



# NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 59, NO. 3

SEPTEMBER 2014

## President's Letter

by  
John Richardson

The upcoming program year will be important for AHS, since our expanding activities will require significant additional funding. For the past year and a half, AHS has been building programs and establishing relationships with other Arlington partners like WETA, Arlington Public Schools, Arlington TV, and the Center for Local History (CLH) at Central Library. We are creating projects and relationships that provide mutual benefits for the other institutions and AHS itself.

At this point we need to undertake a systematic outreach program to the Arlington business community in order to engage them in making local history a part of their own outlook – and to increase financial support for AHS. We have taken several key steps in this regard. We have reached out to key individuals in the business community, seeking their counsel about how and with whom to proceed. We have joined the Arlington Chamber of Commerce, which has an array of programs designed to bring Arlington nonprofits and businesses together. We provided a lecture program in June on “The Business Side of Arlington History” sponsored by the Chamber and hosted by a local law firm. We have established a Development Committee with the responsibility of providing a blueprint for AHS’s new initiatives with the business community.

The new AHS initiative will not be a quick or short-term project, however. We will need to make the case to local businesses that involvement in local history is good for business. We will need to make the case that activities that strengthen a business’s “sense of place” are worth the effort by expanding business. In the latter respect, AHS has floated a proposal with merchants in a well-established strip mall to create a campaign that will feature attention to the history of businesses as well as their locations, ideally highlighted with light-pole banners bringing attention to the initiative. This is but one of an infinite number of ways that the Arlington business community can help itself and ultimately help AHS be a more effective organization promoting Arlington history.

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### Note From the Editor

Corrections: It has come to my attention that there were a few errors in the June 2014 Issue of the AHS Newsletter. The “AHS 2014 Annual Banquet” article misidentified Arlington County Board Member Mary Hynes, and failed to mention the attendance of Council Member John Vihstadt. In the article “AHS Presents The Civil War: The Fort Stevens Raid and the Virginia Defenses,” we stated that Professor Benjamin Franklin Cooling was one of the speakers at the public program in June. Though he was scheduled to speak, he made a last-minute cancellation and Loretta Newman gracefully took on the whole presentation single-handedly.

The AHS Newsletter welcomes any recommendations, comments or complaints that will aid us in rectifying errors in past issues. Comments can be filled out at <http://www.arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org/contact/> with “AHS Newsletter Comments” as the subject title.

- Heather Jager

## AHS Board Revises Bylaws, Some Membership Dues and Benefits

by  
Gerry Laporte, Corporate Secretary

On July 15, 2014, the Board of Directors of the Arlington Historical Society revised Article I of the bylaws of the Society, which deals with membership categories. On the same date, the Board approved new dues levels and benefits for some membership categories.

Under the revised bylaws, the previous membership categories of Individual, Family, Sponsor, Donor, and Life are retained. The category previously called "Corporate/Nonprofit" has been renamed "Business/Organization". The dues levels and membership benefits previously specified in the bylaws are no longer specified there. Instead, dues levels and membership benefits will now be established by separate resolution of the Board of Directors, without the necessity of amending the bylaws. In addition, the Board made certain clarifying and simplifying revisions to the bylaws.

In a separate resolution, the Board raised the annual dues levels for Family Members from \$35 to \$40 and for Business/Organization Members from \$125 to \$150. The Board also raised the one-time dues payment required of Life Members from \$500 to \$1000. The new dues levels are effective September 1, 2014. Other annual dues amounts remain at their previous levels—\$25 for Individual, \$75 for Sponsor, and \$125 for Donor.

Under the resolutions, all members will continue to receive a subscription to The Arlington Historical Magazine as a benefit of membership. All members also will be entitled to priority ticketing and discounts for the AHS annual banquet and other ticketed events and to a 10% discount in the museum store in the Arlington Historical Museum. Members at the Sponsor level and above will be entitled to recognition in The Arlington Historical Magazine. Business/Organization members will be entitled to recognition in the AHS newsletter. Complete details on AHS membership benefits should be available on the AHS website soon ([www.ArlingtonHistoricalSociety.org](http://www.ArlingtonHistoricalSociety.org)).

