



Huntley Headlines

Friends of Historic Huntley

Fall 2022

Save the Date!

FOHH Annual Meeting

Guest Speaker:

Tammy Mannarino

Saturday, October 29, 2:00 p.m.

Annual Meeting details will be forwarded by email and posted on the FOHH website several weeks prior.

For more information, call 703.768.6987 or email jgibber@aol.com.

FOHH's membership will gather at the Annual Meeting to elect board members, review FOHH's annual financial statement, and hear a presentation by local historian Tammy Mannarino on "Louis Hertle's Beautiful Boulevard to Gunston Hall."

Just as we are discussing current plans for the Richmond Highway Bus Rapid Transit System, a century ago Louis Hertle, owner of Gunston Hall, had his own strong feelings about transportation and tourism. He purchased George Mason's historic home in 1912 and, with his wife Eleanor, began to restore the estate for their use and the enjoyment of future generations. He had a vision for welcoming the automobile-touring public to Gunston Hall and, particularly in the 1930's, he had some friends and acquaintances well placed to help make it happen.

Ms. Mannarino's revealing insight into Hertle's early 20th-century efforts for bringing tourists to the home of T.F. Mason's grandfather, George Mason IV, also touches upon an emerging

national concern for historic sites that formed the backdrop for Hertle's efforts. Her presentation is sure to have you seeing today's south county historic landscape in a new light! If you find you need a "fix" of local history right now and can't wait until the Annual Meeting, visit Ms. Mannarino's website, backyardmountvernon.com, for many interesting tidbits about Mount Vernon area history.

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 6.** ❖

Huntley Marks 50 Years on the National and Virginia Registers, plus Calder Loth Returns!

On March 21, 1972, Huntley was placed on the Virginia Landmarks Register. Before the year was out, on November 3, 1972, it also was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. ***Fast forward to 2022: Huntley has been officially recognized as a state and national architectural and historic treasure for 50 years!***

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From left to right, Historic Huntley Site Interpreter Cheryl Repetti, FOHH Secretary Carolyn Gamble, Calder Loth, FOHH Vice-President Robbie McNeil, FOHH Treasurer, Jere Gibber, and Historic Huntley Summer Intern Rose Foshee. Photo by Malcolm McNeil.

President's Column: We Did It! We Added \$700K to FCPA's Budget!!

by Todi Carnes

In April of this year, FOHH asked its members, particularly those residing in the Fairfax County area, to contact the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors (BOS) to ask that the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) receive its fair share of taxpayer revenues. In the aftermath of the Great Recession, FCPA's share of general fund revenues shrank considerably and never was restored, let alone increased to keep pace with the FCPA's current needs. Thanks to your response, the hard work of the FOHH Executive Committee, allied FCPA Friends groups, and others having an interest in the county's parks, the **BOS added \$700,000 to FCPA's FY 2023 budget**. These additional funds will pay for two new positions and other means to combat invasive species. Notably, the landscape at Historic Huntley is rife with invasives, especially in the wooded area adjacent to the pathway going up the hill to the villa.

FOHH's advocacy efforts began with a determination by its Executive Committee that **the time had come to take a stand for increased taxpayer support of county parks, including Historic Huntley.**

Historic Huntley has been open to the public now for ten years and has never had a full-time historian to develop and interpret the site's rich architectural and historical significance. Nor has it been generally available to the public. Its structures are open only about half the year (typically, May to October), only on Saturdays, only from 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and only for a fee—initially \$5, then \$8, and now \$10 per non-senior adult. While outdoor signage has been installed, there is little in the way of professional interior exhibits. Progress has recently been made in general upkeep of the terraces, but they are still in need of significant remediation and ongoing care.

Motivated to act by Historic Huntley's

longstanding unmet needs, in March FOHH's Executive Committee reached out to other FCPA Friends groups and proposed that they work together in advocating for increased park funding as part of the county's FY 2023 budget cycle. Eight other groups joined FOHH. Together, they named their effort the **Fair Parks Initiative (FPI)**. For the six weeks then remaining for FY 2023 budget advocacy they embarked on a crash course in learning about the budgeting process, developed advocacy materials, appeared at budget town hall meetings in the various magisterial districts, testified in budget hearings before the BOS, and, of course, reached out to their memberships for critically needed support. It was a jam-packed, crazy six weeks! And it paid off when, in May, the BOS added \$700,000 to the FCPA's FY 2023 budget—a feat described by many at the outset as impossible.

As with the "Mission Impossible" movie franchise, there will be a sequel! The FY 2024 budget cycle is just now getting underway, and the FOHH Executive Committee is reconvening the FPI to make sure advocacy efforts start at the beginning of the cycle rather than at the tail end, as happened this spring. While the FOHH Executive

Committee is still learning about the county's budget process and the FCPA's internal financing, it knows all too well the unmet needs of Historic Huntley, and it has learned that with your help, anything is possible! Thank you, Huntley fans, for your support!! ❖



Members of the FOHH Executive Committee outside the Fairfax County Government Center after presentation of FOHH testimony to the Board of Supervisors. From left to right, FOHH Treasurer Jere Gibber, President Todi Carnes, Secretary Carolyn Gamble, and Vice-President Robbie McNeil. Photo by anonymous, obliging passerby.



