

# Huntley Headlines

Friends of Historic Huntley

Fall 2023

## ***Save the Date!***

**FOHH Annual Meeting**

**Guest Speaker:**

**Martha Claire Catlin,  
Historian of the  
Alexandria Friends  
Meeting at Woodlawn**

**Saturday, October 28, 2:00 p.m.  
Sherwood Regional Library**

2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria  
*For more information, call 703.768.6987  
or email [info@historichuntley.org](mailto:info@historichuntley.org).*

**FOHH's membership will gather at the Annual Meeting to elect board members, review FOHH's annual financial statement, and hear a presentation by Martha Claire Catlin, Historian of the Alexandria Friends Meeting at Woodlawn.**

In the years preceding the Civil War, the Hybla Valley area was home to a mix of agricultural labor practices. Some families, like the Masons of Huntley, relied on enslaved laborers. Lured by cheap acreage worn out by earlier tobacco farming, an influx of northern Quaker families moved into the area. A number of these families strove to demonstrate that farming was viable without slave labor.

This was the case with the Quaker anti-slavery colony established at the former Woodlawn Plantation, previously owned by George Washington's step-granddaughter, Nelly Custis Lewis. Notably, the lives of



*The Quaker meeting house at Woodlawn as it appeared in the late nineteenth century. Photo courtesy of the Alexandria Friends Meeting.*

enslavers and anti-slavery proponents overlapped. At least one son of Thomson and Betsey Mason attended the Alexandria school of Benjamin Hallowell, a Quaker abolitionist.

**Martha Claire Catlin, historian of the Alexandria Friends Meeting at Woodlawn**, will share the fruits of her extensive research into Woodlawn's anti-slavery Quaker colony. If you're a fan of local history, you won't want to miss hearing from and taking the opportunity to meet one of the area's most knowledgeable historians of the nineteenth-century Mount Vernon area, Martha Claire Catlin! ❖

## ***Save the Date!***

**FOHH Members-Only  
Visit to Freedom House  
Museum**

**Saturday, September 23, 11:00 a.m.**

1315 Duke Street, Alexandria  
*For more information, call 703.768.6987  
or email [info@historichuntley.org](mailto:info@historichuntley.org).*

In May 2022, 1315 Duke Street opened its doors to the public as the **Freedom House Museum**. Purchased by the City of Alexandria in 2020, it is dedicated to telling the stories of Alexandria's enslaved and free black communities, particularly during

*continued, page 3*

## President's Column: Fair Parks Initiative to Receive Sally Ormsby Award for Environmental Stewardship!

by Todi Carnes

**Congrats FOHH Members!** A year ago, we reported on the success of the **Fair Parks Initiative (FPI)** launched by the FOHH Executive Committee in the spring of 2022. The FPI experienced another successful year in 2023 and is now being recognized for its work. On **November 17, the FPI will be awarded the Fairfax County Park Authority's (FCPA) Sally Ormsby Award for Environmental Stewardship.** The FPI will share the award with a coalition of non-FCPA-related citizen groups also pursuing better funding of the FCPA.

FPI operations, which are actively facilitated by the FOHH Executive Committee, help FCPA friends groups work together in advocating for a greater share of Fairfax County's tax dollars. In addition to FOHH, friends groups of the following FCPA properties and functions have been active FPI participants in the past two years: **Accotink Creek, Colvin Run Mill, Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, Fairfax County Archaeology and Cultural Resources, Frying Pan Farm Park, Green Spring Gardens, Holmes Run, Huntley Meadows Park, and Pimmit Barn.** Most importantly, standing behind these groups are friends members, like you, who enthusiastically responded to requests to contact district supervisors and ask for increased FCPA funding. **With your help, we secured this increase!**

Following FPI advocacy efforts, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors (BOS) increased FCPA baseline funding for FY 2023 by more than \$700,000 and for FY 2024 by more than \$400,000. Combined, that's an increase of more than one million dollars. Because it's an increase in baseline budgetary funding, the increase will automatically be a

part of the FCPA budget every year moving forward!

These figures include funds to pay for five new, full-time FCPA positions: three in forestry, two to combat invasive species, and two to staff mobile nature centers. In addition, the BOS recently adopted a 5.44% market-rate adjustment in FCPA merit employee pay—two percentage points more than had been proposed prior to FPI's advocacy efforts to increase FCPA staff pay.

The additional funds and positions are critical to maintaining the health of and citizen access to our parks, which cannot thrive without enough employees to accomplish all necessary tasks and adequate pay.