In a major revision of membership benefits, the Board voted to have the Society join the North American Reciprocal Museum (NARM) Program and provide the museum and other cultural institution reciprocal benefits of the NARM Program to AHS members at the Donor (\$125 annually) and Life Member levels. This will permit AHS members at these levels to free or member admission prices and member museum store discounts at almost 700 participating institutions in the United States and Canada. AHS members at the Donor and Life levels will soon be receiving AHS membership cards with NARM stickers attached to allow them take advantage of these benefits.

After the revisions, Article I of the AHS bylaws reads as follows:

### "Article I. Membership

"1. Membership shall be open to all persons interested in the objectives of the Society. The categories of membership shall be as follows:

- Individual
- Family
- Sponsor
- Donor
- Life
- Business/Organization

"2. Membership dues and benefits shall be set by resolution of the Board of Directors from time to time.

"3. Dues cover the period July 1 through June 30. Members failing to pay their dues by September 1 shall be dropped from the rolls one month after the mailing of a notice. Members joining or renewing on or after March 1 shall be considered to have paid their dues for the following year.

"4. Any person may, in recognition of achievement or for services rendered to the Society, be provided an honorary membership by vote of the Board of Directors. Honorary members may vote and shall be entitled to receive the benefits applicable to their category of membership, but shall not be required to pay dues."

The Board's revisions to the AHS bylaws are shown below, with insertions underlined and deletions stricken through:

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## Docent Social at the Hume School

by  
John Richardson

Continuing a tradition of acknowledging the vital role played by docents at the Hume School and Ball-Sellers House, AHS held its annual Docent Social at the Hume School Saturday afternoon, Aug. 30. The upstairs boardroom was put to good use with cafeteria tables to seat the approximately 20 attendees. Matt Keough and Annette Benbow, docent coordinators at the two facilities, put together an excellent repast, with broiled chicken supplemented by donated salads, vegetables, and sweets. Annette and AHS president John Richardson welcomed the group, which included AHS directors Gerry Laporte and Mark Benbow. Long-time AHS volunteer and former president Sara Collins was also on hand. The event was enlivened with the arrival of local author and raconteur Charlie Clark, who was happy to sign copies of his new book, "Arlington County Chronicles."



Since 2012 we have gone from 237 friends to 729. Like us on Facebook and learn more about Arlington County History, from Native Americans to today!



Like us on  
**Facebook**

### Summer Fun at AHS

by  
Jennifer Jablonsky

This summer has been a busy one for the Arlington Historical Society. We've launched new programs and exhibits and continued with our lecture series.

#### *Fort Stevens Lecture*

On Thursday, June 12, the AHS hosted a lecture Civil War: The Fort Stevens Raid and the Virginia Defenses by Loretta Neumann. Ms. Neumann helped to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Fort Stevens, the only Civil War battle in the nation's capital and the only time in the nation's history that a sitting president – Abraham Lincoln—came under direct enemy fire. The presentation brought these events to life with historical photos of the military campaign. To further contextualize these events, Ms. Neumann presented a number of present day photographs of the forts surrounding Washington, DC, with an emphasis on those in Northern Virginia, to bring a modern perspective to this 150-year-old event.

#### *Stories at the Museum*

This summer AHS launched a new program series for children and families entitled Stories at the Museum. The series, which launched in July, will be offered once a month through December. Each program features a story and craft activity loosely based on an object in the AHS collection on display on the first floor of the Hume School. First participants are read a short children's story based on a museum object and then make a craft related to the story and collection item. Afterwards the families are invited to explore the museum downstairs.

So far the turnout for these programs has been small but has steadily grown each month. We hope this program will help create a new generation of museum visitors and Arlington History enthusiasts! Join us for the next program on Saturday, October 25 from 1:30 to 3:30 PM at the Arlington Historical Museum.

### Historical Essay Contest

Earlier this year the Arlington Historical Society hosted a Historical Essay Contest with Columbia Masonic Lodge #285 as its sponsors. Arlington Magazine has published the top five articles, which you can read at <http://www.arlingtonmagazine.com/Arlington-Historical-Society-2014-Essay-Contest/>. This is the second year that the magazine has featured the winning essays.

