station.*



*Each document is photographed with a number label that matches its finding aid/ archival file number.*

## 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/huntley-meadows/classes-camps](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows/classes-camps).*

### The View from Huntley

September 10, October 18, November 15, 1-2 p.m., ages 2-adults, \$5. Take a trip through time to examine Alexandria's and the nation's history from the perspective of events at Historic Huntley.

### Mason Tea

September 14, November 4, December 14, 2-3:30 p.m., adults, \$15. Enjoy an 1830-style afternoon tea and a tour of Historic Huntley.

### Twilight Hilltop Tour

September 14, 7:30-8:30 p.m., adults, \$5. Join a special after-hours tour and view the house in a dramatic way by the setting sun.

### Delicious Dairy at Historic Huntley

September 15, 1-2 p.m., ages 2-adult, \$7. Churn your own delicious butter and taste fresh cheese you can make at home.

### Taux Trail for Homeschool

September 18, 12-2 p.m., November 14, 1-3 p.m., ages 6-12, \$12. Be immersed in the lifeways of Virginia Indians—grind corn, make a clay pot, and master corn darts. *Meet at Huntley Meadows Park.*

### Upside-Down Tour

September 19, 1:30 p.m., September 30, 1:30 p.m., October 6, 10:30 a.m., October 28, 2 p.m., ages 8-adult, \$5. It's your turn to tell the story during this interactive tour. Ponder the clues, explore and investigate, play games, and take a selfie with your favorite Huntley character.

### Huntley in the 20th Century

September 20, December 10, 1-2:30 p.m., adults, \$7. 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.

### Colonial Life for Homeschool

October 9, 12-2 p.m., December 12, 1-3 p.m., ages 4-adult, \$12. Discover more about Huntley Meadows Park, land once owned by George Mason. Learn to make candles, design a stencil to mark crops, write with a quill pen, and decide the future of the Virginia Colony. *Meet at Huntley Meadows Park.*

### Halloween History Treat!

**The Frightful Science of Mary Shelly**  
October 12, 7-8:30 p.m., adults, \$25. Enjoy refreshments and watch Dean Howarth historically reenact the Natural Philosopher demonstrating Frankenstein's animation of the dead.

### House Detective

October 15, 1-2 p.m., adults, \$5. Look for clues to resolving some of the enduring mysteries of Historic Huntley in its architectural details and styles. Examine photographs, artifacts, and the buildings themselves.

### Pumpkin Party on the Hill

October 27, 1-3 p.m., ages 2-12, \$15 or group of 4 for \$32. Bring a pumpkin to paint and decorate, taste pumpkin ice cream, and make your own pumpkin play-dough.

### The Women of Historic Huntley

November 5, December 20, 1-2 p.m., adults, \$5. 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 over time.

### Make Old-Fashioned Toys at Historic Huntley

November 17, 1-2 p.m., ages 4-adult, \$7. Make simple toys to take home, play games like those enjoyed by the children who once lived at Huntley, and enjoy a house tour and scavenger hunt.

### Christmas at Huntley

December 16, 4:30-6 p.m., ages 4-adult, \$10. Learn about Christmas traditions, enjoy a glass of hot cider and shortbread, make a small gift, and help illuminate the house. ❖

# FRIENDS OF HISTORIC HUNTLEY

P.O. Box 7241

Alexandria, VA 22307-0241

Address correction requested

## Save the Dates:

*Historic Discussions—September 29*

*FOHH Annual Meeting—November 3*

*Educational programs for all ages*

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## Huntley-Related Web Sites

[www.historichuntley.org](http://www.historichuntley.org)

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/historic-huntley](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/historic-huntley)

[www.friendsofhuntleymeadows.org](http://www.friendsofhuntleymeadows.org)

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## 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 April 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 through November.

*For more information, call 703.768.2525 or go to [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/historic-huntley](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/historic-huntley). ❖*

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## Summer Intern Report: Malcolm McNeil

After graduating from Christopher Newport University with a major in history and a minor in leadership studies, I wanted to work in a historical area, educate kids, and have a solid connection to nature. With the opportunity to serve as **historical interpretation intern at**

**Historic Huntley over the summer,** I found all these things. Helping with camps both at Historic Huntley and Huntley Meadows Park was a fantastic experience. My coworkers shared my zeal for providing a safe, exciting, and knowledge-filled experience for the campers. I would like to give special thanks to Cheryl-Ann Repetti, my supervisor, for bringing me into such a joy-filled atmosphere. I plan to continue my relationship with the park and historic house, and hopefully will begin volunteering at both this fall. Thank you! ❖

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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.

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

**Advisors:** Barbara B. Ballentine • Susan Hellman • Robbie McNeil

### Address changes:

Please send your mailing label with corrections to the address above or to [FOHHuntley@aol.com](mailto:FOHHuntley@aol.com).