

THE BALCH COLUMN

THOMAS BALCH LIBRARY • 208 W. MARKET ST. • LEESBURG, VA 20176 • 703-737-7195 • FAX: 703-737-7150 • EMAIL: balchlib@leesburgva.gov

Programs sponsored by Thomas Balch Library are held in the downstairs meeting room and are free unless otherwise noted. Due to limited seating we recommend registering in advance by calling 703/737-7195. For updated news on events visit our website at: <http://www.leesburgva.com/services/Library/Newsletter/>

DEATH AND THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

Robert W. Prichard

Sunday, 8 March 2009, 2PM

Harvard President and history professor Drew Gilpin Faust's *This Republic of Suffering* (2008) has called attention to the ways in which the American Civil War changed popular patterns of dealing with death. Prichard will examine the argument Faust has presented and will draw upon other sources, such as the Civil War letters of the Donohoe family of Loudoun County, to explore the general topic of mid-19th century American patterns of dealing with death. The Rev. Robert W. Prichard, PhD., has been a professor of Church History at the Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria since 1983. Prichard has earned degrees at Princeton, Yale, and Emory Universities, and is the author or editor of seven books, including *A History of the Episcopal Church* (revised edition 1999). An Episcopal clergyman, he has served parishes in several parts of the state, including Clarke County. He is the first Vice President of the Historical Society of the Episcopal Church.



WOMEN IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Constance Potter

Sunday, 15 March 2009, 2PM

The American Revolution affected not only soldiers, but the civilian population as well. This lecture focuses on women in the Revolution; not just women soldiers, but women at home. Potter will discuss pensions and other frequently used records and also the less well-utilized Papers of the Continental Congress and American State Papers. Constance Potter received her BA and MA in history from Washington State University, Pullman, WA



and is a reference archivist at the National Archives in Washington, DC, specializing in federal records of interest to genealogists. She is a regular speaker at the National Institute on Genealogical Research, the National Genealogical Society, and the Federation of Genealogical Societies as well as local genealogical groups.

BANJO ROOTS: EXPLORING THE MULTICULTURAL HISTORY OF THE NEW WORLD BANJO

Greg C. Adams

Sunday, March 29, 2009, 2PM

Greg C. Adams will provide an interactive presentation covering the early history and development of the banjo. From its West African roots to the present day, the banjo is an iconic instrument whose complex history still surprises, challenges, and pleases those who are willing to learn more about it. Adams (www.myspace.com/banjargreg) is a musician, archivist, and independent researcher who studies the multi-cultural history of the banjo. He holds a BA in Music History from Youngstown State University and an MLIS from the University of Maryland, College



Park. In addition to his professional work as a photo-archivist with an international organization in Washington, DC, his banjo roots research includes field work in West Africa (2006, 2008), development of a prototype database dedicated to early banjo artifacts (entitled Banjo Sightings Database www.banjodatabase.org), and the general study of early American black face minstrelsy and early banjo performance practice. His performances and presentations consist of modern and historical interpretations of 19th century popular music, interactive explanations covering early banjo history, and information about West African musical traditions including his collaborative field work with *Diola ekonting* players from the Senegambian region of West Africa and developing his skills on the *ngoni* through a recently-established apprenticeship with a noted Malian master *ngoni* player and *griot*.

CLERK'S OFFICE TOUR, LOUDOUN COUNTY COURTHOUSE HISTORICAL RECORDS

John Fishback

Monday, 20 April 2009, 7PM

Meet in the parking lot of Thomas Balch Library by 6:45PM

John Fishback, Historic Records Manager for Loudoun County, will lead a tour of the Clerk's Office. He will discuss the extent of Loudoun County's records holdings, where to look for records of births, deaths, marriages, and deeds, and how to use these records in research. No one is permitted to enter restricted areas of the Clerk's Office after 7:00PM, so the group will leave the library promptly at 6:45PM.

