



Mission: The mission of the City of Bowie Museums is to preserve, collect, interpret and celebrate for the public's appreciation the history, architecture, city plans, and people of Bowie, Maryland, through education and exhibition, archaeology and advocacy of this diverse heritage.

New in the Hall

18th Century probate inventories are a resource for replicating spaces in house museums. Legal court documents, these inventories list possessions of a deceased person, with the intention that these items will be liquidated, and the funds included in financial assets. Belair Mansion is fortunate to have a number of inventories

from the past. Among those is the 1763 inventory of Col. Benja-Tasker.



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Col. Tasker, master of Belair for a number of years after the death of Samuel Ogle, was the brother of Anne Tasker Ogle. His 1763 Probate Inventory lists, "in the Hall," an "oval table" valued at 3£,10s. Belair Mansion has recently acquired for its permanent collection a stunning "Queen Anne style" drop leaf table. Purchased at

40th Annual Heritage Day

This year marks the 40th Annual Bowie Heritage Day at Belair Stable. Heritage Day has always been the third Sunday in May—a date corresponding to the running of the Preakness Stakes on the third Saturday of May. As the home of the only father/son winners to capture the Triple Crown, Belair has much to celebrate. Join us on Sunday, May 18 from Noon-4:00 p.m. for the celebration. Free pony rides, music and history fill the day.

the **Spring Fling in Old Bowie**

Don't miss this annual fun event in Old Bowie on Sunday, April 27 from 10:00—4:00 p.m. Enjoy food, fun and antiques in "Bowie's Birthplace." Street vendors, entertainment and railroad history bring the streets to life. The Railroad Museum will feature special activities, shops offer special promotions, and a good time is guaranteed for all!



Tea and Mystery

Don't miss Belair Mansion's first "mystery tea" on June 1 at 3:00 p.m. The Tea Time Players of the Bowie Senior Center will present a farcical drama called "Who Killed the Darling Duke of Darjeeling."

The troupe, members of the Drama Club, have performed the play at a number of venues, including Reynolds Tavern in Annapolis. Set in a tearoom, the amusing "dramedy" explores the relationship of seven women (the suspects!) with the Duke.

Tickets are \$30. Advance Reservations and payment are required. Call 301-809-3089 to reserve.





I wandered lonely as a cloud;

That floats on high over vales and hills,

When all at once I saw a crowd,

A host of golden daffodils;

Daffodils were brought to Britain by the Romans who thought that the sap from daffodils had healing powers. Imported to England in the 16th century, this bright yellow harbinger of Spring no doubt reminded countless colonial citizens of home.

Successful Genealogical Program Held

On Saturday, March 8, the Mansion hosted a day long workshop in conjunction with the Prince George's County Genealogical Society Library. Over 50 participants, all new to the world of genealogical investigation, filled the parlor for some expert advice on finding their ancestors.

The Genealogical Society was founded in Bowie in 1969. Many of you may recall when it occupied other sites in Bowie—including both the Mansion and Stable.

The Library is one of this country's most comprehensive small genealogy libraries, housing over 4,000 volumes, numerous periodicals, surname files, Bible records and a host of other sources. Today the Library calls a 1961 Levitt rancher, just 4 doors down from the Mansion, home.

If you're wondering about your roots, this is THE place to start. Hours are listed on the back of this newsletter. The staff is always welcoming and ready to assist you.



Mother's Day Tea Saturday, May 10, 4:00 p.m.

Treat your special lady to tea at Belair Mansion in honor of Mother's Day. Traditional tea goodies will mark the occasion - sandwiches, scones, cream and jam, and delectable desserts will please everyone. Tickets are \$23 per person; reservations and advance payment required by May 6. Call 301-809-3089 to reserve.

Another New Face at the Mansion

Please join us in welcoming Kathleen Lyons to the Museum staff. Kathleen, a long time resident of the "B section," joins us as our newest Visitor Services Assistant. We're excited to have her join our ranks. She'll be working Tuesdays and alternate Sundays at the Mansion, so drop in and introduce yourself!

PICTURES FROM THE PAST



A date for the photo above is not available, but it clearly illustrates some important figures in Belair's horse racing history.

The gentleman on the left is probably a member of the Thomas family. John, Henry and Paul Thomas were amongst William Woodward's most trusted employees. Tasked with the care and handling of some very important equine residents, their skill was invaluable.

To the right is James "Sunny Jim" Fitzsimmons. Mr. Fitz, as he was often called, is truly a legendary figure in American Thoroughbred racing. All of Belair's famous racing stock learned their "trade" at the hands of Mr. Fitz.

The young horse is simply identified as "Yearling #2." Perhaps he went on to racing glory—we'll never know...but it's fun to wonder!

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Donations at the Radio & Television Museum

The Radio & Television Museum regularly receives splendid donations of vintage radios and TV sets. Pictured here are two massive 1937 RCA-Victor console radios that were donated this past year. Visitors can listen to any one of 37,000 old radio programs from the 1930s through 1950s played through restored radios like these, and can also view early television programs on restored vintage sets. The Museum is open Fridays from 10 to 5 and Saturdays and Sundays from 1 to 5. Admission is free, but donations are encouraged. Special heritage tv and radio programming is scheduled throughout the year. Check www.radiohistory.org, or call 301-390-1020 for future fun events.



