



The Hampton Gazette

A House Divided: The Civil War at Hampton A New Exhibit Opens on Sunday, July 10

One hundred and fifty years ago, the nation plunged into Civil War. At Hampton one finds evidence of conditions seen across the country, but especially in border states such as Maryland: families with divided loyalties, tensions on the home front, and enslaved peoples' desire for freedom. Opening on July 10 the special exhibit "A House Divided: The Civil War at Hampton" highlights these themes as seen through Hampton NHS's rich museum and archival collections. On display will be numerous items never before seen by the public including historic photographs, arms, and war-related manuscripts and memorabilia.

One section of the exhibit will feature the exciting story of the Baltimore County Horse Guards. Charles Ridgely of Hampton was the captain of this group of pro-Southern gentlemen from the area who played an interesting role in the tumultuous days at the very beginning of the war when Maryland's fate had not yet been decided.

"The Horse Guard, in their ornate uniforms of blue and gray, epitomized the notion that riding off to war was a romantic adventure - that changed quickly in the summer of 1861," Says Chief of Interpretation Vince Vaise.

Curator Gregory Weidman is impressed by the ironies seen in the split allegiances of various family members. "Nicholas Greenbury Ridgely, a young cousin of Hampton's mistress Eliza Ridgely who spent much of his childhood at Hampton, wrote and published ardently pro-Southern satirical poetry during the War, making fun of Union politicians and generals. At the same time, his own father was serving heroically as a captain in the Union

navy!" Not surprisingly, "Cousin Nickody", as he was called by the family, published his works under various pseudonyms.

The Ridgelys of Hampton held the second-largest number of enslaved individuals in Baltimore County in 1860. The exhibit brings light to their individual identities and examines what became of them after Emancipation. Documents even reveal show the names of Hampton slaves who became recruits for the Union Army.

The Civil War exhibit will only be available as part of the guided house tour and will be on view through March 2012.

Right: Charles Ridgely, the fourth master of Hampton, in his Baltimore Horse Guard uniform. This rare photograph is one of the highlights of the new exhibition.



Tina Orcutt

New Park Superintendent Announced

The Northeast Regional Director, Dennis R. Reidenbach has named Tina Orcutt the new superintendent of Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine and Hampton National Historic Site.

Orcutt currently serves as the superintendent of Women's Rights National Historic Park in Seneca Falls and Waterloo, New York. She will officially assume her duties in Maryland in August 2011. Orcutt replaces Gay Vietzke, who was recently named Deputy Regional Director for Park Operations.

"With the coming Bicentennial of the War of 1812, I look forward to telling the stories of those who defended our country and showed we could hold our own even as a young nation," said Orcutt. "Coming from a park that tells of a struggle for human rights, I also look forward to continuing to tell the stories of those at Hampton who did not enjoy the rights guaranteed by our Constitution."



Tina Orcutt the new Superintendent of Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine and Hampton National Historic Site

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Superintendent's Welcome

With Superintendent Gay Vietzke's departure and all the attention on the new Visitor and Education Center at Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine, one may ask if the Hampton Renaissance is coming to an end or at least cooling down. I can assure you that this is not the case. If anything, one plateau has been reached and the park is positioned to gain another very soon.

A number of large-scale projects are scheduled to begin in August. For example, the grounds around the Lower House will be regraded to allow handicapped visitors to explore the Log Cabin, Slave Quarters and Tenant Farmers' Quarters. The main road leading to the Farm Complex will be widened and a state-of-the art fire suppression system will be installed in the stables. Come August, we also look forward to the construction of a new collections storage building on the mansion side of the property along with a new entrance road, so be prepared for some dirt and detours! The new storage facility will go

Bond of Iron,

A Review by Ranger Carol

Charles Dew's book, *Bond of Iron: Master and Slave at Buffalo Forge*, explores a Virginia iron forge and the lives of its owner and his workers, enslaved and free. In his book are remarkable amounts of primary documentation remain, allowing Dew to craft a full narrative

In This Issue

A House Divided	1
New Park Superintendent	1
Superintendent's Welcome	2
<i>Bond of Iron</i> Book Review	2
A Golden Gem	3
Hampton's Summer Seasonals	3
New Hampton Guide Book	3
Upcoming Events at Hampton	4

far towards insuring the long-term preservation of Hampton's rare collection objects.