LOUDOUN COUNTY CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE 2009 SPEAKERS AND PROGRAMS

Meets second Tuesday of the month, 7:30PM, Lower Level Meeting Room, Thomas Balch Library, unless otherwise noted. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in Loudoun County history during the Civil War period. For information: 540/822-4480

10 March ~ "General A P Hill" Patrick Falci

14 April ~ "Did Lincoln Own Slaves?" Gerry Prokopowicz

12 May ~ "Francis Channing Barlow: The Boy General" Richard Welch

9 June ~ "Ford's Theater and the Night Lincoln was Shot" Eric Martin

14 July ~ "Aunt Abby House, Confederate Nurse" Teej Smith

11 August ~ "The Civil War in Loudoun County" Steve Meserve

8 September ~ "The John Brown Raid" Dennis Frye

News FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK



Thomas Balch Library was recently recognized by INOVA Hospital with a \$10,000 Founders Grant from their Loudoun Laurels oral history program. The event recognizing the first recipients of the INOVA Loudoun Laurels was held the same evening as the Friends of Thomas Balch Library's "Evening with James Monroe." While I attended the Friends fall event at Oak Hill, John Wells, Town Manager, represented the Town of Leesburg and Thomas Balch Library at INOVA's inaugural event September 20. Childs Frick Burden, Eugene Scheel, and Kim Hart are the first to be recognized by the Loudoun

Laurels program and their oral histories will soon be part of our research collections. In appreciation of this grant, Town Council recognized Randall L. Kelley, Chief Executive Officer, INOVA Loudoun Hospital, with a certificate of appreciation on September 23. At the same council meeting I presented Council with copies of the Loudoun 250th Anniversary Lecture Series booklet/DVD. This booklet has been distributed to Loudoun County High Schools for their media centers and is available for purchase through the Library or from the Friends for \$15.

In an effort to heighten the library's research profile, we asked Town Council for proclamations for Library Week in April and Archives Month in October. Becky Ottinger, a long-time volunteer at Thomas Balch Library, accepted the proclamation for Archives Month. While both Library Week and Archives Month are nationally recognized, there is no such recognition for Family History. We are currently working on identifying an appropriate time of year for the Town to issue a proclamation recognizing the significance of genealogical research to familial and community strength.

Thomas Balch Library Advisory Commission held the sixteenth annual Loudoun History Awards on November 9. This year's honorees are Mitch Diamond, for his role in researching and verifying a little-known Civil War battle at Unison, Phil and Sandra Ehrenkranz, for their work to preserve historic sites, Stevan F. Meserve, for his 2008 publication *The Civil War in Loudoun County: A History of Hard Times*, and James P. Roberts, for his contributions as a volunteer, local historian, and preservationist. Although unable to attend the ceremony, Alexander I. Bailey, recipient of the 2008 Thomas Balch Library Advisory Commission Social Science Award was recognized for his mapping project *Historical Sites in Leesburg*.



A revised and updated researcher's brochure is now available on request. Three new postcards are available for purchase: *Town Hall*, donated by architects Hanno Weber & Associates, *Historic Images of Leesburg* created by staff member Beth Schuster from Visual Collections at TBL, and *Thomas Balch Library*, from an image donated by photographer Jim Hanna. There will be small increases in two library fees beginning January 2009. The patron fee for an Interlibrary Loan request will increase one dollar to \$4; a small portion of the per-request cost to the Library of \$15.25. Self-serve photocopy, microform, and computer print charges will be raised to \$0.25 per page (from \$0.20). Maria Sogegian, a part-time reference staff member, was offered and accepted the position as head librarian at Loudoun Country Day School. While we were sorry to see her leave, we wish her great success. Trina K. Winant has now joined the staff in that position providing reference service for patrons most often on Monday afternoons and alternate Sundays. Trina holds a BA in Speech Communication from Blackburn College, Carlinville, IL, an MLS from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor and an MA in Speech Communication from the University of Minnesota, Mankato, MN. She has lived in Virginia for a number of years working first in Blacksburg, VA for VTLS, Inc., a library software company, before moving to Northern Virginia.

