

Victoria's Messenger

August/September 2007

The Newsletter of the Victorian Society at Falls Church, VA

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IMPORTANT VICTORIAN SOCIETY NEWS

THE ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING WILL BE HELD ON SEPTEMBER 29, 2007, 5:00 – 7:00 P.M., AT PAM JONES' HOUSE IN ARLINGTON. IN ADDITION TO THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS THIS YEAR WE WILL HAVE THE ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS. PLEASE SEE THE LAST PAGE OF THE MESSENGER FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE MEETING AND OUR SLATE OF CANDIDATES FOR THE UPCOMING ELECTION.

Finally!

*Our book, Victorian Falls Church,
went on sale July 16!*

We are very pleased to report that our book has finally been published and is now available for sale at the larger book store chains as well as a number of shops around Falls Church. We have already sold over 50 copies but if you haven't ordered your copy you can still do so. The price is \$20 and the proceeds from the book will be used to promote Victorian Society initiatives in Falls Church. **If you don't have the order form from the last Messenger, just call Linda Lau 703-241-2751 or Midge Wang at 703-534-8394 to reserve your copy.**

Here's another sneak preview from the book; Eva Birch, in a beautiful summer white dress, looks like she is ready to attend one of our summer parties or teas, doesn't she?



And, don't forget

Arcadia Publishing has arranged for us to have a book signing to kick-off the sale of *Victorian Falls Church*. The signing will be August 10 from 7 – 9 p.m. at the Barnes and Noble in Tyson's Corner. Hope to see you all there!

*Now, our upcoming
calendar of events*

Saturday, August 11, Hat Decorating Workshop



Maybe you won't make anything as whimsical as the hat pictured here but you certainly can make a wonderful Victorian creation at our hat decorating workshop. All you need to bring is a ready-to-be-decorated hat frame. We suggest you look at the thrift stores or one of the discount clothing stores around town for a suitable hat frame; straw is always good especially for summer hats and felt/wool are fine, too. If the straw hat is not in a color that you like then you can buy a can of acrylic spray paint and

paint it. You'll also want to bring ribbon and laces in your choice of colors to match whatever outfit you want the hat to match. At the workshop we'll have for sale silk flowers at only \$1.00 per stem!!! As you probably know that is a bargain price which is made available to use through the kindness of member Dee Beck. The workshop will be held at Mt. Hope from 1:30 – 5 p.m. **If you are interested or if you have any questions about what to buy and/or bring, please contact Midge Wang at 703-534-8394.**

If you can't make this workshop and need help in decorating a hat, Midge is willing to do one-on-one hat decorating workshops, too. Don't hesitate to contact her especially if you need a hat for one of our upcoming events.

September 2007

Might be our busiest month ever

Friday, September 7 – FirstFriday in Falls Church Booking Signing for *Victorian Falls Church*

We are very honored to have the opportunity to celebrate our new book, *Victorian Falls Church*, at our very own FirstFriday event. Tom Gettins, proprietor of Art and Frame of Falls Church (111 Park Avenue) has asked us to be the main focus of the September FirstFriday event at his store. We plan to be on hand, in costume of course, to mingle with the crowd, sign books, and promote the Victorian Society at Falls Church. We'd love to see you there and we definitely want members to show up in costume. The event is from 6 – 8 p.m.; afterwards we will probably head over to the Four Provinces for dinner. If you are interested in going to dinner with us, please contact Midge Wang so she can know how many to make reservations for.

Saturday/Sunday, September 8 and 9 – Trip to Philadelphia and King Tut Exhibit

Our plans are finalized for the September 8-9 trip up to Philadelphia to see the King Tut and the Golden Age of Pharaohs Exhibit at the Franklin Institute Science Museum, the Eastern State Penitentiary and the Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion in historic Germantown (Philadelphia), PA. In the next few days you'll receive, from Midge Wang, a complete itinerary for all our events and information about making hotel reservations. Linda Lau has the tickets for the King Tut

exhibit and will bring them up to Philadelphia (unless you want to pick up your tickets before then).

September 15-23 - Victorian Clothing Exhibit at Cherry Hill

As part of our book kick-off, we are holding a Victorian clothing exhibit at Cherry Hill Farmhouse. The free exhibit will feature a variety of Victorian-era clothing and accessories from the collections of our members. We plan to have women's, men's, and children's clothing on display as well as hats, capes, gloves, reticules, and jewelry. All types of clothing from the Victorian era will be included – Civil War up to the Edwardian styles. Exhibit hours are 10 – 3 daily except Sunday 10-2; Victorian Society members will be on hand to act as docents. **If you have items that you would like to lend for display or to volunteer as a docent, please contact Midge Wang at 703-534-8394.**



Sunday, September 16 – Victorian Falls Church Tea and Fashion Show

Mark your calendar for Sunday, September 16 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., because you won't want to miss the Victorian Society at Falls Church's tea and fashion show! The event, which is open to the public, will be held in the Fellowship Hall of the Falls Church Presbyterian Church at 225 E. Broad Street. The purpose of the tea is to promote our new book on *Victorian Falls Church* which will be on sale at the event.



