



# Arlington Historical Society Newsletter

Spring 2017

Volume 62, Issue 1

## President's Message

*Karl Van Newkirk, President, Arlington Historical Society*

Fellow members of the Arlington Historical Society:

Spring is a wonderful time in Arlington. The weather, after a *weird* winter, has turned pleasant, and all the trees and flowers are bursting into new life. Although (as I write this) the giant wisteria at the Ball-Sellers House is still bare, it has fooled me before, and I trust it will do so again. When it blooms, it is indeed a sight to see!

The Ball-Sellers House is also in our thoughts because of two other considerations. The focus of the archaeological investigation there has shifted to processing the numerous artifacts that were recovered last year. Volunteers will be needed on most Saturdays for the foreseeable future to work on this; contact Annette Benbow (BSH@arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org) if you are interested. And our landscape gardener will begin work in the near future on the rain garden to be installed in the area where the dig took place.

Please save the date of June 6th for our annual Gala; the theme this year will be "The Day War Came to Arlington." Our primary speaker will be Lt. Col. Robert Darling (USMC, Ret.), who was on duty at the White House on September 11, 2001. More information about the event will be forthcoming soon.

This will be (presumably) my last message to you as your President. I have decided not to run for reelection, and your new leader will be chosen at our May 11th Annual Membership Meeting. Our Nominating Committee plans to nominate Johnathan Thomas as President (see the full slate of candidates on page 2). I am confident that the Society will be in good hands, and that you will support him as we move forward in our mission to help Arlingtonians better understand our community through its history.

Join us on Thursday, May 11, 2017, for the

## AHS Annual Meeting

(See page 2 For more information)

And on Tuesday, June 6, 2017, for the

## AHS Gala Reception

(See page 5 For more information)

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## Board of Directors

W. Karl Van Newkirk, President  
 Johnathan Thomas,  
 Vice President  
 Gerald J. Laporte, Secretary  
 John H. Tuohy, Treasurer  
 Annette Benbow  
 Dr. Mark Benbow  
 Barbara Bouchard  
 Jennifer Dubina  
 Ali Ganjian  
 Cathy Hix  
 Tracy Hopkins  
 Francis X. O'Leary  
 Susan Webber  
 Robert White

# Notice of AHS Annual Meeting and Program on Arlington Civil War Farmers James & Lewis Marcey

*Gerald Laporte, Secretary, Arlington Historical Society*

The annual meeting of members of the Arlington Historical Society will be held on **Thursday, May 11, 2017, at 7:00 P.M. at Marymount University's Reinsch Library Auditorium, 2807 N. Glebe Rd., Arlington 22207.** Officers and directors for the coming year will be elected at the annual meeting. Directions to the Reinsch Library Auditorium can be found on page 4.

It's expected that the business portion of the annual meeting will be short. A presentation by local historian Jessica Kaplan on Arlington Civil War farmers James and Lewis Marcey will follow. Ms. Kaplan lives in a Marcey family farmhouse in Arlington.

The Nominating Committee of AHS is expected to recommend that the following slate of nominees be elected as directors at the annual meeting:

**President: Johnathan Thomas**  
**Vice President: Annette Benbow**  
**Secretary: Gerry Laporte**  
**Treasurer: John Tuohy**  
**Barbara Bouchard**  
**Jeanne Choi**  
**Tom Dickinson**  
**Gerald Haines**  
**Cathy Hix**  
**Frank O'Leary**  
**Dakota Springston**  
**Karl Van Newkirk**  
**Susan Webber**  
**Robert White**

You can find biographical information on these individuals under "Information on Nominees," below.

Additional nominations may be made from the floor.

In addition to the officers and directors elected by the membership at the annual meeting, the Society's Museum Director, currently Mark Benbow, will serve as a member of the Board of Directors as long as he or she is a volunteer.

The Nominating Committee consists of Gerry Laporte, Chairperson; Barbara Bouchard; and Cathy Hix.

## Information on AHS Board Nominees

**Johnathan Thomas**, nominee for President, is currently Vice President of AHS. He was first elected to the AHS Board of Directors in 2015. Johnathan was born and raised in Arlington. His family has owned land in the county since 1724. He has been working in the residential mortgage industry since 1985 and still calls Arlington home.

