



Historic
SOTTERLEY
 CIRCA 1703
 Summer 2022 Sotterley Family Newsletter

The Long View

Greetings, I hope the bounty and beauty that summer brings is being enjoyed by all of you. Here at Sotterley there is much of that to experience as the site offers so many opportunities to explore, relax, and learn from the site and its many facets.

I was truly honored and proud to be a part of a panel with some of my fellow Sotterley descendants at the American Alliance of Museums Conference in Boston this May. It was gratifying to see that so many of the attendees chose to hear our presentation about how we at Sotterley join together to share our stories and help others gain an understanding of our past. The feedback from so many others in the museum world was very positive and validates the work we strive to accomplish at Sotterley. I want to thank Gwen Banks, Jerome Spears and Liz Plater Cropp for joining me there and so ably representing all of the descendants and those who support us in our mission. Further thanks goes to Jeanne Pirtle for all of her efforts in making this possible and guiding us through this amazing experience.

Not to rest on our laurels, Sotterley is preparing to host the inaugural Day of Unity and Healing on August 20th, which will be a day full of powerful experiences and another opportunity to come together as a community in a positive and enriching way. None of these accomplishments would be possible without the generous support that all of you give to Sotterley. We have made such great strides and weathered so many storms with you by our side, and I sincerely thank you all for your belief in Sotterley.

Jan Briscoe
 President, Board of Trustees

Sotterley Descendants Speak at the American Alliance of Museums Annual Meeting

Four Sotterley Descendants, Gwen Banks, Jerome Spears, Janice Briscoe, and Elizabeth (Liz) Plater Cropp, served on a panel at American Alliance of Museums (AAM) conference in Boston on May 20, 2022. The session, entitled, “Voices of Descendants that Transform Narratives and Strengthen Purpose”, engaged an audience of museum professionals who were attentive, were very interactive, and went away encouraged and inspired. Frequently asked questions were “How do you reach and involve descendants?” “How do you get buy-in for diverse narratives in interpretation with resistant leadership or staff?” “What can I do if I don’t believe a program or project is properly planned or funded?” Answers: time, education, trust, patience, listen, learn, take risks, overcome fear.

Jerome writes “We (here in the United States) have so much on our plates right now. And yet, putting into perspective our collective past - in the hope of learning from what transpired before we each joined humankind, might be our best way to better understand and then navigate our way (together) into and through the future. Sotterley Descendants sharing their voices and adding to the dialogue at the recently held American Alliance of Museums (AAM) convention in Boston no doubt helped in steering us all toward a better place of understanding and cooperation.”



Community & Stewardship

Grants and Awards Help Make Our Achievements Possible!

In a world that continues to be affected by the pandemic in so many ways, Sotterley has steadily progressed forward because of our amazing supporters and those who believe in our work. We cannot thank you all enough! We have also been fortunate to receive some recent grants and awards that will positively impact Sotterley in the months and years ahead.

St. Mary's County continues to offer Sotterley a grant to support our tourism and educational programs, and we are grateful that for many years they have seen the value in the work we do for the citizens of our County!

The Federal Government, through the support of our long-time advocate Congressman Steny Hoyer, awarded Sotterley a Community Project Funding Grant. This grant will address some of our extensive capital and deferred maintenance needs since we care for over 20 historic buildings and 94 acres. There will be more details to come as we work through the process in the upcoming months, but in the next few years, this generous and significant grant will not only help us preserve the irreplaceable, but also address some important infrastructure needs as well.



The State of Maryland, with the support of Speaker of the House Adrienne Jones, Delegate Brian Crosby, Delegate Matt Morgan, Delegate Gerry Clark, and Senator Jack Bailey, has procured funding for Historic Sotterley that will begin in FY2024 and will continue for FY2025 and FY2026. In recognizing the important work we do but also acknowledging that Sotterley's annual income is derived completely from earned income, grants, and donations, this award will help to provide critically needed operational support.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation awarded Sotterley a Telling the Full History grant to continue our impactful Common Ground Initiative through programming, events, research, and partnerships in the community. This grant funding recognized projects that interpret and preserve historic places of importance to underrepresented communities. This grant was made possible through the National Endowment for the Humanities' American Rescue Plan Humanities Grantmaking for Organizations.

