



# Arlington Historical Society

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ARLINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
FALL 2018

## NEXT MEETING:

October 23 2018, 7pm  
1805 South Arlington Ridge  
Road, Arlington, VA 22202.

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*\*INDICATES MONTHLY PRO-*

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## GRAM AT MARYMOUNT UNIVER- SITY

**October 11 2018: Desegre-  
gating Arlington Sports\***

**September 16 2018: Ball  
Sellers and Glencarlyn Au-  
tumn Festival**

**October 2018: Ball Sellers  
Fall Harvest Reenactment**

**October 27 2018: Scary Sto-  
ries at Ball Sellers**

**November 8 2018: The Histo-  
ry of Fort Myer\***

## President's Dispatch

Cathy Hix, President

As a former educator with 39 years in Arlington Public Schools, I have always considered September as the beginning of the year. This year as school supplies go on sale and vacations come to an end, my thoughts go to an historic event that occurred in Arlington County 60 years ago. On February 2, 1959 four black students, Ronald Deskins, Michael Jones, Lance Newman, and Gloria Thompson entered Stratford Junior High School (now the site of HB Woodlawn). On that day, Arlington Public Schools became the first in the Commonwealth to desegregate a school. Arlington's fight to desegregate schools, led by community leaders, was in defiance of the massive resistance occurring throughout the Commonwealth after *Brown vs. Board of Education*, the case which declared Virginia's "Separate but Equal" education policy unconstitutional. In fact, the Commonwealth had taken away Arlington County's elected School Board because we were actively planning desegregation before the ruling became final. Because some people were angry about desegregation, there was concern that there would be trouble when the students came to enter the school. Eighty-five Arlington policemen stood guard at the school to make sure the students were able to attend school and go home without a problem. The successful integration of Stratford Junior High School marked only the beginning of the desegregation movement in Arlington County, which continued until full integration of African American students 12 years later in 1971. More details of this event can be found at :

<https://library.arlingtonva.us/2018/01/11/the-desegregation-of-arlington-public-schools/>

The event that day is of significance to me because my father was one of the Arlington policemen at the school standing guard. While I was only one year old at the time, he shared his story of that day when I was older. During my tenure in Arlington Public Schools, I had the great opportunity to hear stories from that day from others, including those four students who first entered Stratford Junior High that day. During the upcoming year AHS, along with other organizations in the county, hope to shine a light on the events of 60 years ago and their significance and impact over the last six decades. As members of AHS, we hope you will join us to honor and remember that significant day.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **Upcoming Public Programs:**

**November 8 2018: The History of Fort Myer:** The history of Fort Myer is as deep and rich as Arlington's itself. From its modest beginnings during the Civil War as Fort Whipple to the premier cavalry post of the US Army at the turn of the last century and up to the present day, events occurring at Fort Myer have shaped our Nation's (and the world's) history. Help commemorate the end of World War I and Veteran's Day by learning about Fort Myer's role in this conflict and beyond. Historian Kim Bernard Holien served as a military historian for the US Government starting in 1979 and from 1995 was the Fort Myer Military Community historian until his retirement in 2013. He earned his bachelors degree from Bethel College and his masters degree in history from George Mason University in 1984. He is the author of the *Battle at Ball's Bluff*.

### **Directions to Marymount (for our Public Programs):**

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 may 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 the campus from the 26th Street North entrance. We hope to see you there!

### **Other Historical Events:- History around the Community**

The Ball-Sellers House continues to bring history alive at events in September and October:

On Sunday, September 16, we participated in Autumn Fest hosted by the Glencarlyn Community Garden. There was a "Guess the Herb" game and water color painting and renewable planting so visitors of all ages could take some garden beauty home with them. We are looking forward to the next event with the Community Garden!

Sometime in October, we'll host the ultimate "foodie" history event when colonial reenactors will show you what the Ball family would have done with all the things they harvested: fruits, corn, herbs, honey, wheat, and more. Visitors will be able to taste food that colonial Virginians would have eaten, including desserts and beverages. Contact us for more information!  
(Free: 1-4:30 pm)

The Ball-Sellers House will close out the season on the evening of Saturday, October 27 when we share historic scary stories at several sites in Glencarlyn—starting, of course, the Ball-Sellers House. Costumes are strongly encouraged and we promise to do our very best to scare you!  
(Free: 6-9 pm).

