



Historic Fairfax City, Inc.  
"Fare Fac - Say Do"

**Executive Officers**

Karen M. Stevenson President  
Andrea Loewenwarter Vice-Pres.  
Hon. John E. Petersen Treasurer  
Betsy K. Rutkowski Secretary

Ann Adams Director  
Hildie Carney Director  
Norma M. Darcey Director  
Patricia A. Fabio Director  
Michael D. Frasier Director  
D. Lee Hubbard Director  
Hon. Wm. Page Johnson, II Director  
Andrea J. Loewenwarter Director  
David L. Meyer Director  
Bradley S. Preiss Director  
David L. Pumphrey Director  
Hon. John H. Rust, Jr. Director  
Eleanor D. Schmidt Director  
Dolores B. Testerman Director  
Edward C. Trexler, Jr. Director  
Ellen R. Wigren Director  
Sidney H. Williams Director

# The Fare Facs Gazette

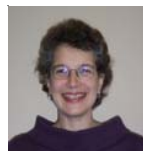
The Newsletter of Historic Fairfax City, Inc.

Volume 4, Issue 2

Spring 2006

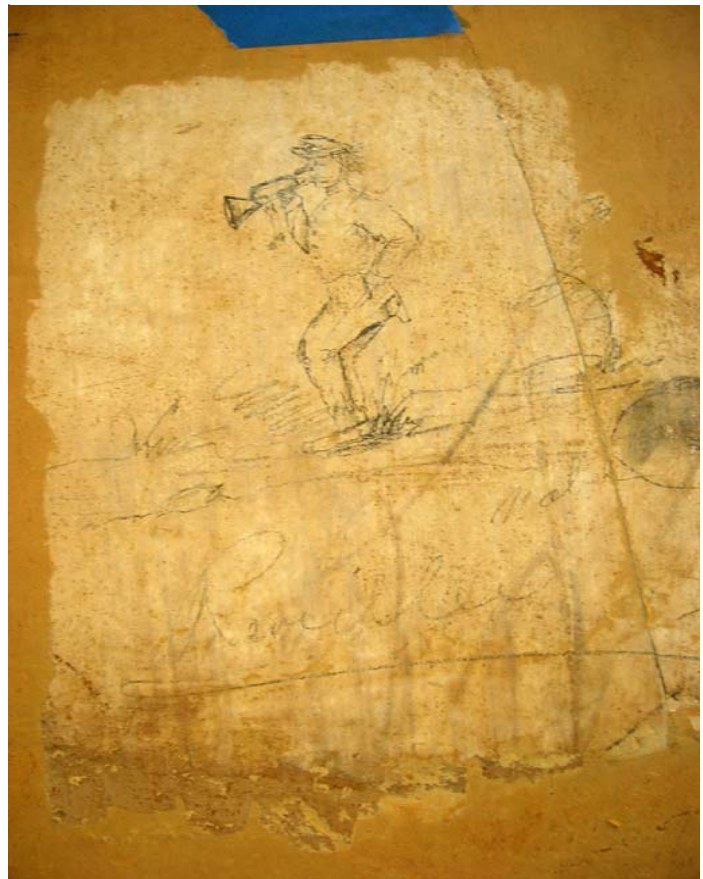
## Blenheim House's New Discoveries

by Andrea J. Loewenwarter



The 2006 Civil War Days on May 6 and 7 were remarkable for several reasons: perfect weather, high attendance (approximately 1700 people) exciting reenactments, exhibits, music and dance performers and speakers. A highlight, however, were the restoration tours provided by

the experts that coincided with the regular history tours, along with the opportunity to see newly discovered graffiti on the lower level walls of the Blenheim house.



One of several new Civil War era etchings recently discovered at Blenheim by conservation technicians. Depicted is a soldier blowing "Reveille" on a bugle.

Due to the ongoing

restoration process the second floor and attic were off-limits to visitors. But seeing portions of the house under stages of investigation certainly kept visitors' attention. On the outside, the 1950s and 1960s kitchen and laundry additions had been removed leaving the original 1858-59 house. Re-grouted and cleaned bricks and a new zinc-coated copper roof gave it a more newly built appearance.

