



Arlington Historical Society

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Arlington Historical Society
September 2019

Inside This Issue

	Page
President's Dispatch	1
Upcoming Events	2
W3R Review	3
Membership	3
1920 Photo Map	3
Three Sisters	4
Ball-Sellers House	5
AHS in the Community	5
Stewardship of Money	6
Business Support	6
Volunteers Needed	6
Financial Report	7

President's Dispatch

This summer, I have had the opportunity to visit California on multiple occasions. My work in California was with history teachers and I enjoyed all the teachers' stories of California history. Their stories have allowed me to learn new details about the gold rush, the San Francisco fire, the sacred Mount Shasta, and the many farming communities that provide our country with produce. It has been a great experience to learn the history of another state, especially one that was settled so many years after the colonization of Virginia.

My explorations of the summer have caused me to reflect on how I have described Arlington to the teachers I worked with during my travels. Many of the teachers were familiar with the area and can associate Arlington with the cemetery and the Pentagon. However, few know that there are many more historic events that have occurred in Arlington, some of which native Arlingtonians may not even be aware.

For example, here are just a few of the relatively unknown gems about Arlington:

- Captain John Smith of Jamestown fame once visited the Arlington area and encountered the local natives.
- The Advanced Research Projects Agency of the Department of Defense, developed the technology that became the foundation for the internet right here in Arlington.
- The Buckingham Community was a pioneering concept to create a garden city of apartments.
- Despite dueling being illegal in Virginia, Secretary of State Henry Clay challenged US Senator John Randolph and the duel was held in Arlington.
- George Saegmuller, a native of Germany, moved to Arlington and achieved success as an inventor and manufacturer of scientific instruments. His business later merged with Bausch and Lomb.
- FBI employee Mark Felt, aka "Deep Throat" met with Washington Post reporters Woodward and Bernstein in a garage in Arlington. The information provided during these meetings would eventually lead to the Watergate Scandal.

One way to learn more about Arlington is to visit the historical markers throughout the county. However, learning the great history of our county and working to preserve and share it is the mission of the AHS. We have many events scheduled this fall and we hope you will plan to join us as we work to share what makes Arlington unique.

Cathy Bonnevillier-Hix

Arlington Historical Museum

1807 South Arlington
Ridge Road
Open Free: Friday,
Saturday, and Sunday
1:00-4:00 pm

Ball-Sellers House

5620 3rd Street, South
Open Free April through
October
Saturday 1:00-4:00 pm

We welcome group tours
of any size by appointment
at both museums.

AHS Board Meeting

October 22, 2019, 7:00 pm
1805 South Arlington
Ridge Road
AHS Members Welcome
The AHS Board of
Directors meets the 4th
Tuesday of each month.

Upcoming AHS Events

October 5, 2019



From Flax to Fabric

Sandy Newton, colonial reenactor, gardener, spinner, and weaver will help celebrate urban gardening with a talk and demonstration of how flax goes from pretty blue flowers in a field to clothing including breaking, carding, spinning, and weaving. Tour the Arlington Food Assistance Center's 18th Century style garden where Elizabeth Ball would have gardened. (All the AFAC gardens in Arlington are open for tours this weekend). Learn how our forebears gardened then and how you can garden now. *(In partnership with AFAC at the Ball-Sellers House, 5620 3rd. St. South, Free. 1:00 pm)*

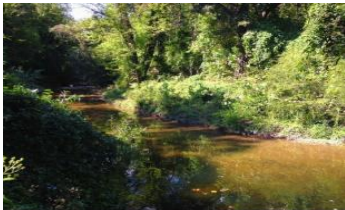
October 12, 2019



A Good Soldier at Arlington House.

We will follow the Civil War record of a good soldier, Robert Sneden, through the artwork he left behind. Historian Dean DeRosa will share Sneden's paintings that depict rare images of Arlington and Northern Virginia during the Civil War. Join us for a rare view of colorful images of what soldiers saw in what is now Arlington during the Civil War. *(Reinsch Library Auditorium, Marymount University Main Campus, Glebe Road, 7:00 pm)*

November 14, 2019



The Bottom: An African-American Enclave Rediscovered

Historical researcher Jessica Kaplan brings this small Arlington African-American community to life based on newspapers articles, Civil War soldiers' drawings, and Southern Claims Commission documents and provides us with a tiny window into the lives of its residents. *(Reinsch Library Auditorium, Marymount University Main Campus, Glebe Road, 7:00 pm)*

Information on all these events and more about AHS—including how YOU can support AHS's work—can be found on our website: <https://arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org>

General George Washington's Road to Yorktown (W3R) - July 2019 Program

By Sean Denniston

On July 11, Robert Selig, Ph.D., National Park Service project historian for the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route spoke on "W3R" and its history. While most know the Americans and French defeated the British at Yorktown in 1781, probably few had given much thought on how they got there! Dr. Selig led the audience down the road by anecdote and PowerPoint.

