

Founders' Day event on June 25 to include encampments, food, fun for the whole family – and it's free!



John Harris, Jr. greets young visitors on the mansion porch.

Round up the children and grandchildren and bring them to the Harris-Cameron Mansion on Saturday, June 25, for a day of fun, entertainment, and learning at Founders' Day, an exploration of frontier and Colonial life known to both John Harris, Sr. and Jr.

Harris, Sr. had come from England in the early 1700s and operated a ferry and trading post at what was known as Harris' Ferry. In 1727 his son John, Jr. was born and by 1748

took over his father's businesses. In 1766 Harris built his stone mansion, earned a good reputation with the native peoples with whom he traded, and died in 1791. It is in this era that we place our Founders' Day celebration.

Founders' Day is open from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The day's activities will include military encampments of the 1st Pennsylvania Regiment and the Donegal Riflemen, a Native American encampment, crafts and games for kids with staff from Fort Hunter Mansion and Park, storytelling, food vendors, and the Popcorn Hat Players – a kids' favorite – at 11:00 a.m. John Harris, Jr. himself will be here to talk about his life at Harris' Ferry, Harrisburg's earliest settlement. The kids will also have the chance to dress up in Colonial garb, so bring your camera!

The day is free of charge and open to the public, with plenty of free parking in PinnacleHealth lots nearby. Tours of the Mansion will be available at no cost to Historical Society members and at the discounted rate of \$5 for visitors 17 and older. For more information, phone our office at (717) 233-3462 or visit our website at www.dauphincountyhistory.org. A calendar of events is found on page 3. in this issue of *The Oracle*.



FOUNDED 1869

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To collect, preserve, exhibit, publish, and promote interest in the history of Dauphin County for the education, enjoyment and benefit of the public.

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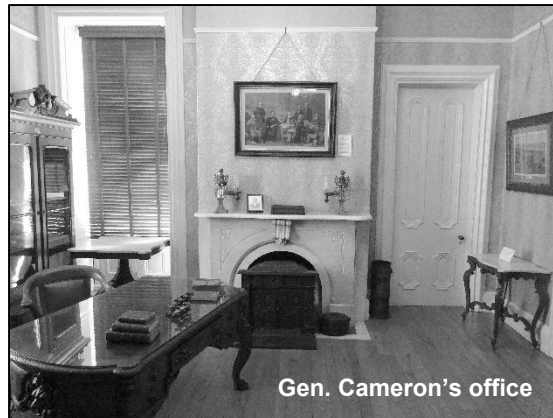
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Restoration and refurnishing of mansion continue as wallpaper comes and goes



With your support and that of other individuals, institutions, and businesses, we have been able to continue the first large-scale restoration of the National Historic Landmark mansion since the 1980s. Exterior restoration is virtually complete.

This spring appropriate wallpaper was hung in the area just outside the solarium and in the office of Gen. Simon Cameron. Modern paper was removed the former "toy room," which has been painted as the first step to converting that space into a lady's dressing room, where vintage clothing and accessories from our collections will be exhibited.

A plan has been drawn up to restore Cameron's solarium with its 19th-century French wallpaper in need of repainting and restoration of the marble flooring. Donors are being sought to fund this project.

This spring our Facilities Committee tackled the gardens with the aid of garden clubs and master gardeners, taking first steps to re-casting the gardens into the Victorian style appropriate for the house left to us by Simon Cameron's family in 1941. Future projects include stabilization and restoration of limestone and brick walls and iron fencing surrounding the historic house.

Research library expands hours to include two Sundays a month; yearbook collection grows

The Alexander Research Library, where you can work on your family tree, research local history, or find your parents in their yearbooks, is now open from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on the second and fourth Sundays



each month, as well as the same hours every week from Tuesday through Friday. Use of the library by members of the Historical Society is absolutely free. Hours have been expanded in order to better serve our members and researchers who depend on our large collections of manuscripts, publications, maps, and photographs.

