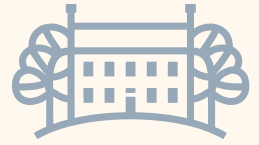


HISTORIC LOCUST GROVE GROVE GAZETTE



Remembering Preston Thomas — His Service and His Legacy ~ Carol Ely, Ph.D., Executive Director

Last fall, Locust Grove lost one of its greatest champions, **Preston Thomas**.

Preston Thomas' formal service on the Board as President, Treasurer, and Secretary was extensive and significant — and his behind-the-scenes presence was just as important to the success of Locust Grove over the two decades of his involvement here.

In 2003-2004, when Locust Grove was temporarily without most of its full-time staff, Preston served as the organization's acting Executive Director. He was there to support me when I became the ED in the spring of 2004, and continued to advise and quietly step in whenever needed until he became ill early last year. His attention to detail, kindness, and understated sense of humor have supported us all through these years of growth and change at Locust Grove.

Born Bowmer Preston Thomas in Washington, D.C., in 1944, he and his family relocated to Kentucky. Preston graduated from Louisville Country Day School and then attended Yale University and the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. He then trained in Internal Medicine at Vanderbilt University and Pathology at the University of Michigan. He served in Vietnam with the Army Medical Corps and was awarded a Bronze Star for his service.

Preston's specialty was Pathology, and he practiced at Suburban Hospital upon his return to Louisville. In 1984, he married Margaret ("Margy") Caldwell Harper, and became stepfather to her children, Noah David Harper III and Katherine Caldwell Harper. His family later grew to include grandchildren



In 2010, Preston Thomas received Locust Grove's highest award for volunteer service — the Audrey Pilkington Lifetime Achievement Award.

David Preston Caldwell Harper and Harriett Elizabeth "Libby" Gould, and his delight in becoming a grandfather was evident.

On retiring from medical practice, Preston spent time with his family and joined more actively in the life of the community, serving on the boards of a number of historical and cultural organizations. But Locust Grove became a focus for his work and his philanthropy when he joined the board in 1997, staying through the transition from Historic Homes Foundation to Historic Locust Grove, Inc.

His wife Margy says that Preston used to ask her why she gladly spent so much of her time in board service to

the organizations that she was involved with. And then when he discovered Locust Grove, he understood. His devotion to Locust Grove and the people here was deep and heartfelt. Preston was most active on the Finance Committee, keeping close watch on our incoming and outgoing funds, and solving knotty financial problems down to the penny.

His generosity extended to a carefully thought-out legacy gift to Locust Grove, including donations to our operating funds for our annual expenses, a leadership gift to our new capital campaign, and an overwhelmingly generous gift to our endowment — ensuring the sustainability of this place that he valued so much.

Preston Thomas will always be part of Locust Grove, and we will strive to honor his memory.

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Director's Letter — Carol Ely, Ph.D.

It's a not-so-secret secret that Locust Grove is undertaking a Capital Campaign to raise funds for the projects in our Master Plan that you've been hearing about for the past few years. Shhhh!

The Board of Historic Locust Grove, Inc., voted last October to proceed with the fundraising campaign, and since then we've been pinning down the costs of the various projects, consulting with designers and other experts, and mapping out a fundraising plan that will accomplish our goals.

We've had some quiet conversations with longtime supporters, some chats with local foundations, and by spring we expect to formally announce the campaign once we've ensured that we are well on our way. The Campaign Chair is **Kate Dalton Boyer**, and **Gwynne and Grover Potts** have agreed to serve as the Honorary Campaign Chairs.

The goal is to become a historic site and museum for the 21st century. We want to appeal to a wide range of visitors with a variety of interests — with a series of programs and experiences that are rich and meaningful, grounded in history, engaging, and enlightening. Our historic site will be visually appealing, comfortable to visit, and with an organization that is fiscally sustainable for the long term.

This means some new visitor amenities like paths, parking, benches, and landscaping; better earned-income generators like an enclosed store, a part-year cafe, and a covered open-air pavilion available for rentals; and expanded programming in the new pavilion, a classroom space, temporary exhibit space, and interpreted outbuildings and grounds.