While our members model their Victorian period finery, decade by decade, Linda Lau will recount the notable goings-on in town at that time. Her narration will cover milestones in the growth and development of Falls Church, its role in the Civil War and other conflicts, and the changes in its economy over the years. Meanwhile, other members of the Victorian Society at Falls Church will be pouring the tea and filling the plates with savory sandwiches and delectable treats.

Who are all these industrious members, you may ask? Look in the mirror, and then pick up the phone to call Maryll Kleibrink (703-534-4003) or Priscilla Gibson (703-671-8307) to volunteer your services! We need people to help with baking, set up (12:00 to 2:00), clean up (4:00 to 5:00), greeting and signing guests in, brewing the tea and arranging the tea plates, showing people to their seats, helping the fashion models to dress, modeling fashions, and serving tea. We also need 12 silver teapots, 12 ceramic ones, and hot mitts, so let us know if you have one that you are willing to lend.

Volunteering not your "cup of tea?" You can also show your support by joining us and bringing a friend! The tea costs \$30 and reservations can be made by sending a check payable to VSFC to P.O. Box 7436, Falls Church, VA 22040. Indicate "Sept. 16 tea" on the memo line, and whether there are specific people with whom you would like to be seated. A reservation flyer is included with this Messenger. The deadline for RSVPs to be received in our box is September 12.

Unfortunately, we won't be able to admit anyone without an advance reservation.

In order to promote the sale of our book and to make both of these events a big success we need the support of you, our members. So please mark your calendars for these events. We will especially need a good turn-out of Victorians to model fashions at the tea. It's your chance to show off those wonderful outfits that we know are hanging in your closets.



Saturday, September 22, Book Discussion Group

Marjorie Draudt has suggested that for our next book discussion we read *The Water Babies* by Charles Kingsley. Written for Kingsley's son Grenville, *The Water Babies* was an exceptionally popular fantasy serialized in *Macmillan's Magazine* 1862-3 and then published in 1863. Like Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* or White's *The Sword in the Stone*, this tale explores the possibilities of an alternative world following certain transformations. Its main character is a young boy chimney sweep and the serious issues of whether enforced child-labor is immoral and how the poor should be treated are major themes in this landmark children's tale. Most readers, however, will be carried away by the fantasy and its sense of hope and possibility in life just as Queen Victoria was (she read it to her children and appointed the author canon of Westminster) AND, after *Middlemarch*, this is a short, easy read!! **We'll meet at 7:30 at Linda Lau's house; to RSVP contact Linda Lau at 703-425-0292.**

Sunday, September 23 - Heurich House (Brewmaster's Castle) Tea for Centenarians

The Heurich House has asked us to be present for a tea that they are presenting to those residents in Washington, DC, who are 100 years old or older! Since the house was built in 1894, 1890's – 1910 attire is a must for this event. We are there to lend atmosphere and just look pretty (as we have done at other Heurich House events). The tea is from 4 – 6 p.m.; **if you are interested, please contact Midge Wang.**

Saturday, September 29 – Annual Membership Meeting

Our annual membership meeting will be held at Pam Jones' lovely Victorian home and garden from 5 – 7 p.m. Light refreshments will be served. This is an important meeting for us as we will have the president's report of our activities from the past year and we will also elect a new slate of officers. **Please RSVP to Linda Lau, 703-425-0292, no later than September 23. Remember, this is an election year and, therefore, we need a good turnout of members.**

Sunday, September 30 - Titanic at Toby's Dinner Theater

We have purchased a group of tickets to see the award-winning musical *Titanic* at Toby's Dinner Theater in Columbia, Maryland. Cost of each ticket is \$37 and, if you have signed up to go, please send in your payment. Toby's is

only 45 minutes from Falls Church, right up Interstate 95 going towards Baltimore and very close to Savage Mill (where you might want to stop on the way home and do some shopping). Prior to the show they serve a brunch buffet which is very good; however, because it is a buffet we recommend that you not wear Victorian clothing. **Contact Midge Wang if you want to attend this event; tickets are still available but we need to have an exact count no later than the end of August.**

And then in October

Join us for a "magical" Victorian evening as we present

The Grand Illusion Ball



**Sunday, October 7
6 – 11 p.m.**

at the Army Navy Country Club

Join us for a sumptuous dinner, 19th century dancing, a silent auction, good company, and some Victorian magic. We begin at 6 p.m. with a cash bar (tickets will be sold at the ball), and then move on to a 7 p.m. sit-down dinner. Dinner selections are baked rockfish with dill cream sauce, rice pilaf and fresh seasonal vegetables OR honey mustard New York sirloin sliced with three peppercorn sauce, fresh seasonal vegetables, and oven roasted potatoes. A vegetarian selection is also available.