Inside, all the downstairs and stairwell wallpaper had been stripped, door moldings and fireplace mantels had been temporarily removed as part of the discovery process to determine which features were original to the house and which had been added at other time periods. Project Architect Terry Necciai fascinated crowds as he discussed the details

Fairfax, Virginia, May 2006-

Greetings from the President--

News from HFCI Committees and Board member activities. Our Outreach Committee, Chaired by Ellie Schmidt has compiled a "power point" presentation with pictures to introduce HFCI to other organizations and civic associations. We are adding pictures of additional activities as they occur. Please contact us if your organization is interested in this presentation which is only about 20 minutes long. We bring our own equipment. (contact: [www.karencedar40@yahoo.com](mailto:www.karencedar40@yahoo.com))

The Blenheim Committee, Chaired by David Meyer has announced City Council has given approval for the final design of the Interpretive Center consistent with the City's Master Plan. After a final bid is approved by the City and a contract is signed, ground breaking for the Interpretive Center will be scheduled.

Edward Trexler, Chairman of our Historic Markers Committee is working on completion of four historic markers in time for the Jamestown 2007 Celebration. The four markers are: Old Fairfax High School; the Draper House; Mount Calvary Baptist Church (1<sup>st</sup> Black Church) and Rosenwald School. Ed was also recently honored as a Direct-Service Volunteer (nominated by the HFCI Board) at the City of Fairfax Volunteer Recognition Awards on April 18, 2006. Congratulations, Ed! Thank you for your dedication!

HFCI Board members visited the home of Cindy and Mike Pappas at 3701 Old Chain Bridge Road in April to see the "almost complete" restoration of the Roberts/Chichester House built around 1866. Of particular interest to Board members were the "hand hewn" logs used to support the house. About three years ago, HFCI supported preserving this house when it was sold to developers.

In conjunction with Spotlight on the Arts, HFCI sponsored at Old Town Hall a program on May 10<sup>th</sup>: "This Ole House – The Art of Restoration and Renovation". Board members Brad Preiss (interior finishing contractor) and Mick Frasier (President of Fairfax Homes) were members of the five member panel. Dr. Chris Martin, City Historic Resources Director moderated the panel. Other members were Mike Pappas (restorer of homes), Douglas Gilpin (preservation architect) and Andrew Wilson (City Fire Marshal).

Civil War Days were held at the Blenheim estate on May 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>. The Blenheim House open for tours and Mosby's raid were the highlights of this event. A big thanks to the Civil War reenactors who donated \$270 to be used for Blenheim.

Karen Stevenson

## Getting To Know You

HFCI Board Member John E. Petersen, Ph.D



John is a three year HFCI Board Member and Treasurer of HFCI. His professional background makes John a "perfect fit" for Treasurer of HFCI's Board. He is Professor of Public Policy and Finance at the School of Public Policy, George Mason University. He received his B.A., Economics, from Northwestern University, and M.B.A. from the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, and a Ph.D., Economics, University of Pennsylvania. He travels extensively doing research and financial advisory work in Eastern Europe and East and South Asia advising the World Bank, USAID and the Asian Development Bank.

Continued on Page 3 

## This Ole House is a Hit

On Wednesday, May 10th, Historic Fairfax City, Inc. in conjunction with Spotlight on The Arts and the City of Fairfax Department of Historic Resources, sponsored a panel discussion as part of their bi-annual meeting titled: *This Ole House, The Art of Restoration and Renovation*. Participating on the panel were three City of Fairfax residents Mike Pappas, Mick Frasier and Brad Preiss, who shared their expertise and experiences of old house restoration.

**Mike Pappas** has toiled through grit and grime and much determination to restore his current residence in the City of Fairfax, even when others thought it was meant for demolition. This is only one of several houses he and his family have successfully restored.

**Mick Frasier**, President of Fairfax Homes, related some of his vast knowledge as a builder specializing in residential restoration and renovation tools he has put to practice in his own City of Fairfax home.

**Brad Preiss**, as the proprietor of a local commercial/residential contractor business, uses fine craftsmanship skills to create embellishments for homes and businesses alike.

**Doug Gilpin** FAIA is a well-known Design and Preservation Architect, whose accomplishments, among others, include the restoration of the Ratcliffe-Allison House. He provided a special perspective on the panel to restoration and renovation of old homes. Along with creative part of old house restoration and renovation comes the business side.

