



NEWSLETTER Number 13

June - July 2013

The Friends of Two Rivers Mansion, a 501(c)(3) organization 3130 - McGavock Pike, Nashville, TN 37214

Message from Board President, Phil Howard – I hope you were able to attend “Phil the House” on Sunday, May 19th; the weather was wonderful, the Dan Quest “Tennessee Woodcuts” exhibit was amazing, and a good time was had by all. If you were not able to attend, “Phil the House” will be back in May of 2014. Much sooner than May of next year is our 2013 series opener of Music at the Mansion; City Limits Band will rock the house on June 15th, from 7:00 until 10:00 p.m. (times approximate). Admission is free for members of “Friends”, as at all Friends of Two Rivers Mansion sponsored events; non-member admission is \$5 per person or \$20 per family/carload. Food will be available for purchase from Rose Mary Lane’s catering, a “Friends” member and sponsor. The 2013 Music at the Mansion Concert Series is sponsored in part by Friends of Two Rivers Mansion, Metro Parks, Thornton’s, SunBelt Rentals, MPD Community Credit Union, and Ryman Hospitality Properties. Information and opportunity regarding becoming a member of Friends of Two Rivers mansion will be available before and during the concert. Put the date on your calendar, June 15, get your lawn chair or blanket ready to travel, and be prepared for a night of outstanding rock n’ roll with a bit of country.

Phil Howard, president

Phase Four of Restoration Work complete – Almost 18 months ago the complete exterior renovation of the Mansion and the 1802 House begun. The work was done in four phases and as of this month all the work has been completed. The last two items of work that are most noticeable was the completion of an reinforced concrete ADA ramp with entry into the Mansion at the west most entrance on the north façade and the incredible indirect digital lighting to the east façade. A drive by the mansion after dark is well worth the awesome image at the far end of the drive. A fifth phase of work remains to be done inside with the remaining dollars left in the budget. Prioritizing of interior needs has been done and addressing the interior paint on the main floor remains one of the higher priorities.

Bransford- Blundin Mirror Returns Home to the Mansion: As more and more people learn of the formation of the Friends of Two Rivers and its success in restoring the Mansion to its former glory, several items have been donated and have returned home. The most recent of these items is the Italian mantel mirror that hung in the double parlors of the Mansion along with its twin. Both were mostly likely a purchase from the parents of Spence McGavock's wife, Mr. & Mrs. William S. Bransford. In the estate sale of Mary Louise McGavock in 1966, the twin mirrors were not sold as a pair. William



Bransford Blundin (2nd cousin) purchased one of the pair and had it moved to his home in New York City. Mr Blundin retired in 2010 and moved to Florida and the mirror remained in storage in New York until being donated back to Two Rivers Mansion in September 2012. The 75"x95 in", 400 lb, Italian Rococo style gold gild framed mirror was in fair condition and dates between 1775- 1830. There had been some old repairs, some parts missing and areas that gold leaf had been painted. Reed's Gold Leaf Studios were called in to give a restoration estimate. Micki & Mitch Cavanah have worked on many of Two Rivers Mansion's gold frames and mirrors over the years. With all repairs and the cost of gold the grand total was over \$10,000.00. Mr. Blundin came to visit Two Rivers in October of last year and had not seen the mirror in many years. He was told about the cost of repairs and he graciously made the donation to fully fund the restoration

project. The mirror was moved to Reed's studio in Feb. 2013 and is now completely restored and hanging in its original place in the Mansion.

Membership Has Its Privilege – Friends of Two Rivers members are admitted free to all Friends events at the Mansion by showing the membership card. That makes the cost of membership a great investment and you will not miss any of the exciting things planned for the 2013 program year. Take this opportunity to mark your calendar now for the following dates:

Sunday, May 19 - Phil the House with Art and Friends (annual membership meeting)

Saturday, June 15 - Music at the Mansion (Rock n' Roll by the City Limits Band)

Saturday, July 20 - Music at the Mansion (Big Band music by the Moonlighters)

Saturday, August 17 - Music at the Mansion (Nashville Blues Society)

Saturday, Sept. 7 - Music at the Mansion (Contemporary Christian)

Saturday Oct 26 - Halloween at the Mansion

Friday, Saturday, Sunday, December 13, 14, 15 - Historic Holiday Tours

Plans are currently under way to have the Mansion open for tours on a limited basis on Wednesday afternoons from 1 to 4 p.m. This offering will begin this month and continue during the summer months.

