



1922-2011

# The Thomas Balch Chronicle

The Newsletter of Friends of the Thomas Balch Library of the Town of Leesburg, Virginia  
208 WEST MARKET STREET, LEESBURG, VIRGINIA 20176

*A Library for History and Genealogy*

Volume 15 Issue 3

Fall 2011

## Join The Friends' At A Very Special Fundraising Event: A Late Afternoon At the River

**Friends of the  
Thomas Balch  
Library, Inc.**

P.O. Box 2184  
Leesburg, VA 20177

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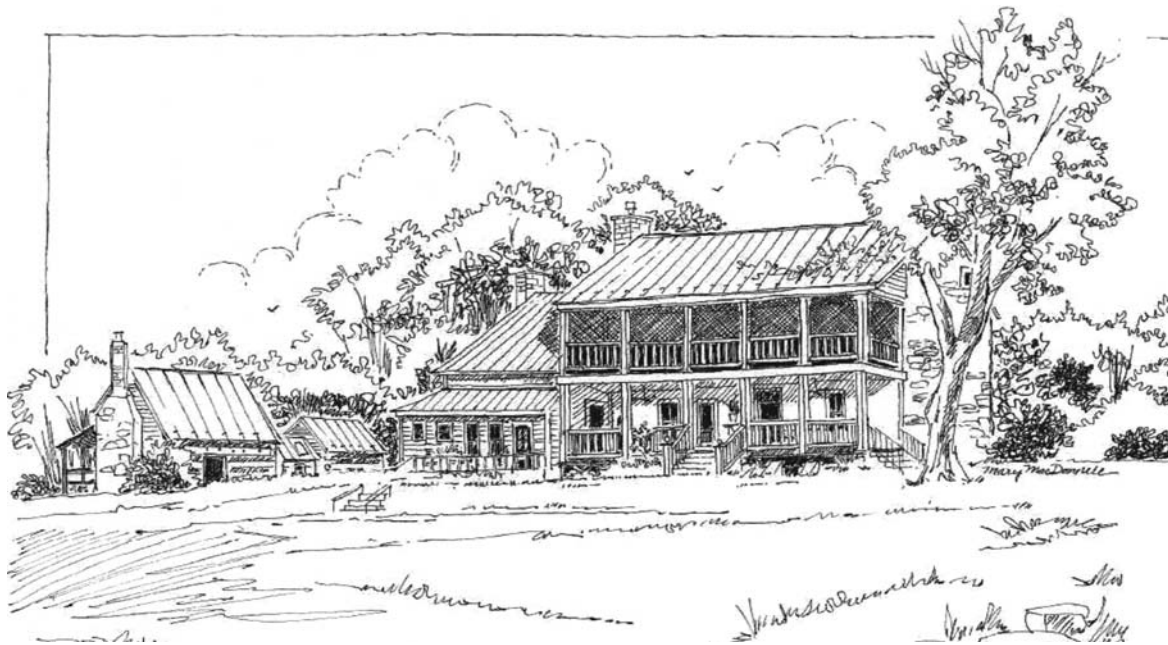
*Leesburg Town Council*

**Library Director**

Alexandra S. Gressitt

**Editor**

Janet Manthos



*Sketch courtesy of Mary MacDonnell*

The Friends of the Thomas Balch Library are inviting local history buffs on September 25 to “A Late Afternoon at the River,” its fourth annual fundraiser to support the activities of the Library. The event will take place at four o’clock in the afternoon at Riverside on the Potomac, the 18<sup>th</sup> century home of Travis and Suzi Worsham on the river just north of Leesburg.

Guests will enjoy fine wine and delicious hors d’oeuvres, from Savoir Fare, of Round Hill while strolling about the beautiful grounds of the historic farm, located on the site of one of the original ferries across the Potomac. Then they will assemble under a tent to hear a lecture by Dennis E. Frye, Chief Historian and Chief of Interpretation, Education & Partnerships at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park . Frye will speak about “The Potomac: International Border between North and South.”