**Steven Dean** of Potomac Bank explained the unique way City residents can finance their homes restoration/renovations through the Renaissance Program.

Finally, City Fire Marshall **Andrew Wilson**



**This Ole House panel (l to r): Dr. Chris Martin, Andrew Wilson, Mick Frasier, Brad Preiss, Craig Underhill, Douglas Gilpin, Jr., Mike Pappas**

provided the fundamentals of permits and guidelines to safely accomplish house restoration and renovation.

**Dr. Chris Martin**, Director of Historic Resources, moderated the panel discussion.



Getting To Know You...Continued from page 2.

He is active in many professional organizations and was a former City Council member (Fairfax, Va.) and serves on the city's Economic Development Authority. As HFCI's Treasurer, John's background and experience are greatly appreciated.

John is married to Mary (Livingston) Peterson, has three children (Mary, Chap and Schuyler) and six grandchildren. Mary also does volunteer work and has worked with HFCI on our Homes Tour and other activities in the past. John & Mary we thank you both for all you do.

### New Discoveries at Blenheim...continued from page 1.

of the architectural elements. Susan Nash, a wallpaper conservator explained the various



Recently uncovered Civil War era etching at Blenheim depicts a bedraggled soldier.

wallpaper samples she had found in a case exhibit and those pieces left in situ on the walls. Matthew Mosca, a renowned historic paint finishes consultant who had been hired to remove and analyze numerous layers of Blenheim wall paint.

Conservation Technician Kirsten Travers had begun to test the removal of paint on the stairwell and center hall walls the week preceding Civil War Days. Her success was phenomenal as she not only was able to painstakingly remove areas of a tan coat of paint that week, but she also uncovered new soldier graffiti in the form of names, regiments,

sayings and drawings. Her work continued throughout the weekend as she applied a chemical stripper to small sections of the wall where it seemed that writing was hidden. She then used water on a large cotton swab to carefully remove the paint (this original whitewash paint had most likely been applied by the Willcoxon family when they reoccupied the house after the war).

Four new Union soldiers names were revealed and initial identifications were made: Walter Angus and Henry Bryant of the 44<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry, Edward Cramer of the 54<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry and Frank (Francis) May of the 64<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry. Private May also includes lukewarm regrets that he wrote on the wall. The 4<sup>th</sup> New York Cavalry is also well-represented downstairs, although no names match up at this time. (During the winter, however, Benjamin Wheat's name from the same regiment was uncovered in the back parlor). The next step in the research is to make copies of soldiers' files and available pension files from the National Archives.

The most fascinating discovery occurred at the top of the flight of stairs. A soldier, adept with a graphite pencil made sketches of a soldier in the first months of his service. A cartoon pose of a gleeful soldier described as "Very Patriotic" is at the top of the images. Each subsequent drawing includes words that end with "patriotic" until the final sketch of a bedraggled soldier. A list is written below: "4<sup>th</sup> month / No money / No whiskey/ No friends / No rations / No peas / No beans/ No pants / No Patriotism". But what a find!

## Fire at Fairfax Court House

by William Page Johnson, II

Over the course of the last two hundred years, two large fires destroyed the central business district of downtown Fairfax resulting in the substantial loss of both buildings and property. The two fires, fifty years apart, together destroyed most of the block of Main Street between Mechanic Street (now University Drive) and Payne Street (now Chain Bridge Road) to the extent that no buildings existing today on this block were constructed before 1900.

The first major fire to strike Fairfax occurred during the early morning hours of Wednesday, August 4, 1853. The fire originated in the printing office of the Fairfax News, on Main Street. The Fairfax News was located near the southeast corner of Main Street approximately where the Paint Your Own Pottery is now situated. The Fairfax News was established in 1848 and was the first paper in Fairfax County. The loss to Hiram Brower<sup>1</sup>, the proprietor of the Fairfax News, was total. His printing press, typesets, books and supplies were all consumed. The equivalent of \$250,000.00 in today's dollars. The law office of William H. Dulany, a future Fairfax County Commonwealth's Attorney and Virginia Senator, was located on the first floor of the same building, as was the medical office of Dr. William Presley Gunnell.<sup>2</sup> William Dulany was able to save some of his law books. However, Dr. Gunnell's loss was complete. The equivalent of \$60,000.00 in personal property in today's dollars. *The Evening Star* in Washington, DC reported several days later that "The loss falls heaviest upon the proprietors of the News ... its types, books had been destroyed..." the Star "...very charitably suggests that those in arrears make prompt payment, and thus assist the proprietor to recover from his losses."<sup>3</sup>

