



Huntley Headlines

Friends of Historic Huntley

Spring 2024

Art & Architecture Day at Historic Huntley Saturday, April 13, free 1:00-3:00 p.m. activities 3:00-4:00 p.m. artist reception

FOHH's signature annual open-house event, **Art & Architecture Day**, returns on **Saturday, April 13**.

Activities from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. include observing artists at work "en plein air" (painting outdoors), free tours of the site's federal-period structures in the context of a carefully designed landscape, viewing art connected to Huntley, and browsing/purchasing history and other non-fiction titles from FOHH's used book sale.

At a reception for the artists from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m., the works painted during the day will be available for public viewing and sale.

The event is **co-sponsored by FOHH and the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA), and offered in conjunction with Architecture Month programming arranged by the American Institute of Architects Northern Virginia Chapter.**

For more information, call 703.768.2525. ❖

Save the Date!

Fall Annual Meeting Saturday, October 26, 2:00 p.m.

FOHH is pleased to announce that historian **Dr. Sheri Huerta** will speak at our Fall Annual Meeting. Be on the lookout for details in our next newsletter. ❖



The guest speaker at the 2023 FOHH Annual Meeting, Martha Claire Catlin (second from left), is shown with, from left to right, FOHH Members Charlotte Brown, Sheryl Sims, and Bonnie Wilkins. Martha's presentation focused on the antebellum anti-slavery Quaker colony at Woodlawn. Photo courtesy of Sheryl Sims.



Plein Air Artist Theresa Miller showcases her painting of the Huntley villa completed at last year's Art & Architecture Day. Photo by Carolyn Gamble.

The Fairfax County Park Authority Board in partnership with the Fairfax County Park Foundation Board present

Fairfax County Park Authority

Elly Doyle

PARK SERVICE AWARDS

Friday, November 17, 2023
CrystalView
12025 Route 50 • Fairfax

Fairfax County Park Authority FCPF Fairfax County Park Foundation

On November 17, 2023, the **Fair Parks Initiative (FPI)**, launched by FOHH in concert with other park friends groups, was a **co-recipient of the Sally Ormsby Environmental Stewardship Award** given by the FCPA Board. The purpose of the FPI is to increase the FCPA's slice of taxpayer funding for cultural and natural resources. To date, FPI has helped secure more than a million dollars in increased funding. The FPI's advocacy was complemented and immeasurably assisted by its Ormsby Award **co-recipient, the Fairfax Parks Coalition**, a group of non-friends advocates dedicated to securing increased equity and natural resource funding for the FCPA.

President's Column: It's Always Time to Celebrate Historic Huntley!

by Todi Carnes

With the turn of the calendar, we've entered 2024. While inspiring eager anticipation of what the new year will bring, it also invokes reflection on what has gone before. For FOHH fans this brings the somewhat startling realization that 2024 will be the **200th anniversary of Historic Huntley's construction**, established through dendrochronology. With the tenant house dating to around 1827, we know the site's multiple structures took several years to materialize.

The 200th anniversary of the villa's construction will be recognized as part of **Huntley Meadows Park's (HMP) celebration of its 50th anniversary** next year. We can celebrate both Historic Huntley's Mason-family origins and its present service as a FCPA site.

As FOHH Vice-President Robbie McNeil often points out, **Historic Huntley under FCPA ownership** has its own history, a story that has its roots in the 1970's. **C. Richard**

Bierce, AIA, historical architect and preservation consultant (*see photo below and article on page 3*), was present during the time when the site's future as a public park slowly came into focus. The history of FOHH, as noted by the **Virginia Resolution** (*see article on right*), goes back more than 30 years and is intimately tied to the development of Historic Huntley.

Notably, some of the activists instrumental in saving Historic Huntley and having it restored for the public's benefit also were instrumental in saving HMP from being bisected by a highway. Key among these persons was **Norma Hoffman**. Many of our readers knew Richard Bierce and/or Norma Hoffman. Sadly, both have now passed away, evidencing how what we know so well today swiftly becomes tomorrow's history.