To add to the guest’s enjoyment, an exciting raffle will take place featuring items and activities related to local history. A sampling: an authentic Civil War bank note; a private tour of Loudoun & Mosby’s Confederacy; a ‘basket of cheer’ from Barboursville Vineyards; a champagne brunch for 10 guests at a delightful 18<sup>th</sup> century house and gardens; a studio portrait sitting with Sarah Huntington; a garden consultation with a renowned garden expert, along with a gift certificate for plants and accessories; and other valuable and interesting offerings.

The Worshams have been working for some time to restore the old house and adjacent log cabins, developing landscaping and terraces overlooking the farm’s original pond, and rebuilding the barns. This is a private residence that has never been opened to the public before. Don’t miss this opportunity to see and enjoy this interesting and historic home.

The Thomas Balch Library is a library of history and genealogy owned and operated by the Town of Leesburg. Friends of the Thomas Balch Library is a 501 (c) 3 foundation established to support and supplement the activities of the Library. All proceeds from this event will go towards the endowment for Thomas Balch Library.

Persons wishing to receive an invitation to this event may call 703-737-2166 or send a request by email to [EVENTS@balchfriends.org](mailto:EVENTS@balchfriends.org). We hope to see you there!

**BE SURE TO RENEW YOUR FRIENDS’ MEMBERSHIP. CHECK YOUR LABEL FOR YOUR RENEWAL DATE. PLEASE USE THE FORM ON PAGE FIVE TO ENLIST YOUR FRIENDS TO BECOME MEMBERS.**

## ***Friends' Groups Honor Student Historians***

### **LOUDOUN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SOCIAL SCIENCE FAIR AWARDEES – JUNE 2011**

To encourage students' interest in history in general, and particularly the history of Loudoun County and the Commonwealth of Virginia, three groups closely involved with Thomas Balch Library, are at the forefront of that effort. Supporting the Loudoun County Public School's annual Social Science Fair since 2008, the **Thomas Balch Library Advisory Commission (Town of Leesburg)** this year honored Olivia Corso, a rising sophomore at Tuscarora High School, for Excellence in Local History Research. Olivia's topic "*Who Did the Battle of Ball's Bluff Affect and How Did It Change the Lives of the Men Involved?*" Olivia's research took her to Thomas Balch Library, Balls Bluff Battlefield, Rust Library and the Union Cemetery. Olivia has been invited to present her research project at the Loudoun History Awards in November.

The **Black History Committee of Friends of the Thomas Balch Library's** annual award went this year to Alex Hunt, Dominion High School student, for his exceptional PowerPoint presentation "*What was segregation like in Loudoun County, Virginia, between 1920 and 1969?*" Alex showed his excellent presentation at the July meeting of the Black History Committee and there he received his award, that included a check and copies of all BHC publications.

The committee also welcomed William F. Brazier, Supervisor of Social Sciences Instruction for the Loudoun County Public Schools. Mr. Brazier's attendance made possible his exposure not only to the vast resources of local and state history at Thomas Balch Library, but also the publications produced by the Friends and the Black History Committee.

**Friends of the Thomas Balch Library** recognized Grace Dreyer, a rising senior at Potomac Falls High School with the Local or Virginia History Award for her presentation on "*How have American artists helped to shape and reflect America's unique cultural identity throughout history?*"

Board member Wynne Saffer served as judge for the category, and Board member Harriett Condon presented Ms. Dreyer with her award. This talented young woman also has been recognized by her school for her design and constructions of their traditional Senior Stained Glass window for the 2012 year, shown here. The window will be installed in the lobby of the school.



Olivia Corso at Balls Bluff



William F. Brazier, LCPS; Donna Bohanon, BHC; Awardee Alex Hunt.



Art Instructor Elaine Nunnally, the Stained Glass Window and History Awardee Grace Dreyer.