**Annette Benbow**, nominee for Vice President, has been on the AHS Board of Directors for four of the past five years, serving one year as Recording Secretary of AHS. She has been Chair of AHS's Ball-Sellers House Committee since 2012 and also manages social media for AHS.

## Information on AHS Board Nominees, cont.

**Gerry Laporte**, nominee for Secretary, is a three-term past President of AHS and currently serves as Secretary. He was a member of the AHS Board of Directors from 1997 to 2010 and has been reelected each year since 2013. He is a retired corporate and securities attorney who has lived in Arlington for 30 years.

**John Tuohy**, nominee for Treasurer, joined the AHS board as Treasurer in 2016. He is a Certified Public Accountant and long-time resident of Arlington. John has also served as Treasurer of the Warren G. Stambaugh Foundation, CrisisLink, the Arlington Red Cross, and the 28th Massachusetts Company B Civil War reenactment unit.

**Barbara Bouchard** joined the AHS board in 2016. She is a lifelong Arlington resident, has a law degree, and is currently employed as a Senior Associate Director at the Federal Reserve Board.

**Jeanne Choi** would be a new member of the AHS board. She was raised in the Arlington/Falls Church area, and, after living in D.C. for 20 years, recently purchased a home and moved back across the river to Arlington. Jeanne has spent her entire career in marketing and communications, with a focus on new and traditional media strategies. She is currently the VP of Marketing and Communications for a regional real estate company.

**Tom Dickinson** served as President of AHS for 2010 to 2012 and as a director for 2003 to 2013, including his time as President. He currently serves as a docent at the Arlington Historical Museum. Tom has been a member of AHS since 1981.

**Gerald Haines** would be a new member of the AHS board. He was Chief Historian of the CIA from 1998 to 2002; Chief Historian of the National Reconnaissance Office of the Department of Defense from 1994 to 1998, where he established the agency's historical program; and a historian at the National Security Agency from 1986 to 1992. After retiring from the CIA, Gerry taught Latin American Relations and U.S. Intelligence at the University of Virginia for 12 years.

**Cathy Hix** joined the AHS Board of Directors in 2016. She is an Arlington native who attended Arlington Public Schools. She was a social studies teacher in Arlington for 34 years, and for the past four years has been the K-12 Social Studies Supervisor for Arlington Public Schools.

**Frank O'Leary** joined the AHS board in 2016. He retired in 2014 after 31 years as Arlington County Treasurer. While in that position, he received many awards recognizing the superior quality of his service, including two Awards for Excellence in Financial Management from the Government Finance Officers Association. Frank and his wife Linda have lived in Arlington County since 1969.

**Dakota Springston** would be a new member of the AHS board. He is a thirteenth-generation Virginian, second-generation Arlingtonian, and graduate of Washington-Lee High School. He attended Mary Washington and Marymount Universities, graduating in 2016 with a degree in History and Secondary Education. Dakota is a member of the Jamestown Society, along with numerous other organizations, as well as an avid reenactor, published author, and Arlington Public Schools history teacher.

**Karl Van Newkirk** is completing his fourth term as President of AHS (1991-92; 1994-95; 2015-17) and has been a once-a-month docent at the Arlington Historical Society since the early 1990s. He was the editor of the annual Arlington Historical Magazine from 1992 to 2015. He has taught an annual course on the history of Arlington for Encore Learning since 2003.

**Sue Webber** has been a resident of Arlington for the past 13 years and has served on the AHS Board of Directors for the past year. Sue is employed by Booz Allen Hamilton, providing on-site consulting services in learning strategy, knowledge management, organizational development, and coaching for the Federal government.

## Information on AHS Board Nominees, cont.

**Robert White** moved to Arlington in 1970 and is completing his second year on the AHS Board of Directors. He first became involved with AHS as a docent at the Arlington Historical Museum and continues to serve in that capacity at least three times a month. His other activities include project/building management for the historic Hume School building that houses the museum, community outreach, and coordinating AHS's annual essay contest for Arlington high school students. Robert is retired from the U.S. government as a senior staff officer.

