



NEWSLETTER Number 15

October – November 2013

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

Phase 5 Restoration Has Begun –Based on the interior needs assessment that was completed by contractor Gary Grau and Parks representative Tim Netsch six different project areas were identified for attention in this 5th phase of work. The largest of the projects will focus on the trim paint for all interior wood and trim downstairs in addition to repairs to the interior doors/hardware and plaster repair. In addition, all newel posts, balusters and handrails will be examined for needed repair or replacement on both stairways and plaster repairs will be made in numerous locations in the house in addition to some tile repair in the bathrooms. The total amount of these repairs will exceed the balance left in the restoration account but the Friends Board voted at its last meeting to approve funds to cover the balance in order to complete work on all needs that have currently been identified.

An additional roof repair will be necessary to replace standing seam copper roofing over the north elevation bathroom and this expense will be covered by the Parks Department as part of normal upkeep for the Mansion. Once phase 5 is complete the Mansion will have undergone a complete restoration/renovation and could be considered to be in as good a condition as its been in since the late 1800's.

Mansion History – During the fall of 1875 a highlight of the social season was the marriage of David and Willie's 23 year old son Frank to Lula Spence of Murfreesboro. Their son Spence was born a year later and a daughter, Willie, was born in 1880. She did not survive a childhood disease and died at 18 months. Lula died five months later of what many believe was grief over the loss of her daughter.

Frank remarried Clara Plimpton in August 1896. Clara was a Nashville physician who had established her practice in 1878 and her entry into the family had a significant impact on the future of the estate. As mentioned in the last installment of this history, the Two Rivers Farm was a thriving stock farm known for Morgan Horse breeding. In 1890 David and his uncle, Gen

William Hicks Jackson, paid \$8,000 for a Morgan Horse stallion named Ben Franklin. In 1891 Willie and David transferred the ownership of the farm and the debt to their son Frank.

In 1893 a financial depression began that would last four years and resulted in massive business failures and bank closures and by the time of David's death in 1896, Frank was borrowing money from multiple sources and finding it increasingly difficult to keep the farm solvent. Things were bad enough that Clara asked for a prenuptial agreement to be signed prior to she and David's wedding in August 1896.

Failure after failure to make good on the loans combined with the acquisition of additional debt resulted in a Chancery Court ruling in February 1898 which set a deadline for all encumbrances to be cleared or the farm would be advertised for sale on the Courthouse steps.

(Credit for the research that's abbreviated in this and the next installment goes to Barbara Franklin and Carolyn Sullivan who co-authored a booklet entitled *Dr. Clara C. Plimpton McGavock: An Unlikely Mistress of Two Rivers*. Their book is available for purchase at any Friends of Two Rivers events.)

Music at the Mansion – The last of the 2013 Music at the Mansion series was held in September and the response of those attending one or more of the four concerts has been great. The series is already in the planning stages for 2014 and two of the four dates have already been booked. The dates for next summer are:

Saturday, June 21 – The Moonlighters (a 24 piece big band orchestra)

Saturday, July 19 – unconfirmed

Saturday, August 16 – The Nashville Blues Society returns for a third time

Saturday, Sept 20 – unconfirmed

These are outdoor events and attendees are encouraged to bring lawn chairs/blankets for the lawn. Cooler and snacks from home are allowed but excellent catered food is also available from RoseMary Lane Catering. These are dates that should go on every calendar and events that should not be missed.

Halloween at the Mansion – The next Friends event at the Mansion is rapidly approaching for Saturday, October 26th. Halloween at the Mansion is free to the public and provides a safe, family friendly alternative to Trick or Treating. From 4 pm til 8 pm the grounds will be open and feature a candy trail around the circular drive, hay rides, costume contests, music, ghost stories, a haunted house and more. This event is in partnership with local businesses who take the advantage to advertise their product/service along the candy trail. A donation of \$50 secures a table along the trail and the donation is fully tax deductible. Anyone interested in having a business or organization represented in this year's event should contact Laura Carrillo at 885-1112 or Phil Claiborne at 889-2907. Space is limited so don't delay, this is always heavily attended and is a great fun event.

Summer tours of the Mansion deemed a success – The Mansion has been open for tours on a limited basis this summer to test the need for this kind of access to the property. The response has been good enough that plans will be made to offer more opportunities for people to learn of the history of the property and the people who have lived there in the coming year. In order to be successful in doing this there is a need for volunteers who would like to train as docents

for the Mansion in preparation for the 2014 season. Anyone interested in receiving this docent training can e-mail phil.claiborne@nashville.gov or by calling 889-2907 .

Friends of Two Rivers Merchandise – Friends related merchandise is 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. The recently published booklet entitled *Dr. Clara C. Plimpton McGavock: An Unlikely Mistress of Two Rivers* is also now available. The proceeds from the sale of these items goes to support the work of the Friends of Two Rivers in their efforts to preserve the Mansion and its history in addition to providing opportunities for the community at large to experience the Manison. Purchases are also tax deductible.

Through the end of the year a special offer is open to anyone who takes a new 1 year supporting membership at \$150 or who upgrades their present membership to the \$150 level for one year. As an incentive to be involved with the Friends at this level, you will receive one of the signed and numbered limited edition prints of the Mansion. This is the same print that sells for \$150 framed and matted.

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 .

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 are free to members who show their membership card.

Consider End of Year Giving – At this time of the year many businesses and individuals begin to look at their income tax liability with an eye on how to reduce the amount the tax man will take before the next tax deadline. One option that's often part of such consideration is to give a gift to a tax exempt organization that can provide proof of the gift for tax filing purposes. The Friends of Two Rivers is classified as a 501(c)(3) Tax Exempt Charity and would be a great place to invest dollars that would otherwise go to the Federal Treasury. Now that the exterior renovation has been completed the next phase of work at the Mansion will begin to address a Master Plan for the site and how the grounds will be improved. Your dollars could play an important part in the continuing efforts to bring Two Rivers back to its former glory. Anyone interested in such a gift can contact Willie McDonald, the Treasurer of the Friends of Two Rivers for more information. He can be reached at the Donelson Cedarstone Bank location at 874-3545

Phil Claiborne

Founder