From June to September, French troops from Newport, RI and the Continental Army from New York marched 300 miles to Yorktown at one mile per hour (oxen set the pace). Troops carried their own weapons and equipment at 60 pounds a man. The armies were diverse where many French soldiers actually spoke German, and perhaps a quarter of the American Army was African American. We learned the armies marched through what is now Washington, DC, including on what is now Florida Avenue. Information on W3R including an interactive map can be found at www.w3r-us.org.



Arlington Historical Society Membership

Annual membership dues cover the period of July 1 to June 30 each year. During the summer 2019, AHS sent out renewal notices to members both by U.S. Mail and by email. About 50% of our members have already renewed for 2020, and we thank you for your continued support of our mission to preserve, promote and interpret Arlington County's history.

Do you wonder if you renewed your AHS membership for 2020? If you did not renew your membership by September 1, you received a final notice by U.S. Mail. The notice gives you one more chance to renew, or you will be dropped from our rolls September 30, 2019.

If you are dropped from our rolls, you will miss out on the annual Arlington Historical Magazine in October 2019. Articles include:

1. by Nancy Tate: An article commemorating the 100th anniversary of the League of Women Voters in Arlington
2. by Jessica Kaplan: An article about the notorious "High View Hotel" overlooking Chain Bridge in the late 19th century
3. by Johnathan Thomas: An article about the beginnings of the Washington Golf and Country Club
4. By Nancy Silcox: An article commemorating the 80th anniversary of the first civil rights "sit-in" at the Alexandria Public Library in 1939
5. Of course, there is the annual oral history by Virginia Smith and finally the AHS Year in Review compiled by Gerry LaPorte.

Your membership dues help us keep our two properties, the Arlington Historical Museum and Ball-Sellers House, open to the public. In addition, membership benefits include:

- Helping preserve and promote Arlington history and build community in Arlington
- Invitations to members-only events
- Subscription to the Arlington Historical Society newsletter
- Subscription to Arlington Historical Magazine
- 10% discount at Arlington Historical Museum shop
- Priority ticketing and discounts on annual banquet and other ticketed events
- Recognition in Arlington Historical Magazine (Sponsor, Business, and Life members)
- Free admission/shop discounts at 1000+ cultural institutions through the North American Reciprocal Museum (NARM) program (Sponsor and Life members)
- Recognition in the annual banquet program (Business and Life members)
- Recognition in the Arlington Historical Society newsletter and social media (Business members)

Membership Levels	
Individual: \$35	Dual: \$50
Sponsor: \$100	Life: \$1,000
Business/Non-profit: \$350	

To renew your AHS membership, please send back the final notice. Did you misplace it? Please , go to <https://arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org/membership/> You can renew electronically or download a form to send with a check.

1920 Photo Map Coming!

To mark the 100th anniversary of Arlington County taking its name, AHS will soon host an interactive online "Storymap" featuring current and vintage photos of homes, schools, churches, stores and infrastructure familiar to Arlingtonians in 1920, the year their hometown ceased to be part of "Alexandria County."

The map, featured on the AHS website, has been built with a program created by the Esri company and developed by Arlington-based software firm Blue Raster. The project was coordinated by local columnist Charlie Clark, with much volunteer help.



Each issue of the AHS Newsletter offers “Three Sisters” to showcase three historical things that make Arlington so unique. The Three Sisters are a person, a place, and an artifact from the AHS collection.

The Person



One of the most interesting people in Arlington’s history is George Washington Parke Custis. Without him, many of the nation’s most historic objects, including George Washington’s swords, uniforms, paintings, and silver might not exist. Custis is even responsible for the naming of our community, Arlington, named after his home along the Potomac River, or as he described it a “museum to Washington.”

George Custis was the son of John Parke Custis (Martha Washington’s son from her first marriage) but young George was raised by George Washington after his father died at Yorktown. Custis was enamored with his adoptive father and did everything he could to honor his memory. He held festivals at Arlington House, some in honor of George Washington, others to determine the best sheep “in the nation.” Custis was also an artist who painted numerous scenes of the Revolution; a playwright authoring plays

about American history, and a historian seeking to preserve early American history. a great example of a true Arlingtonian.

