

HAPPY NEW YEAR



NEWSLETTER Number 40

January - February 2018

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

Message from Board President, Larry Weber - I hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday. Christmas at Two Rivers is a special time with all the decorations. I hope each of you found time to come by the house and enjoy the Christmas spirit with the ladies who make the place so warm and inviting, even on the coldest days. Looking ahead, it will be my honor and privilege to serve as president of our Friends group through 2018; and as such I owe you all an early commitment to devote my energy and attention to fulfilling the responsibilities of that role. We have an important and full agenda for 2018; our board and all of our wonderful volunteers will be called upon to help do the work and make our plans and programs grow from concept to reality. The Friends of Two Rivers Mansion has come a long way in its seven years of existence and has accomplished much in setting the stage for a great future. Through 2018, we get to take an active part in safeguarding and shaping that future for the benefit of our community, its residents and visitors.

A great Thank You to all who worked and served in 2017, the officers and board members, the many volunteers who took hours of their time to help and participate in various programs, planning, decorating, parking cars, moving furniture and equipment, attending meetings, making calls, advertising, and just sharing of themselves and talents to make Two Rivers Mansion and better and more beautiful place. Your good work shows!

As we begin the year we will be focusing much attention upon two exciting initiatives, which include the design and construction of a separate event center on property behind the mansion and our first of several proposed educational themes designed for primary-school-age students. The vision for the event center is to provide an improved facility for community events and gatherings while taking that usage pressure off of the Mansion, thus allowing it to be better managed as a historic (museum) home reflective of its important role in the history of our city. One of the first educational programs will concern the history of slave life on the Two Rivers plantation property. Slavery is often overlooked in the historical picture of how life existed at the time when large plantation homes like Two Rivers were built and prospered. It is our intent to treat this important subject honestly and with the sensitivity and openness it deserves. The educational programs will represent an important step forward in preserving our history and sharing it with new generations, who will undoubtedly be challenged to view the world as it once was, with elements of grandeur along with all its imperfections and limitations. I find it challenging myself and am excited with the opportunity to learn.

Wishing the best of a new year for each of you and thanking you for being a part of this experience, I am looking forward to working with you through the year.

Property History - Willie Barrow was a prominent Nashville businessman and plantation owner during the late 18th and early 19th century. He was born in 1770 in North Carolina and first settled in Nashville in 1795 when he purchased 290 acres along Sycamore Creek, an area between what is today Lower Broad and the City Cemetery. His father, Micajah Barrow, acquired land grants from the state of North Carolina that were left to Willie upon his death in 1805. For more than twenty years Barrow traded in both land and slaves on a consistent basis and in 1812 he purchased a 175 acre tract in McSpadden's Bend from John Arnold, who had purchased the land from David Buchanan. That would eventually become the Two Rivers Mansion property. He named the property Belmont but it's unclear if he ever lived there.

In 1812 an advertisement in the local newspaper stated that he had three plantations for rent. Two of the farms were listed as 8 miles above Nashville (east of the bend) and consisted of 75 acres each. Two years later, Barrow offered more property for lease. This time he tendered 250 acres in the bend which had 100 acres cleared for farming and which had a small house with four rooms downstairs and two rooms upstairs.

An interesting note to Willie Barrow's investment in McSpadden's Bend is that he was involved in the establishment of the Belmont Domestic (Female) Academy. Three years after his purchase of property in 1812, he offered the "large farm house owned by David Buchanan," located at today's site of Two Rivers Middle School, to John J.

Abercrombie and his wife, Sarah, for the purpose of opening a boarding school for girls. The school taught reading, writing, orthography, grammar, music, geography, needle point, drawing and painting. It lasted only a few years in the bend before the Abercrombie's moved the school into Nashville. Barrow, however, continued to support education in Nashville and in 1816, he became the founding director of the Nashville Female Academy. In the Panic of 1819, Barrow was forced to sell almost all of his holding including his home in downtown Nashville. He died in 1825 at the age of 55 and is buried in the City Cemetery.