## ***Frederick Douglass Elementary School Roundtable and Reflection Day, October 22, 2011***

A very large hole in the ground, just off Plaza Street in Leesburg, was once Frederick Douglass School, opened in 1958 as a segregated elementary school in Leesburg proper, for African Americans. Desegregated, following the 1968-69 Supreme Court ruling, it served all races until closing and becoming a LCPS support facility. That building will be replaced with the new two story Frederick Douglass Elementary School, planned to open 2012-2013.

Sponsored by the Black History Committee of the Friends of Thomas Balch Library, Inc., and Loudoun County Public Schools, former students, teachers and others interested in the history of the school are urged to attend and participate in the Round Table and Reflection Day, beginning at 1:00 PM on October 22, 2011 in the Main Lobby of Douglass High School, 407 East Market Street, Leesburg, VA. Light refreshments will be served, and your RSVP is requested by Friday, October 14 so we may prepare accordingly. For more information contact us at [Sara.HowardOBrien@lcps.org](mailto:Sara.HowardOBrien@lcps.org) or call 571-252-1156. It should be an interesting and enlightening time in which to gain new perspectives of segregated life in Leesburg.

## ***Nineteenth Loudoun History Awards***

The Thomas Balch Library Advisory Commission will present the nineteenth annual Loudoun History Awards on Sunday, November 13, 2011 at 2 p.m. in the downstairs meeting room at the library. This event honors individuals making significant contributions to preserving Loudoun's past through collections of county documents and memorabilia, preservation of historic landmarks, visual arts, writing and long-time commitment to local history organizations. For a brochure or additional information on nominating individuals, contact the Library Director at 703-737-7195.

## ***The Last Hardware Store at TBL, October 30, 2011 at 2 PM***

If you missed the May 14 premier of this documentary video produced by The Lincoln Studio, you are in luck. FTBL Board member Sarah Huntington is executive producer and it was through her efforts this record of the venerable Nichols Hardware Store in Purcellville is preserved for posterity. The documentary will be available for purchase.

## ***The Director's Letter***

Greetings:

As a way of addressing pressing space constraints alternate methods of expanding our research collection have been undertaken. For several years the Friends of the Thomas Balch Library, Inc. have assisted the library in this endeavor by underwriting the cost of some of its digital subscriptions such as set up fees for *JSTOR* and annual subscription fees for *America's Genealogy Bank* and *America's Newspapers*. These three subscriptions are heavily used and widely recognized as significant assets by researchers. Two recent additions to our digital offerings, parts of Gale Cengage Learning Corporation's *Archives Unbound* are: "*We Were Prepared for the Possibility of Death*" *Freedom Riders in the South, 1961* which contains documents from the FBI library concerning the Freedom Rides and is a fitting addition to our collection during this the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the rides and *The Civil War in Words and Deeds* which contains regimental histories, personal narratives, and other sources of significant historical value from the period between 1860 and 1865.

In May Thomas Balch Library was the recipient of Loudoun Preservation Society's (LPS) first Katherine "Kitty" Boyd Grant. We are honored to have been so selected. The grant (\$5,000), awarded for our application to process and digitize WAGE Radio tapes and memorabilia in our collection, will enable us to start phase one of the project. Phase one will cost \$12,000 with full funding achieved by blending the LPS grant with funds from the Loudoun Laurels (INOVA) oral history grant and assistance from Friends of the Thomas Balch Library.

Due to straightened economic times Thomas Balch Library, as with other departments within the Town of Leesburg, has experienced staffing reductions. In the FY2012 Budget one position was eliminated and one left unfunded. While there have been no reductions in programs, the library will now be closed for entire holiday weekends rather than just the holiday. These closures, posted on our website, are spread throughout the year, enabling the library to continue providing patron access seven days a week and two evenings.

Elsewhere in the newsletter you will find a list of newly catalogued books and manuscript collections. Programs and exhibits for the fall and classes through June 2012 are also to be found elsewhere in the newsletter.