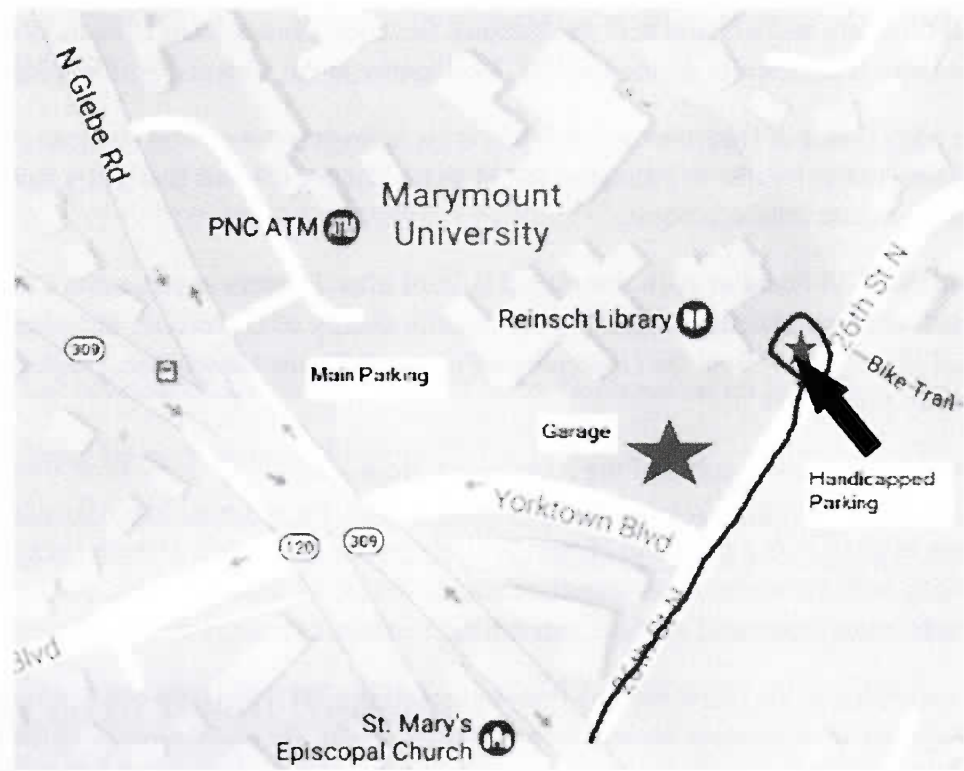
## Parking at Marymount for AHS Annual Meeting

*Mark Benbow, Director, Arlington Historical Museum*

A number of people have asked questions about parking at Marymount when AHS has its events at the university's Reinsch Library at 2807 N. Glebe Rd. If you enter the main entrance off of North Glebe Road you can ask the guards for a spot. It's a short (but hilly) walk to the library on a nice evening.

You can also park in the main garage, accessible off of the 26th Street North entrance. There is handicapped parking available right outside the library as well if you enter campus from the 26th Street North entrance.

Finally, there is also a Marymount Shuttle that runs from 4040 Fairfax to and from campus when school is in session.



# AHS NEEDS VOLUNTEERS!

Contact Volunteer Coordinator Robert White ([robertwhite7@aol.com](mailto:robertwhite7@aol.com))

# Announcement of AHS Gala Reception

*Frank O'Leary, Director, Arlington Historical Society*

In addition to a rich variety of educational presentations throughout 2017, the Arlington Historical Society will present a very special program at the **Army Navy Country Club in Arlington on June 6th** entitled, "The Day War Came to Arlington!" Our principal speaker will be Lt. Col. Robert Darling of the United States Marine Corps (Ret.). On September 11, 2001, Colonel Darling served as our nation's primary military presence in the President's bunker. In that capacity, he witnessed the fear, confusion, and panic that immediately followed the surprise attack and the ensuing near-disasters that were narrowly averted. He also was witness to and part of the eventual clarity of decision-making and resolution that rallied our nation. His presentation is a gripping, no-holds-barred account of that fateful day.

We shall also be honoring our military, our veterans, and our first responders at the event. Featured speakers will include: Captain Patrick Hannigan (USN), the commander of our namesake ship the USS ARLINGTON; General James Jackson (Ret.), head of Arlington's Military and Veterans Advisory Commission; County Board member John Vihstadt on behalf of Arlington's World War I Commission; and former Fire Chief James Schwartz.