Summer Fun Programs At City Museums

Don't forget the **"Kids Kaboose"** at the Train Station Museum every third Thursday through the early Fall. The program is geared to ages 3-10. Enjoy the program from 10:30-11:30, then have a brown bag picnic on the grass as the trains whiz by. "Kids Kaboose" is free, no reservations are required.

Belair Mansion will host **"Can You Dig It?"** for young archaeologists ages 6-12 on June 30 from 9:30—1:00 p.m. Youngsters will dig, sift, catalog and recreate artifacts under the watch of a real archaeologist. The program is free, but registration is required. Call 301-809-3089 to register.



Heritage Day 1969

Governor Marvin Mandel signs autographs and joins an assembled group of dignitaries and volunteers, for Bowie's first Heritage Day, in dedicating the Belair Stable Museum. Developer William Levitt sold the Belair Stable property to the City of Bowie for the profit his corporation would have realized on the building lots the stable occupied.

And, Speaking of William Levitt...

National Public Radio recently announced that, among the recent casualties in the home building industry, one in particular stands out—especially to Bowie residents.

In 1968, William Levitt, developer of Belair and many other "Levittown" type developments, sold out to IIT. IIT, not pleased with its transaction, decided to sell. Levitt signed a letter of intent to take the company back, intending to operate as a privately owned concern under its original name of Levitt & Sons. Levitt died in 1994.

Levitt and Sons developers remained in business, until recently. Dozens of projects from South Carolina to Florida were in the works. A November, 2007 filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy halted construction of thousands of homes, including a very large senior community in Port St. Lucie, Florida. So closes an era that began in 1948!

Happy Birthday, Maryland!



The State of Maryland will celebrate its 374th birthday on March 25. Our state flag, adopted in 1904, combines the heraldic colors of the Calvert and Crossland families, Maryland's founders.



CALENDAR



Belair Mansion
Saturday, March 22 4:00 p.m.

Annual Teddy Bear Tea

Bear Lovers Ages 4 –104 are invited to bring a furry friend to tea. Advance reservations & payment required. \$19. per person 301-809-3089



Belair Mansion
Tuesday, April 8 7:30 p.m.

Second Tuesday Lecture “John Shaw Furniture at the Hammond Harwood House” Free



Bowie Train Station
Thirld Thursdays 10:30-11:30
Kids Kaboose

Railroad fun for ages 3-10 Free
301-575-2488



Old Town Bowie Spring Fling
April 27 10:00—5:00

Fun for all ages 301-575-2488



Belair Mansion
Saturday May 10 4:00 p.m.
Mother’s Day Tea

Reservations/ Advance Payment required \$23 per person 301-809-3089



Belair Stable
Sunday May 18 Noon-4 p.m.
40th Annual Heritage Day

Pony rides, music, history, fun Free



Belair Mansion New Program!!!!
Saturday May 31/June 28
8:00 p.m.
Campfire Stories

Join the Bowie Rangers for history round the campfire. Free



Belair Mansion
Sunday June 1 3:00 p.m.

“Who Killed the Darling Duke of Darjeeling?” Tea and Mystery!
Reservations and advance payment required \$30. per person 301-809-3089



Belair Mansion
Monday, June 30 9:30-1:00
“Can You Dig It?”

Archaeology Program for ages 6-12
Free, registration required 301-809-3089

Hours: All Free Admission

Belair Mansion, 301-809-3089
Tuesday - Sunday, Noon to 4 p.m.



Belair Stable, 301-809-3089
Tuesday - Sunday, Noon to 4 p.m.



Bowie Heritage Center, 301-575-2488
Tuesday - Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Bowie Railroad Station, 301-809-3089
Tuesday - Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Radio & Television Museum
www.radiohistory.org, 301-390-1020
Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday & Sunday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.



Prince George’s County Genealogical Society Library, 301-262-2063
www.rootsweb.com/~mdpgcgs



Wednesdays, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. (1st Wednesday of the month, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.), and last Saturday of the month, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.



The City of Bowie welcomes the participation in City sponsored activities and programs of individuals with disabilities. Please contact the City at least two weeks in advance of the date on which the activity will either begin or be held to request an accommodation. Thank you



CITY OF BOWIE MUSEUMS

Support the Museums! Become a member!

City of Bowie Museums
12207 Tulip Grove Drive
Bowie, Maryland 20715
301-809-3089 fax 301-809-2308

TTY/TDD 301-262-5013 or MD Relay System 800-735-2258

This material is available in alternate formats

email: museumevents@cityofbowie.org

www.cityofbowie.org/museum

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Diane Polangin, Councilmember
Geraldine Valentino Smith, Councilmember
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Jean Lancaster, Chair Friends of Belair Estate
Karen Duffy Miles, Archivist PGCo Genealogical Library
Ken Mellgren, President Radio History Society

Staff

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Jason D. Illari, Museum Curator
Russell E. Davies, Stable Facilities Manager
Ruth A. Murphy, Welcome Center Facilities Manager