It's been a sizzling season at Historic Huntley this year! Fortunately, during the cool of winter, Huntley Meadows Park (HMP) staff were thinking ahead and reached out for help in purchasing some summer shade in the form of an activity tent. With substantial financial contributions from both FOHH (\$1,500) and Friends of Huntley Meadows Park (\$3,000), HMP staff were able to acquire the tent, which has provided much needed shelter for kids' camps at Historic Huntley all summer. Photo by Carolyn Gamble.

Huntley Marks 50 Years

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Not long before its 1972 register designations, however, Huntley was mostly lost to memory, its features disguised by elements added over the years; its acreage dramatically reduced; and its use transformed from a country retreat for a wealthy, politically connected branch of the Mason family to an everyday private residence of an Army colonel's family, headed by Ransom and Marguerite Amlong. Mrs. Amlong appreciated Huntley's cultural value and wanted it to be preserved. It appears that around 1969, she reached out to the Fairfax County historic community. Realizing what a gem Huntley was, Fairfax County preservationists, in turn, reached out to the state.

Calder Loth, then a young architectural historian with the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, described his May 1969 encounter with Huntley [excerpt from the preface of Tony P. Wrenn's 1971 publication, *HUNTLEY—A Mason Family Country House*, Fairfax County Division of Planning, Fairfax, VA]:

Neither I nor anyone else on the staff of the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission had ever seen or heard of the house, and my Fairfax guides were anxious that their 'discovery' be brought to our attention. Having assumed that anything of interest in that section of Fairfax County had long been swept away for housing developments, I was in no way prepared when suddenly we rounded a corner and looked up to see a curious geometric structure sitting placidly among its outbuildings against a wooded hillside, aloof from its plebian neighbors. A quick scanning of composition and details dissipated any skepticism I may have had: here, on the outskirts of the capital city was a genuine Federal villa!

Following his introduction to Huntley, Mr. Loth was part of the successful effort to place Huntley on the state and national registers. Mr. Loth went on to become the Virginia Department of Historic Resources' senior architectural historian and editor of *The Virginia Landmarks Register*. He has been recognized at the federal level for his Virginia historic preservation accomplishments, receiving the U.S. Secretary of Interior's Historic Preservation Award. Now retired, Mr. Loth remains active in the historic preservation community.

At FOHH's invitation and with the enthusiastic support of Huntley Meadows Park (HMP) staff, Mr. Loth returned to Huntley this June. As he had not been back since his visit 53 years ago, it was his first time seeing the site in its current, restored state. As



Calder Loth commenting on architectural detail with Historic Huntley Site Interpreter Cheryl Repetti and FOHH Treasurer Jere Gibber.

he toured the property, he graciously took the time to discuss Huntley's architectural features and functions with accompanying HMP staff, FOHH officers, and the Historic Huntley summer intern. Overall, he was pleased with the restoration work, and he expressed his appreciation for Huntley's "very distinguished design" as a retreat. He also shared his opinion that the villa's original design would have been for a two-story-tall central room, speculating that the upper-level room was a design modification made prior to or during construction.

While at Huntley, Mr. Loth took a beautiful photo of the villa. It is now the image representing Huntley on the **Virginia Landmarks Register Online**, taking Historic Huntley into its 51st year as an officially recognized site of statewide importance. <https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/historic-registers/029-0117/> ❖

Tour Historic Huntley: Saturdays, 10:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. through November 19

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 unfurnished late Federal-style 1825 villa, farm outbuildings, stories from the Huntley community, and an unparalleled view of the 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. Purchase tickets at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/historic-huntley/hours-tour or pay at the door: \$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. ❖

Print Goes on Loan to the Franconia District Supervisor's Office

When FOHH recently acquired a print of **Sheryl Sims' fabric art quilt depicting Historic Huntley**, there was never any serious doubt about where it would hang: the Franconia District supervisor's office (*Franconia District is the new name of the former Lee District*). For many years, FOHH has had on indefinite loan to the supervisor's office a **painting of Historic Huntley by John Kofler**. When interacting last year with the Supervisor's office to have the Kofler painting reframed and preserved, FOHH Board Member Charlotte Brown was advised by **Franconia District Supervisor Rodney Lusk** that if FOHH had more site-related artwork, he would be happy to display it in his office.

When FOHH acquired the Sims art quilt print, a ready "home," frequented by many prospective viewers, awaited it. With Supervisor Lusk on hand, on June 13, FOHH officially presented the Sims' art quilt print to the Franconia District supervisor's office on an indefinite loan. ❖



From left to right, FOHH Board Member Charlotte Brown, Supervisor Rodney Lusk, Artist Sheryl Sims, and FOHH President Todi Carnes. Photo by Supervisor Lusk's staff.