Leonardtowntown Rotary has awarded us a grant to support our Growing for Good program – growing produce on site that is donated to local food pantries, while also engaging our community through volunteerism. Thank you to ALL of the organizations and individuals that make our work possible!



Farewell

We bid a fond farewell to Sotterley's Director of Educational Programming and Partnerships, Jeanne Pirtle, who stepped down in June. Jeanne's creativity, vision, and research were integral to developing the direction of our current tours, programming, and educational partnerships. Jeanne was instrumental in the development and nurturing of Sotterley's Descendant's Program and Common Ground Initiative. Jeanne has promised to continue her support of our work, but we will always be grateful for her dedication and leadership over almost 12 years at Historic Sotterley.



Spring-time Events & Education without Boundaries



Down on the Farm

How is your garden growing? Sotterley's Growing for Good program has been harvesting vegetables such as yellow squash, zucchini, potatoes, peppers and cucumbers and providing them to local food pantries. Onions, tomatoes, and green beans are maturing and will soon be ready. Potatoes planted by a gang of volunteers this Spring are ready for harvest, and more green beans will be planted in their place. Sotterley staff also planted a small field of tobacco for demonstration purposes. The crew then ground up some tobacco and placed it around potato plantings as an experiment and found it to be a natural deterrent for potato beetles! Whether you measure success by how we support our community or by providing educational opportunities, Sotterley's farm is thriving! Contact us if you are interested in volunteering!

Summer Fun & Learning

In July, Education Coordinator Katherine Humphries lead our Family Friendly Fridays - a weekly event for kids to beat summer boredom and keep their minds active. Activities ranged from a youth bird walk with our local chapter of the Audubon Society to a colonial kitchen demonstration by Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum. Thank you to everyone who took part in these exciting Fridays!

If you missed Family Friendly Fridays, don't worry, we still have educational Summer fun coming up! You can join us August 15 through August 19th for Bug-a-Palooza to learn all about the tiny worlds of our local buggie friends. Each day of the week will focus on a different insect (or arachnid) with special activities. Check our website for more information!



Sink Hole Investigation

A fortunate stroke of serendipity occurred this spring when a sink hole suddenly appeared in the "Pecan Room" of Sotterley's Garden. Dr. Julie King, our archaeology expert, dispatched a crew to investigate. Volunteers assisted with screening the dirt and debris that resulted. One of the artifacts found was a pipe bowl fragment with a mark, "LE". Dr. King has advised us that this is the mark of Llewelin Evans, a Bristol, England pipemaker working from 1660-1689. This suggests that a pre -Sotterley component exists in this area, and this invites more investigation one day!

Aeropark Farmer's Market

Aeropark Farmer's Markets have been going better than we could ever hoped, so now we're bringing them to you EVERY MONTH! Previously known as the Airport Farmer's Market, the Aeropark Farmer's Market takes place in the Aeropark Innovation District at the St. Mary's County Regional Airport. You can visit us for unique, local products on:

August 14th, 2022 **October 9th, 2022** **December 18th, 2022**
September 11th, 2022 **November 20th, 2022**



Gala Brings our Sotterley Family Together

It was a fun and magical night on June 11th as we were finally able to host an in-person Gala at Sotterley for all of our family and friends! Two years ago, we had to cancel our Gala, and last year our gracious hosts held smaller “mini-Galas” for Sotterley at their homes or other locations. This year, we were finally able to once again bring everyone together under one tent! “Aloha” was this year’s theme, and since the spirit of Aloha means to come together in mutual regard, affection, and warmth in caring, the theme was perfect!

We are so grateful to our incredible Gala Committee under the leadership of Julie Burk-Greer who helped us bring everyone together for such a wonderful event, as well as to all of our fabulous sponsors and attendees. Their generosity at this event will help support our programs and events in the upcoming year!



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