Invasive species are rife at Historic Huntley, which includes a small forested area. Accordingly, Historic Huntley stands to benefit from the new FCPA funding for invasive species control and forestry operations. FOHH is pleased to have its FPI work recognized through the Sally Ormsby Environmental Stewardship Award.

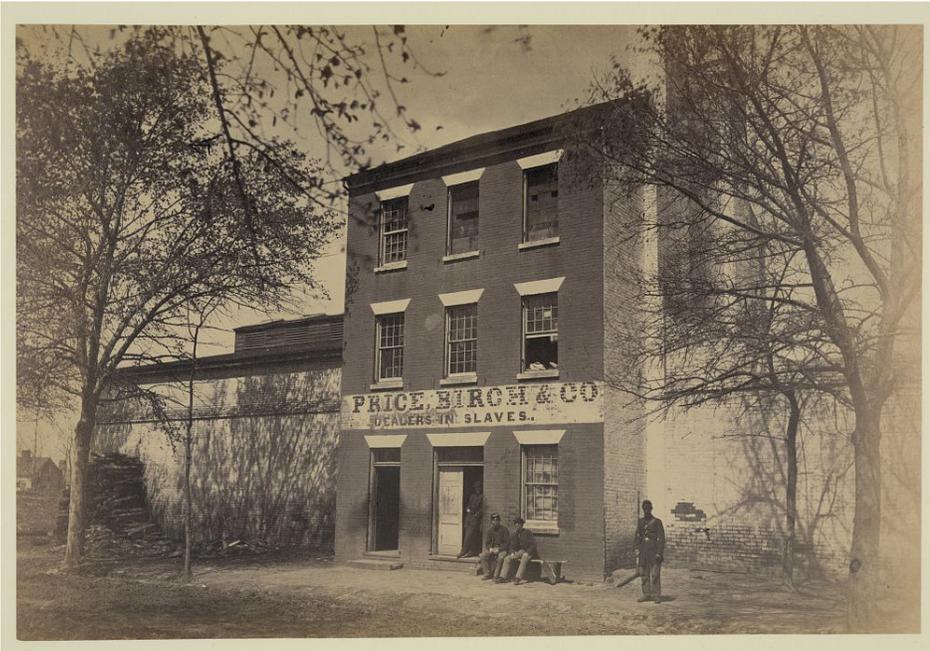
FOHH leadership is dedicated to promoting and practicing good

stewardship of all aspects of the Historic Huntley site. It has been **pushing for increased funding not only for natural resources, but also for cultural (i.e., historic) resources.** For example, FOHH requested, through the FPI, that the mobile nature centers feature FCPA cultural resources, too. So far, decisionmakers have been more receptive to increasing funding in connection with the natural environment versus the built environment (such as the villa and other man-made structures at Historic Huntley). Nonetheless, FOHH will avidly pursue more cultural resource funding, as well as increased natural resource funding. Stewardship of the whole for the benefit of all is what the FPI is about.

Thank you, FOHH members, for supporting the FPI by contacting your district supervisors and requesting increased FCPA funding, and congratulations to you on the upcoming Sally Ormsby Environmental Stewardship Award for the FPI and its allied friends groups like FOHH. Literally, you earned it! ❖



*As part of their Fair Parks Initiative, multiple friends groups of Fairfax County parks testified in support of giving a greater share of Fairfax County's general funds to the Fairfax County Park Authority at the spring 2023 public hearings on the FY 2024 budget. Pictured here, from left to right, are Marylou Wall, Aimee Martin, and Susan Voss (all with the Friends of Green Spring Gardens—FROGS) and Todi Carnes and Carolyn Gamble (both with the Friends of Historic Huntley).*



During the Civil War, Union forces used the former slave pen at 1315 Duke Street as a prison for Confederates. An inscription on the photo notes that the site included holding cells and a whipping post. Photograph, Front of “slave pen,” Alexandria, Va, by Andrew J. Russell between 1861-1865. Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2006683273/>.