The Place

One of the most interesting houses in Arlington is the remaining half of a pair of structures originally built in Washington, D.C. They were on West and East Executive Avenue as guardhouses for the White House after the Civil War. In 1938, a man by the name of Bennett bought the structures at auction. He hired Z.B. Groves to move them to Arlington. Groves placed rollers under the structures, pulling them across Key Bridge and up Lee Highway with mule teams. Mr. Bennett then remodeled them slightly to turn them into small, but rentable, homes. Unfortunately, after many years of neglect, one of the houses had to be demolished in 1990.



The Artifact

This wooden nickel was given to customers by Buckingham Community TV which was located at 311 N. Glebe Road. Buckingham Community TV was in the Buckingham Shopping Center, at what is now Ace Cash Express. We don’t know much about this business. Can you tell us more? This is one of the many “give aways” from Arlington businesses of yesteryear that will be featured in the fall temporary exhibit at the Arlington Historical Museum. The majority of these artifacts were donated to the Arlington Historical Society. Let us know if YOU have any “give aways” from by-gone Arlington businesses.



Ball-Sellers House News

At the Ball-Sellers House, the oldest house in Arlington County built by John and Elizabeth Ball in the 1740s which is owned by AHS, docents have been giving free tours to all visitors on Saturday afternoons from April through October. The house has also hosted several special events and group tours so far this season. In early June, volunteers helped celebrate Glencarlyn Heritage Day by walking in the neighborhood parade and the house was one of several open for tours in the neighborhood. Throughout the summer, visitors have also included Ball family or Carlin family descendants, including descendants (pictured at right) of Moses Ball, a brother of John Ball who had property adjacent to John's. The Ball descendants came from Richmond, and Mechanicsville, Virginia and wore T-shirts with a Ball family crest.



As the weather cools and this newsletter goes to press, the Ball-Sellers House is looking forward to more events:

- Sunday, September 15: AutumnFest in partnership with Glencarlyn Community Garden (10:00-3:00 pm)
- Sunday, September 22: Author Libby McNamee will talk about her book, *Susanna's Midnight Ride*, the true story of a heroic young Virginia girl during the Revolutionary War (2:00-4:00 pm)
- Saturday, October 5: Flax to Fabric: in partnership with Arlington Food Assistance Center as we celebrate urban gardening. Reenactor Sandy Henderson will demonstrate how flax is made into fabric (1:00 pm)

Details about these events and more are available at <https://arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org>.

AHS in the Community Sept 2019

AHS operates two free local museums: the Arlington Historical Museum at Hume School which is open Friday-Sunday afternoons throughout the year. The Ball Sellers house museum is open Saturday afternoons from April to October. These museums are staffed by a terrific group of volunteer docents.

AHS volunteers also participate in and share their expertise at many community endeavors. These volunteers use their knowledge of Arlington history to inform the public. In the past few months:

- Tom Dickinson and George Axiotis lent their Arlington expertise to the staff at UVA Darden Sands Family Grounds Executive Meeting Center in Rosslyn. The staff request to AHS was to help them tell visitors about the history of the area where the center is located.
- Annette Benbow, Mark Benbow, Seth Black, Sean Denniston, Valerie Gomez, Jessica Kaplan, Cathy Hix, Tracy Hopkins, John and Mary Tuohy, Molly Wassom, Sue Webber, and Robert White staffed the Arlington Historical Society booth at the Arlington County Fair in August. The AHS booth provided us with the opportunity to share information about AHS, local history, and upcoming programs.
- Karl Van Newkirk continues to lead the work to upload all the editions of the Arlington Historical Magazine to our AHS website. He has been assisted by Seth Black, Max Gross, Jessica Kaplan, and Cindy Mattson.
- Jessica Kaplan gave a talk at Shirlington Library on the basics of compiling and organizing a personal history and family tree.
- Beginning in January 2020, Arlington will be celebrating the 100th anniversary of the naming of the county. Cathy Hix is part of a county planning committee to organize events to honor this occasion.

AHS Stewardship of Your Money

The AHS depends on donations and membership fees to enable us to carry out our mission. The generosity of our members has allowed us to continue our work in the community. This summer your donations supported the following:

- Continued work to add content to the AHS website including work by AHS member Charlie Clark to develop and upload an online interactive 2020 exhibition of photos of Arlington history.
- Several repairs to the Arlington Historical Museum including the air conditioning system to make sure our artifacts are in a temperature-controlled environment, a new water heater after it flooded a section of the basement, and in late August, we were able to repave and restripe our museum parking lot. The contractors who rented our parking lot for the water pipe upgrade also did repair some damage incurred while they used the lot.
- Painting was completed at the Ball-Sellers House, including both sections of the house and the two historic external structures.