The first place prize of \$1,000 went to Noah Kennedy of Washington-Lee High school for his analysis of the dynamics surrounding Arlington's historic school desegregation of Stratford Junior High in 1959. Fellow students Audrey O'Donnell and Allison Jaffee took second place (\$500) and third place (\$300), respectively, and Honorable Mention Awards (\$100 each) went to Wendy Berrios of Wakefield High School and Antonio Mestre [also] of Washington-Lee.

**NAUCK**  
1844 Arlington, Virginia 2014  
**Civic & Community Pride Day**  
History & Heritage \* Health & Wellness \* Food & Fun  
Saturday, September 20, 2014 at Noon - 5:00pm  
Drew Model School & Community Center & Nauck Town Square  
3500 S. 23rd St., Arlington, VA 22206

## IN MEMORIAM

### Robert McAtee

*Robert McAtee, the oldest resident of Arlington's Maywood neighborhood, died last month, Sunday, August 10. He was just two months shy of 101 and had lived in the same house for 98 years.*

*Universally known as "Mac," Mr. McAtee was an institution in the county, attending community meetings and high school reunions in the kilt of his Scottish kinsmen and regaling all listeners with scrupulously accurate stories of old Arlington...*

*He attended Cherrydale Elementary School (since demolished) and enjoyed telling stories of clambering along (and under) the trestle of the old Washington and Old Dominion Railroad. He also attended Washington-Lee High School, where he was a proud member of the Cadet Corps. After graduation in 1932, he began his working life at the Government Printing Office, where he worked until being drafted into the Army of the US in the fall of 1941. Mac was selected to attend Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, GA where he graduated with Class 13. He served for three years and was honorably discharged as a Captain. To further contribute to the war effort, Mac subsequently volunteered for the US Maritime Service.*

*At the conclusion of World War II, Mac returned to Maywood. He attended Columbia Tech where he studied electrical engineering. He worked for General Electric for a short time until he began managing a trailer rental lot on Lee Highway. In 1955 he purchased a trailer rental business at Seven Corners which he operated for over 45 years.*

*Mac had one sister but never married and leaves no survivors. In recent years he was cared for by his long-time friend Robert Beck, Katherine Skerl, and care-givers Denora, Amy, and Marina.*

This excerpt from the obituary written by Peter Harnik was taken from ARLnow.com.

### What was Maywood like 100 years ago? (Well, 95 actually.)

By Robert B. McAtee, as told to Peter Harnik

A hundred years ago we got around mostly by horse and buggy for personal use, and by horse and wagon for business use. Of course, the primary method was walking. It was a necessity. We walked to the grocery, to the post office, to the drug store. We would walk down Windy Run to the Potomac, just like now. Except back then we swam in the Potomac. There was a heavy undertow at Forty Foot Rock. My dad would explain the environment to us kids. Back then, on Windy Run was a mill race – a wooden sluice that fed water to a grist mill. There was another one on Spout Run which fed water power to John Mason's Grist Mill. (John Mason was the son of George Mason, but he was long dead by that time. The mill eventually went out of business.)

The first fire station in Arlington was in Cherrydale. It still stands on Lee Highway by Pollard St. Maywood had a fire substation with a bell tower and a cistern. The fire truck was a Model T Ford with a hook and ladder, plus a tank that held soda and acid. After World War I, when the men went to work in Washington, D.C., ladies were firefighters, firewomen I guess you'd say. I only remember three fires – one on a streetcar, one in the walls of a house at Fillmore and 24th, and the other I forget. They didn't have hydrants back then; the firemen had to throw the end of the hose into a creek and use a motorized pump to pump it up.

The oldest house in Maywood was the Digges' House, made of brick. It still stands at the corner where Lincoln Street bends around to become 23rd Street. But back then Lincoln Street was called Oak St. and there was no 23rd St. The man who built and sold many of our homes was Mr. Hugh Thrift. That's where Thrift Station and, later, Thrift Hill Park got their names. At the corner of Georgetown Rd. (which is now Lee Highway) and Lee St. (now Lincoln) was an ice house. The ice man came round in his wagon once a day in the summer. You'd tell him how much ice you wanted – 10 cents or 15 cents – and he'd take his big, sharp knife and cut you a block for the icebox – whack! In the middle of the summer we'd need 40 or 50 pounds of ice a day.

