



BELLE GROVE PLANTATION



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Big things are happening at Belle Grove! In May, we embarked on the most extensive infrastructure improvement in our museum's 51-year history. This project is possible thanks to a transformative \$1.1 million gift from the Shoemaker Family Charitable Trust.

The Shoemaker Family gift will substantially fund the renovation of the 1918 Bank Barn to include the Museum Shop, exhibits, event space, and visitor amenities. It is also funding new high speed internet and a security system for the entire Belle Grove campus.

The Beverley B. Shoemaker Barn Welcome Center will be completed in spring 2019. There are additional aspects of the project that require funding such as audio-visual and computer

equipment, event furniture, patio tables, and landscaping. We would also like to fully realize architect Fred Andreae's vision for the building, which includes custom artwork at the entrance. These realistic animal murals will provide a warm welcome to visitors and a whimsical nod to the past inhabitants of the Barn.

In addition to contributing to the Belle Grove annual fund, we ask our valued supporters to consider designating a gift to the Barn project. We want to rise to the challenge that the Shoemaker Family has set with their generosity and make the most of this opportunity.

Even as this capital project is underway, Belle Grove continues to operate as always—serving more than 14,000 guests this year, hosting special events, and

conducting new research. Read more about these activities on the following pages.

Your year-end gift is critical to daily operations. Many of you are members of Belle Grove, purchase tickets to events, and sponsor activities. We appreciate our dedicated community and maximize every dollar you give. It has sustained our long history as a self-supporting organization that is not reliant on municipal, state, or federal government sources. Your annual fund gift ensures a bright future ahead.

Thank you for your ongoing and generous support,

Suzanne Conrad
Board Chair

Kristen Laise
Executive Director

How to Donate

- Use the enclosed envelope to make a donation by check or credit card.
- Visit www.bellegrove.org and click on the blue "Donate Today" button to make a secure donation via PayPal.
- If you have a tax deferred IRA and are over 70½, you may be able to make a tax-free gift, see more on p. 3.
- Give the gift of stock by contacting Bayliss Wealth Management Group of Wells Fargo Advisors at 540-545-7700 and referencing account #1464-7435 and DTC #0141.

Belle Grove is a 501c3 non-profit organization and your donation is tax deductible. It will be acknowledged in writing for your records. Belle Grove is registered as a charitable organization with the Commonwealth of Virginia and a financial statement is available upon written request from the Office of Charitable and Regulatory Programs.

MOMENTOUS MOMENTS OF 2018



James Madison (John Douglas Hall) celebrated his birthday at Belle Grove with a Parlor concert by the United States Army Historical Trumpets and Flutes of the Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps from Washington, D.C.

Belle Grove Plantation is a vibrant place constantly engaged with our community. Thanks to your support, it has been a successful year.

We began our 2018 season with a special free-admission day to celebrate the birthday of Belle Grove's famous brother-in-law, President James Madison. Interpreter John Douglas Hall delighted guests of all ages that crowded into the Parlor to pay their respects. The United States Army's Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps sent their Historical Trumpet and Flutes for the occasion and they performed a memorable concert.



New friends from Sycamore Springs Clothier in Troy, Ohio who specialize in hand-crafting historic clothing.

One highlight of this year's Hite of Excellence Dinner Series events was an 18th Century Fashion Tea. The seamstresses of Sycamore Springs Clothier's educated and entertained us with their knowledge of period clothing and could even tell us more about the fashions in the Hite portraits in the Parlor.

In addition to another great "Of Ale and History" Beer Festival in May, Belle Grove hosted the inaugural Farm to Fork Fondo Shenandoah. This cycling event for riders of all abilities featured area farms and rural routes. It was such fun that they will be returning in September of 2019.



Belle Grove hosted the inaugural Farm to Fork Fondo Shenandoah featuring great cycling and local agriculture. The event will return in September 2019.

The summer brought a busy time with Garden Fest and, thanks to ample rain and hardworking volunteers, a beautiful and lush season in the Belle Grove Teaching Garden.

Belle Grove hosted the triennial Hite Family Reunion in July and enjoyed seeing old friends and welcoming new ones. Several Belle Grove volunteers are researching Hite family history and they presented the findings to the family. We ended the summer with a gorgeous day for Wine Fest.

Learning more about the African American history of Belle Grove continued this year and is one of the most fulfilling aspects of our work.