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

*Alexandra S. Gressitt*  
Library Director

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## ***Maximizing Your Time at Thomas Balch Library***

An Introduction to the Library, its resources and research techniques. Classes 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, will be limited in size, and registration is required. The classes repeat, periodically throughout the year.

### **Introduction to Digital Resources at Thomas Balch Library**

**Thursday, 6 October 2011, 10-12AM**

Participants in the session will learn about digital resources available at Thomas Balch Library. Bryan D. Fisher, Library Research Associate, will demonstrate databases and other online tools available for researchers, showing types of information to be found and suggesting research strategies. Resources to be demonstrated include *JSTOR*, *America's GenealogyBank*, and *America's Newspapers*.

### **Using Visual Collections at Thomas Balch Library**

**Thursday, 3 November 2011, 10-12AM**

Elizabeth E. Preston, Library Reference Associate, will introduce users to visual collections at Thomas Balch Library. Types of images available and how they may be accessed will be discussed.

### **Deed Research**

**Thursday, 1 December 2011, 10-12AM**

Wynne Saffer, author of *Loudoun County, Virginia 1860 Land Tax Map*, will use a case study to demonstrate how to establish chain of title using deed indexes and other types of land ownership changes such as wills, marriages, old advertisements, and chancery cases.

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## ***Monthly Exhibits Add to Your Thomas Balch Library Experience***

**EXHIBITS : LOWER LEVEL MEETING ROOM**

**SEPTEMBER: LEESBURG: NOW AND THEN—**

**K D KIDDER & NEIL STEINBERG**

**OCTOBER-DECEMBER: BUTTERFLIES,**

**DRAGON FLIES AND BUGS**

**GARY MESTER**

**[SEE PAGE 4 FOR ADDITIONAL EXHIBITS AT THE LIBRARY'S MERCER ROOM]**

**RECENTLY CATALOGUED BOOKS AT**

**THOMAS BALCH LIBRARY** (BETWEEN 05/11& 07/11):

- The Curtis Collection: A Personal View of Prince William County History*, by Donald E. Curtis  
*Gardner's Photographic Sketch Book of the Civil War*, by Alexander Gardner  
*My Folks Don't Want Me to Talk About Slavery*, by Belinda Hurmence, ed  
*The Land of the Living: The Story of Maryland's Green Ridge Forest*, by John Mash  
*Local Records and Genealogy: A Primer for Family Historians*, by Joan W. Peters  
*A Black Woman's Civil War Memoirs*, by Susie King Taylor and Patricia W. Romero.  
*A History of Loudoun County Baseball: 1869-1987*, by John Kelly Barrett  
*The Hamilton Book Club Centennial Cookbook*, compiled by Donna Norton  
*Connections and Separations: Divorce, Name Change and Other Genealogical Tidbits from the Acts of the Virginia*, by Wesley E. Pippenger  
*A Plan for the Conservation of Waterford*, by Eugene Scheel  
*A Generall Historie of Virginia*, by John Smith  
*Fifty Early American Towns*, by Everett Wilson  
*First Explorations of the Trans-Allegheny Region by Virginians, 1650-1674*, by Clarence Walworth Alvord  
*Frank Leslie's Illustrated History of the Civil War*, by Frank Leslie  
*Established 1887: A History of Sterling, Virginia, Past and Present*, by The Printhouse Express  
*They Were a Community of African-Americans in Leesburg, Va., 1870-1930*, by Jim Koenig  
*Samuel H. Major: The Poor Tailor of Amelia County, Virginia*, by Olen Hales Lewis and George Marion Hall  
*Leesburg*, by Annie Laurie McDonald  
*The Clans and Tartans of Scotland*, by R. R. McLan  
*The History of Ashfield Farm*, by Lori Kimball  
*The Battle of the Wilderness, May 5-6, 1864*, by Gordon D. Rhea  
*The First Methodist Deed in America, Leesburg's Old Stone Church*, by Melvin Lee Steadman, Jr.  
Also cataloged is an addition to the Rare Book Collection:  
*A View of the Organization and Order of the Primitive Church: Containing a Scriptural Plan of the Apostolic Church . . .*, by A. B. Chapin.

