

Word From the Junction

Newsletter of the Manassas Museum Associates – Fall / Winter 2022

Liberia House



Update

As we move into the cold winter months, many of our historic properties see a decrease in use. Staff dedicates this time to complete much needed maintenance work or renovation projects on buildings and landscapes. This year, we are turning our attention to Liberia.


Over the course of the next five to six months, staff will be working with contractors to completely renovate the kitchen, which includes removing all the modern tile, as well as wiring, and pipes from the bathroom area on the second floor. In addition they will scrape and paint all the trim and millwork inside the house. Every aspect of this work will be completed with oversight from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, which holds an easement on the property.

The work in the kitchen area begin in October, where contractors carefully removed all the modern cabinets, countertops, and flooring. As you can see in these photos, the room looks much bigger when empty. We were pleased to find the original floor underneath the modern vinyl. Unfortunately, a section was removed at some point in the past, likely to make way for the installation of a wood burning stove. It will need to be replaced. In addition, we were surprised to discover that the ceiling

in the kitchen is not the original, but one installed at a lower height, nearly three feet below the real one. While we would love to remove the newer ceiling and return the room to its full height, that would limit

our options to light the space. For now, we are going to leave it as is. Finally, we are going to install new cabinets and countertops, and work to restore the beautiful wooden floor. When it is finished, this space will be used as a behind the scenes work area for when staff host events and programs on the property.



We hope to see all of you in 2023 when we reopen Liberia for spring programs. Until then, stay safe and healthy, and enjoy the upcoming holiday season. 



Curator's Corner

by Mary Helen Dellinger



The City of Manassas is coming up on a very important date – April 2, 2023. That day will mark the 150th anniversary of Manassas becoming a town. While most of you are looking ahead in anticipation, I am looking back at the history that was made in those 150 years and the many objects and images we have in the collection that represent


that history. Of particular note is a new addition to our collection – an embosser.

An embosser is a small press that creates a raised design or seal on a piece of paper. They are used by notaries, architects, and corporate officials to authenticate a document. Unlike the small handheld versions used today, this one is large and made from cast iron.

This embosser was discovered in the basement of City Hall during the recent work to clean out the building prior to renovation. When it was brought to my office, I was thrilled to discover that the seal reads Town of Manassas 1873, making it an early – if not the first – embosser used by the new town. As I've said

many times before in this newsletter, I am continually surprised at what comes out of basements, attics, and garages.

Pleased to add the Town of Manassas embosser to our collection

I am very pleased to add the *Town of Manassas* embosser to our collection. It joins the ones we already have for the Manassas Industrial School for Colored Youth, the People's National Bank, and Osbourn High School. Taken together, these four pieces help us document an important local business, two schools, and the early days of our Town. Thank you to all who have saved and donated these pieces for future generations to enjoy. 

Mark your calendars now for a special exhibit opening the evening of Thursday,

February 2, 2023 at the ArtFactory!

We are cutting the ribbon on a new exhibit created in partnership with their staff and are excited to share it with you.

Watch for details on our Facebook page.

Word From the Junction is published two times a year
by The Manassas Museum Associates

Manassas Museum Associates Board

Pat Beuch, President; Linda Szymczak, Vice President; Nancy Rohr, Secretary; Kristen Henneke, Treasurer; Cheryl Pepin, Associates Coordinator; Members: Barbara Breeden; Margaret Covington; Martha Anne France; Don Libeau; Gerald Sproles

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Pardon Our Dust

Construction Update

The sound of construction equipment is filling the air at the site of the Manassas Museum. As one of my colleagues remarked when the safety fence went up a few months ago, “It’s Time to Build!”

After a fun groundbreaking on the evening of July 28, 2022 work on the building started the following week. The first step in preparing the site for the new addition was to tear down the brick wall that had long separated the courtyard from the lawn. The change was immediate and stunning, opening up the building and making it very visible from across Prince William Street. The next step was to remove all the features of the old courtyard to prepare the way for a new one. Over the next several weeks, the concrete foundation was poured, under slab plumbing was installed and some masonry work was completed. Work is continuing at a good pace to keep us on track for a fall 2023 grand reopening.

As we move through the winter months, you will see walls and a roof go up as the new addition starts to take shape. While all this is going on, staff is working closely with Capitol Museum Services and our new Exhibition Committee on creating new exhibits for the reimagined gallery spaces. You can follow our progress on the city’s website at: www.manassasva.gov/reimagine



Members of the Historic Resources Board and City Manager Pat Pate participate in the groundbreaking on July 28.



Work on the foundation of the museum addition is the first step in creating new spaces for our community to enjoy.