Huntley-Related Web Sites

www.historichuntley.org

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/historic-huntley/

www.friendsofhuntleymeadows.org



The artists and their day's accomplishments, from left to right: Anne Meagher-Cooke, Doug Stern, Theresa Miller, Marilyn Miyamoto, Ann Alden, Marisol Coy, and Courtney Rogers. Photo by Carolyn Gamble.

Art and Architecture Day Debuts

After two years of pandemic postponements, a truly glorious spring day greeted Historic Huntley's inaugural **Art and Architecture Day on April 30**. FOHH members conducted free architectural tours of the site, with art by prior Huntley residents and other artwork depicting Huntley on display. The Fairfax County Park Authority generated a lot of smiles among children with an ice cream-making class. Additionally, HMP staff supported a FOHH pop-up book sale, to the delight of history book lovers.

Making the event truly great, seven artists took advantage of the extraordinarily fine weather to produce, in about four hours of open-air painting, nine works of art depicting aspects of Historic Huntley. They kindly welcomed onlookers and answered queries from the public about their craft and the works they were painting. **Many thanks to plein air artist Bethanne Kinsella Cople** for assisting FOHH in bringing these adventurous artists to Historic Huntley! ❖

Upcoming FCPA Programs

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**

Civil War at Huntley—Division and Endurance (16-Adult)

Fairfax was as divided as the nation in 1861. Yet these divisions help to explain how Huntley endured the war. Examine Huntley during the Civil War through the experiences of the Mason family, their neighbors, and an occupying army. Tour of Historic Huntley included. \$10

- September 18, 2:00-3:00 p.m., Code: 4NZ.W1PM

Delicious Dairy at Historic Huntley (2-Adult)

Churn your own delicious butter and taste fresh cheese you can make at home. Discover how Huntley, once summer home for the wealthy, became a dairy farm. House tour included. \$10

- November 13, 2:00-3:00 p.m., Code: 66F.189V

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 not have been celebrated by the Masons. \$15

- November 6, 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Code: 269.QT52

Enslaved Lives and the Legacy of Slavery (Adults)

Join a historian for a tour of Historic Huntley that examines the relationship of the Mason family to slavery. Gain insight into the lives of the Humphrey family and other enslaved people whose labor maintained Mason wealth and social status. \$10

- September 10, 3:00-4:00 p.m., Code: BF1.KLRP

Epidemics of the Past (14-Adult)

Disease has always shaped our history. Enjoy a healthy stroll up to a lovely view while we uncover why the Masons built a summer home upon a hill and how epidemics of the past shaped the society we live in today. \$10

- November 19, 2:00-3:00 p.m., Code: ZGS.0BEJ

Family Hilltop Outing (5-Adult)

Join us for a family friendly tour of Historic Huntley high upon a hill. What significance does this villa have to one of our founding fathers? Hop back in time. Can you hold a block of ice with just one finger? Challenge yourself using historical tools like ice tongs. Learn to master old-time children's games. Children must be accompanied by a registered adult. \$10

- September 24, 3:00-4:00 p.m., Code: AN7.DBFH
- October 10, 1:30-2:30 p.m., Code: AN7.HCO2

House Detective (Adults)

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. \$10

- October 8, 3:00-4:00 p.m., Code: 7A9.TLXB

Huntley Speaks Architectural Tour (16-Adult)

How does Historic Huntley's architecture connect to America's hard-won independence? Who designed it and for what purpose? Join a historical guide on a walking tour of this Federal-style villa and related outbuildings to discover how architecture from the past speaks to us today. \$10

- November 12, 2:00-3:00 p.m., Code: 093.HSTW

Mason Tea (Adults)

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.1307
- October 13, 2:00-3:30 p.m., Code: 87A.1UCQ

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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 _____

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

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 • Stephen F. Kimbel • Patty Young • Susan Escherich, Emeritus • Todi Carnes, HMHOA Representative • Woodlawn Faith United Methodist Church Representative

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Contact changes:

Please send your email or mailing address changes to info@HistoricHuntley.org or **FOHH, P.O. Box 7241, Alexandria, VA 22307-0241**.

Upcoming FCPA Programs *continued from page 5*

Pumpkin Party on the Hill (2-12 years)

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 31, 2:30-4:00 p.m., Code: 099.9X1Q

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

- November 12, 4:00-5:30 p.m., Code: YTX.B134

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

- September 17, 2:00-3:00 p.m., Code: F12.HFD2
- November 20, 2:00-3:00 p.m., Code: F12.5HB3

Twilight Hilltop Tour (Adults)

Historic Huntley sits high upon a hill overlooking Hybla Valley and Huntley Meadows Park. It's a dramatic setting made all the more stunning by the setting sun. Join us after hours for a special tour and see the house in a different light. Light refreshments served afterward. Dress appropriately for the weather. \$10

- September 18, 7:00-8:00 p.m., Code: D3E.YART
- October 7, 7:00-8:00 p.m., Code: D3E.IL20
- November 20, 5:00-6:00 p.m., Code: D3E.HOXR
- December 11, 4:30-5:30 p.m., Code: D3E.ONTT

FRIENDS OF HISTORIC HUNTLEY

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