

Word From the Junction

Newsletter of the Manassas Museum Associates - Fall 2021

Ready, Set, Move!

If you have been by the Museum recently, you probably noticed all kinds of activity, seen staff loading boxes into vans, or noticed changes inside the building. What's going on? The answer is simple – we are MOVING!

The project to renovate the Museum and put an addition on the building starts early next year. For this work to take place, the building must be completely emptied. What does this mean for the Museum



Museum staff and volunteers work to pack up the McBryde Library and load the van for a trip to our storage unit.

store and for exhibits, programs, and events? When will the building reopen? What will the new Museum look like? Will the staff still be working? Great questions, and we are glad you asked!



First, and most importantly, Museum staff will continue to offer the same great services we always do, just in different ways and from different locations. This will be true until April, 2023 when we reopen in our newly renovated building. Here are the details on each area of our operations.

Echoes has opened in a smaller version of the Museum store in the historic Southern Railway Depot. This temporary location is in the James and Marion Payne Gallery that normally holds an exhibit on the history

See Moving, next page

of trains in Manassas. That exhibit was taken down so the store could move in. Staff will reinstall a refreshed version of this exhibit after the Museum reopens in 2023 and the store moves back to its normal location.


Curator Will Continue to Use the Collection for Talks, Programs and Social Media — Programs Will Still Be Offered at Our Other Historic Sites

While we cannot offer our usual changing exhibitions for the next 16 months, the Curator will continue to use the collection for talks, programs and the occasional social media post. Every effort will be made to fill research requests and anyone that has a legitimate need to see an object in the collection will be allowed access. Don't forget that our photographic collection is now available online and can be viewed any time by visiting www.manassasmuseum.org.

Programs will still be offered, but instead of holding them at the Museum, we are going to leverage our other historic sites for these. Planning is already in the works for 2022, so keep an eye on our website for details. The playground and picnic area at Baldwin Park behind the Museum will not be affected by construction, so those of you with young kids and grandkids can continue to enjoy the swings and other play equipment.

Staff Will Be Working In Person and Remotely

Finally, staff will be working in person and remotely so we can share temporary office areas. Most Museum staff will relocate to the top floor of Old Town Hall, while others may be temporarily set up at Liberia House. All of us will be available by phone and email just as if we were working at the Museum so if you need to get in touch with any of us, our contact information remains the same.

We hope you share in our excitement about this project to expand and renovate the Museum. Watch this newsletter and our website for updates and be sure to visit us before we close on December 12. Visit www.manassasva.gov/reimagine to find out more about the expansion and renovation project. 

Word From the Junction is published quarterly by The Manassas Museum Associates

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Curator's Corner

by Mary Helen Dellinger

In our last issue, I promised to keep everyone updated on what was happening with collections and exhibitions while the museum undergoes renovation. Much has happened since my last article, so let's dive right in with an update!

Packing Has Begun Behind the Scenes at the Museum

Packing has already begun behind the scenes at the Museum, including inside the McBryde Library. I have spent the past two months sorting through files, exhibit support materials and the 1,000+ books we own to see what needs to be kept and what we can get rid of. By mid-November, everything we are keeping will be in storage, remaining there until the summer of 2023. All collections will be moved into storage as well, but the research files and photographs will be kept in our temporary office spaces so they can still be accessed by the public while we are closed. While no exhibits will be offered during this time, we will continue to pull objects for programs and events as appropriate. In addition, I will make every effort to fill as many research requests as possible for the general public.



Phase 1 to Make Portions of Our Collection Available On line is Complete

If you recall, in our last issue I mentioned that we spent the past year working on a project to make

portions of our collections available on line. Phase 1 of this project is complete and now you can view all of our photographs from the comfort of your home.

American Alliance of Museums Museum Assessment Program (MAP)

The Manassas Museum was asked by the American Alliance of Museums to write a blog about our recent experience with the Museum Assessment Program (MAP)! Read about how our MAP work has informed how we approach working with our community:



<https://www.aam-us.org/2021/10/01/with-the-help-of-map-the-manassas-museum-met-its-changing-communitys-needs/>

With the Help of MAP, the Manassas Museum Met Its Changing Community's Needs – American Alliance of Museums

Through the Museum Assessment Program, museums gain perspective on how to improve core areas of their operations, with a combination of guided self-reflection and close consultation with an expert Peer Reviewer. One of the many museums that have transformed their practices through this process is the Manassas Museum in Manassas, Virginia, which completed its third and fourth assessments in 2017 ...

www.aam-us.org

Simply visit the City's website and navigate to the museum page. There you find the link that will take you to the database. We will continue to add other portions of the collection so visit often to see what's new.

That's all for now! I have more books to pack but I will be back in early 2022 with another update.





A PEEK AT PROGRAMS

www.manassasva.gov/leisure

by Rachel Goldberg

October was a whirlwind of spooky activities, programs and events!