Anniversary Celebration continues year-long

Clip and save this handy calendar to make sure you don't miss any of our exciting, entertaining, and educational events. If you don't see a sponsor's name listed, we invite you to consider being a program sponsor. Please call our office at 233-3462.



July 4 10 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

INDEPENDENCE DAY AT THE MANSION

John Harris, Jr., reads the Declaration as he did in 1776. Readings at 10:00, 11:00, noon from the front porch. Free. Sponsored by David W. Volkman.

October 1 7:00 p.m.

COLONIAL TAVERN NIGHT

John Harris, Jr. provides food, fun, games, music, and fine whiskey tasting right in his own home. Tickets required.

October 28 7:00 and 8:30 p.m.

GHOST TOURS OF THE MANSION

Spooky stories of eerie events that took place in Dauphin County. Tickets required. Sponsored by LeRoy S. Zimmerman.

October 30 2:00 p.m.

SCHOLARLY SYMPOSIUM:

"SIMON CAMERON RECONSIDERED"

The life of Cameron will be examined by distinguished scholars and authors in a panel discussion.

November 19 7:00 p.m.

A GALA VICTORIAN DINNER

Feast as the Victorians did with our very own spectacular menu. Tickets required.

December 11 1:00 to 6:00 p.m.

CHRISTMAS AT THE MANSION & HOLIDAY MARKET

Decorations, Santa Claus, and a first-class craft market featuring some of the region's best artisans. Admission fee for non-members. Holders of HHA House Tour tickets are admitted free.

State Museum archaeologist to speak at June 12 open house



Kurt Carr, Senior Curator of Archaeology at the State Museum of Pennsylvania and author of "First Pennsylvanians: The Archaeology of Native Americans," will speak on Sunday, June 12, at 2:30

p.m. in the Victorian Parlor of

the mansion. Carr will discuss the story of Native Americans in the area that became Harrisburg.

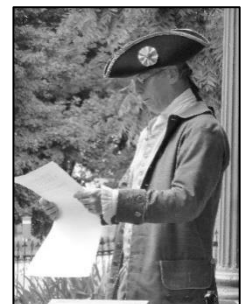
Carr is a graduate of Franklin and Marshall College and has earned a PhD in anthropology from the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. In recent years, Carr and the staff of the Section of Archaeology have performed work at Fort Hunter Mansion, identifying and excavating features around the smoke house foundation and at the back porch, where a number of Native American trade goods have been found.

Copies of Dr. Carr's book will be available for purchase.

Watch your e-mail and Facebook posts for details on other events in our Sunday speakers series, sponsored THE HALL FOUNDATION.

Independence Day at the Mansion coming in July

Don't miss our annual reading of the Declaration of Independence, just as John Harris, Jr. did shortly after a copy of the Declaration arrived in Harrisburg in 1776. The Rev. David Biser, member of our Board of Trustees, and a well-known



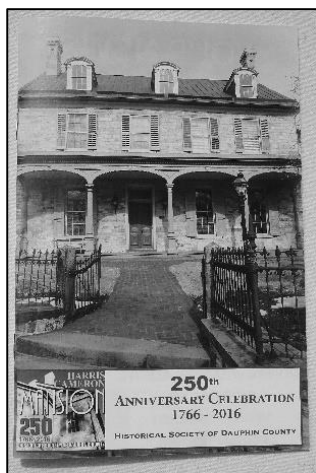
portrayer of Harris, will read from the front porch at 10:00 and 11:00 a.m. and noon. And don't be surprised if some other interesting characters from the past show up.

Tours of the mansion and Anniversary Exhibit will follow the readings. This popular annual event is made possible by a generous gift from David W. Volkman.