The Leesburg 250th Anniversary Lecture series concluded in November. The six programs were recorded and we plan to produce a booklet/DVD to be available sometime in 2009. These lectures as well as our regular lecture series were hugely successful. We have applied for grants to assist in publishing these lectures. To this end, Loudoun Restoration and Preservation Society awarded \$3,000 to the Friends of the Thomas Balch Library, Inc.

The Northern Virginia law firm of McCandlish & Lillard, P.C., is celebrating its centennial this year. To mark this milestone, the firm commissioned a history entitled "*McCandlish & Lillard, P.C.: 100 Years of Tradition, Innovation, and Results.*"



Lawrence J. McClafferty, Stephen C. Price, Alexandra Gressitt, Regina Petruzzi Neumann.

A copy was presented in November to Thomas Balch Library for its collection. During its 100-year history, McCandlish & Lillard has made significant contributions to the legal and business communities of Loudoun and Fairfax Counties and the Commonwealth through its leadership in county and state bar associations. In addition, eleven attorneys from the firm were named to Virginia's Legal Elite in December 2007, and three of the firm's attorneys have been recognized as "The Best Lawyers in America."

Recently processed collections include Loudoun Quilt of Faith (M 042, VC 0020), an inter-faith oral history project; Donohoe Family Collection (SC 0021), transcriptions of family letters during the Civil War; and Catocin Mountain Alliance (M 031), records from a community organization formed to fight a land development project. The next time you visit the library check our digital research products: *Access Newspaper Archive*; *America: History and Life*; *AncestryLibrary Edition*; *Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867-1970* (Virginia); *Footnote*; *HeritageQuest Online*, and *New England Historic and Genealogical Society*.

The library is very active. By frequently checking our website, you will be able to keep up with our activities, research collection additions and events.

As always it will be my pleasure to welcome you when visiting Thomas Balch Library or when attending our programs.

Alexandra S. Gressitt, Library Director

CELEBRATING AN AMERICAN FAMILY: THE WILLIAMS FAMILY PAPERS AT THOMAS BALCH LIBRARY

Stephanie Adams Hunter
Sunday, 3 May 2009, 2PM

The Williams Family Papers, a recently processed manuscript collection, offer a unique opportunity to follow a family across a period of nearly 200 years through letters, memorabilia and photographs. Four families are represented in the papers, providing a range of perspectives on banking, industry, law, and the military. From a young couple's tragically short long-distance marriage to children writing to their parents from school, the letters offer an intimate view of family life in the 19th and 20th century. Originally from Pennsylvania and New York, descendants of the family settled in Loudoun County in the early 20th century. Thomas Balch Library has a long history with the Williams family; Harrison and Joan Williams lived next door to the library and had a personal interest in it. Stephanie Adams Hunter, Library Archives Specialist, will discuss highlights from this fascinating collection, illustrated with examples drawn from it. Hunter holds a BA from The Evergreen State College and an MLS from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



WALKING TOUR OF LEESBURG

James Roberts
Saturday 16 May 2009, 9-12AM

James Roberts, a native of Leesburg, member of Thomas Balch Library Advisory Commission, and 2008 recipient of a Loudoun History Award, will lead a walking tour of Leesburg. The tour is an insider's commentary of local people, places and points of interest both in and around Leesburg. Particular detail is paid to how Leesburg has grown and evolved through the years architecturally, economically and racially. Factual, historical and anecdotal information is intertwined and presented in storytelling fashion as only someone who lived through it and thoughtfully observed it can do. This unique tour will leave from Thomas Balch Library parking lot at 9AM.