The staff will get a bit more space, too. In the past decade our staff has grown from three to six full-time employees, with ten part-time employees — and we need the room. Our volunteers will get an upgraded lounge, and the library and archives will have a dedicated space, too. Most of this will be done by reworking the existing Visitors' Center interior without greatly expanding the building's footprint.

Historic preservation continues to be an essential focus. With our partner, Louisville Metro Parks, we plan to replace the 60-year-old house roof and upgrade the climate control systems to ensure the house's preservation for another 200-plus years, at least.

This spring, our members, friends, volunteers, neighbors, and the entire community will be introduced to the detailed plans for the future of the site. And they will be asked to consider participating in helping to make the plans a reality.

But for now, it's the "quiet" phase of the campaign. We're so excited to be embarking upon this new endeavor to improve our favorite historic site, Locust Grove.



Places Special to Locust Grove Highlight Trip to Washington, D.C.

JUNE 25 TO JUNE 29 — RESERVATION DEPOSIT DUE FRIDAY, MARCH 16



Locust Grove is sponsoring a customized trip for members and other interested people to the nation's capital, June 25 through June 29 — with visits to places that have significance to Locust Grove's people and its historic house.

At George Washington's Mount Vernon and also 12 miles south at George Mason's Gunston Hall, we'll see verdigris wall treatments similar to what we have at Locust Grove.

At Dumbarton House, owned by the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America, our special tour will include a rare look at a beautiful gold-striped dress attributed to Lucy Croghan.

At Anderson House, we'll explore the headquarters of the Society of the Cincinnati, of which Major William Croghan was a proud member.

At the 18th century Gadsby's Tavern in Alexandria, Va., we'll have an included dinner at this favorite dining spot of George Washington, James Madison, James Monroe, and other notable compatriots of Major Croghan.

We'll also have two afternoons to take in some of the Smithsonian Institution's many museums on our own. Included is a bus tour of the capital's traditional sights — with stops or visits at the Capitol, White House, Arlington National Cemetery, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (for the changing of the guard), and the Iwo Jima Marine Corps Memorial.

And after dinner one evening, we'll have a special guided tour of the beautifully lighted monuments that make Washington, D.C., so impressive.

The tour is \$850 (per person, double occupancy) or \$1,080 for singles. The price includes four nights' lodging, four breakfasts, one dinner, motorcoach transportation, and admission to all listed attractions.

Additional costs would include all lunches and three other dinners — with a suggestion to allow \$30/day for food.

The deadline for making a reservation deposit is Friday, March 16. For further information and to reserve your space on this special Locust Grove journey, call Curator of Collections and Education **Mary Beth Williams** at (502) 897-9845 or email her at mwilliams@locustgrove.org.



Spirit Award Winners: First-Person Interpreters Cast

The **First-Person Interpreters Cast** is this quarter's Spirit Award Winners.

Visit Locust Grove during special events and you might be startled to see what appears to be people from two centuries ago, wandering the grounds or stopping to speak with you.

They're actually a part of Locust Grove's 27-member First-Person Interpreters (FPI) Cast who portray members and friends of the Clark and Croghan families who would have lived at or visited Locust Grove in 1816.

"The First-Person Interpreters are helping make Locust Grove more appealing to the changing museum audience," says Locust Grove Program Director **Brian Cushing**, who also directs the FPI program. "Our docents give great tours, filled with descriptions of who lived here, what their lives were like, and how they lived.

"It's great when visitors spy an interpreter knitting, sewing, or playing a game, they start asking the interpreter questions," Brian continues. "What's great is when the visitors carry on a real conversation, circa 1816, with that character."

The challenge, of course, is for the interpreter to stay in character and discuss with intelligence and accuracy whatever subject visitors bring up. That takes an incredible amount of primary-source research from a window of time pertinent to the year 1816, as well as months of practice and rehearsal. They also research and create the garments their characters wear, made of period-correct textiles.

Open auditions for the cast are held once or twice a year, resulting in cast members from all walks of life. A few are retirees, but most are either students or hold jobs in education and the business world.

All are united by a love of history and performance. Interpreters must attend at least six workshops each year, covering topics such as character development, period clothing, and how their characters fit into life at Locust Grove.