As we glory in the 200th anniversary of Historic Huntley's construction, let us also celebrate and chronicle the people of Historic Huntley here today, so that we have a record of their presence and accomplishments—**Cheryl Repetti, Ph.D., Jackson Allsman, and Lark MacNeil** (*see page 3*). ❖



C. Richard Bierce, AIA with, from left to right, FOHH Secretary Carolyn Gamble, Past President Barbara Ballentine, and Treasurer Jere Gibber on September 29, 2015, at the installation of the Historic Huntley mantel restored with FOHH funds. Photo courtesy of Carolyn Gamble.

Virginia Legislature's Resolution Commends Historic Huntley!

While it seems that politicians can't agree on much these days, the Virginia House of Delegates and Senate came together last year to agree to a **resolution commending Historic Huntley on the occasion of its 50th anniversary on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places.**

The initiative was led by **Delegate Paul Krizek**. Among the many things noted by the resolution is that, "for more than 30 years, the nonprofit organization Friends of Historic Huntley has worked tirelessly to preserve and protect Historic Huntley for the enjoyment of future generations." To read the full resolution, go to <https://www.richmondsunlight.com/bill/2023/hj571/fulltext/>. ❖



Virginia House Delegate Paul Krizek (left) and **FOHH President Todi Carnes** (right) holding a framed copy of the **Virginia Legislature's Resolution commending Historic Huntley** at the FOHH 2023 Annual Meeting. Photo by J.G. Harrington.

Historic Huntley People: Hail and Farewell

It's hard to believe that it's been nine years since **Cheryl Repetti, Ph.D.** assumed the position of site coordinator and historic interpreter for Historic Huntley in 2015. Programming was in its infancy and blossomed on her watch. Over the years, Cheryl has tended to literally hundreds, if not thousands, of young summer campers. With her academic credentials and committed interest in scholarship, she was an excellent mentor to college summer interns.

A great friend of FOHH, Cheryl furthered our interests. When FOHH acquired an important Betsey Mason letter, she initiated contact with George Washington's Mount Vernon, ultimately leading to its exhibit there. She cooperated enthusiastically with Dennis Pogue's tenant house study, as well as Calder Loth's "return to Huntley." She worked extensively with Patty Young on teas at Historic Huntley, onboarding them as successful, full-fledged park programs. Finally, she's done her own sleuthing into the site's history and people, often on her own time. As just one example, she discovered the collection of Bill Amlong artwork at Longwood University.

Given her many accomplishments, it's not surprising that last fall, FCPA headquarters placed Cheryl in a position where she will lend her many talents to historic sites across the county. No longer on the HMP staff, Cheryl now serves as a HQ special projects historian. Since she'll still have contact with Historic Huntley in the coming years, we won't say "goodbye." But we will say, "thank you" and "hope to see you again soon!"

To **Jackson Allsman**, Cheryl's replacement, we heartily say "Welcome to Historic Huntley!" In reply, Jackson sends his greetings to FOHH.



Cheryl Repetti, Ph.D. holds a bowl made from historic oak, presented to her by FOHH in thanks for her nine years of service to Historic Huntley. Photo by Carolyn Gamble.

Aloha, my name is **Jackson Allsman**. I am the new cultural resource interpreter here at HMP. I was born and raised in Fairfax County, attended Woodson High School, and graduated from Roanoke College in May 2023 with a B.A. in history.

My love for the outdoors started at a young age and has continued throughout my life. From my start as a Tiger Cub in first grade, to achieving the rank of Eagle Scout, through work as an outdoor adventure guide in college, to here working at a park, I love being outside. The opportunity to do what I love (and use my major!), as well as being able to give back to the park and community I grew up in, has me eternally grateful. Thank you for accepting me as part of the family!

Somewhat belatedly, but no less warmly, we welcome **Lark MacNeil**. She began working with Historic Huntley as a HMP naturalist/historian interpreter in May 2023, after having been on the staff in other positions since 2021. As volunteer coordinator she works with field trip volunteers, program assistants, and historic house docents. She is thrilled to be on the HMP team!

For her, the park is a treasured place with personal as well as professional connections. She met her husband, fellow HMP Staff Member Malcolm MacNeil, while working there. We extend our congratulations to the couple, who welcomed their first child this January. In her free time, Lark is an avid video gamer, with particular fondness for sim and crafting games.



Jackson Allsman, HMP's new cultural resource interpreter, on Poor Mountain Trail, Salem, Virginia. Photo courtesy of Jackson Allsman.