## GMU FOHH Student Award Winner: *David G. Armstrong*

By arrangement with the George Mason University (GMU) department of History and Art History, **FOHH underwrites an annual GMU student award of \$250 for the best research project directly related to George Mason IV and/or his family writ large.**

This year’s recipient of the award is **David G. Armstrong**. David is a Ph.D. student, as well as a high school history teacher at Fairfax Baptist Temple Academy. His academic interest in early America led him to create a **GMU digital project**, *“Not Satisfied with the Provisions Made for Her’: Elizabeth Mary Ann Barnes Hooe, the Mason Family, and the Transfer of Property in Early Virginia.”*

Elizabeth Hooe married George Mason V, uncle to Historic Huntley’s Thomson F. Mason. When widowed, Elizabeth found herself well-

provided for by her husband’s will. Nonetheless, she challenged its provisions in a bid for greater clarity about her inheritance and to escape restrictions it would impose if she were to remarry.

David’s research project provides contextualizing information on the role of inheritance in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century America. It shows not only how Elizabeth responded to the inheritance provided by her husband, but also how expectations of what Elizabeth and her potential marriage partners might inherit from their forebears likely affected decisions about who to marry, and how and why she actively shaped inheritances for her own heirs.

To view David’s award-winning digital project, go to <https://research.centerformasonslegacies.com/s/masonfamilypapers/page/elizabethmabmason>. Congratulations, David! ❖

## Freedom House Museum

*continued from page 1*

the period of 1828-1861, when the building, as part of a larger complex no longer extant, served as a slave pen/jail. It would have been well known to those enslaved by Historic Huntley’s Thomson and Betsey Mason.

On **Saturday, September 23, at 11:00 a.m., the Freedom House Museum will host a FOHH members-only visit to the site.** Watch for details in our upcoming annual membership letter.

If you’re not yet a FOHH member and would like to participate in this members-only event, become a member by completing and sending in the form on page 6. ❖

## Poetry at Huntley

If you’ve been inspired by Historic Huntley or its people to write poetry, please share it with us! Send submissions to [info@historichuntley.org](mailto:info@historichuntley.org). The poem featured below was written by **Steve Kimbel**, a former FOHH Board member and a museum docent in Alexandria. ❖

### *Master of Huntley* by Steve Kimbel

Son of a Revolutionary War veteran

Grandson of the author of the Bill of Rights

Owner of Daniel Humphreys

Owner of Daniel’s wife Rachel

Owner of Daniel and Rachel’s son Daniel

Owner of Daniel and Rachel’s daughter Priscilla

Owner of Daniel and Rachel’s grandson Thomas

Owner of Sandy and 85 other human beings

*Copyright, Stephen F. Kimbel*



**Painting by Yvette St. Laurent seen again at Huntley!** As some of you might remember, this painting of Historic Huntley by Yvette St. Laurent used to hang in the Huntley Meadows Park Visitor Center. **It now hangs in Chairman of the Board of Supervisors Jeff McKay's office, courtesy of FCPA.** Chairman McKay secured the loan to ensure that a prominent reminder of his home district—the recently renamed Franconia District—would be with him when he transitioned from his former district supervisor's office in Franconia to his office at the Government Center.

**FOHH Board Member Charlotte Brown**, pictured above, coordinated with Chairman McKay and the FCPA to bring the painting to Historic Huntley, where it was on public display for the **second annual Art and Architecture Day in April 2023**. If you missed the painting's brief appearance during the event, you can view it in by stopping by Chairman McKay's office. Photo by Todi Carnes.

### 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)

## Historic Huntley Historical Interpretation Intern: *Mitchell Flores-Kaplan*

Meet **this summer's intern at Historic Huntley, Mitchell Flores-Kaplan!** Now a senior at Christopher Newport University, Mitchell is majoring in art history and minoring in museum studies and history. In addition to assisting with summer camps, Mitchell researched various artists who lived at or painted at Historic Huntley. He examined how their art showcases the land and its architectural features, looking at stylistic differences among the artists and how their art changed over time.

He summed up his summer's work while still in the midst of it. "I am an Alexandria native, but had never thought to do any research on local artists, and this opportunity is opening my eyes to a lot of new knowledge that I greatly enjoy gaining. I could not complete this work without the help of my supervisor, Cheryl Repetti [Huntley Meadows Park, FCPA], and the help and trust of the Friends of Historic Huntley. I am very thankful that I have gotten this opportunity and am very appreciative that I was chosen [as Historic Huntley's summer intern]!" ❖

*Historic Huntley Intern Mitchell Flores-Kaplan takes a self-portrait.*

## 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 1825 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](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/historic-huntley/hours-tour): \$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. ❖



# Upcoming FCPA Programs at Historic Huntley

For more information and to register, call 703.222.4664 or go to [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes](http://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**