This isn't to say that activity has been slow in the last few months. Visitation to the Farm Complex has jumped 200% over the last year from April to June. The Rangers have launched a new grounds and gardens talk and the first two parterres are planted in their Victorian-era splendor. For the first time in a long time, Hampton's Civil War story is being told with a special exhibit in the North Portico. Titled "A House Divided: The Civil War at Hampton" the exhibit showcases rare letters, ephemera, reproduction uniforms and many never-before-seen photographs. Plans are also in the works for a visitor contact station - but more on that in the next newsletter!

The Hampton Renaissance rolls on!

Sincerely,

Vincent Vaise
Acting Superintendent

that draws the reader in. He explains how hot and cold blast iron furnaces functioned and the stunning amount of labor necessary to mine raw ore, melt it to form pig iron, and then work it into bar iron to be sold.

Yet the most intriguing part of Dew's work is the way he illustrates in great detail the lives of the enslaved workers. In great detail readers view generations of enslaved families at Buffalo Forge. Some are injured in the forge, some die of disease or childbirth, and one is whipped by a white mob following John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry. Dew does not have to speculate about enslaved African-Americans; the records tell the story.

One particularly interesting part of the enslaved experience at Buffalo Forge is that workers could earn pay for any work over the specified amount that they performed. Called "overwork," this allowed one enslaved man to purchase items like furniture and even a looking-glass. However, it does not appear that this money could be used by enslaved African Americans to pay for their own freedom.

The Hampton Gazette is inspired by the small family newspaper written and published by the Ridgely children who lived in the mansion at Hampton in the 19th century. The original "Hampton Gazette" included family stories and satire, prose and poetry, and everything the Ridgelys' creativity could invent. They designed it to appear like a typical newsletter but filled it with references from their classical education and family jokes. Above is the banner from a September 1876 issue, and below right is a clip from that paper.

ATTENTION!! ATTENTION!!! The police are requested to be on the look-out for a notorious thief, who may easily be distinguished by light puffs and blue stockings. When last seen, she was seated in calm possession of the stoutest of the Lost Hearts.

WANTED. A small boy to open the outer gate, leading to the Springs Hotel: to be on duty from 5 to 11 o'clock on moonlight nights, that any gentleman, driving a "friend" in a buggy, may not be interrupted in important conversation.

LOST!! LOST!!! LOST!!!! Begged, Borrowed, or Stolen! Five fine hearts of various sizes! To be returned to the hostess of Hampton Hall. The finder of the same will receive a suitable reward.

FOUND. One of a string of Hearts, much worn and valued by a lady, fell to the floor and rolled away. It was discovered beneath the piano-stool, and if not called for and identified within two days at the Editor's bureau, will be appropriated by X. Z.

FOUND.—Mr. Tennyson sends his compliments to the "Sofa Up-stairs," and says the highly honored line of poetry: "The path of duty was the way to glory," is from his, "Ode to the Duke of Wellington."

FOUND.—A small roll of brown ribbon, with a heart inclosed, under the dinner table. Those interested will please apply to
WARDY, Student's Hall.

Bond of Iron is an excellent read and provides a fascinating look at an iron forge and the lives of the enslaved African-Americans who labored there. It is definitely worth while, especially given the the subject matter's connection to the Hampton estate.

A Golden Gem at Hampton NHS: The Downy Yellow Violet

As gardener of the Hampton National Historic Site and Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine, I am always observing the landscapes for unusual or new vegetative curiosities. While walking in the lawn by the 1910 garage, not far from the herb garden, I noticed small yellow flowers growing in the grassy area.

Upon closer identification and consultation from the Horticulturist, Paul Bitzel, we agreed that the plant was a Downy Yellow Violet also known as *Viola Pubescens*. The yellow violets were found scattered along with the more common forms of violets around the small outbuildings including the privy. Other groupings of *Viola Pubescens* were also observed growing under the canopy of the two historic catalpas on the south side of the mansion.