These presentations will follow a gala reception at the **Army Navy Country Club, starting at 6:00 P.M. on Tuesday, June 6, 2017.**



## Ticket Prices

AHS Members	\$55 per individual, \$100 per couple
Active and Retired Military and First Responders:	\$55 per individual, \$100 per couple
General Admission:	\$70 per individual, \$120 per couple
Friend:	\$250 (admit two attendees, recognition in written program and public display)
Sponsor:	\$500 (admit four attendees, recognition in written program and public display)
Benefactor:	\$1000 or more (admit six attendees, recognition in written program and public display, autographed copy of <i>Inside the President's Bunker</i> )

Watch your mail for your written invitation to the reception, which will contain information on purchasing tickets and making contributions in connection with the event.

## Sprucing up the Hume School Building

*Robert White, Director and Volunteer Coordinator, Arlington Historical Society*

While the weather this past winter was comparatively mild, we did get several rains that helped clear the air of the dust and pollen from autumn. The rain also helped us discover the several leaks we had in our roof. Not wanting the interior of our building to be damaged, we replaced the roof as soon as we could. Surprisingly, the next heavy rain showed we still had leaks. The floor of the belfry was the culprit. Repairs were made and it is with a great sense of relief that we have noted no wet spots inside the building during or after the last heavy rain.

While inspecting the roof we also noted that the exterior paint was chipping and peeling and that the wood on two of the windows was suffering from major decay. Repairs to the two windows were made and a close inspection was made of all exterior wood trim, including all dormers and soffits. That inspection made it obvious that more work was needed, so a contract was let to prepare and paint all exterior wood and metal trim. This contract will include scraping old paint, re-glazing windows, replacing wooden trim pieces as needed, and then applying a primer followed by two coats of high-quality paint. Work will commence April 17th, weather permitting. When complete, the exterior of the Hume School building will hopefully be in good shape for the next 20 years or so.



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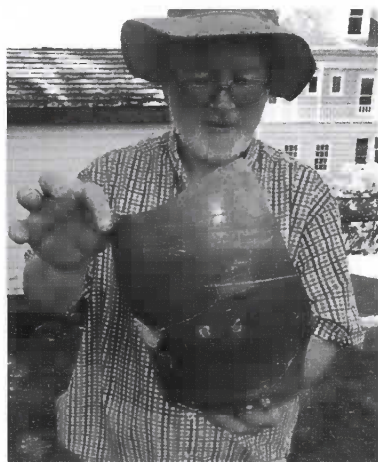
## Ball-Sellers House Season Began April 1st (No Fooling!)

The Ball-Sellers House opened this year with something even more special. Sandy Newton, a reenactor from Arlington House, did demonstration wool spinning all afternoon (see image). Some visitors had been to the Ball-Sellers House before but specifically came to see Sandy's demonstration. She also educated the docents on the approximate age of our small and large spinning wheels (at least 100 years old) *and* she advised us on the most historically accurate places to put them in the house. Docent Margaret Wagner and Annette Benbow treated visitors to cracknels, snickerdoodles, and lemonade. It turned into a lovely day and a great start to our 2017 season!




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## Ball-Sellers House Artifact Cleaning Still Underway

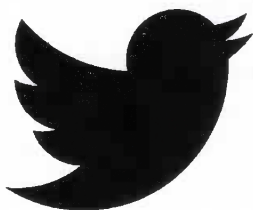


Artifact cleaning from last year's archaeological dig at the Ball-Sellers House is continuing. This lab work is being done on most Saturdays on the lower level of the Arlington Historical Museum at 1805 South Arlington Ridge Road. If you'd like to help reveal what we unearthed, for an hour or more, contact [BSH@arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:BSH@arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org) and we'll add your name to be notified of when we are next gathering. No particular skills are necessary. High school kids with adult supervision are welcome.

*At left: Ball-Sellers House Lead Archeologist Patrick O'Neill displays one of the dig's largest artifacts*

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## The Arlington Historical Society is on Twitter!



You are probably already aware of our newly revamped website ([www.arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org)) and our Facebook page, but we bet you didn't know we are now also on Twitter! Look for us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/ArlHist>. You'll find even more information about Arlington history, reminders about upcoming events related to Arlington history, and items in our collection that are not on display. Haley Wallace, our collections manager, and Diamond Van Ausdal, our intern from Marymount University's history department, are keeping you up to date on our new Twitter account. Check us out!

# Calendar of Upcoming Events

## April 2017

### ***Museum Exhibit: The Great War***

(Through September 5, 2017)

The Arlington Historical Museum

1805 South Arlington Ridge Road, Arlington, VA 22202

## May 2017

### ***George Washington's Forest History Walk***

Sunday, May 7, 2017, 1:30 P.M.—3:30 P.M.