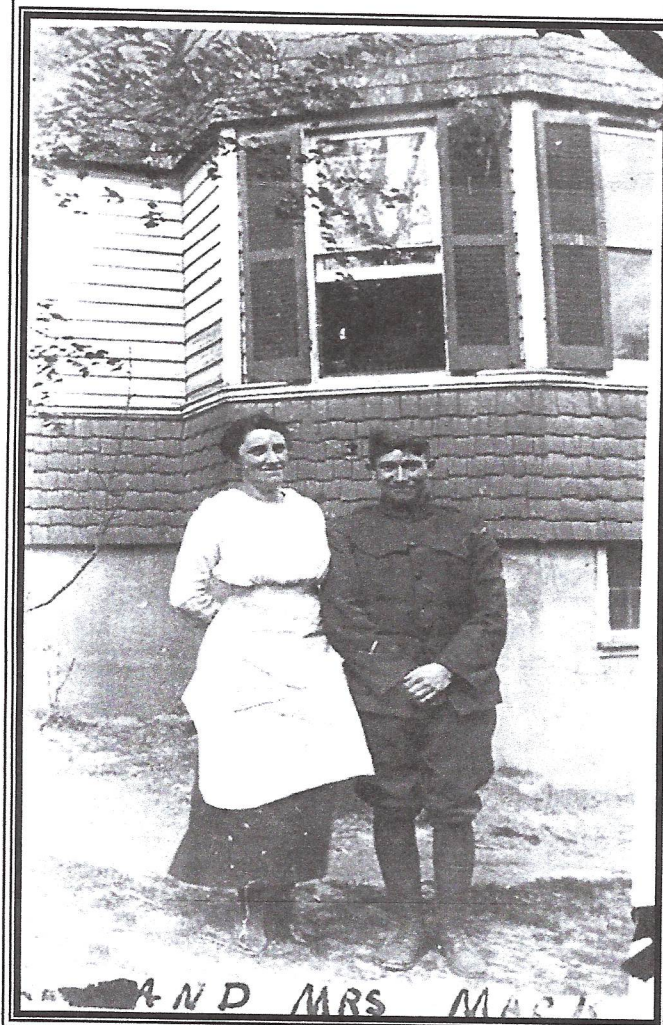




Every issue, the Arlington Historic Society Newsletter will offer the feature Three Sisters, showcasing three things that make Arlington what it is. There will be a person, a place and an artifact from the AHS collection, all illustrating a unique facet of the history of Arlington.

**Person of the Issue:**

As we celebrate the WWI centennial, Arlington has been looking back at the numerous Arlington Veterans of the Great War, who served their country one hundred years ago. Our person of the issue this newsletter is David Mack, a Cherrydaler, who served in the Army in 1918. David is pictured below with his wife, at their Stafford Street house (which is no longer standing). David's wife Ellie was the mother of six children! Before the war David had been a painter and contractor for Ernest Comley. At the end of the war Mr. Mack was a participant in the Cherrydale Volunteer Fire Department Parade!



AND MRS MACK

**Place of the Issue:**

Arlington is made up of many historic places, homes, streams, forests, stores, parks and schools. Each issue we will feature a different one of these historic places, and showcase a little of what makes Arlington, Arlington.

**A Sears Hathaway**

This Sears Hathaway home is one of many Kit Homes in Arlington County, part of our history as a growing suburb and "commuter" town. The Hathaway was a good affordable home which included "many consumer delights". This particular home is for sale (also on the market is historic Birchland) and this Hathaway is in danger of possibly being torn down. This part of our history is in danger of disappearing unless we act.



**Artifact of the Issue:**

These medals (earned during the Spanish American War and the Great War) belonged to Commander James Blair Gilmer, who resided in Arlington after he left the Navy in the 1930s. Commander Gilmer, like many other Arlingtonians and other American heroes, is now buried in Arlington National Cemetery.





## HISTORY HAPPENINGS— THE VINE—

*The Wisteria Vine that grows at Ball Sellers House is truly one of the natural marvels of Arlington County, and always guarantees a great show! "The Vine" in this newsletter will cover Ball Sellers House, and include the latest information from Ball Sellers.*

On August 4, the Ball-Sellers House hosted a living history reenactment featuring service personnel from all the wars each resident of the Ball-Sellers House participated in since the American Revolution. Kids and adults alike had fun learning about each resident and what it would have been like for each to serve in the military. Visitors experienced history by reenacting military drills with the Virginia militia in the Revolutionary War, getting their "tintype" photo in period costume taken by a Civil War photographer, practicing rifle drills with a Civil War Union corporal and a major, and learning about the Spanish American war from a U.S. Navy seaman who helped invade Cuba. A US Army cavalry officer and an infantry "doughboy" demonstrated military equipment from World War I. Visitors also learned about a US Army infantryman's experiences in World War II from the son of a man who stormed Utah beach in the invasion of Normandy. Visitors learned that not all veterans were men, as reenacted by a World War I US Navy "Yeomanette" and a World War II Navy WAVE (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service).