Between Museum at the Market, City Cemetery Tours, and Spirits of Liberia, October was pretty spooktacular! Tours of the Manassas City Cemetery were led by Program Attendant Victoria Liantonio and were as spooky as ever! We offered four tours which highlighted notable residents such as the Osbourn sisters and Frances Bushong Saunders, as well as some other lesser known folks with fascinating stories.

For example, have you ever heard of Ms. Fannie Fewell?

Her grave at City Cemetery is marked only by a footstone. Ms. Fannie Fewell was the youngest daughter of William Fewell, who laid out the streets and lots that became the historic center of downtown Manassas. In 1872, Fannie was 16 years old and was known in the community to be of great beauty and engaging manners. At some point she became acquainted with Mr. James Clark, a married man with two children who was the Commonwealth attorney for Prince William County.

On the evening on July 21, 1872, Fannie secretly boarded a train to Alexandria. For the next four weeks a frantic search went on for her, but despite the efforts of local townspeople there was no evidence regarding her disappearance. In late August, Mr. Clark was reported to be at his father's residence in Fredericksburg, not at his home in Manassas where his wife was uncertain of his whereabouts. He also had been missing for this same period Ms. Fewell had been missing and people were becoming convinced the disappearance of the two of them was no coincidence. Mr. Clark



Museum staff await visitors to the Sprits of Liberia program.

was arrested on suspicion of the disappearance of Ms. Fewell and for his own protection for fear her father would shoot him.

By late August, Ms. Fewell had been located in a hotel in Washington by her brother-in-law, where she claimed that Mr. Clark had married and then abandoned her. She had apparently been under the impression that he was leaving his wife. The couple then traveled to Missouri, where she was abandoned before making her way back to Washington.

Before Mr. Clark's trial could proceed, Fannie's brother, Lucien, walked into the Brentsville Jailhouse and shot Mr. Clark multiple times. Lucien was a Civil War veteran and former prisoner of war who had a violent criminal record, and likely suffered from PTSD. Mr. Clark died two days later.

During testimony given at Lucien's trial, the full story finally came out. Mr. Clark and Ms. Fewell were in love, and Fannie was a willing participant but Mr. Clark got cold feet and backed out. Finally,

See October Events, next page



Notes

from the President's Desk

It's hard to believe, but the holiday season is upon us and 2021 is coming to a close. While the calendar may show the end of the year, the work your Associates are doing to support the museum is ongoing. Our annual raffle of a box filled with fun Christmas items and gift cards to spend at local businesses will take place on Friday, December 3rd at the holiday open house. Tickets are on sale now! You can purchase them from any Associates board member or at Echoes, the Manassas Museum store. The cost is \$5 each or five for \$20.

We are also supporting two special projects being spearheaded by City staff and volunteers. In preparation for the 150th anniversary of the City of Manassas in 2023, staff have begun to capture oral histories from local residents. Whether you are new to the area or have lived here your whole life, we want to hear your stories and memories about Manassas. To schedule a time to have your story recorded please contact communications@manassasva.gov or 703-257-8456. We also are excited about the initiative to create a special license plate for the City's anniversary year. To get more information about this project, or to reserve your plate, please contact Robert Keller at rekeller2@verizon.net

Finally, don't forget that the Museum is closing in mid-December for a major renovation. We are incredibly excited about this project that will give us new exhibits and programming space, and better facilities to serve all the residents of Manassas. Read more about this project in our cover story.

With best wishes for happy and healthy holiday season,

Pat Beuch, President


October Events

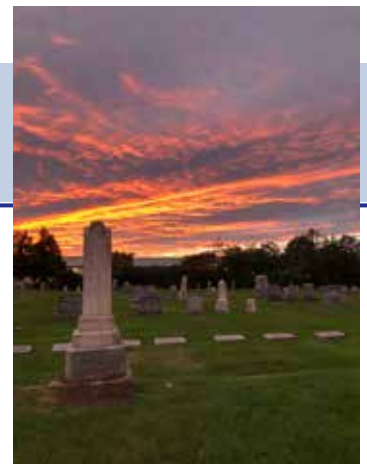
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after deliberations which took all of 5 minutes, Lucien was acquitted for the murder.

Fannie went on to marry James Trimmer in 1874, with whom she had four children. She died in 1914, of exhaustion. Her brother continued to get in trouble for assault. He eventually moved to New Mexico and became a stagecoach driver, where he earned the nickname 'Pistol John' and spent time in

prison for assault. He died sometime before 1910.

If you liked this story, mark your calendars for the City Cemetery tours next October to hear more interesting stories about Manassas' residents. 





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ECHOES

Come visit *Echoes* Manassas Museum Shop at our satellite location during renovations! Same great gifts and souvenirs, just in a new spot! Find us across from the Museum inside the Historic Manassas Visitor Center at 9431 West Street. We hope to see you there!



Echoes, The Manassas Museum Store
Shop online at manassasechoes.com
or call us at 703-257-8453

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