Ball-Sellers House

5620 3rd Street South, Arlington, VA 22204

### ***AHS Annual Meeting / I Was a Union Man: James & Lewis Marcey's Civil War Experience***

Thursday, May 11, 2017, 7:00 P.M.—8:30 P.M.

Marymount University, Reinsch Library Auditorium

2807 North Glebe Road, Arlington, VA 22207

## June 2017

### ***Gala Reception: The Day War Came to Arlington with Lt. Col. Robert Darling***

Tuesday, June 6, 2017, 6:00 P.M.—9:00 P.M.

Army Navy Country Club

1700 Army Navy Drive, Arlington, VA 22202

### ***The History of Theodore Roosevelt Island***

Thursday, June 8, 2017, 7:00 P.M.—8:30 P.M.

Arlington Central Library Auditorium

1015 North Quincy Street, Arlington, VA 22201

The Arlington Historical Society Newsletter is published quarterly.  
We welcome news items, photos, and articles for inclusion in the newsletter.  
Please submit copy to [info@arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org) or to the address below.

Newsletter Editor, Arlington Historical Society  
P.O. Box 100402  
Arlington, VA 22210





## *January Public Program:*

### Alexandria County, the War of 1812, & the Battle of the White House

*With Dr. Patrick O'Neill*

*Max L. Gross, Editor, Arlington Historical Magazine*

On January 11, 2017, the Society held its first program of the new year, and what a program it was! Dr. Patrick O'Neill, who had served as principal archeologist at the Ball-Sellers House dig this past autumn, was our speaker. Dr. O'Neill is not only a fine archeologist, but also a thorough expert on the War of 1812, which, as his presentation demonstrated, has also involved archeological digging.

In a detailed and fully-illustrated lecture drawn from his fine book on the subject, Dr. O'Neill walked his audience through the English attack on Washington, D.C. in August-September 1814. This attendee learned much that he had not known before. The assault on Washington was not carried out by troops on ships that sailed up the Potomac, landing where Fort McNair now stands. (A briefing I had once heard at Fort McNair had told me that.) Rather, Washington had been attacked by an infantry force that marched up from southern Maryland and defeated local militia forces at Bladensburg before moving on to burn the Federal buildings in the District of Columbia.



The mission of the ships that came up the Potomac was to rescue the infantry soldiers had they become trapped (they didn't). The ships then had to navigate back through the narrow Potomac channel to effect their escape. But the Virginia and Maryland militias were waiting for them on both sides of the river where Fort Belvoir now exists. Below the bluff was a customs house, white in color, where the Battle of the White House took place on September 1st-5th, 1814. The English ships escaped, but not without damage. The English navy then regrouped and went up to Baltimore where the English sought to capture Fort McHenry on September 12th-15th. On the morning of September 14th a hostage on board one of the English ships, Francis Scott Key, peered through the dawn's early light to see if the American flag was still flying. And we all know the rest of the story.

## *February Public Program:*

### Historic African American Churches in Arlington

*Max L. Gross, Editor, Arlington Historical Magazine*

The approximately 175 attendees of the Arlington Historical Society's February 9th program at Marymount University enjoyed a most remarkable experience. Three historic African American churches in Arlington date from their beginnings in 1866, the year after the end of the Civil War. These churches are:

1. Calloway United Methodist Church, located in Hall's Hill, today Highland Park — think Lee Highway and Glebe Road
2. Lomax AME Zion Church, located in Nauck/Green Valley in south Arlington — S. Glebe Road and 24th Street
3. Mt. Zion Baptist Church, located in south Arlington — S. Glebe Road and S. Walter Reed Drive

In 2016, each of these churches observed their 150th anniversaries in Arlington, for which each had assigned committees to recover the history and achievements of each church. Representatives of these committees came together to tell their respective stories. Many members of each congregation came to enjoy the evening, which had a distinctly spiritual mood.

