



Historic SOTTERLEY

CIRCA 1703

Winter 2022 Sotterley Family Newsletter

The Long View

As we approach the end of the year and look back at all that Sotterley has accomplished in 2022, I know everything was made possible because of our many incredible supporters. Our members, donors, elected officials, volunteers, in-kind supporters, businesses, and granting organizations all played critical roles in every success and accomplishment we achieved.

I was fortunate enough to be able to personally participate in many of the ways we touched our community over the last year. When I was part of our special events, descendant led Common Ground programming, education programs for students, or our Growing for Good program, I saw firsthand the positive impact we had on the lives we touched. It is why this site and the work we can do is so important.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I thank each and every one of you for the role you have played in our achievements, and we have so much more planned for the upcoming year. Our dedicated staff, volunteers and partners are working to expand our programming for all of our students and visitors and preservation of our many historic structures and collections is continuing. I look forward to sharing it all with you in 2023, and with your continued support I know that it will be our best year to date.

May this holiday season bring you and your family joy and happiness.

With gratitude and warmest wishes,

Janice Briscoe
President, Board of Trustees



Fostering Education at Sotterley

There is nothing that brings Sotterley to life quite like the chitter-chatter of students here to take part in our educational programming. We recently said goodbye to our last school group of the fall season, and we're counting down the days until our spring groups start up. Until then, we're also preparing for St. Mary's County History Day! Historic Sotterley's Education Coordinator, Katherine Humphries, is the lead organizer for this annual event and is partnering with St. Mary's County Library to host this year's competition, which engages students and teachers in historical research and related skills. This year's theme is *Frontiers in History: People, Places, and Ideas*. Winners of the district contest will move on to Maryland History Day, hosted by Maryland Humanities, and may have the opportunity to advance all the way to National History Day! For more information, reach out to Katherine at edteam@sotterley.org or 301.373-2280.



Connecting to our Community

Sotterley and Descendants are Creating Connections

This fall our descendants continued to play an important role by sharing Sotterley and its stories with the community. In October, Board members Gwen Banks and Jan Briscoe visited Asbury at the request of the senior living community, and their presentation “Beyond Color: the Power of Connection” was incredibly well received. They spoke about Sotterley’s work and mission, and how descendants are using their voices to connect the realities of our shared past to an understanding of our world today and to each other.

In November a group of 3rd, 5th, and 8th grade teachers from Charles County visited Sotterley to experience our education-based tours and activities for youth in a half-day program led by Katherine Humphries, our Education Coordinator. As part of the event, Jan and Gwen joined the group and again shared their perspectives on how Sotterley stories are told and understood. One of the visitors shared the following: “This was Vocabulary Matters! I enjoyed the way information was presented. It wasn't a “this is what you should think” kind of a thing. It was factual, respectful of not just the people we were learning about but also of us as teachers and human beings, and stripped away the romanticized perspective into the nitty-gritty of the history.”

At the end of November, an organization was hosted at Sotterley for their monthly meeting: Inns of Court, a group founded and dedicated to promoting the highest level of professionalism in the practice of law. At the meeting, Gwen and Jan, accompanied by Nancy Easterling, spoke to the group, and the theme was “Historic Sotterley: Pursuing Social Justice and Equity by Finding Common Ground.”

Sotterley, with descendant leadership, continues to share the realities of its history to foster connections and promote understanding.



Sotterley Descendants in the News

Recently, Sotterley Descendants Angela Wilson and Jerome Spears were featured in an article by AFRO News, where they spoke about their family history and how their connection to Sotterley has impacted them. The article is an in-depth look at the journey of discovery and healing some of our descendants have taken, and we're proud to have been a part of that journey. If you'd like to read the article for yourself, you can find it in the news section of our website!



A Year You Made Possible

Our Community Moves Us Forward

This year we were able to return to some of our favorite programming, events, and volunteer opportunities. After two years of uncertainty, it was fantastic to see all your shining faces ready to learn, connect, and grow with us. From our inaugural Day of Unity and Healing to our very first hybrid *People and Perspectives* event, you showed up in droves to support Historic Sotterley in all that we do. We are endlessly grateful, and excited to bring you so much more in 2023!



Honor Roll of Donors

The Heartbeat of Sotterley - Our Incredible Supporters

This list embodies the heartbeat of Sotterley: You! We know that there are many wonderful causes and organizations that call for your support, but by making the decision to support Sotterley you provide the gift and the means to change lives, shape perspectives, and allows us to be a force of good in our community. We are honored that you consider Sotterley worthy and significant.

This list represents individuals, businesses, organizations, and granting agencies who gave cash contributions, in-kind services and goods, and employee matching gifts in FY2022 (July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.)

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And a Thank You to all of our volunteers!

Sotterley's volunteers continue to make special donations of their time - which for non-profits is just as valuable as the generous funds we receive. Thank you for the hours spent as docents, shopkeepers, gardeners, events crew, and farmers. You help our mission move forward throughout the year and we could not do it without you.



Legacy Society

For over three hundred years, Sotterley has watched over the Patuxent River. Its story began before our country's. Through wars, economic upheavals, hurricanes, and near-collapse, Sotterley has remained. It survived because people believed in its story, its importance, and its legacy.

Connect your legacy to Historic Sotterley's by joining The Sotterley Legacy Society. This special group is making the lasting commitment to preserve Historic Sotterley in their estate plans. This commitment will preserve this special place and its important stories for future generations.

If you would like to make a bequest to Sotterley, already have plans to do so, or you want to discuss the many ways to join your legacy to Sotterley, please contact Nancy Easterling at execdirector@sotterley.org.

Make History. Leave a Legacy.



In Memoriam Pete Himmelheber

Peter Himmelheber, installed as a Sotterley Fellow in 2020, was well known in St. Mary's County to anyone with an interest in its history. Pete's expertise included the history of landownership in the county from the colonial period through the present day, as well as the history of religion in Southern Maryland. After his first careers in the Navy and as an electrical engineer, Pete pursued a new calling— as an educator and exceptional volunteer. He did this not only with Historic Sotterley, but Historic St. Mary's City, the Friends of the Library, the St. Mary's County Historical Society, and more. At Sotterley, Pete has helped bring the past to life as he volunteered as a docent, organized and created many of the tools at the Corn Crib display, and gave woodworking and blacksmithing demonstrations. He assisted with research for Sotterley and the War of 1812, and most recently for the exhibit "Saving History: The Urgency of Preservation." Pete Himmelheber passed away in November after a life well lived.



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During the season of giving, it can be tough to find the perfect gift for your loved ones. We invite you to gift them an experience with a Historic Sotterley Membership! Our members get free guided and self-guided tours, 10% off at our museum store, and invitation to our member-only events. It's the perfect gift that they can use year-round and connects them to local history.

If you're interested in gifting a membership, you can do so on our website at www.sotterley.org