**RECENTLY PROCESSED MANUSCRIPT**

**COLLECTIONS** (BETWEEN 05/11 & 07/11)

- John Champe Chapter, Sons of the Revolution Collection* (M 063)  
*Sara Armstrong Collection* (M 064)  
*Mt. Zion Church Preservation Association, Inc. Records* (M 066)  
*Register of Colored Voters at Purcellville Precinct, Jefferson District, Loudoun County Virginia* (OM 006)  
*Sterling Park, Virginia Collection* (SC 0007)  
*Medical Register, Loudoun County Circuit Court* (SC 0067)  
*Ashburn Colored School Property* (SC 0071)  
*Blue Ridge Library Records* (SC 0073)  
*Moore/Gibson Land Deed* (SC 0074)  
*Lyndon LaRouche Collection* (SC 0075)  
*Thompson Lodge of Masons Treasurer's Book* (SC 0077)  
*William Moore Land Plat* (SC 0080)  
*Purcellville Library and Book Mobile* (SC 0081)  
*Purcellville National Bank Collection* (SC 0082)  
*Diary of Catherine Barbara Broun* (SC 0083)  
*W. Roger Smith Civil War Research Collection* (SC 0084)  
*John Fletcher Railroad Memorabilia Collection* (SC 0085)  
*Goose Creek Herb Guild Records* (SC 0086)  
*Irwin Uran Memoirs* (SC 0087)  
*News Publishing Company Collection* (SC 0088)  
*Civil War Letter, Leesburg, VA* (SC 0090)  
*Loudoun County Court Complex Collection* (SC 0093)

**MERCER ROOM EXHIBITS, FALL & WINTER**

- September: Records of the Land by Local Artists  
Loudoun Academy of Arts  
October: American Archives Month/New Collections  
Thomas Balch Library  
November: Loudoun Preservation Society: Past, Present and Future -- Lori Kimball  
December: Works by Contemporary Loudoun Potters  
Loudoun Arts Council  
January: Jenkins Collection of Arrow Heads & Artifacts  
Loudoun Farm Museum  
February: Black History Month  
I Have A Dream committee  
March: Loudoun County Cemeteries  
Wynne Saffer

**AND, ONCE AGAIN: BE SURE TO RENEW YOUR FRIENDS' MEMBERSHIP. CHECK YOUR LABEL FOR YOUR RENEWAL DATE. PLEASE USE THE FORM ON PAGE FIVE TO ENLIST YOUR FRIENDS TO BECOME MEMBERS.**

# New and Renewing Members

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**Loudoun Discovered: Communities, Corners & Crossroads**

- Volume 1 **Eastern Loudoun: Goin' Down the Country**
  - Volume 2 **Leesburg and the Old Carolina Road**
  - Volume 3 **The Hunt Country and Middleburg**
  - Volume 4 **Quaker Country and the Loudoun Valley**
  - Volume 5 **Waterford, the German Settlement and Between the Hills**
- each volume: \$ 20.00

- Set of all 5 volumes plus Eugene Scheel's  
**New Historical Map of Loudoun County** \$100.00
- Individual copies of the **Historical Map** \$ 10.00
- The Essence of A People:  
 Portraits of African Americans Who Made a  
 Difference in Loudoun County, Virginia** \$ 15.00
- The Essence of A People II: African Americans Who Made  
 Their World Anew in Loudoun County, Virginia and Beyond** \$ 15.00
- Loudoun County's African American Communities  
 A Tour Map and Guide** \$ 5.00
- A Taste of Loudoun County:  
 Our Favorite Recipes 1903-1951  
 Home Interest Club Cookbook - Centennial Edition** \$ 10.00
- A Story of Round Hill, Loudoun County, Virginia**  
 by Ann W. Thomas \$ 20.00
- In the Watchfires: The Loudoun County  
 Emancipation Association, 1890-1971**  
 by Elaine E. Thompson \$ 20.00
- George Washington Carver: Scientist, Artist, & Musician**  
 by Lemoine D. Pierce \$ 10.00
- Journey Through Time**  
 by Black History Committee of Friends of the  
 Thomas Balch Library \$ 5.00
- "The Imperious Laird": John Campbell,  
 Fourth Earl of Loudoun**  
 by Douglas W. Foard, Ph.D. \$ 15.00
- Billy Pierce: Dance Master, Son of Purcellville**  
 by Lemoine D. Pierce \$ 15.00
- Loudoun 1757: On the Border of Mayhem Loudoun  
 County 250th Anniversary Lecture Series** \$ 15.00
- Leesburg 250th Anniversary Lecture Series (2008)**  
 Hosted by Thomas Balch Library, includes booklet & 2 DVDs \$ 15.00