Your Historical Society does its best to keep you informed of the activities you support with your membership. There is *The Oracle*, of course, and more frequent e-mail communications about upcoming events. (Make sure we have your email address!) We also invite you to "like" us on Facebook, where you will find almost daily posts of interest to our more than 1,000 Facebook friends. If you are not already on Facebook, it's easy to register and use, even if all you ever look at is the Society's page.

Do you have a copy of our Anniversary Booklet?



We've produced a handsome – and handy -- commemorative booklet with a greeting from the Board of Trustees, a history of the Harris-Cameron Mansion complete with photos, a list of sponsors, and ads from our many

supporters. If you would like to have a copy, please stop in the Society office Tuesday-Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. or at any event in the mansion.

Invite a friend to join – and save!

Now through the end of the year, we are offering a discount of \$5.00 on each new membership. *You* already know the benefits of membership. Now tell your friends and send them our way to enjoy all of this year's special events. That same discount will apply if you wish to give a gift membership. A form is provided on page 7. of *The Oracle*.

Exhibit tells story of house and beginnings of Harrisburg

The anniversary exhibits now in place (both outside and inside the mansion) include a history of native peoples of the area, the mansion and its residents, and the community that became Harrisburg. You are invited to see the exhibit (included with free admission) anytime the mansion is open for tours.

We wish to thank those who contributed to the success of the exhibit, which runs through the end of 2016.

Nancy Mendes, *designer*

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250th Anniversary Membership Special

Take \$5.00 off any new membership for 2016

Already a member? Increase your membership to \$250 or above and receive a signed copy of *Harrisburg and the Susquehanna River* by Erik V. Fasick, published in 2015.



All Members of the Historical Society receive the following benefits for one year:

- Unlimited admission to the Harris-Cameron Mansion and Alexander Research Library
- Free admission and advance notice of programs, exhibits and events.
- Access to member-only programs and tours.
- A subscription to the HSDC newsletter, *The Oracle*.
- 10% discount in the Museum Shop.
- A free tour of Fort Hunter Mansion with your membership card.



Discount on an individual membership to the Pennsylvania Heritage Foundation®. A \$50 value for only an additional \$27 (includes free admission for one to the historic sites and museums of the Pennsylvania Trails of History®, a subscription to Pennsylvania Heritage® magazine, a 10% discount on ShopPAHeritage.com, and Time Travelers privileges, which may offer discounts at museums and historic sites around Pennsylvania.)

Premier Circle members receive additional benefits:

- Heritage Circle \$55 – A complimentary group tour for up to 6 people.
 - Haldeman Circle \$100 – A 5% discount on a rental for a private event.
 - Cameron Circle \$250 – Exclusive Curator's tour of the mansion; and a 10% discount on rental for a private event.
 - Harris Circle \$500 – Benefits above and a 20% discount on rental for a private event.
 - Penn Circle \$1000 – Benefits above, two complimentary tickets to Victorian Dinner, free rental for a private event.
- Additional contribution \$_____. In memory/honor of _____.

<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$15	<input type="checkbox"/> Haldeman Circle	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$35	<input type="checkbox"/> Cameron Circle	\$250
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- ☐ Please sign me up for Pennsylvania Heritage Foundation® Membership. (Enclose separate check for \$27 payable to "Pennsylvania Heritage Foundation.")
- ☐ I am interested in volunteering. Please contact me with volunteer opportunities.

Consult your tax advisor concerning memberships. A copy of the official registration and financial information of the Historical Society of Dauphin County may be obtained from the PA Dept. of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Adopt-an-Artifact program will benefit collections

In researching objects for exhibition during the Anniversary Year, a number of important pieces were found to be in need of restoration. These objects are being gathered into one of the rooms on the second floor of the mansion, and each is labeled with the estimated cost of restoration.

If restoration is something you would like to do (alone or share with family and friends), please ask to see what artifacts are still available for you to "adopt."

Your name will be included in the permanent records, and a special tour will be arranged for you to see the object before and after restoration – and to be photographed with it for our newsletter and website. If you wish, you may remain anonymous.