At that time Fairfax had no Fire Department. It was, therefore, up to the citizens to save

themselves. While some citizens dosed the buildings with well water and tried to beat back the flames, others ran into the burning buildings to save what property they could. Despite their heroic and determined efforts, the fire spread to the adjoining buildings on either side of the News. The law office of William L. Edwards burned, but most of his law books were saved. The home of "Mrs. Hunt," a widow, was also destroyed, but her furniture was saved before the building was consumed. All of the buildings were then owned by Nelson Conrad, a merchant of the town. Incidentally, Nelson's son, Thomas Nelson Conrad, who was sixteen at the time, would become somewhat famous in later years, first as a Confederate Spy during the Civil War and subsequently as president of the Virginia Agricultural and Mining College, now known as Virginia Tech. Conrad, who, although insured for his loss, immediately sold his land holdings in Fairfax.

The cause of the fire was determined to be arson, because, when first detected "the printing office was on fire in three places, neither having connection with the other."<sup>4</sup>

The citizens of the town met the next day in the courthouse to discuss what to do next. The citizens resolved to make every effort to find the responsible party. To that end, a \$100 reward was offered for the arrest of the criminal. In addition, a "Patrol" was organized for the village. There was also renewed discussion about purchasing a fire engine.

The second major fire in Fairfax occurred directly across the street from the first. At approximately 9:30 p.m., Monday evening, May 29, 1899 fire was seen emanating through the front door of Moncure Brothers Dry Goods Store. The store was located on the northeast corner of Main Street and Payne Street (Chain Bridge Road) where Victoria's Cakery is now situated. The fire was started by a careless use of a kerosene lamp. The Moncure Brothers Store also housed the Masonic and Good

## Sheep For Sale?

by William Page Johnson, II



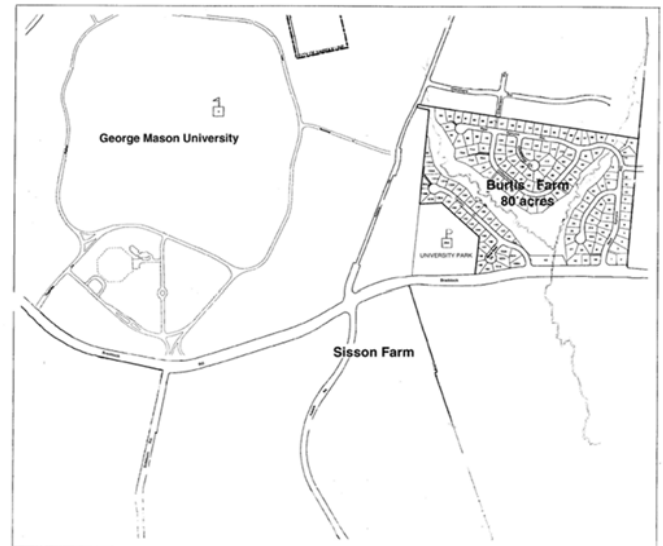
On Saturday, May 25, 1861, one day after Union forces crossed the Potomac River and occupied Alexandria, and two days after Virginia voters approved the referendum to secede from the Union, an incident occurred on just outside of Fairfax that was to be a harbinger of things to come for many Fairfax resident's during America's bloodiest conflict.

Confederate forces had already started to mobilize even before the Ordinance of Secession was ratified. In Fairfax County, an infantry company, known as Fairfax Rifles was organized in 1859 in response to John Brown's raid on the Federal Arsenal at Harper's Ferry, VA (now West Virginia). Eventually, this company would become Company D, 17<sup>th</sup> Virginia Infantry, C.S.A. The men of this militia company were officially authorized by the Fairfax County Circuit Court to patrol Fairfax County roads to seek out and arrest runaway slaves, agitators and abolitionist "incendiaries." There were ample targets of opportunity for these patrolers, or *pattyrollers*, as they came to be called by southern slaves.