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The Thomas Balch  
**Chronicle**

Friends of the  
Thomas Balch Library  
P. O. Box 2184  
Leesburg, VA 20177

**Don't Miss This!**  
**Sept. 25, 2011**  
**An Afternoon at the River!**

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS AT THOMAS BALCH LIBRARY

For full descriptions of the following programs to be held at Thomas Balch Library during the coming months, please consult your Fall issue of *Balch Column*. These outstanding presentations provide an opportunity to hear directly from the authors and presenters who have researched and studied the vast array of topics. These programs never fail to enrich one's knowledge and appreciation of this nation's history. What a great way to spend a Sunday afternoon, or to join one of the walks and hear from the leaders and scholars the 'real story' that lies beneath the surface.

Sunday, 18 Sept., 2pm—**Virginia Silversmiths, Clock and Watchmakers, 1607-1860: Their Lives and Marks**—Catherine B. Hollan.

Saturday, 24 Sept., 2pm—**Leesburg: An Exploration Through Time** (Documentary by Library staff, directed by Matthew Exline.)

Sunday, 2 Oct., 2pm—**The Spectral Tide: Ghost Stories of the US Navy**—Eric Mills.

Monday, 3 Oct., 2pm—**Clerk's Office Tour, Loudoun County Courthouse Historic Records**—John Fishback.

Saturday, 15 Oct., 9-12 noon—**Walking Tour of Leesburg**—James Roberts.

Sunday, 16 Oct., 2pm—**African Americans in the Civil War: Men, Soldiers, Citizens**—Hannah N. Geffert.

Sunday, 23 Oct., 2pm—**Lincoln's Bodyguard: Ward Hill Lamon**—Robert O'Connor.

Sunday, 30 Oct., 2pm—**The Last Hardware Store** (Documentary Film by the Lincoln Studios, Purcellville, VA).

Saturday, 6 Nov., 2pm—**Balls's Bluff Walking Tour**—James A. Morgan, III.

Sunday, 13 Nov., 2pm—**Loudoun History Awards**.

Sunday, 4 Dec., 2pm—**The Captain Who Burned His Ships: Captain Thomas Tingey, USN, 1750-1829**—Gordon S. Brown.

Sunday, 11 Dec., 2pm—**Leesburg Then and Now**: Author talk and signing—Annie McDonald.

### OTHER ACTIVITIES AT THOMAS BALCH LIBRARY

**Thomas Balch Library Advisory Commission** sponsors the annual Loudoun History Awards and an award for excellence in historical research at the annual Loudoun County Public School Social Science Fair. It meets at the Library the second Wednesday of each month at 7 PM. 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](http://www.balchfriends.org).

**Black History Committee of Friends of Thomas Balch Library, Inc.**, meets at the Library the fourth Tuesday of every month at 7 PM. The public is always welcome. For information visit: [www.balchfriends.org](http://www.balchfriends.org).

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: [www.leesburgva.gov/ThomasBalchLibrary/publications](http://www.leesburgva.gov/ThomasBalchLibrary/publications) or follow us on Facebook. Thomas Balch Library is located at 208 W. Market St., Leesburg, VA 20176.