Additional objects will be added over time. Call us

Here are examples of objects in the Adopt-an-Artifact program.

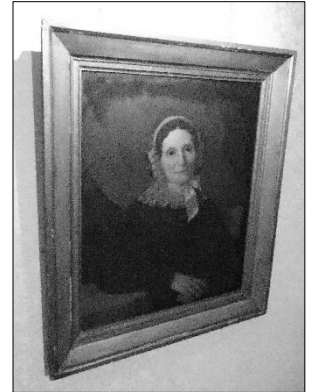


The plain design of the chest of drawers above indicates its modest beginnings, while the portrait at right is of high quality.



This early musical instrument can be made to play again. You'll hear sounds from the past!

Rebecca Orth Reily (1796-1854) was painted by Pennsylvania artist John F. Francis (1808-1886).



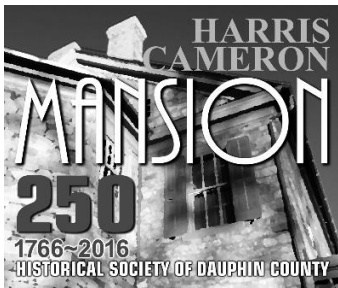
This large 19th century painting of a pastoral scene with sheep is in need of professional cleaning. Its gilt frame shows significant damage, with missing portions than can be replicated.

The upholstered divan to the right is believed to have been part of the furnishings of the mansion while the Cameron family was in residence. Its upholstery is torn and its stuffing falling out. The chair belonged to Simon Cameron and may well have been in his office. Imagine what dignitaries may have sat in it.



Is it evident that the Cameron chair, while still sturdy, needs cleaning. Reproduction fabrics can approximate the look of the original.





**To our 250th Anniversary
year donors we say thanks
for making possible this
year's celebration.**

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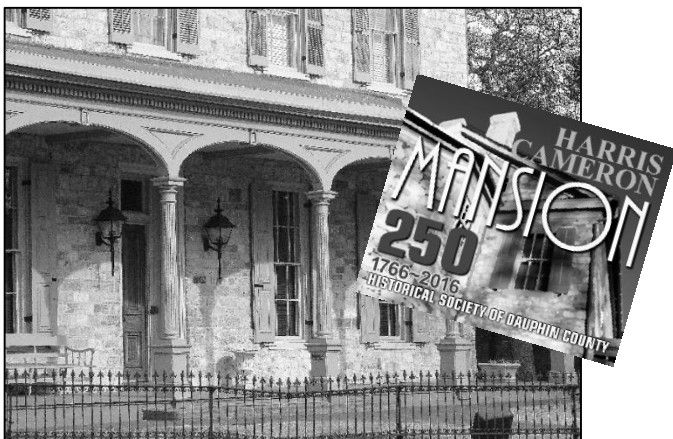
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FOUNDERS' DAY: A CELEBRATION OF HARRIS' FERRY AND ITS MANSION

Free! Saturday, June 25
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
See our lead story!

Artisans sought for Holiday Market

It may seem early, but it's time to invite regional artisans to display and sell their wares at our Holiday Market on December 11. Last year a number of first-class artisans participated, providing visitors with a variety of traditional handcrafted items to grace their homes. Nearly 450 visitors toured the Mansion and enjoyed this show. Those interested in participating should call the office at 233-3462 and ask for additional information. New artisans will then be asked to submit photographs for judging. A fee is charged for the limited number of spaces in the show. We're looking forward to another top-notch show in our Anniversary Year.



Leather and soap
artisan Kari Hultman

FOR SALE. The Society is offering for sale a two-story building at 311 South River Street, Harrisburg, zoned for office/retail/studio space, and which may qualify as two apartments. This is a unique investment opportunity. If you or someone you know is interested in this valuable property, which includes a parking lot with 24 spaces, please visit our website or email realtor Nikolas Sgagias at nsgagias@naicir.com. The price was recently reduced.