AHS receives no operational funding from the county, so we depend on your donations to continue this work. We want you to know how we use your donations and we are grateful for all your support in helping us share the history of this great county.

**We deeply appreciate the support
of the following local businesses
and organizations.**

Aurora Hills Women's Club

BCN Homes

Clark Lithograph

EagleBank Foundation

E.G. Reinsch Companies

Glass Distributors, Inc.

John Marshall Bank

National Capital Bank

Brian and Christine Normile

Wells Fargo Bank

VOLUNTEER



Volunteer Your Time and Talents

Help Your Community by Helping AHS Promote and Preserve History

AHS is fueled by volunteer energy and has opportunities for everyone who has an interest in history or who wants to be more involved in their community. Here are a few examples.

Find out more: email:

info@arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org

What would do you like to do?

- Docent at one of our two museums? No experience necessary. We'll train you.
- Garden? Use your green thumb at either of our historic properties.
- Research? If you like to find and dig into historical records, you can help us learn more about our artifacts and the people, places, and things in our local history.
- Fix things? Two historic properties always have small jobs to do to maintain and preserve them.
- Social media: We have a growing following in Facebook and Twitter and a new Instagram account.
- Writing grants? Help us find appropriate grants and put our best foot forward on the application.
- Gift store assistant manager: learn from a 30 year veteran to purchase books and other items for the museum gift shop.

And many more! What do you like to do in your spare time? We have something for everyone!

Arlington Historical Society, Inc.
Summary Financial Report

As of and for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2019

<u>Revenues</u>	
Unrestricted	
Membership Dues	\$18,770.13
General Donations	9,933.63
Ball-Sellers House Rent	9,350.00
Banquet	18,487.97
Museum Shop Sales	1,758.07
Interest & Investment Gains	182.19
Other	5,896.26
	<u>\$64,379.25</u>
Restricted	
Ball-Sellers House Donations	10,851.71
Hume School Bldg. Fund Donations	5,800.00
9-11 Programming Donation	10,000.00
Endowment Investment Gains	6,506.02
	<u>33,157.73</u>
Total Revenues	<u>\$97,535.98</u>
<u>Expenses</u>	
Museum Programming	5,487.37
Hume School Bldg. Maintenance	6,397.56
Ball-Sellers House	
Programming	3,288.97
Capital Improvements	<u>19,373.28</u>
Total Ball-Sellers House	22,662.25
Banquet	11,368.65
Magazine & Newsletter	6,144.74
Museum Shop Inventory	461.19
Administration	9,712.28
Other	490.75
Total Expenses	<u>\$62,724.79</u>
Net income July 1, 2018–June 30, 2019	<u>\$34,811.19</u>
Net Assets	
Unrestricted Funds	
Operating	
General	113,624.97
Ball-Sellers	22,600.49
Deaccessioning Fund	4,462.77
Building Fund	9,960.75
Total Unrestricted	<u>\$150,648.98</u>
Restricted Funds	
Hume School Bldg. Fund	9,960.75
9-11 Programming	10,000.00
World War I Programming	15,827.72
Endowment	56,271.07
Ball-Sellers Security Deposit	503.87
Total Restricted	<u>\$92,563.41</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$243,212.39</u>
Liabilities	
Ball-Sellers Security Deposit	503.87
Total Liabilities	<u>\$503.87</u>
Net Assets at June 30, 2019	<u>\$242,708.52</u>



P.O. Box 100402
Arlington, Virginia 22210

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

**NON-PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
ARLINGTON, VA
PERMIT NO. 1578**

History Awaits Come Visit!

Arlington Historical Museum
1805 South Arlington Ridge Road
Arlington, VA 22202
Hours: Friday-Sunday
1:00-4:00 P.M.

Ball-Sellers House Museum
5620 Third Street South
Arlington, VA 22204
Hours: Saturdays 1:00-4:00 P.M.
(April through October)

The Arlington Historical Society, founded in 1956, is a non-profit organization incorporated under Virginia laws. The Society supports research, collection, preservation, discovery, and dissemination of Arlington County's history. Board meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00 P.M. in the Arlington Historical Museum at the Historic Hume School and are open to the public.



Website: <https://arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org>
Email: info@arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org
Facebook: [ArlingtonHistoricalSociety](https://www.facebook.com/ArlingtonHistoricalSociety)
8 703-892-4204