2018 Officers and New Board Members - The officers for the Friends Board for 2018 are Larry Weber, President, Mary Hart, President Elect, Pam Huff, Secretary, and Robert McDonald, Treasurer. The Board will also welcome five new members for a three year term. This group includes Tony Barrow who is a communications expert, currently employed by XO Communications, Carla Davis who is employed by RH Boyd Publishing as a graphic design and layout artist, Sherri Forrest who is employed by the Southern Pharmacy Cooperative and is returning to the Board after a one year sabbatical, Mickey Sullivan who is the Senior Principal for Gresham, Smith and Partners, and Patricia Rudy Woods who is a business woman and historian of the early families of Pennington Bend.

Christmas Came Early This Year -

Christmas came early this year at the Mansion. On November 2nd a donation to the Mansion's collection was made by Mary Ann Hagewood. In addition to a large amount of research done by the late Jeanette Rudy related to the Mansion and the Pennington Bend area, five items were returned that were in the 1966 estate sale following Mrs. McGavock death. Those items included a candy dish, two vases and two decanters. These items can be seen in the display case located in the gentleman's parlor on your next visit to the Mansion.



Then in early December a copy of a short black and white film from the private film collection of Mrs. John O. White was delivered to the Park Department. A portion of the film shows Spence and Mary Louise walking around the grounds of the Mansion. In addition to the live images of the couple, another important piece of information is provided which has long been a mystery. The date of the film is noted as 1931 and one



segment shows a view of the fountain and a newly planted boxwood garden. The date of the garden has long been a source of puzzlement but based on the date of the film and the appearance of the plant material the mystery the garden's install can be now be narrowed to sometime between 1929 and 1930.

Event Center progress - The final stages of the Metro procurement process is taking place to move forward for a team to do the initial planning and creation of a design for the Two Rivers Event Center. Assuming this phase will be completed by the early spring, money for the construction phase to begin will hopefully be included in the 2018-19 Metro Budget. This projected timing would see the Center as a reality in late 2019 or early 2020. Once completed this structure will allow for a much more varied event calendar and for the Mansion to become more of a house museum and educational center.

Hip Donelson Farmer's Market - At the November Park Board meeting approval was given for the Hip Donelson Farmer's Market to be held on the grounds of the Mansion for the 2018 season. Previously the market has been held on the grounds of the Fifty Forward Center on Donelson Pike and most recently in the parking lot at ACE Hardware on Lebanon Road. The move to the Mansion grounds will provide a number of benefits for both the Mansion and for the Market. From the standpoint of the Market, parking will be less of a problem, the trees will provide a welcome relief from the summer sun and the surrounding will provide for a more relaxed and casual setting for those who visit the market. The Market will be held every Friday from 4 to 7 pm and will begin on May 4th which coincides with the beginning of the summer tour schedule for the Mansion. Plans are being made to provide additional Friends events that market patrons can take advantage of.

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 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 .

If your membership expired in 2017 and you have not renewed it, this will be the last newsletter you will receive.

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

Phil Claiborne

Founder/President Emeritus

Now that the 2018 Events Calendar has been set go ahead and mark these dates on your calendars so that you won't miss a single happening at the Mansion and so that you will get all the benefits your membership entitles you to.

FRIENDS OF TWO RIVERS MANSION 2018 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 16, 17, 18 - Two Hearts Antique and Craft Show

March 11 - Phil The House with Art and Friends
(Phil Ponder exhibit and technique demo)

April 15 - Family Day and Dog Adoption Day Event

April 27 - Evening at the Mansion Fund Raiser
(Details and reservation information will be available in the near future)

May 7 - Beginning of Summer Tours that run through the end of August

June 12 - Nashville Symphony (Symphony in the Park Series)

July 13-14 - Quilt Show

August or September - Music at the Mansion TBD

September - Nashville History seminar with Dr Carol Bucy
(Details will be available in late summer)

October 27 - Halloween at the Mansion