We had a water tank in our attic. Most houses had a hand pump to fill it, but we were one of the first to have an electric pump. Now and then the water would taste peculiar for a time; that meant that a mouse had gotten in and drowned. Some homes had outhouses, some had septic tanks. Most had some kind of light fixture out front, either electric or gas or a combination, but there were no electric outlets in our house, and there were almost no accessories. If you had a washing machine, it was in the basement with a wire leading directly to the electric panel. Coal was delivered by horse and wagon, and it went down a chute into your basement. Trash and leaves were burned in the back yard, and we put the ashes in the alley. Compostable garbage was buried in the back yard. Bottles and cans, of which there weren't many, were taken to the local dump down on County Road (now Lorcom Lane). The scissor grinder and knife sharpener walked through the neighborhood, carrying his rig on his back. Plus many other folks came through – Mr. Lickey, the bread man; also the Honey Man, the Butter Lady, the Egg Lady and the Watermelon Man...

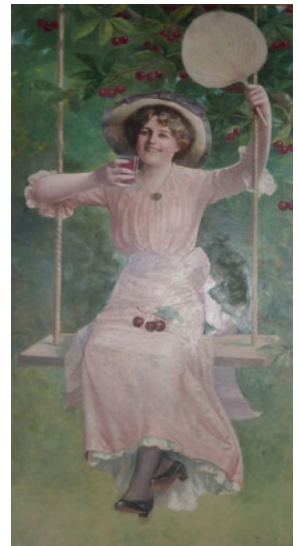
To read the full obituary and the rest of this article go to <http://www.arlnow.com/2014/09/08/remembering-maywoods-oldest-resident/>

## New Exhibit: "Arlington's Brewery and Cherry Smash"

by

John Richardson

AHS welcomed some 45 guests to a Friday evening reception on Aug. 15 at the Hume School to inaugurate a new rotating exhibit by Museum Director Mark Benbow on Rosslyn's Cherry Smash soda factory that took over an Arlington beer-making establishment that had gone by the boards as a result of Prohibition. Because publicity about the reception – open to members as well as non-members – went to a wider than usual audience, a number of new faces were present. Dr. Benbow spoke briefly about the exhibit, and Garrett Peck, author of the new book, "Capital Beer," spoke about his research and signed copies of the book. Among the guests was Devin Hicks, owner of the Westover Beer Garden, which has become a gathering place for Arlington families and craft beer enthusiasts. Devin reported that he is sponsoring a new micro-brewery in Arlington that will produce "Sehkraft," a local brand that will soon become familiar to Arlingtonians.



## Arlington Historical Society Kicks Off Fall Programming with 9/11 First Responder ACFD Chief James Schwartz

by

Garrett Peck

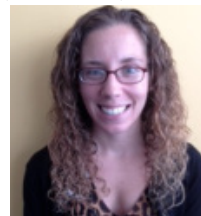
The program season kicked off on Thursday, September 11, 2014 with Chief James Schwartz of the Arlington County Fire Department, who provided an historical overview of the ACFD, beginning with the formation of the first volunteer fire company in 1898 through the hiring of its first career staff in 1940. The chief continued the discussion of the department's evolution over the years as it has adapted to meet a growing community's needs. ACFD was the lead firefighting agency that responded to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack at the Pentagon, and Chief Schwartz led the unified command fire and rescue effort. Chief Schwartz joined Arlington Fire in 1984, serving in a variety of fire department positions including assistant chief for operations. In April 2003, he was assigned to the Office of the County Manager, where he served as the Director of Emergency Management until his appointment to Fire Chief the following year.

The Arlington County Fire Department consists of 320 personnel that provide fire, EMS, hazardous materials, and technical rescue response to an urban community of 213,000 residents in an area of 26 square miles.



## AHS Welcomes New Directors

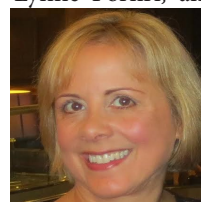
### Jennifer Jablonsky



Jennifer Jablonsky is an Education Specialist at the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC). Prior to joining NMAAHC, she served as a Park Ranger at Arlington House (The Robert E. Lee Memorial), and Sagamore Hill National Historic Site. She has also interned at the New Bedford Whaling National Historic Site, Stonehill College Archives, Arlington House and the Heritage Education Services (NPS), as well as others. She has a Bachelor's degree in American History and American Studies from Stonehill College, in Easton, MA and a Master's of Arts degree in Public History from American University.