### Photo caption:

Left to right: Elise Milstein - WWII US Navy WAVE; Kathryn Holt Springston - WWI US Navy Yeomanette; Peter Chen - WWI Cavalry; Max Lee - WWI Infantry; Mark Benbow - Spanish American War Navy seaman; Scott Springston - Civil War Photographer; Peter Vaselopoulos - Civil War Corporal, 3rd US Regular Infantry Company K.; John Touhy - Civil War Major, Union Army; Dakota Springston - Revolutionary War, Virginia Volunteers; not shown, George Axiotis - WWII US Army infantry

Photo by Greg Embree

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**NOTICES AND NOTIFICATIONS  
NOTICE OF BYLAWS AMENDMENTS**

**By Gerry Laporte, AHS Secretary**

The Board of Directors of the Arlington Historical Society amended the Bylaws of AHS recently on two occasions. AHS must notify its members of Bylaws changes in the next newsletter of AHS, which is the reason for this notice.

On March 6, 2018, the board amended the Bylaws to establish a standing Finance Committee of the Board and to eliminate the Audit Committee. The new Finance Committee consists of at least two board members nominated by the President and approved by the board plus the Treasurer. Its duties are to develop AHS's annual budget for adoption by the board, oversee AHS's financial reporting and disclosure process, monitor choices of accounting policies and principles, and undertake other financial tasks related to the operations of the Society as may be deemed appropriate by the board. The members of the Finance Committee other than the Treasurer are also responsible for reviewing the accounts of the Treasurer each year and issuing a report on its review, a duty formerly handled by the Audit Committee.

On April 3, 2018, the board amended the bylaws to change the name of the "Family" membership category to "Dual" membership and to eliminate the "Donor" membership category.

You can find an updated copy of AHS's Constitution and Bylaws on its website at [www.ArlingtonHistoricalSociety.org](http://www.ArlingtonHistoricalSociety.org).

**DO YOU HAVE OLD FILMS OR PHOTOGRAPHS OF ARLINGTON?**

If you happen to have or find any old films or photographs in your attic or closet that show scenes of Arlington "back in the day", AHS would be glad to give them a new home. Contact us and we will be glad to help preserve your part of Arlington History.

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### Public Program Recaps

AHS has had a great year for public programs! If you haven't had a chance to attend a public program or a speaker hosted by AHS, don't miss our next program! Details can be found on page 2 and on our website. So far for this year, we have learned about the soaring history of aviation at Fort Myer, a local navy heroine named Julia Reinhardt Powell, along with the impact of immigration on the great war! Arlington was also lucky to have heard from Mark Benbow and others at a wonderful commemoration of WWI in Arlington. AHS was also present at the Arlington County Fair, continuing a tradition dating back to the 1970s. Our next few programs promise to be just as interesting and informative, so don't miss them!

### AHS Blast from the Past

*Each issue will try to feature a "AHS Blast from the Past" to complement what has happened in the past, and connect it to the present.*

Across Arlington County this month, students headed back to school to start another year in the classroom. Arlington Schools have historically been academic, as well as sports, powerhouses, and have also been important agents for change for prominent social issues, such as desegregation. AHS has a very close connection with the schools, our main museum is the oldest standing school and preserves what a classroom would have looked like for students of the past. In this photograph, students at Cherrydale Elementary head back to school for the first day. Do you have memories of your days in Arlington Schools? Do you remember going to Cherrydale School or St. Agnes, or your days at W-L, Wakefield or Yorktown? AHS would love to hear your story!



### Arlington Remembers the Great War

*By Cathy Hix*

On June 28<sup>th</sup>, the Arlington Historical Society, in partnership with the Arlington World War I Task Force hosted a reception and educational presentation at the Navy League of the United States on Wilson Boulevard to honor and remember Arlington's participation in World War One. The event, led by Frank O'Leary was titled *Arlington Remembers: The Great War*. Opening ceremonies included an honor guard of doughboys and the singing of patriotic songs led by Opera Nova. The keynote speaker, Dr. Mark Benbow, shared many details of Arlington during the WWI era. Dr. Allison Finkelstein, Chair of the World War I Task Force outlined the group's many accomplishments and future plans. Arlington students who won the AHS WWI essay contest were also recognized. Guests were treated to a reception with food donated by Liberty Tavern, Me Jana, Whitlows, and Joe's Pizza and Pasta.