A PEEK AT PROGRAMS

www.manassasva.gov/leisure

by Rachel Goldberg

This time of year is a time of reflection and planning for the Programming team and right now I'm thinking a lot about all of the different partnerships we've cultivated and fostered this year that have led to engaging, fun, and meaningful programs for a variety of audiences.

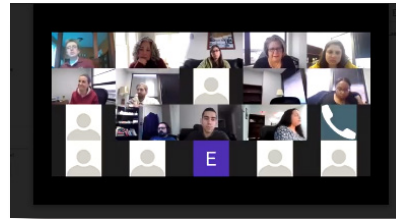
We've done a lot of work in the last couple of years to elevate the stories of the enslaved people who once lived and toiled at Liberia House, and this year we were thrilled to host our first Juneteenth event in partnership with Manassas Park and the Naylor family. To honor the impact the Naylor family had on Manassas Park, the City named a street in their new historic downtown area "Naylor Drive." Manassas Museum staff participated in the ceremony, providing context for the family's history in the area. Later that day, with over 60 people in attendance, Liberia house was opened and members of the Naylor family, who came from all over the country to participate in the event, spoke with visitors about their family's history.



Ellie Hill and Linneal Naylor at the Manassas Park Street Dedication. (left)



Visitors at Liberia house hear about the Naylor family from descendants of the family. (right)



Members of the PWC Bar Association participate in a Zoom class. (left)

Rachel Goldberg and Tracey Lenox present their work together at the VAM conference in Richmond. (right)



Work With the Public Defender's Office and County Bar Association

Our work with the Prince William County Public Defender's office and the Prince William County Bar Association continued with a series of classes focusing on different aspects of African American history in Manassas. Public Defender Tracey Lenox said that the classes were very informative and gave the attorneys a better understanding of the systemic issues that their clients are facing. In March, Rachel Goldberg, Program Coordinator for the Manassas Museum, and Public Defender Tracey Lenox presented this work at the Virginia Association of Museums statewide conference in Richmond. The session was very well received and participants commented that they appreciated

See Programs, next page



Notes

From the President's Desk

It's fall, and with this time of year comes cooler weather, fun holidays and progress made on the renovation at the Museum. Check out the "Pardon Our Dust" article to learn more about what construction milestones have been reached. Although the Museum is closed right now, it is the perfect time of year to visit one of our other historic sites (by the way, we have seven!) and learn more about local history. Stroll the grounds of the Manassas Industrial School and check out the statue of Jennie Dean. You may also climb to the top of Mayfield Fort and check out the new outdoor exhibit, which provides information about the role of this site during the Civil War. The grounds of Annaburg are open as well and are a great place to walk your dog or let the kids' burn off some pent up energy.

If you are one of those early Christmas shoppers, give some thought to gifting a membership to the Museum Associates. This is a great gift for a hard to buy for person who has everything. To join, simply stop by the train depot and pick up a brochure in *Echoes*, the Manassas Museum store, or send an email to membership coordinator Cheryl Pepin at 1873mma@gmail.com.



With best wishes from my home to yours for a very happy holiday season!

Pat Beuch, President

Programs

continued from previous page

learning about our work and brainstorming potential "unconventional" partners in their own communities.

Old Spirits Investigations

Another new and unusual partnership this year was with Old Spirits Investigations (OSI). On October 14th, we worked with OSI to do a paranormal investigation of the Candy Factory. The program was capped at 15 participants so that we could move through the building's smaller spaces easily--the program sold out and had a wait list. Surveys from the program showed that people thoroughly enjoyed the investigation and thought that our "experts" were great. We look forward to investigating more of the City's historic sites with OSI in the future!

Next year, we look forward to continuing some of these great partnerships while also cultivating new ones. We are excited to bring in authors, speakers, living historians, and other experts and to partner with a variety of local businesses and other groups to bring more great programs to residents of Manassas!



Participants in the sold out Paranormal Investigation at the Candy Factory.



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www.manassasva.gov/museum

HISTORIC
Heart
MODERN
Beat

ECHOES

Check out what's new at *Echoes* Manassas Museum Shop! Some of our popular new items to the shop include our newest Manassas Map Collection, featuring custom made merchandise with the current map of Manassas and its surrounding areas in Prince William County. The pillows would be a comfy accent to your living room décor! Other sweet additions are honeys, jams and sauces from local honey vendor Sweet Sophia. These yummy condiments are all made in Prince William County and are sure to enhance a favorite meal!

Stop by *Echoes* to see all our new items and some old favorites! — *Echoes is your destination for all things local!*



Echoes, The Manassas Museum Store
Shop online at manassasechoes.com
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Your destination for distinctive gifts, toys, collectibles and books.