In the nursery landscape business I was involved in for 22 years, prior to my National Park Service tenure, I had never observed yellow violets in the wild. To have seen the yellow violets at Hampton in such numbers was truly a treat. The bright yellow flowers contrasted nicely with the dark green heart shaped foliage.



Left: The downy yellow violet. Right: Head Gardener Michael Lynch pruning trees outside the new Visitor Education Center at Fort McHenry National Monument & Historic Shrine; he passed away in January 2011.

The perennial *Viola Pubescens* grows in Maryland in partly shady moist to dry mixed deciduous woodland areas and is also found from Nova Scotia to Minnesota and Ontario and south from Virginia to Texas. The plant grows from 6" to 10" tall and blooms in April and May. Seedling violas may germinate when the seed capsules explode and disperse seeds in an area. Impatiens, touch me nots, and garlic mustard also have dehiscent seed capsules that help scatter their seeds. The yellow violet may also spread by runners.

In the diary of Helen Stewart Ridgely, the wife of the fifth master of Hampton, in about 1908 she refers to yellow violets on the Hampton estate. So we know that the violets have been at Hampton for at least one hundred years. Hopefully they will prosper for centuries to come for all to enjoy!

This article was written by Michael Lynch, Head Gardener at Hampton NHS, prior to his passing away January 1, 2011. Yellow violets were one of Mike's favorite flowers and we are pleased to be able to share his thoughts with you.

Getting to Know Hampton's Summer Seasonals...



Ranger Shaun Lehmann, 25
Graduate Student at the
University of Maryland
Baltimore County



Ranger Laura Neugebauer, 24
Graduate Student at
The Johns Hopkins University



Ranger Rebecca Holliday, 21
Undergraduate Student at
Coppin State University



Intake Ariel Mond, 17
Undergraduate Student at
American University



Intake Bahareh
Jabbari, 16 Senior at
Western High School

New Hampton Guidebook in the Museum Shop

The new Guidebook for Hampton NHS has hit the shelves of the Historic Hampton Museum Shop. Filled with facts about the people, places, and objects related to the Hampton estate, this guidebook encompasses knowledge gained since the last guidebook was printed. It also includes something that was sorely lacking in the last version: color photographs. Images of the rooms and people as well as specific artifacts, written and material objects, fill the pages of the book.

The guidebook displays a larger context for the history of Hampton, with sections on visitors to the estate, structures on the property, and the work of the curator. Using historic photos, collection objects, and quotes, the new guidebook is the perfect book for casual readers or history buffs. Pick up your copy of the new Hampton NHS Guidebook today!



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U.S. Department of the Interior

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EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

The Hampton Gazette is the official news bulletin of Hampton National Historic Site. It is produced quarterly and distributed to park friends, supporters, and visitors.

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Upcoming Events at Hampton NHS



Hampton is proud to offer a variety of family friendly events. All of the events at Hampton NHS are free so come enjoy!

Second Sunday Events

**“Had on and Took with Her”
African American Dress in the Federal Era
August 14, 2011 at 2:00 p.m.**

Historian and author Ann Wass returns to Hampton with this new program about African American clothing during the Federal Era. This program will cover not only what enslaved men and women were wearing, but also the fashions that were popular with those who were free and living in cities such as Baltimore and New York.

**Manly Arts Day
September 18, 2011 at noon**

Come to Hampton National Historic Site on Sunday, September 18 for the sixth

annual Manly Arts Day at Hampton! Although historically identified as “Manly Arts,” all are welcome to learn about and participate in exercises and demonstrations of swordsmanship, boxing, and other skills which were used by men and women to “come home alive” in the 19th Century.

Other Events

**The Complete Hampton
August 6, 2011 at 12:30 p.m.**

This three hour Ranger-led walking tour will take place on the first Saturday of every summer month. It takes you through the entire park, from the farm through the grounds to the mansion. Visit places that you have never seen or that you have always meant to see including the family cemetery and terraced gardens. Explore the nature, architecture, and history that made Hampton a national park.

Please call the park for further information at (410) 823-1309 x251 All events are subject to change.