Generous grants from the James R. Wilkins Charitable Trust and the Battlefield Preservation Fund of the National Trust for Historic Preservation made it possible for



Hite family members came from around the country for their triennial reunion at Belle Grove.

Belle Grove Through the Ages
celebrating past residents
of the Manor House
November 30-December 30
Info at www.bellegrove.org

Ph.D. student Matthew Greer to continue the archaeological investigation of the Belle Grove slave quarter site this summer.

This project, now in its fourth year, has discovered more than 30,000 artifacts. Mr. Greer's research is providing insight on how the enslaved workers owned by the Hites lived and worked and also how slavery operated in the Shenandoah Valley. Plans are underway for the 2019 season. It will again provide teaching opportunities through internships and a field school from Hood College in Frederick, Maryland.

In November, Belle Grove hosted its first African American history event. Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park and the Slave Dwelling Project from Charleston, South Carolina, partnered with us. The Slave Dwelling Project brings people together for overnight experiences to discuss the history of slavery. While Belle Grove's slave quarters were long ago removed, the lower level of the Manor House is one place where the enslaved worked and may have slept. The day concluded with an overnight stay for students and staff of Lord Fairfax Community College and Shenandoah University.

The overnight experience capped off an inspiring day of talks and interpretive programs about African American genealogy, the black

history of the Shenandoah Valley, and archaeological research at Belle Grove. Having nationally recognized living history interpreters, Jerome Bias and Cheyney McKnight cook on Belle Grove's hearth was likely the first time a person of African descent has cooked there since the 19th century. It was a poignant backdrop to Park Ranger Shannon Moeck's interpretive program about Judah, one of the Hite's enslaved cooks. We were also amazed by the skill and artistry that blacksmith Gilbert Walker demonstrated in Belle Grove's forge.

Ranger Moeck debuted a new program on Emanuel Jackson, a free black man who purchased the freedom of his three sons, daughter, daughter-in-law, and two grandchildren from the Hites. The story of the Jackson family, who would go on to live and work in Pittsburgh, is an active area of research. A recently discovered family letter details the purchase of the eldest child, Daniel. During the program, it was read aloud by the Slave Dwelling Project founder, Joseph McGill, giving voice to this profound story.

This event was enthusiastically attended by families and by 12 of Belle Grove's neighboring museums and history organizations, which is a testament to the network of colleagues that we have and how they look to Belle Grove for leadership on this topic. We are planning to hold this event again next fall.



Slave Dwelling Project founder Joseph McGill read aloud a letter from Emanuel Jackson, a free black man from Pittsburgh who purchased the freedom of his children from the Hite family.



Living historians with the Slave Dwelling Project, Jerome Bias and Cheyney McKnight demonstrated cooking in the Winter Kitchen making seven dishes for the students spending the night.



Park Ranger Shannon Moeck presented a program on Judah, an enslaved cook at Belle Grove.



Norma Johnson, President of the Josephine School Community Museum shared local African American history with visitor Preslaysa Williams and her children.



Blacksmith Gilbert Walker traveled from Savannah, Georgia to participate in the event and crafted a beautiful and practical oyster knife for a visiting family and a pot lifter for cook Jerome Bias.

TAX DEFERRED IRA?

If you are over 70 and a half years old and have a tax deferred IRA, you may make a donation from your IRA directly to Belle Grove without ever paying taxes on the donated amount.

This is true even if you do not itemize deductions for tax purposes. The donation (a "Qualified Charitable Distribution" or QCD) must be made directly to Belle Grove by your IRA trustee. The amount donated will not be reported as income for tax purposes. Consult your financial advisor for details.

You will need to provide Belle Grove's EIN, 54-1047175. For me and others who qualify, this will allow a larger donation and savings on income tax for 2018.

John Adamson
Treasurer, Belle Grove

UPCOMING 2019 EVENTS!

- February 9: Dinner Series Kick-Off Party
- March 23: Opening Day
- May 11: "Of Ale and History" Beer Festival
- June 1: Garden Fest
- August 24: Wine Fest
- September 14-15: Farm to Fork Fondo



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Belle Grove's Board of Directors and staff greatly appreciates every person who donated time and funds this year. We particularly thank and acknowledge the following corporate and Hite of Excellence Dinner Series sponsors, and the Madison, Heritage, and President's Society level members.

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Belle Grove Plantation is a partner in the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park. The Park was founded in 2002 and is a partnership between the National Park Service, four non-profit organizations, and one municipality.