### Lynne Porfiri

Lynne Porfiri, an attorney, has been working for Arlington County since 2008. She is currently Acting Assistant Director of the Department of Environmental Services. Prior to joining the County, Lynne gained extensive legal and program management experience working in the Virginia Governor's Office, the private sector and higher education as an adjunct professor. Originally from Florida, Lynne lives in South Arlington.



### Mike Febrey

History has always been one of my passions. I can remember my father driving around Arlington and pointing out houses built by various Febrey men. I remember him telling the story of Alvin Lothrop purchasing the Wilson Boulevard property for his daughter.



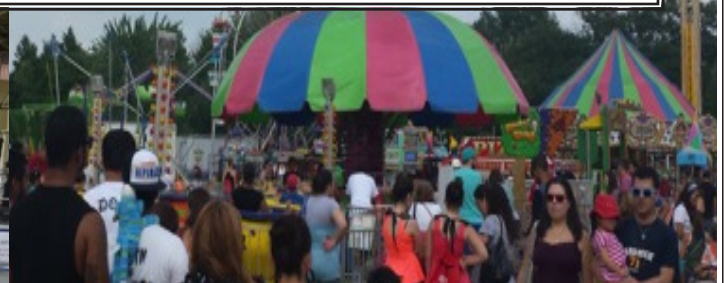
When I saw the posting for the Treasurer's position it seemed like a great way to get involved with my family's heritage and contribute to the community.



## ARLINGTON COUNTY FAIR 2014

AHS and the Arlington County Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission (ACWSC) teamed up again on a joint booth at the 2014 Arlington County Fair held at the Thomas Jefferson Community Center, August 8-10. Volunteers from both organizations manned the booth from Friday afternoon through Sunday evening, with two for each three-hour stint. The booth sponsors displayed a wide variety of products, both for sale and giveaway. AHS products included books and pamphlets about Arlington history, including a new AHS brochure that was well received. The Commission sold commemorative T-shirts and offered Park Service pamphlets on the Civil War in Northern Virginia. Highlights of the booth were a book-signing Saturday afternoon by local author Charlie Clark of his new publication, "Arlington County Chronicles," and a display case containing artifacts from Al Eisenberg's excellent Civil War collection coordinated by his wife, Sharon Davis. There was a fairly steady stream of visitors, who purchased a number of books and other items. The County Fair has proved itself to be an excellent outreach vehicle for both AHS and ACCWSC, although ACCWSC's participation will no doubt end with the closing of the Civil War sesquicentennial period in 1865.

- John Richardson



*Featured in the Next AHS Newsletter...*

**"Ball-Sellers Antiques Appraisal Fundraiser on Sep 13 Helps Pay for Continued Preservation"**

### **Arlington Historical Society Summarized Results for the Year Ended June 30, 2014:**

Cash balances July 1, 2013	\$ 129,961
Receipts	30,571
Disbursements	<u>35,440</u>
Cash balances June 30, 2014	\$ 125,092

From a financial standpoint, fiscal year 2013 resembled previous years. There were no surprises or aberrations. The slight deficit has motivated us to redouble our fundraising efforts for the coming year. We have formed a special committee which has been tasked with exploring ways of increasing our funding so that we may enhance our program offerings.

John Richardson

## Upcoming AHS Programs

### September 2014

*Stories at the Museum- Zeppelins*

Saturday, September 20, 2014

1:30 to 3:30 PM

Arlington Historical Museum,

1805 S Arlington Ridge Road, Arlington, VA

### October 2014

*An Ordinary Hero: Joan Mulholland and Civil Rights in Arlington*  
*Joan Mulholland*

Thursday, October 9, 2014

7:00 to 9:00 PM

Arlington Central Library Auditorium

1015 N Quincy Street, Arlington, VA

*Stories at the Museum - Ships*

Saturday, October 25, 2014

1:30 to 3:30 PM

Arlington Historical Museum

1805 S Arlington Ridge Road, Arlington, VA

### November 2014

*The Columbia Pike Documentary Project*  
*Lloyd Wolf, Documentary Film Maker*

Wednesday, November 13, 2014

6:30 to 8:45 PM

Arlington Central Library Auditorium

1015 N Quincy Street, Arlington, VA

*House History Program*

Wednesday, November 5, 2014

6:30 to 8:45 PM

Arlington Central Library, 2nd Floor Multi-Purpose Room

1015 N Quincy Street, Arlington, VA

*Stories at the Museum - Planes*

Saturday, November 22, 2014

1:30 to 3:30 PM

Arlington Historical Museum

1805 S Arlington Ridge Road, Arlington, VA

### December 2014

*Bringing History Alive - The Teaching of Social Studies in*  
*Arlington Public Schools*