AHS and the WWI Task Force are thankful for the numerous individuals and businesses who generously made the event a financial success, by their contributions totaling nearly \$18,000. Attendees also had the opportunity to make a donation through the purchase of WWI commemorative coins, designed by local artist, (and retired Police Captain) Kevin Reardon.

The Arlington WWI Task Force's final remembrance will occur at the Clarendon War Memorial on November 18, 2018, in honor of the anniversary of the armistice on the 11<sup>th</sup> hour of the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month in 1918. Donations collected before June 28<sup>th</sup> will be used for the installation of seven interpretive panels at the Clarendon War Memorial that tell the story of Arlington's participation in conflicts throughout its history. The first two panels related to WWI are expected to be in place by the November 18<sup>th</sup> event.



# ADDENDA

## AHS

### OFFICERS:

PRESIDENT:  
Cathy Hix

### VICE

PRESIDENT  
AND

VOLUNTEER  
COORDINATOR:  
Robert White

SECRETARY:  
(AND COUNTY  
HALRB  
LIAISON)

Gerry Laporte

TREASURER:  
John H. Tuohy

THE AHS  
BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS:

Mark Benbow:  
*Museum Director*

Annette Benbow:  
*Ball Sellers*

*Committee Chair*

Haley Anderson

George Axiotis

Tom Dickinson

Gerald Haines

Tracy Hopkins:

Chair,

Membership  
Committee

Jessica Kaplan

Elise Milstein

Karl VanNewkirk

Dakota

Springston:

*Newsletter Editor*

## Editors Note

*Editors Disclaimer:* While we greatly appreciate the contributions of our many authors, views expressed in these articles are solely those of the designated author, and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the society, and/or the editor of this newsletter. ~Dakota Springston

## AHS in Action:

A question that I am often asked is "what has the Historical Society done lately?" Sometimes people don't realize that an Historic Society does more than just study the past, or have meetings. AHS is a active part of Arlington, and there is always something in the works. Currently, AHS is working on multiple projects, including conservation work on newly found relics, helping Arlington County Schools implement local history instruction in the classroom, re-cataloguing our collections so that they will be preserved for the future, along with numerous other projects. AHS is always looking for ways to engage with the community, and educate the public about history, and we need your help do to that. If you have an idea, let us know, or if you want to be a part of saving Arlington's history, we are always looking for volunteers and ideas! Together, we can not only save our history, we can make it!

## MEMBERSHIP ALERT!

### Have you renewed your annual AHS membership?

No? You will miss out on the Arlington Historical Magazine, and this is your last newsletter, not to mention other benefits.

Please go to our website to renew:

<https://arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org/membership/>

## Hume School Happenings

There is always something happening at the AHS Museum at the Hume School, and right now there is the WWI exhibit put together by Dr. Mark Benbow. The exhibit includes World War I uniforms, photographs, and civilian items that help show Arlington's experience during the "War to End All Wars." The exhibit is part of a larger effort to mark and remember the centennial of the First World War, and honors the Arlingtonians who were a part of this "Great War." Arlington's WWI history is often eclipsed by our WWII history, and by the large surge of growth in our County after the war. This is an interesting look at what Arlington was like one hundred years ago! Some items in the exhibit were provided from Mark Benbow's personal collection. Stop by and see it soon!

The Arlington Historical Society Newsletter is published quarterly.

This is your newsletter, and we love hearing from you!

We welcome news items, photos, and articles for inclusion in the newsletter.

Please submit copy to [Dakota.springston@apsva.us](mailto:Dakota.springston@apsva.us) or to the address below.

All submissions may be edited for length, grammar, spelling, etc.

Newsletter Editor, Arlington Historical Society

P.O. Box 100402

Arlington, VA 22210







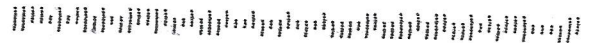
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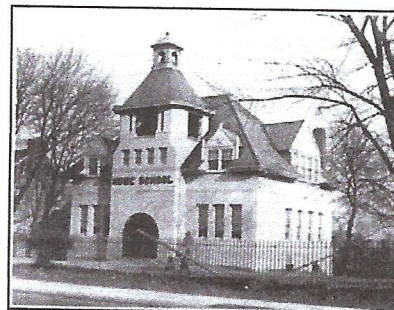


## History Awaits. Come Visit!

**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)

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. Board meetings are open to the public.



**WWW.ARLINGTONHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG**  
**FACEBOOK: 'ARLINGTONHISTORICALSOCIETY'**