Her art has been featured in many publications, including *American Artist* and the *Washington Post*. Her work is also featured in the books, *Fixing the Worlds* and *The Ashen Rainbow* by Ori Soltes. A native of Washington, DC, and a graduate of George Washington University, Sanabria is an active member of the Black History Committee of Friends of Thomas Balch Library, Inc. The exhibit, presented by The George Washington University Virginia Campus and the Gallery 222/Loudoun Academy of the Arts Foundation will be on display at The George Washington University Virginia Campus, 44983 Knoll Square, Ashburn, VA, from January 6-March 27, 2009; Reception Thursday, January 22, 2009, 6-8PM.

UNFORGOTTEN: SLAVE QUARTERS AND OTHER AFRICAN AMERICAN SITES

Paintings by Sherry Zvares Sanabria

Neo Realist Sherry Zvares Sanabria will be showing her luminous and haunting paintings from the series *Unforgotten: Slave Quarters and Other African American Sites*. Sanabria's works are included in permanent collections of museums or other public and private spaces both nationally and in Europe. Her art has been featured in many publications, including *American Artist* and the *Washington Post*. Her work is also featured in the books, *Fixing the Worlds* and *The Ashen Rainbow* by Ori Soltes. A native of Washington, DC, and a graduate of George Washington University, Sanabria is an active member of the Black History Committee of Friends of Thomas Balch Library, Inc. The exhibit, presented by The George Washington University Virginia Campus and the Gallery 222/Loudoun Academy of the Arts Foundation will be on display at The George Washington University Virginia Campus, 44983 Knoll Square, Ashburn, VA, from January 6-March 27, 2009; Reception Thursday, January 22, 2009, 6-8PM.



Black History Committee of Friends of Thomas Balch Library, Inc.

meets at the library the fourth Tuesday of every month at 7PM.

The public is always welcome. For more information visit www.balchfriends.org

VIRGINIA FORUM

The fourth annual Virginia Forum, an educational meeting dedicated to current Virginia historiography, meets at Longwood University in Farmville, Virginia, April 24-25, 2009.

Panelists from the Thomas Balch Library 2007 Loudoun 250th Anniversary lecture series, "Loudoun 1757: On the Border of Mayhem," Carl J. Ekberg, Paul W. Mapp, Timothy J. Shannon, Warren Hofstra, and Douglas Foard will participate in a panel discussion encapsulating their presentations from the anniversary lecture series. Their panel discussion, renamed "Facing Montcalm: Virginia and Imperial Defense, 1755-1758," will take place, Friday, April 24. Also of interest on Friday, James H. Hershman, vice chair of the Thomas Balch Library Advisory Commission, will participate in a session entitled: "New Perspectives on Massive Resistance," presenting a piece on "Historiography of Massive Resistance." This session is chaired by John Kneebone with panelists Brian Daugherty, and Caroline C. Morris. Winchester-related programs include: Susan Garfinkel, Library of Congress, "Quaker Exiles at Winchester: Mapping the Evidence," and Warren Hofstra, Shenandoah University, "Country Music, Patsy Cline, and Cultural History Class and Conflict in Winchester, Virginia, 1948-1957."

The Virginia Forum offers opportunity for exchanges of ideas among scholars, archivists, librarians, museum curators, K-12 teachers, and those interested in Virginia history and culture. For information, contact the Virginia Forum at info@virginiaforum.org. Visit www.virginiaforum.org for information on the 2009 conference including registration and information on Saturday tours which include: African American history in Farmville, the High Bridge Trail/Israel Hill, and Civil War history at Saylor's Creek.