*Cathy Hix, APS Social Studies Supervisor*

Thursday, December 11, 2014

7:00 to 9:00 PM

Arlington Central Library Auditorium

1015 N Quincy Street, Arlington, VA

*Make Your Own Holiday Ornament and Cards*

Saturday, December 20, 2014

1:30 to 3:30 PM

Arlington Historical Museum

1805 S Arlington Ridge Road, Arlington, VA

## Thank-You's to Volunteer Workers

by

John Richardson

September is the beginning of the 2014-2015 AHS program year, and we have a full plate of activities, aside from initiatives that are generated in the course of events. Before plunging into the future, however, I want to take a few minutes to say "thank you" to the many AHS supporters who make the organization hum. I apologize in advance to any good soul(s) whom I have overlooked and will be happy to mention their names in the next newsletter. AHS has many moving parts, and because it is an all-volunteer organization, it means that our supporters are able to tackle their assignments only after they have, in most cases, put in a day's work.

First of all, I want to thank the AHS Officers and Directors, whose participation and input help guide the organization and try to keep me out of trouble. Susan Anderson, Membership Coordinator, has a wealth of experience in dealing with systems and the public and will help professionalize this vital function. Newsletter Editor Heather Jager jumped in quickly and has made this key communications tool her own in a short time. AHS Magazine Editor Karl Van NewKirk has been at his task for almost 25 years, keeping Arlington historical scholarship available to a wide audience of readers, including libraries. Chick Walter and Bonnie Flynn organize the semi-annual Hume School grounds cleanup teams that present a sparkling AHS face to the world; restaurateur Rich Kelly generously contributes "Hard Times" eats for the hungry volunteers. Matt Keough, Docent Coordinator, balances an over-full agenda graciously and effectively. Martha Orth coordinates Ball-Sellers House docents and organizes group tours. Eleanor Pourron, Museum Shop Director, makes sure that publications are stocked and enumerated. Communications Director Garrett Peck has brought AHS into the digital communication age and, together with graphic designer Kenny Allen, produced the first AHS brochure in living memory. Many thanks to Facebook editor Annette Benbow. Program Coordinator Jen Jablonsky has not only doubled but also enlivened the AHS program calendar. Mary Vihstadt oversaw planning for the 2014 annual membership banquet despite competing time demands. Website Manager Robin Gross has streamlined the AHS website, a key link with members and supporters. Mark and Annette Benbow, indefatigable managers of the Arlington Historical Museum and Ball-Sellers House respectively, have introduced creative innovations and increased visitor traffic at both sites. The faithful cadre of Docents at the museum and Ball-Sellers are indeed the backbone of AHS and were celebrated at the Docent Social at the Hume School on August 30. Other AHS faithful support our work by manning tables at community events like Clarendon Day and Nauck Civic Pride Day. The list goes on, but it all adds up to an impressive commitment by many dedicated volunteers to the important and growing work of the Arlington Historical Society. Thank you all.



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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

The Arlington Historical Society (AHS) is an all-volunteer, non-profit organization founded in 1956 and incorporated under the laws of Virginia for literary and educational purposes that support research, collection, preservation, discovery, restoration and dissemination of the local history of Arlington County.

[WWW.ARLINGTONHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG](http://WWW.ARLINGTONHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG)

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**HISTORY AWAITS.  
COME VISIT!**

ARLINGTON HISTORICAL MUSEUM  
1805 South Arlington Ridge Rd.  
Open Saturdays & Sundays  
1-4 p.m., Free

Come visit our permanent exhibits on the  
200+ year history of the country.

BALL-SELLERS HOUSE  
5620 South Third St.  
Open Saturdays 1-4 p.m.  
April - October

Also arrange a visit by calling 703-379-2123  
Free admissions, donations appreciated.

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