



NEWSLETTER Number 22

January - February 2015

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

Message from Board President, Phil Claiborne - It's hard to believe that we are standing on the threshold of our 5th year as a Friends group. It was February 4, 2010 when I first sat down in the Mansion with Tommy Lynch, Parks Director; Tim Walker, Robin Zeigler and Tara Mielnik, Metro Historic; Dot Hunter and Carolyn Sullivan, Stones River Woman's Club, to review an assessment of the exterior of the Mansion that had just been completed by Tim and his staff and to discuss the advantages of forming a 501 organization to help with addressing the detonation and other needs of the Mansion. Almost five years later the Mansion is now in better condition than it's been in since the late 1800's and thousands of people have had to opportunity to come to the Mansion to enjoy its beauty, learn of its history and experience the varied entertainment options that have become part of our annual calendar of events.

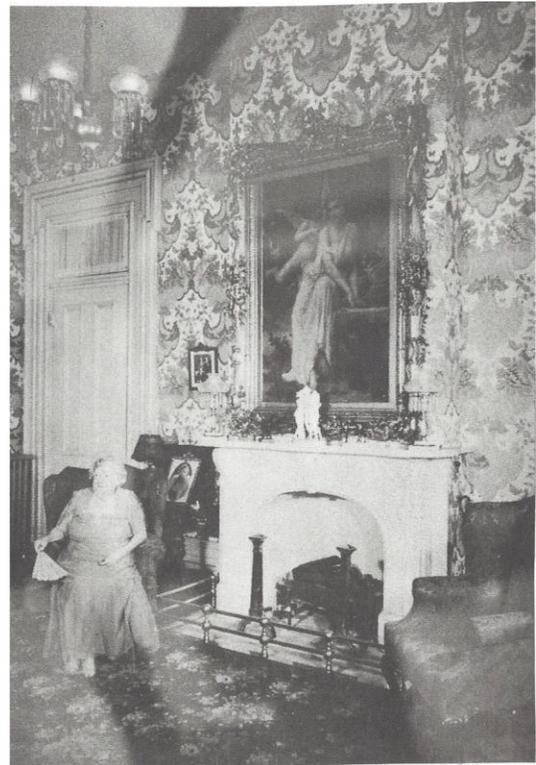
This level of accomplishment could not have been possible without the dedication and commitment of a tremendous Board of Directors and the support of the Mayor's Office, the Parks Director and Parks Board, the Director of the Historic Commission and staff and a loyal membership to support the our efforts as a young and growing organization. Now that a strong base is in place, the next five years hold unlimited potential for making Two Rivers Mansion a premier destination in Metro Nashville.

Mansion History - In December 1964 Leona Taylor Aiken conducted an interview with Mrs. Mary Louise Bransford McGavock for the first Progress Edition of the *Donelson News-Dairy* which was published in January 1965. She relates this event in a book she published in 1975 called *The McGavocks of Two Rivers*. In this, and the next two editions of this newsletter, I will be sharing Mrs. Aiken's recounting of that interview which gives a glimpse into the Mansion during the days of its last permanent resident/owner.

“When she telephoned me to set a time for the interview, Mrs. McGavock's voice was hoarse and scratchy. She was having difficulty talking, and of necessity, our conversation was short. At the appointed time, I walked up to the veranda between two holly trees heavy with scarlet berries. A large magnolia tree shaded the right corner of the house. I stood before the sixteen foot tall carved double doors of Two Rivers Mansion and pulled the brass knocker. One of Mrs. McGavock's nurse-companions admitted me and left me in the crowded “television room” on the right side of the wide entrance hall. The furniture was upholstered in needlepoint. I waited on a lumpy sofa with hard springs while looking curiously around at the family photographs lining the walls, and resting on every flat surface. A picture of Mrs. McGavock in her wedding dress hung on one wall.

Despite her age (86) and infirmities, Mrs. McGavock swept swiftly and gracefully into the room. She was a small person, with a direct gaze though her eyes appeared clouded. She greeted me pleasantly and said she would be happy to show me around her home. She identified some of the people in the pictures and pointed out the lovely tinted picture of her wearing a large summer hat which was one of her favorites.

We crossed the broad hall into the large twin parlors. They were the most beautiful, brighter and well-kept rooms in the house. She said the wallpaper came from England. There were identical rugs of soft shades of blue and rose in each room, twin imported Italian marble fireplaces surmounted



by large ornate mirrors in gold frames, and identical sparkling crystal chandeliers.