We are sad to share that long-time friend and FOHH Advisor **C. Richard Bierce, AIA**, passed away December 26, 2023. A historical architect and preservation consultant, Richard served on the Fairfax County Architectural Review Board for 30 years, administering the regulations of the county's historic overlay districts, including Huntley's. Richard first toured the Huntley site in the 1970's and served on the FOHH Advisory Council until 2018 (*see photo and article on page 2*). He researched and wrote the 2002 *Historic Structures Report* for Huntley in conjunction with Shaffer, Wilson, Sarver & Gray, P.C., a document that informed many restoration decisions. He generously shared his expertise through public presentations and consultation, and served as a mentor to many. ❖

Tour Historic Huntley: Saturdays, 10:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m., spring through fall

Discover a view for all time during a tour of Historic Huntley, with its many vistas, voices, and stories, many reflecting the American quest for freedom. The tour includes the late Federal-style 1824 villa, farm outbuildings, stories from the Huntley community, and an unparalleled view of Hybla Valley. 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.

The villa is a short walk up a steep hill and the grounds are open from dawn to dusk from March through November.

For tours, advanced registration is recommended. Purchase tickets at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/historic-huntley/hours-tour:

Huntley-Related Web Sites

www.historichuntley.org
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/historic-huntley/
www.friendsofhuntleymeadows.org

*Historic Huntley has been open to the public long enough that not only the Mason-era structures require preservation and maintenance, but so does FCPA's interpretive infrastructure. Recently, wood rot made it necessary for park staff to **replace Historic Huntley signage** along Harrison Lane. Thank you to Carl Meadows, Chris King, and Brooks Long for taking on this project! Photo by FCPA staff.*

\$10, adults; \$8, seniors, youth, students; free for children up to 4. Check in at the lower house adjacent to the parking lot at 6918 Harrison Lane, Alexandria, VA 22306. For more information or to schedule a private tour by appointment, call 703.768.2525. ❖



Upcoming FCPA Programs at Historic Huntley

For more information and to register, call 703.222.4664 or go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes, click on **Find a Program**, and search by **Historic Huntley**, **program name**, or **code**. Preregistration is required for many programs.

A tip for finding **ALL programs** at Historic Huntley. Enter the following: Search text: **hist**; Category of activity: **All Categories**; Place: **Historic Huntley**; Month: **All Months**; Day of the week: **7 Selected**; Age range: **All Ages**

Safely See the Partial Eclipse (5-Adult) • April 8, 1:30-4:30 p.m., Code: VLL.5150

Come out to your local park and learn about the science behind eclipses, what causes them, and why they are so locally rare. Learn the many ways to safely view the eclipse while it is happening so you can try them out. Children must be accompanied by an adult registered in the program. Program attendees receive a free pair of solar viewing shades. \$10

Art & Architecture at Huntley (All Ages) • April 13, 1:00-4:00 p.m, Code: 5E6.DF5B

Join us at Historic Huntley for a celebration of arts and architecture. From 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., enjoy tours and watch artists at work creating paintings “en plein air” (outdoors). At 3:00 p.m. attend a reception for the artists whose paintings of the day will be available for viewing and sale. Please register to help us plan for the event. Free

Mason Tea (16-Adult) • May 10, 1:00-2:30 p.m., Code: 87A.99DN

Enjoy an afternoon tea circa 1830 much as Betsey Mason would have, with the gleam of polished silver and proper tea etiquette. Sample a menu of tasty treats appropriate to the period in an historic setting. Tour of Historic Huntley included. \$35

Mapping the Past for Homeschoolers (7-13 yrs.) • May 15, 1:00-3:00 p.m, Code: C5B.VC40

Supplement your historical studies with a fun day of exploring, interpreting, and making maps. Try your hand at orienteering, learn about different types of maps from around the world, and take home a personalized map of your life. \$14

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 _____

Huntley Headlines and event notifications are emailed to members.

Current and past issues of the newsletter and event information can be found at www.historichuntley.org.

- \$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 Special Events

FOHH: Fundraising Program Planning Public Relations Research

Send completed form with check payable to *Friends of Historic Huntley* to:

FOHH, P.O. Box 7241, Alexandria, VA 22307-0241

Questions? info@HistoricHuntley.org

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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FRIENDS OF HISTORIC HUNTLEY

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