

Friends on the Road...to Annapolis

Members of the Friends of Belair Estate, and friends of the Friends, braved a wet windy day in November for the Fall History Trip, exploring some Ogle history in our own back yard—in Annapolis. After a delightful trolley tour by Discover Annapolis Tours, the day included a visit to the William Paca House and the Chase Lloyd House., with the rain holding off long enough to explore some history, architecture and a visit to the graves of Benjamin Tasker, Sr. and Jr. at St. Anne's Churchyard. The day closed with a break for tea and scones at historic Reynolds Tavern before heading home.

Our FOBE trips always aim to entertain and educate our volunteers and members. Join us on our next trip...we're hoping to have TWO in the spring!

Friends on the Road: Top—Chase-Lloyd House Parlor, Center—Friends paying their respects to Benjamin Tasker Sr. & Jr. at St. Anne's Church, Bottom—Friends on Parade—Passing Ogle Hall, the Ogle Family's 18c townhouse on King George Street.



Do You Remember This Event?

Seems train “episodes” aren’t the only things that have caused a stir in Bowie. In September 1953, the friendly skies over the area didn’t appear so friendly. An F-86 Sabre Jet, with flames shooting from an engine, was seen in the sky over Bowie Race Track. In addition to 24 live rockets, the plane carried “secret equipment.”

The pilot ejected and landed on a farm north of the race-track in Anne Arundel County. The Washington Post reported he’d suffered minor scratches and bruises.

The plane itself exploded on impact in “the woods off State Route 197, about one mile southwest of the track,” and left a debris field a quarter mile wide.

The location, which was not intended to be exactly known, seems to have been near the Whitehall section—one mile southwest of the Bowie Racetrack. In 1953, Whitehall was woods and farmland.

A bomb disposal unit from Aberdeen Proving Ground was dispatched to assist with clean up.

And, thanks to Mike Rauck, writer of a great Bowie blog and supporter of our museums, from whom this story was totally plagiarized...because it is so curious and fascinating. Mike is always a super source of modern Bowie history.

‘Tis the <Fruitcake> Season!

Ahhh...the fruitcake. Our favorite—or not so favorite—holiday dessert/snack, the source of a sort of leaden feeling in the tummy, the sugar overload source, and the butt of so many jokes... The fruitcake, be it humble or hearty, good or bad, expensive or cheap, has a long history.

The earliest fruitcake is from Ancient Rome (where else?!) with pomegranate seeds, pine nuts and raisins mixed into barley mash as its ingredients. By the Middle Ages, cooks had added spices, honey and preserved fruits. Before long, fruitcake spread all over Europe. Recipes varied in different countries thru the ages, depending on the available ingredients and church regulations forbidding the use of butter during times of fasting.

Starting in the 16th century, sugar from the Americas (and the discovery that high concentrations of sugar could preserve fruits) created an excess of candied fruit, thus making fruit cakes more affordable and popular.

And, it’s not just for Christmas, either! In Australia, its consumed all year round. In Ireland, it’s a Halloween treat. In Romania, it’s made for every major holiday. So...have a holiday treat and chow down on any style of fruitcake from any number of vendors. You’ll be enjoying a slice of history.

Coming This May to MPT...

Rubicon Productions, a Maryland company, has been hard at work over the last six months on a documentary for Maryland Public Television about Thoroughbred racing in Maryland—its past and its hopeful future. Entitled “Racing the Times,” the production is stunning.

Because no history of Maryland Thoroughbred racing would be complete without a segment on Belair Stud Stable, the crew has visited use twice in the last few months, filming at the Stable and the Mansion. In fact, just a few weeks ago, our famous 18th century Thoroughbred racer and broodmare, Selima, paid a visit to the Mansion!

Rubicon is hopeful that the production will be complete for Maryland’s Preakness Celebration. Drew Perkins, the owner, has promised a viewing at Belair— which will, of course, signal a reception featuring the traditional Preakness beverage—Black Eyed Susans (juleps are for Kentuckians)— and maybe oatmeal cookies...watch for it!

*Above: Selima arrives by special courier to be filmed for “Racing the Times.”
Below: Selima and her “groom” survey the Mansion Garden.*



The original Selima was imported to Belair around 1750 by Gov. Samuel Ogle and his brother-in-law Col. Benjamin Tasker, Jr. A daughter of the famous Godolphin Arabian (one of the Thoroughbred foundation sires) she excelled on the race track and in the breeding barn— being the dam of the famous (if somewhat “cranky”!) Selim, one of colonial America’s finest racers.

Holiday Shopping

Belair Mansion will celebrate Black Friday on Saturday on Nov. 29, from Noon-4:00 p.m. Visit the Museum Shop and take advantage of a 20% discount on everything! Just in...a resupply of Belair Stable Cat’s Meow houses plus lots of redware and stoneware dishes, Mansion and RR Christmas ornaments, Belair at Bowie coffee mugs, books galore and toys for kids and adults.

Got Visitors for the Holidays?