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## Merit Badges

**Archaeology Merit Badge** (11-18 yrs.) \$60

• September 25, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Code: 04C.1WVV

**Citizenship in the Community Merit Badge** (10-18 yrs.) \$48

• October 22, 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Code: FE0.84XH

**Citizenship in the World Merit Badge** (11-17 yrs.) \$60

• November 2, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Code: DDB.PBXI

## Programs for Homeschoolers

**Mapping the Past for Homeschoolers** (7-13 yrs.)

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

• September 27, 1:00-3:00 p.m, Code: C5B.ASXX

**Colonial Life for Homeschool** (6-12 yrs.)

Did you know that Huntley Meadows Park was once part of George Mason's holdings? Discover this forgotten Founding Father as you make your own candle, design your own stencil to mark crops, write with a quill pen, and decide the future of the Virginia colony. \$14

• October 17, 1:00-3:00 p.m., Code: 925.5G5U

• November 13, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., Code: 925.G8UL

## Programs for Many Ages

**The Art of Calligraphy** (12-Adult)

Mary Teichman says "calligraphy is a great antidote to modern life." Explore the connection of Huntley's past residents to the beautiful art of writing. Try your hand at a variety of pens and brushes. Supplies included. \$12

• September 5, 1:00-2:30 p.m., Code: YTX.BT3Y

**Mason Tea** (16-Adult)

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 as you brush up on your tea history. Tour of Historic Huntley included. \$35

• September 13, 2:00-3:30 p.m., Code: 87A.K8F4

**Safely See the Partial Eclipse** (5-Adult)

Come out to your local park and learn about the science behind eclipses, what causes them, and why they are so locally rare. You will be taught 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

• October 14, 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., Code: VLL.M0MG



*This villa porch at Historic Huntley had been wrapped in caution tape for some time. Not any longer! Huntley Meadows Park Maintenance Crew Chief Carl Meadows has coordinated necessary repairs for both of the side porches. The work is being done by Stephen Ortado, an historic preservation carpenter who earlier restored the villa's main fireplace mantle with financial support from FOHH. For the porch repairs, he's using long-lasting, oak boards. Photo by Carolyn Gamble.*

## 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](http://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](mailto: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.

**Board of Directors:** Todi Carnes, President • Robbie McNeil, Vice President • Carolyn Gamble, Secretary • Jere Gibber, Treasurer • Erica Hershler, Publicity • Charlotte Brown • Peter Christensen • Charles O. Davis • Patty Young • Susan Escherich, Emeritus • Todi Carnes, HMHOA Representative

**Advisors:** Barbara B. Ballentine • Harry Glasgow • Susan Hellman • Phyllis Walker-Ford

### Contact changes:

Please send your email or mailing address changes to [info@HistoricHuntley.org](mailto:info@HistoricHuntley.org) or FOHH, P.O. Box 7241, Alexandria, VA 22307-0241.

## Upcoming FCPA Programs at Historic Huntley *continued from page 5*

### The Women of Historic Huntley (16-Adult)

A society matron, an enslaved wife and mother, a farmer's daughter, a military wife. Historic Huntley has been home to some interesting women and has seen the lives of women change dramatically since the house was built in 1825. See Huntley from a refreshingly different view as we stroll the house and grounds. \$10

• October 19, 2:00-3:00 p.m., Code: F12.D0DB

### Pumpkin Party on the Hill (2-12 yrs.)

Bring a pumpkin to paint and decorate, make and taste some pumpkin ice cream, and make and bring home your own pumpkin play-dough. Learn about the history of pumpkins and enjoy a pumpkin story. \$9

• October 29, 2:00-3:30 p.m., Code: 099.VP2F

### Mystery Spy Camp (6-9 yrs.)

Join a top-secret mission to solve mysteries at Historic Huntley. Follow a treasure map to collect clues and decipher coded messages. Engage in fun experiments to extract real DNA, discover the magic of invisible ink, and create your own spy gadgets and treasure maps to challenge your fellow spies. Solve the mystery with outdoor activities, games, experiments, and crafts. Once registered, download camp forms from website. \$139

• November 6-7, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. both days, Code: VN4.QVL1

### Dutch Oven Brunch (6-Adult)

Join us around the campfire for some corn pancakes and freshly made butter as we learn about the history of Thanksgiving foodways and how Thanksgiving might have been celebrated by the Masons! \$15

• November 20, 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Code: 269.7CTS

## FRIENDS OF HISTORIC HUNTLEY

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

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