"I try to find things that my character, Fanny Fitzhugh, has in common with people today — worry about the children, pride in their accomplishments, or delight about a new recipe she's found," says FPI **Sharron Hilbrecht**. "I want to make Fanny and her family come to life so they are more than just portraits on the wall."

Adds **Hannah Stoppel**, who interprets Elizabeth Taylor, Zachary Taylor's sister. "We engage visitors on a personal level and open them up to experience history in a way they weren't expecting. We bring the house to life, and pull visitors right into the story of Locust Grove and the people who lived here."

FIRST WEDNESDAY LECTURE SERIES

Hear a variety of interesting speakers on unusual topics that relate to the lives of the Croghans, Clarks, and the region. Held on the first Wednesday of each month, except January and May. Lectures begin at 1:15 p.m., with desserts and beverages served beforehand. Cost — \$6, or \$4 for members.

Upstairs/Downstairs at Locust Grove

MAR 7 WEDNESDAY, MARCH 7 — 1:15 PM

The portraits and furnishings at a historic home help us envision the people who lived there a century or two before. But those things tell us little about the lives of many others whose service was invaluable to the functioning of these homes. Help us celebrate Women's History Month as Dr. Joy Gleason Carew, professor of Pan-African Studies at U of L, helps us enter the world of Locust Grove's Lucy Croghan and her daughters — and gives us a peek into the lives of several of the enslaved women and children who also lived here.



Louisville, Then and Now

APR 4 WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4 — 1:15 PM

Join us as local architect and historian Steve Wiser, AIA, shows images of how Louisville looked over the past 100 years — and compares them to those same locations today. It will offer you a fun and fascinating juxtaposition of how Louisville's streetscapes and culture have changed over the century.



Spring Used Book Sale

MAR 1-4 MARCH 1-4 (DETAILS ON BACK COVER)

More than 23,000 books await you, organized into more than 30 categories. Most books are \$1 for paperbacks, \$2 for hardbacks. Special books also are available at bargain prices.

A St. Patrick's Day Tea and Talk Louisville's Irish-Catholic Newcomers: Early Confrontation and Conflict

MAR 17 SATURDAY, MARCH 17 — 2 PM

Join us for a special tea party to celebrate St. Patrick's Day and Locust Grove's Irish-born founder, William Croghan. Animated speaker and popular local historian Tom Owen will describe the lives of the Irish immigrants who settled in Louisville, with details about the "Bloody Monday Riots" of 1855. Authentic Irish tea with tasty Irish treats will follow. Limit: 90 participants; reservations required. \$15; \$10 for members. Call (502) 897-9845.



18th-Century Thunder: A Revolutionary War Encampment

APR 21 & 22 SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, APRIL 21 AND 22, 10 AM — 4:30 PM

Spend Thunder Weekend in 18th-century style as George Rogers Clark's Illinois Regiment settles into their Louisville camp, with musket demonstrations, a memorial to George Rogers Clark, and recruitment for new, pint-sized troops. Tour the camp to talk to soldiers, visit the regiment's surgeon, learn new recipes in the hearth kitchen, and more! \$6 for adults, free for children 12 and under; historic house tour included. Snacks will be available for sale.



Lydia Fast Bonnet Workshop

APR 21 & 22 SATURDAY & SUNDAY, APRIL 21 & 22

Regency-Era and Jane Austen reenactor Lydia Fast creates and sells her beautiful bonnets at special events and online — and offers workshops to help others fashion their own bonnets. People with basic hand- and machine-sewing skills are invited to participate in her two-day workshop at Locust Grove. Maximum of 12 students. Cost: \$250, which includes materials. For more information and to register, email Lydia at lvgfast@gmail.com.



Shakespeare In The Parks

APR 27 FRIDAY, APRIL 27, 6:30 PM

An irrepressible sprite named Puck creates havoc in a forest for four young lovers on Midsummer night — and then attempts to convince everyone (including the audience) that it's all just been a dream. Join the internationally renowned Kentucky Shakespeare company as they present a 90-minute production of one of Shakespeare's favorite plays — A Midsummer Night's Dream. Admission is free. The performance area, food, and drink will be available at 5:30 p.m.; the play starts promptly at 6:30 p.m. Bring your own blankets and chairs.