Mrs. McGavock identified the McGavocks in the four large pictures on the wall as the Felix Grundy McGavocks (her maternal grandparents) and the Jacob McGavocks (her maternal great-grandparents). On a mantel were miniatures of her parents, William and Manoah McGavock Bransford. I remarked that she resembled her mother. “Oh, no” she quickly corrected me, “I look like my father” with evident pride in her voice, as if to say, “I was Daddy’s girl,” (which she was-an only child). Also there was a miniature of her cousin Randal McGavock who was Mayor of Nashville in 1858.”
(The McGavocks of Two Rivers, 1975, page 2)

New Board Members - Many thanks go out to the three Board members whose terms are ending. Todd Henry, Jerry Allen and John Hobbs Jr. have all played important roles during these early formative years of the Friends group and a simple “Thank You” seems small for their many contributions. Beginning with the new year three new members will be filling their vacancies on the Board for three year terms. Greg Hinote, business man, former Chief of Staff for Congressman Jim Cooper and currently serving as Deputy Mayor of Metro Nashville-Davidson County, Tammy Daughtry, extensive background in event production, author, speaker and founder/CEO of Modern Family Dynamics, and Angie Brown, educator with experience in museum and historic site operation and currently serving as director of Tulip Grove Preschool. Each of these individuals bring unique backgrounds and experiences that will help us move the Friends of Two Rivers to the next level during their terms and we welcome them and look forward to their contributions.

American Revival Full Tester (Canopy) Bed on Loan to the Mansion- In recent months a loan arrangement has been reached with the heirs of the Robert Orr family to display a four post canopy, or tester bed, circa 1850s. The bed is described as “transitional late Classical into Rococo Revival period, constructed of flame-grained mahogany veneered on pine. Ogee cornice having rounded corners, supported on four cluster-column style posts terminating in octagonal bases. Arched and paneled



headboard with scroll molded top edges adorned a central shell flanked by volutes and sided fans with C scrolls. Serpentine side rails and footboard, each with a carved bed is believed to have been originally owned by the McGavock family of Two Rivers Plantation, Nashville.

It was purchased by Robert Orr of Nashville and his wife, Annie, from Spence McGavock sometime around 1900 when Robert and Annie married (this would have been around the time of a severe recession following the financial panic of 1893, which resulted in Spence McGavock leasing out the farm in order to keep from losing the property altogether, also around the time his stepmother, Dr. Clara Plimpton McGavock, who was living at Two Rivers, passed away.”

The bed is accompanied by an American “Wig” dresser which is “transitional late Classical/early Rococo Revival period, 1840-1860. The dresser is a two piece construction with carved pediment with central shell flanked by acanthus/scrolls, over a veneered frieze. It has a central rectangular mirror flanked by two cupboard doors opening to narrow interior compartments, each with shelves and a small drawer.



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The lower case has a partial white marble top over three graduated drawers with round wood pulls and accented with ripple or ribbon molding, and is raised on ogee bracket feet. Dresser has descended with the bed and is believed to have also been originally purchased for Two Rivers Plantation.”

Friends Event Calendar For 2015 - One of the benefits of being a Friends member is having free admission to all Friends sponsored events during the membership year. Going ahead to mark these dates on the calendar will insure maximum benefit of your Friends membership in 2015.

February 13-14-15 - Two Hearts Antique and Craft Show
May 17 - Phil the House with Art and Friends
June 18 - The Nashville Symphony
July 18 - The Moonlighters Big Band Orchestra
August 15 - The Nashville Blues Society
October 24 - Halloween at the Mansion
December 11-12-13 Holiday Tours

In addition to the events listed a schedule will be published later for tours that will be conducted beginning in the late spring and continuing into the early fall.

Since the Friends of Two Rivers is an all volunteer organization, It goes without saying that the conduct of an activity schedule such as this requires support from the membership. If you are interested in volunteering to help for one or more of the events listed above please get in touch with me or one of the Board members so we can talk with you about the needs for each event.

Friends Gift Shoppe - The decision to create a gift shoppe located in the 1802 House has been a huge success. Those attending the last Music at the Mansion event in August were the first to be able to come inside the 1802 House and expressed their excitement at being able to see the inside of the earliest McGavock home. During December, the Christmas tours originated in the House and proved to be such a success that all tours going forward will start and end in the 1802 House Gift Shoppe. A variety of Items are available for purchase including prints of the Mansion and 1802 House, note cards, Friends of Two Rivers, T-shirts in a variety of colors, tote bags and 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. Any of these items would be great to add to your personal collection and would also make great gifts for a friend or

someone special in your life. 100% of the proceeds from the sale of Mansion merchandise goes directly into the promotion and upkeep of the Mansion and can be considered as a tax deductible donation. We are now able to accept payment from all your credit cards via SQUARE in addition to cash or check.

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 or \$3,000 for two years. All membership fees are considered donations and are, therefore, tax deductible. The Basic Memberships are listed below and anyone interested in using the Mansion for an event can choose from one of Event Membership or Supporting 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 .

All Friends events are free to members so the cost of membership is more than covered if you attend all the events that are offered during the year. Memberships also make a great gifts for friends and relatives.

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 _____

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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

Phil

Claiborne

Founder and President