Mansion History – In the last couple of newsletters it was noted that William Harding purchased the 1802 House and the surrounding land in 1819. The 1100 acre farm was named after the “Two Rivers” that formed the east and west boundaries of the estate.

William married Elizabeth Clopton in 1830 and died shortly before their first child was born in 1832. The baby was expected to be a boy and the couple had planned to name him after his father. Instead, a little girl was born and was named after her father as planned. She was named Mary William Elizabeth Harding but would be known as Willie. Elizabeth and her baby lived with her uncle John Clopton and his wife until she remarried when Willie was two years old. Her marriage to Francis (Frank) Owen resulted in a move to Memphis where he served as a Methodist minister. Willie returned to Nashville when the Owens sent her back to attend the Nashville Female Academy. During her time in Nashville she would often visit her father’s family at Belle Meade where she met her second cousin David McGavock. Their fondness for each other led to love and their marriage in 1850.

The couple moved to Willie’s inheritance at Two Rivers where they would make their home for the next 45 years. The construction of the Mansion began in 1859. When the Civil War broke out, David did not enlist and was imprisoned for a time in Nashville as a Confederate sympathizer but by the 1870’s the estate had developed into a thriving stock farm known for a number of crops including cotton, corn, vegetables, orchards in addition to numerous livestock, a dairy operation and race horses which proved to be David’s passion. One document states that there were over fifty buildings on the property at one time such as barns, horse stalls, tenant houses and sheds. Many of these buildings were destroyed by a tornado in 1933.

David became well known as the primary breeder of the Morgan horses. The Morgan horse breed had originated in Vermont as a compact breed, generally bay, black or chestnut in color. They were used as coach horses, cavalry mounts and for harness racing which was David’s forte. One of the most famous of the Morgan horses, Ben Franklin, was purchased by a stock company owned by David and his uncle, General William Hicks Jackson, for \$8,000 in 1890.

Members are encouraged to get involved as a volunteer- It goes without saying that producing a year of events at the Mansion is a lot of work. Much of that work to date has been shouldered by the Board of Directors and and some willing spouses. One way to get the most out of your Friends membership is to involve yourself as a volunteer. Multiple opportunities are open on various committees that are diverse enough to cover most interest areas. In addition to Event committee work (planning, set up, event support, clean up) other areas include Membership, Fundraising/Sponsorship, Marketing, Nominating, and volunteer enlistment. Each of these committees have a Board member as chair and plenty of room for interested members who want to be involved. Please consider serving in some capacity. If you need more information before deciding just make your questions known by return e-mail and someone will follow up with you.

Memberships – Memberships for “The Friends of Two Rivers” are available in categories that range from a minimum of \$20 a year up to corporate memberships of \$2,000 a year. **All membership fees are considered donations and are, therefore, tax deductible.** The **Basic**

Memberships are listed below and anyone that might be interested in using the Mansion for an event can choose from one of **Event Membership** categories which will be determined at a time of consultation with the Two Rivers Mansion Events Coordinator, Laura Carrillo. She can be reached at 615-885-1112 or laura.carrillo@nashville.gov . Corporate membership levels and benefits can be explained by contacting Mrs. Carrillo or any member of the Friends Board.

BASIC Membership for Friends of Two Rivers Mansion includes:

- I. Senior citizen or Student - \$20 annual or \$55 for 3 years
- II. Individual - \$25 annual or \$65 for 3 years
- III. Family - \$50 or \$125 for 3 years

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Enclosed is \$ _____ for my tax-deductible membership.

Make check payable to: The Friends of Two Rivers

Mail check to: 3130 McGavock Pike, Nashville, TN 37214

Most events at the Mansion that have an admission fee but are free to members who show their membership card.

During the 2013-14 membership year, anyone who subscribes to a one-year Supporting Membership at the \$150.00 level will receive a signed and numbered limited edition print of the Mansion as a gift. The un-framed print is currently valued at \$75.00.

New Merchandise and Credit Cards – Friends related merchandise will be available at all Friend’s sponsored events as well as from the website. Items available for purchase includes prints of the Mansion and 1802 House, note cards, Friends of Two Rivers T-shirts in a variety of colors, tote bags as well as a number of salvaged items from the restoration. We are able to accept credit cards for the purchase of Friends merchandise as well as for membership fees. The website at www.friendsoftworiversmansion.org or www.friendsoftworiversmansion.com also offers a PayPal link for the purchase of merchandise in addition to paying for memberships. Donations can also be made using the PayPal link.

Phil Claiborne

Founder