In the thirty years before the Civil War, Fairfax had seen a great influx of Northern migration, particularly from the State of New York. There was a great deal of animosity between some of these Northern émigrés and the native Virginians. When war came, they too, became natural targets of the pattyrollers. Perhaps the war afforded an opportunity to settle old scores. It is certain that, at least initially, Northern families and their property were singled out. Later, all would be made to suffer by the desperate actions of both armies.

On Saturday May 25<sup>th</sup> 1861, John "Jack" Horace Barnes, who had just been promoted to Corporal the day before, was east riding along Braddock Road with a companion identified only as "Pettit." This *Pettit*, could have been one of four men by that name who served in the Fairfax Rifles – Charles, George, Hiram or John Pettit.<sup>1</sup> Barnes and Pettit were on a foraging mission and were attempting to secure food for the rest of the Rifles who were camped a short distance away at Fairfax Station.

Barnes, who lived nearby at *Hope Park* on Popes Head Road, was a native of this part of Fairfax County and he knew all of his neighbors very well. Not by accident, Barnes and Pettit turned their horses onto the farm of John & Harriet Burtis on Braddock Road just east of the intersection of Roberts Road. Unfortunately for the Burtis', they were relative newcomers to Fairfax County, having arrived from Rensselaer County, New York in 1856.<sup>2</sup> The location of their small 80-acre farm along Braddock Road is now the site George Mason Forest subdivision and University Park, a Fairfax County Park.<sup>3</sup>



Map of Burtis Farm on Braddock Road near Roberts Road.

John and Harriet Burtis were subsistence farmers, raising enough to feed themselves with perhaps just a little left over for the markets of Alexandria or Georgetown. According the Agricultural Census of 1860 for Fairfax County, the Burtis' raised vegetables and livestock in the form of sheep. Aside from the occasional lamb, they probably did not utilize their sheep as a food source, except in an emergency. The real value of their sheep was in the wool they produced. Harriet Burtis probably used the sheep to card and spin wool to help clothe her family. Wool could also be sold for cash. Kill all the sheep and you have no more wool.

In the early spring, there was not much forage available in Fairfax, as the vegetable crops had not yet come

in. But, for Barnes and Pettit, and the other hungry Virginia soldiers, sheep would do just fine, and the sheep of a New Yorker was probably preferred over all others!

The incident was chronicled in the Washington Evening Star of May 30, 1861:

*“OUTRAGES IN FAIRFAX—We learn from a late resident of Fairfax county, Va., the following particulars of some of the doings of the disunion forces scattered through the country. Last Saturday, Mr. John Burtis [John R. Burtis], a native of New York, was waited upon on his farm by John Barnes and a man named Pettit—both members of the Fairfax Rifle rangers, then encamped at Fairfax station, on the Orange and Alexandria Railroad—who inquired if he had any cattle or sheep for sale. Mr. Burtis replied, he had none; when they told him that they were without provisions at camp, and he (Mr. Burtis) must supply them with something. After some conversation, the men went into an adjoining field, and after shooting several of his sheep, returned and ordered him to take his horses and wagon and carry the carcasses over to their quarters. This Mr. Burtis also refused to do; whereupon, after threatening him severely, they compelled a free negro [Wesley Winfield?] to catch a horse and take the sheep over to the camp. On their way they declared, in the presence of the negro, that they intended to get Mr. Burtis, with his team, over to the camp, and seize the latter, and probably put him under arrest. On Saturday night Mr. Burtis attempted to come to Washington, but was prevented by secession pickets stationed near his house. On Monday morning he started with his team in an opposite direction from Washington, and, after a very circuitous route through the woods, finally succeeded in reaching this city.”*

Living directly across the road from the Burtis family at the time, was the family of Mathew Sisson, my great-great-great-grandfather. The Agricultural Census of 1860 for Fairfax County shows that Mathew Sisson had livestock

on his farm. Why then, did not Barnes and Pettit not make similar demands on Matthew Sisson for his livestock. There can be only one answer – The Sisson’s and other families in the area were natives of Fairfax County and the Burtis’ were not. To make matters worse, John and Harriet Burtis did not own slaves, but used a freed slave, Wesley Winfield, to help with their farming chores.<sup>4</sup>

Worse was to come however for Fairfax residents. In the summer of 1864, Union General Ulysses S. Grant gave the order to “...eat out Virginia clear and clean..., so that crows flying over it for the balance of the season will have to carry their provender with them.”<sup>5</sup> Throughout four years of warfare Fairfax County was devastated by hundreds of such incidents from both armies, North and South.