## *March Public Program:*

# Alexander Robey Shepherd: The Man Who Built the Nation's Capital

*With Author John P. Richardson*

*Max L. Gross, Editor, The Arlington Historical Magazine*

Past AHS President John P. Richardson was the speaker at the Society's March 9, 2017, program at Marymount University. The topic of his talk was his recently published biography of "Boss" Shepherd, the successful District of Columbia businessman who in the early 1870s constructed much of the infrastructure of our nation's capital. The owner of a successful plumbing and gas fitting company, Shepherd also apparently possessed an intense personality that he turned to civic duty. Washington before the Civil War was quite an undeveloped city, with muddy streets and open sewer canals. But after the Civil War it was also treeless and in tattered condition. In just a few years after the Civil War and before the economic depression of 1873, Shepherd served as Chairman of the Board of Public Works and then nine months as territorial governor (1873-74). With the strong support of President Grant (1869-1877) and the reluctant support of Congress, from whom he had to raise funds, he used his company to lay sewage lines, pave the streets, install lighting, plant trees, and build many buildings that resulted in a major transformation of the city. As Richardson noted, this effort realized the dream of Pierre L'Enfant, the original designer of the District of Columbia.

Shepherd went bankrupt as a result of the economic panic of 1873 and moved to Mexico, where he purchased land in the Sierra Madre mountains and established a silver mining company. There he and his family moved from a high-profile life in the American capital to a simple frontier life away from the public. Richardson also told that part of Shepherd's story, and noted that Shepherd's family returned him to Washington after his death to be buried in Rock Creek Cemetery, where his mausoleum may be seen today.

Boss Shepherd is not a well-remembered figure in Washington's history, which generally belongs to the city's many out-of-state politicians. But the city has remembered him with the fine bronze statue that stands in front of the D.C. City Hall (Wilson Building). And just diagonally across Freedom Square at the corner of 13th and E is the very excellent Boss Shepherd restaurant. Then there is Shepherd's Park, the district north of Walter Reed Hospital, where Shepherd lived in what was then a rural setting. There is also Shepherd Elementary School. Now, finally, there is this definitive biography of the man.

Like so many biographies of its type, it was a labor of love for its author, who stated that he had been working on it for 31 years while he was engaged in many other labors of life. It is the story of a remarkable man who deserves to be remembered, and John Richardson deserves praise for reconstructing the picture of Shepherd's life.



### In Memoriam

Pat Miller

A memorial service was held on April 11, 2017, for Pat Miller, who served on the AHS board for many years in the 1990s and early 2000s. Pat died on March 28th at Powhatan Nursing Home in Falls Church. She was 98. She was a veteran of the Foreign Service and longtime resident of Lyon Village. Pat enjoyed telling people that she had dated Everett Dirksen in her younger years.

### New AHS Life Members

Kathleen Ausley

King Prather

Sheryl Scull

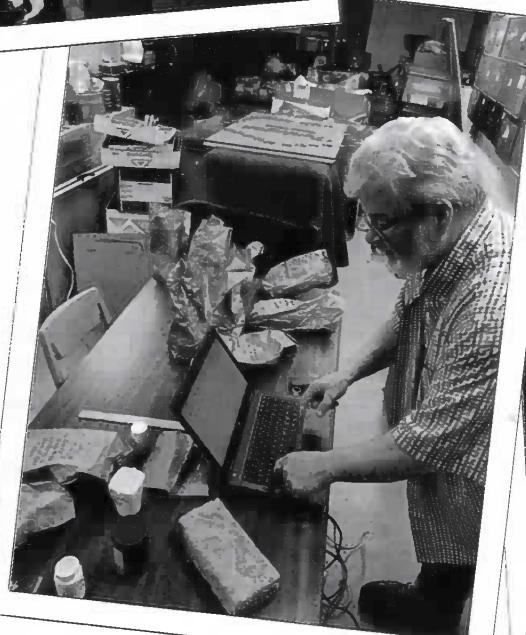
## Snapshots: The Arlington Historical Society's Year to Date



Above and top right: AHS personnel and guests enjoy the 2017 AHS Winter Social.



Near right: Archeologist Patrick O'Neill catalogs Ball-Sellers House artifacts.



Far right: On behalf of AHS, volunteer Jennifer Shaw accepts Partnership and Shared Purpose award from Lomax AME Zion Church.



Near right: Attendees at the AHS February public program at Marymount University.



Far right: Arlington Historical Museum visitor rings the Hume School bell.





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## History Awaits. Come Visit!

### **Arlington Historical Museum**

1805 South Arlington Ridge Road  
Arlington, VA 22202

Hours: Wednesdays, Saturdays, and  
Sundays 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)*

**T**he 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 first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 P.M. in the Arlington Historical Museum at the Historic Hume School. Board meetings are open to the public.



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