Looking for something to do? Don’t forget our museums! The Mansion and Stable are open Tuesday through Sunday from Noon-4. Railroad Museum and Welcome Center are open Tuesday through Sunday from 10-4. The Radio and Television Museum is open Fridays, from 10-5, Saturdays and Sundays, from 1-5. All City Museums are free, with no reservations required...Mansion, Stable, RR and Welcome Center will be decorated for the season. Come visit!

Keeping up with the Caboose

Just an update...the Railroad Museum’s Norfolk and Western Caboose, as previously written, is in very poor condition. Repairs are constant, and the structure is failing. It’s a constant battle with wood rot, squirrels and a badly leaking roof.

So...our present red lady has been purchased, via auction, and will soon leave us. We will enter into an agreement with the B&O Museum to replace the caboose over the winter. We’re hoping for a Chessie caboose in the B&O inventory already. The B&O will donate the caboose to us, with the City of Bowie paying for its restoration at the B&O and placement at the Railroad Museum.

The new caboose will likely be “dressed” in Chessie “livery”—paint colors of blue and yellow. We’ll have a more secure environment for children’s activities and visitor comfort.

Don’t be alarmed if you see an empty space up at the Railroad Museum...it will be filled shortly!

Special Birthday Greetings

We don’t normally recognize birthdays in this newsletter, but a very special one happens on December 29. Happy 95th Birthday to Fannie Basim, a 95-year resident of Huntington City and Bowie, and the heart and soul of Old Bowie today. Museums staff folks extend not only birthday wishes, but sincere thanks to Ms. Basim for her continued generosity with her knowledge of Bowie history and her donations to our museums—objects, information...always with a smile and a chuckle!



CITY OF BOWIE MUSEUMS

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

www.cityofbowie.org/museum

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

This material is available in alternate formats. Call 301-809-3089

 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.

Bowie City Council

G. Frederick Robinson, Mayor
Isaac C. Truth, Mayor Pro Tem
Dennis Brady, Councilmember
Henri Gardner, Councilmember
James L. Marcos, Councilmember
Diane Polangin, Councilmember

Staff

Pamela L. Williams, Manager—Historic Properties/Museums
Samantha H. Dorsey, Museums Curator
Ruth A. Murphy, Welcome Center /RR Facilities Manager
Museum Offices are staffed Mon.-Fri., 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
To reach staff, call 301-809-3089 /museums@cityofbowie.org

Fall 2014

Musings



CALENDAR



Bowie Railroad Museum
Sunday, Nov. 30 10:00am-4:00 pm

Trainspotting Day

Visit Santa in the Welcome Center, chat with the NTrackers Model RR in the Caboose, and watch unusual trains fly by on AMTRAK'S busiest day of the year. Free; no reservations reqd.



Belair Mansion
Saturday, Dec. 6 2:00 pm

Blue Sky Puppet Theater Show

Discover Santa's gift to the man who never laughed at anything! Free; no reservations reqd.



Belair Mansion
Sunday, Dec. 6 10:00 am-6:00 pm

Belair By Candlelight/City Tree Lighting
Beautiful decorations, the music of "Bedlam," and cider and cookies. Stay for the tree lighting and caroling with City Council. Free; no reservations reqd.



Belair Mansion
Saturday, Dec. 13 10:00 am—Noon

KnderKristmas

Holiday fun for ages 3-11. Visit with Mrs. Claus, special Holiday Tour, craft and refreshments. Free; no reservations reqd.



Bowie Railroad Museum
Tuesday, Dec. 16 10:30 am-Noon

Kids Kaboose

Railroad fun for age 1-11. Free, No reservations reqd.



Bowie Railroad Museum
Tuesday, Dec. 30, 10:30-Noon

Kringle Kaboose

Holiday railroad fun...and our annual reading of the Polar Express! Free; no reservations reqd.

Two Discount Shopping Days at Mansion!

Saturday, Nov. 29 Noon—4 Black Friday on Saturday

Saturday, Dec. 20 Noon-4 Midday Madness
Stocking Stuffer Day
20% Discount on EVERYTHING!

**All City Museum Sites will be closed on
December 25 and 26th.**



Belair Mansion
Saturday, Jan. 3 2:00—3:30 pm

Time Travelers Twelfth Night

Young historians will explore a colonial celebration, dancing, fun, and refreshments. Free; no reservations reqd.

Hours: All Free Admission

Belair Mansion, 301-809-3089
12207 Tulip Grove Drive
Tuesday - Sunday, Noon to 4 p.m.



Belair Stable, 301-809-3089
2835 Belair Drive
Tuesday - Sunday, Noon to 4 p.m.



Bowie Welcome Ctr/, 301-575-2488
8606 Chestnut Avenue
Tuesday - Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Bowie RR Station, 301-809-3089
8614 Chestnut Avenue
Tuesday - Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Nat'l. Capital Radio & TV Museum
www.ncrtv.org



.org 301-390-1020
2608 Mitchellville Road
Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday & Sunday,
1 p.m. to 5 p.m.



**Prince George's Co. Genealogical
Society Library, 301-262-2063**
www.rootsweb.com/~mdpgcgs

12219 Tulip Grove Drive
Please call 301-262-2063 for open hours and/
or appointments for research.