Washington D. C. Trip

JUN 25-29 MONDAY, JUNE 25 TO FRIDAY, JUNE 29

RESERVATION DEPOSIT DUE MARCH 16 (SEE ARTICLE ON PAGE 3)



EMILIE STRONG SMITH CHAMBER MUSIC CONCERTS

The 34th season of the Emilie Strong Smith Chamber Music Series offers concertgoers a unique opportunity. Patrons delight in music that the Clarks and Croghans would have heard in the room where they most likely would have enjoyed it — the second-floor Great Parlor of the historic house. Refreshments are at 5:00 p.m.; the concert begins at 5:30 p.m. Pre-paid reservations are requested. Please call (502) 897-9845 to reserve. Concerts are \$20 each.

Beethoven in the Parlor

FEB 25 SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25 — 5 PM

The Locust Grove Chamber Musicians celebrate 1818 with an all-Beethoven concert. The year 1818 was a watershed year for Beethoven when he produced his largest works — the "Missa Solemnis," the "9th Choral Symphony," and the "Hammerklavier Sonata, Op. 106." Tonight's concert features Beethoven's "Thirteen Variations for Piano on the Aria, Es war einmal ein alter Mann," from Dittersdorf's opera, "Das rote Käppchen," along with Beethoven's violin sonata, "Spring Sonata."

Looking South: Italian Music in the Chapels and Courts of Germany

MAR 25 SUNDAY, MARCH 25 — 5 PM

A concert of early Baroque music for violin by composer/performers working in Germany in the 17th century. Fascinated by the musical revolution taking place in Italy, German nobles and musicians imported books, instruments, and players in an attempt to stay up-to-date. The program features examples of Italian musical experiments including improvisatory sonatas and toe-tapping dances as well as German imitations of the Italian style. Samuel Breene on baroque violin and Jeff Noonan on theorbo and baroque guitar.

Christmastide Brings Great Delights

From a Facebook post in early December 2017: "My friends and I visited Locust Grove this past Saturday during Christmastide. What a pleasure it was to see the actors, dressed in period clothing and interacting with us . . . The history of the house was very educational as well. We were able to tour the grounds ourselves, giving us a sense of what it must have been like to live during that time period. Walking through the museum was a great treat as well, so much so that I can't wait to return with my husband and children!"



That was joy to the eyes of everyone who worked so hard to make Locust Grove's 2017 Christmastide on December 2 a delightful experience.

The historic house was alive with first-person interpreters who brought to life many of the family members. There was singing, dancing, and even some card-playing in the house. In the hearth kitchen, visitors could learn about party foods of the early 1800s. In the Visitors' Center, children made ornaments of the time period and visitors shopped for treasures at the artisan booths and Christmas book sale. Singers from the Lincoln Performing Arts School entertained while the visitors enjoyed seasonal refreshments.



Thanks to Our Recent Donors

Donations received from Enrollment/Renewal from July 2, 2017, through January 15, 2018

Many thanks to the hundreds of people who support Historic Locust Grove through various kinds of donations. We depend upon and deeply appreciate your generosity and involvement.

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A hearty "thank you" to all of these people who recently joined or renewed their memberships, and to all of our longtime Friends of Locust Grove!

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In Memoriam
As we went to press with this issue we learned of the death of Downey M. Gray III, who had served on the Board of Historic Locust Grove for many years. We will publish a remembrance of Downey in the next issue of the Gazette.

In Memoriam
*Marty Ely
Bonnie Kugler
Bill Pace
Margaret "Love" Sooy
Betty Thirlwell
Preston Thomas
Jane Wilson*
We note with sadness the recent death of members of our Locust Grove family. We treasure their generous contributions to Locust Grove of their time, energy, support, and enthusiasm.



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561 Blankenbaker Lane
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[WINTER 2018]

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THURSDAY, MARCH 1,
5 PM — 7:30 PM

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
FRIDAY, MARCH 2, 10 AM — 7 PM
SATURDAY & SUNDAY, MARCH 3 & 4,
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