John & Harriet Burtis immediately fled to the safety of Washington, D.C. where, sadly, John Burtis died shortly their after arrival. Harriet Burtis continued to live in Washington, D.C. and remarried in 1871.<sup>6</sup> During the war, Jack Barnes served in the 17<sup>th</sup> Virginia Infantry and was captured and paroled. He then joined Mosby’s Rangers and was captured a second time. This time, he was convicted of violating his original parole and was, with some irony, sent to the U.S. Penitentiary at Albany, New York. He survived the war but returned to Fairfax to find his farm destroyed. In 1871, he moved to Washington, D.C. where he died in 1897. He is buried in the Fairfax Cemetery.<sup>7</sup>

(Endnotes)

<sup>1</sup> Brothers and Cousins: Confederate Soldiers and Sailors of Fairfax County, Virginia, © 1995, Johnson, William P., Iberian Publishing Company, Athens, GA.

<sup>2</sup> Fairfax County Deed Book Y3:50, Fairfax County Circuit Court Clerk, Fairfax, VA.

<sup>3</sup> Chain of Title - Fairfax County Deed Book and Page: 5391:1393; 4235:653; V14:434; K13:456; H10:1; T9:437; T9:274; P8:163; P8:164; P8:51; K7:85; J6:182; H6:24; D6:552; F6:584; F6:538; E6:29; V4:262; K4:90; E4:252; B4:267; Fairfax County Circuit Court Clerk, Fairfax, VA.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census of 1860, Fairfax County, VA.

<sup>5</sup> Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Excerpt from a letter dated July 14, 1864, Lt. Gen. U.S. Grant to Maj. Gen. H.W. Halleck.

<sup>6</sup> District of Columbia Marriage Record, 1870 – 1877, v. 3, p. 40, George N. Burns to Harriet M. Burtis, July 31, 1871.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid 1.

## FAIRFAX FAST FACT:

### Abner Stevenson's Farm

In the 1860's Abner Stevenson owned the farm immediately behind Fairfax Court House, where the Fairfax County Judicial Center and Massey building now stand. It was on his farm that the first skirmish of the Civil War occurred on June 1, 1861, and where Captain John Quincy Marr became the first Confederate casualty.

Abner was born in England. He married Mary Ann Grant in 1836 and emigrated to the United States shortly thereafter. The couple settled in New York City. Abner was the nephew of George Stephenson, inventor of the Steam Engine. Before arriving in Fairfax, Abner, installed the stained glass windows in Trinity Episcopal Church (1846) in Manhattan!



### The Fate of Old Dick

One of the U.S. cavalry horses whose name was "Dick" was badly wounded in the skirmish at Fairfax Court House. After the Union cavalry retreated from Fairfax, apparently Dick could go no further. He was given to an old gentleman named Kidwell living about six miles from the Fairfax Court House.

Several days later *Dick* was "taken possession of by the secessionists, and is now held a prisoner of war. A large company waited upon the old gentleman and deprived him of his gift, and "Dick" was marched off, surrounded by a squad with fixed bayonets, to headquarters, where he is visited by scores, who have nearly worried his life out in tormenting him 'for spite,' or to get locks of his hair as souvenirs."

## Second Sunday Programs at the Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center 10209 Main Street Fairfax, VA

All programs begin at 2 p.m. and are followed by informal discussion and refreshments in the Visitor Center.

July 9– "New Discoveries: Conservation/Restoration Tours of the Blenheim House" – Blenheim Estate, 3610 Old Lee Highway (2 - 4 p.m.)

August 13– Civil War Soldier ID Tags – Joseph Stahl, Civil War historian and collector.

September 10– "African-American Education in Fairfax County" – presentation by Phyllis Walker Ford, Chairman, Laurel Grove School Association, and Page Johnson, Fairfax historian and author

October 8– "Digging up the Dirt: Family Archaeology Program" – Hands-On Program, Blenheim Estate, 3610 Old Lee Highway

November 12– "What We Lost in the 1960s Suburbia" – talk and book signing, Ray Suarez, Correspondent for Public Television's "The News Hour" and author.