EXHIBITS 2009

MARGARET MERCER ROOM

- January** History of Education in Loudoun County - Beth Schuster and Stephanie Adams Hunter
- February** African Americans: Their Role in Loudoun's History - Black History Committee of Friends of the Thomas Balch Library, Inc.
- March** Civil War Relics and History of J.E. B. Stuart and Robert E. Lee - John Wyrick
- April** Restoration of Governor Westmoreland Davis' Mansion and His Life at Morven Park - Tracy Gillespie
- May** Local Artists, Sketches, Paintings and Drawings - Loudoun Sketch Club
- June** African American Involvement in Rice Plantations of South Carolina Through History and Art - Kathie O'Keefe
- July- Aug.** Civil War Artifacts - John Creamer
- September** Postal History of Leesburg - Lewis Leigh

LOWER LEVEL MEETING ROOM

- Jan.-March** "A Virginia Native Flower Walk" by professional photographer Neil Steinberg
- April-June** "A Retrospective: 1957-2007" by professional photographer K. D. Kidder
- July-Sept.** "The Natural World that is Northern Virginia" - featuring images of the natural resources and beauty of the land that has endured throughout the transformation of Northern Virginia from rural to urban - Gary Mester

MAXIMIZING YOUR TIME AT THOMAS BALCH LIBRARY: An Introduction to the Library, Its Resources and Research Techniques

A series of classes offered throughout the year will introduce novice and experienced researchers to the intricacies of resources at Thomas Balch Library. Each class will include a tour of the facility, subject-specific training by experienced staff, handouts, and an opportunity to ask questions. These classes, held the first Thursday of each month, **10:00 am to 12:00 pm**, will be limited in size, registration is required, and classes will be repeated periodically.

General Introduction to Thomas Balch Library ■ Thursday, 5 February

Alexandra S. Gressitt, Library Director, will provide a general overview of the Library, its history, organization, collections with emphasis on digital collections, services, programs, and volunteer and intern opportunities.

Information Seeking Strategies ■ Thursday 5 March

In this session, under the direction of Beth Schuster, Library Reference Specialist, participants will learn techniques for developing and implementing effective search techniques. While the techniques discussed are applicable in a wide variety of environments, attention will be paid to Thomas Balch Library's subscription databases, including *America-History and Life* and *Access Newspaper Archive*.

Online Census Research - "Making Sense of the Census" ■ Thursday, 2 April

LaVonne Markham, Library Specialist, will provide tips for using different online census databases, such as *HeritageQuest* and *AncestryLibrary*, for printing clear copies and how to use extraction forms for each census year.

Manuscript and Archives Research at TBL ■ Thursday, 7 May

Stephanie Adams Hunter, Library Archives Specialist, will introduce users to manuscript and archives holdings at Thomas Balch Library. The kinds of materials available, how they may be accessed and their use in historical and genealogical research will be discussed.

Traditional Genealogical Resources at TBL ■ Thursday, 5 June

Mary Fishback, Library Assistant, will demonstrate how to use traditional research materials in the collections of Thomas Balch Library to uncover family history. Users will be introduced to documenting and abstracting historical resources.

Beginning Genealogy ■ Thursday, 6 August

LaVonne Markham, Library Specialist, will introduce researchers to the complexities and secrets of locating ancestors using resources and online subscriptions available at Thomas Balch Library.

Research Using Visual Collections at TBL ■ Thursday, 1 October

Loudoun Historic Building Files, Assessment & Parcel Database ■ Thursday, 5 November

Leesburg's Historic District Files and Sanborn Maps ■ Thursday, 3 December

OTHER ACTIVITIES AT THOMAS BALCH LIBRARY

Thomas Balch Library Advisory Commission meets at the library the second Wednesday of each month at 7PM. The public is always welcome.

Friends of the Thomas Balch Library, Inc., a 501c3 organized to provide support for Thomas Balch Library, meets at the library every other month. The public is always welcome. For more information call 703/737-2166 or visit www.balchfriends.org.

Annual Meeting of Friends of the Thomas Balch Library, Inc.

Sunday, 18 January 2009, 2PM (snow date: 25 January 2009, 2PM)

During the annual business meeting members and guests will hear a report on the state of the Friends, its plans for the future, welcome new members, and participate in the election of officers for 2009. A keynote address "Inaugurations Past and Present: A Look at the History Behind the Pomp and Circumstance," will be presented by author and editor Donald R. Kennon, chief historian of the United States Capitol Historical Society.

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