December 10– "Holiday Customs of the Past" – talk by Virginia Mescher, historian and food ways interpreter.

For more information and reservations, call the Museum and Visitor Center at 703-385-8414 or email [sgray@fairfaxva.gov](mailto:sgray@fairfaxva.gov).




## Advertisements

On Saturday last, at Fairfax C. H., men servants hired at \$90 to \$125—women, \$50 to \$70—boys, \$40 to \$80 At the hiring, yesterday, at Catta', West End, about the same rates were obtained.

The Evening Star, January 3, 1856.

**CABINET MAKING, UNDERTAKING, &c**  
**JOHN WALTER**, having removed to the north side of E street, near 11th, is again ready to serve his friends and the public. His stock of Parlor and Chamber Furniture is new. He attends to the Undertaking business at any hour of the day or night. His prices are extremely moderate. de 17-1m



The Evening Star, January 7, 1860.

**TO ALL THAT VALUE THEIR SIGHT.**



**JOHN TOBIAS**  
**PRACTICAL OPTICIAN**

WISHES to call the attention to all that suffer with defective sight, caused by age, sickness and particularly from glasses injudiciously selected, to his superior SPECTACLES and GLASSES carefully ground by himself to a true spherical accuracy, and brilliant transparency, suited precisely and beneficially to the wearer according to the concavity or convexity of the eye. Very numerous are the ill effects caused to the precious organ of sight from the commencement of using glasses in not being precisely suited, by the use of an Optician; and the practice of many years, enables him to measure the focal distance of the eyes, and such glasses that are absolutely required will be furnished with precision and satisfaction.

J. T. acknowledges the very liberal encouragement already obtained, and further solicits the patronage of those that have not yet availed themselves of his aid.

Persons that cannot conveniently call, by sending the glasses in use, and stating how many inches they can read this print with their spectacles, can be supplied with such that will improve their sight.

Innumerable testimonials to be seen; and references given to many who have derived the greatest ease and comfort from his glasses.

Circulars to be had gratis, at his office, No 518 Seventh street, three doors from Odd Fellows' Hall, up stairs.

The Evening Star, May 17, 1856.

# DUES ALERT

If you have not paid your annual Historic Fairfax City, Inc. dues they are now due. Please remit based on the schedule below. Annual dues payments should be made out and sent to: *Historic Fairfax City, Inc.*, 10209 Main Street, Fairfax, VA 22030.

Your annual dues help HFCI to continue to meet its basic goal of preserving the unique history of the City of Fairfax. Tax deductible donations over and above dues payments are encouraged.

### Membership Classifications:

- Class A Individual.....\$25.00
- Class A-1 Additional Member.....\$10.00
- Class B-1 Non-profit.....\$35.00
- Class B-2 For profit.....\$50.00



## Quote-worthy

The Good Ole Days weren't always so good....

*"The bearer of this, Catherine Jackson, colored, has the authority of her master, George W. West, of Fairfax county, State of Virginia, to hire herself for three months from the 10<sup>th</sup> day of March 1859; and I am especially authorized by her said master to attend to her, for his interest, in the premises.*

*Witness my hand, this 10<sup>th</sup> day of March, 1859*

**THOMAS C. DONN."**

Source: Washington Star, April 7, 1859, p. 4.

"Fire" Continued from page 5...

Templar Lodges on the second floor. The Masons and Templars lost all of their property, including an organ.

As with the 1853 fire, the citizens tried in vain to battle the blaze. Incredibly, Fairfax still had no Fire Department. The fire quickly spread east to the adjoining buildings on the north side on Main Street. Job Hawxhurst's Drug Store, which also housed the Post Office and Telegraph Office, was destroyed. The mail, however, was saved. Henry Hawxhurst's law office and William H. Steele's Undertaker's Shop and residence were destroyed. The Blacksmith's Shop which adjoined the Undertaker was saved, as was a store belonging to the Gordon Family. Three houses on the opposite side of the street initially caught fire, but were quickly extinguished.

While the buildings were all quickly rebuilt, a lasting legacy of this disaster is still evident in Fairfax today. The Mason's, who were left homeless as a result of the fire, received a gift from a fellow Mason, Joseph E. Willard. Old Town Hall was commissioned by Joseph Willard and completed in 1900, barely one year after the 1899 fire. For the next 70 years the Fairfax Mason's met on the second floor of Old Town Hall. The first floor of the building was used by the larger community. Eventually, the City of Fairfax acquired title to the property. The building still serves part of its original community function, hosting many community functions.

Unfortunately, it would be another 30 years until Fairfax was served by a fully equipped Fire Department.

(Endnotes)

<sup>1</sup> Hiram Brower (1823 - ? ) Editor of the *Pottstown Tariffite* 1842 - 1845; Came to Fairfax from West Chester, PA where he had published the *Newton Journal* from 1848 to 1850. It is believed

that he purchased the *Fairfax News* from the estate of Hiram Fuller, founder of the *Fairfax News*, about 1852 (see *Presses and printers of Newton Before 1868*, Barnsley, Edward R., © 1934, Bucks County Historical Society). m. M. Augusta D. Brower (1826 - ? ). Children were William F. Brower (1855 - ? ), Charles A. Brower (1858 - ? ), Physician, Gainesville, Prince Wm. Co., VA 1880.

<sup>2</sup> William Presley Gunnell b. October 19, 1820; d. June 5, 1875; bur. Oakwood Cemetery, Waco, TX. Was the son of Ira and Martha Vermillion Gunnell; m. Martha Lindsay, b. 01/20/1820; d. 11/30/1902. Occupation Physician. His home in Fairfax was the site of the capture of Gen. Edwin S. Stoughton by Col. John S. Mosby during the Civil War. Removed to Waco, McLennan Co., TX after 1860. Children were: Jenny Lindsay Gunnell (1853 - ? ), Ada Byron Gunnell (1855 - ? ), Marion Campbell Gunnell Hutchins (1856-1937), Dr. Mooter Gunnell (1858- ? ), Laura Richard Gunnell (1859-1929).

<sup>3</sup> *The Evening Star*, August 5, 1853, p. 2, c. 5.

<sup>4</sup> *Alexandria Gazette*, August 6, 1853, p. 3, c. 2.

## Advertisements

**Cephalic Pills**  
CURE  
**Sick Headache.**  
CURE  
**Nervous Headache**  
CURE  
**All kinds of**  
**Headache.**

# Welcome New Members!

James E. Anderson  
Christopher J. Marsh  
Charles & Rosalie Pate

The Board of Directors of HFCI extends a hearty welcome to all new HFCI members.



## HISTORIC FAIRFAX CITY, INC.

Do you want to know more about the history of where you live?

### JOIN HISTORIC FAIRFAX CITY, INC.

Just what is available to you as a member of HFCI?

A newsletter, 4 times a year announcing what is happening with all HFCI projects and events

2 general meetings a year, affording you an opportunity to meet and speak with people behind the scenes working to maintain interest in the history of Fairfax.

We are looking forward to having you be a part of the City's bi-centennial in 2005. We need and value your support. Together we will preserve the heritage that has been left to us.

The Board of Directors of  
Historic Fairfax City, Inc.

## HFCI MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/ RENEWAL

*HISTORIC FAIRFAX CITY, INC. is a non-profit corporation (501©(3) organization)*

Membership Classifications:

- Class A Individual .....\$25.00
- Class A-1 Additional Household Member .....\$10.00
- Class B-1 Non-profit Organizations .....\$35.00
- Class B-2 For profit Organizations .....\$50.00

Enclosed is my tax-deductible membership application and check made out to Historic Fairfax City Inc. for: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Name or Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact name: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Return to: Historic Fairfax City, Inc.,  
Attention: Membership Committee  
10209 Main Street  
Fairfax, VA 22030

-or-

Website: [www.historicfairfax.org](http://www.historicfairfax.org)

E-mail: [info@historcfairfax.org](mailto:info@historcfairfax.org)

*"Preserving the Past. Protecting the Future."*

Return Address - Historic Fairfax City, Inc.  
Karen Stevenson, President  
10209 Main Street  
Fairfax, VA 22030



## The Newsletter of Historic Fairfax City, Inc.

The Fare Facs Gazette © 2006  
Editor: William Page Johnson, II

**E-mail:** [historicfairfax@aol.com](mailto:historicfairfax@aol.com)  
**Website:** [www.historicfairfax.org](http://www.historicfairfax.org)