After dinner the dancing begins with Corky Palmer as our dance master. Don't know how to dance? Well, not to worry, because, just like last year, there will be plenty of easy dances for those who are 19th century dance challenged. And, even if you don't want to dance you'll have a grand time watching the ladies in those glorious Victorian ball gowns and socializing with all of your society friends. Don't have Victorian clothing? That's fine, too. Just show up in your finest modern-day apparel.

And, don't forget to bring your checkbook because, as in the past, we will have a silent auction with all sorts of wonderful antiques and reproductions, gift items, and services you'll want to bid on. Who knows what special item(s) you'll be able to walk home with! Last year there were some great treasures and we are sure that this year will be no different.

The cost for VSFC members is \$65 per person and for non-members \$75 per person (the same price as last year). **A reservation flyer is included in this Messenger. Don't delay in sending it in as reservations must be received no later than September 30, 2007.**

Donations Appreciated!

Interested in donating something for the silent auction? We are looking for antiques, reproductions, gift items, and certificates for products/services. Donations are tax-deductible and help the society meet its fundraising goals. Please contact Maryll Kleibrink (703) 534-4003 to make a donation. Thanks!

Saturday, October 20 – Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure at the Fulton Opera House

We've bought group tickets to see this comic mystery based on the original 1899 play by William Gillette and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. The Fulton Opera House in Lancaster, PA, is a beautifully restored Victorian opera house. If you didn't make it that last time we went there, then you won't want to miss this opportunity. Our plans are to again have a tour of the Opera House at 5:00 p.m. then have dinner at a nearby restaurant. Last time we stayed at the Lancaster Arts Hotel and some of us are staying there again but you're free to make whatever accommodations you would like. Don't forget, Lancaster is only 20 minutes from Adamstown and all those antique malls. So you might want to plan that for Sunday. **Ticket cost is \$47 and that includes the tour of the theater. If you have already reserved a ticket, then send in your payment no later than September 30; if you are interested in reserving a seat then contact Midge Wang and send in your payment.**

Friday, October 26 – An Evening with Lizzie and Edgar (our Halloween literary evening)

What better way to get a head start on Halloween than an evening spent with the Mistress of Murder and the Master of the Macabre? That's right...our next literary evening will be spent with Lizzie Borden and Edgar Allen Poe, two of the Victorian era's most celebrated characters. Who knows what will be in store as Lizzie and Edgar join us for some Halloween fun. **It all takes place at Cherry Hill Farmhouse starting at 8 p.m. Cost is \$4 unless you come dressed in your Victorian attire and then the fun is free. You must RSVP to Diane Morse at 703-248-5171.**

Other events of interest

The New Old Theater is planning a new production for September -- a "Victorian Theater Evening" which will include the final act of *The History of King Lear*--this is a 1681 adaptation of Shakespeare that was the standard Lear for Americans up through the Civil War--until Edwin Booth restored the full Shakespearean text in 1875. Following that, they will show the farce of "The Stage Struck Yankee". The stage yankee was a dominant stage type up until mid-century--

Asa Trenchard of *Our American Cousin* is the most famous example. There will "olios" throughout, stage acts of song, dance and verse. Dates and times are:

Friday, September 7 and Friday, September 14 at 8:00 in Takoma Park at the Seekers Church, 276 Carroll Avenue, across the street from the Takoma Park station on the Metro Red Line; ticket prices are \$15 adult, \$10 senior or student, and \$5 12 and under.

Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, September 20, 21, and 22 at 8:30 p.m. at the Robert Long House Garden at Fell's Point, Baltimore; ticket prices are: Baltimore \$12 adult, \$8 senior or student, \$5 12 and under.

Mount Clare Visit Was Delightful

Society members want to thank Karen Burt, our member from Reisterstown, MD, for planning a lovely summer's day outing for us. On June 9th we gathered at the outskirts of Baltimore to tour the Carroll family mansion (now a museum) Mount Clare. Not only is the home a beautiful example of 18th century architecture, impeccably restored and furnished, but our visit coincided with a very special exhibit - 300 years of Wedgwood China. Each room was enhanced by shelves, mantles, and tables arranged with the treasures of several private collections of simply amazing examples of Wedgwood. The variety of colors of Jasperware were beyond our imagination and we all loved the elaborate covered Stilton cheese servers - (memories of Frank Ross' cheese at one of our dinners!) - Stilton's are BIG cheeses!

Our next stop was at Tea on the Tiber, a lovely tea room in Ellicott City, Maryland. The decor was lovely, the tea selection very fine and we enjoyed all the treats, especially the scones. Best of all, we were seated around a large oval table where lively conversation turned to personal animal stories - the hands down winner was Marcia Seigert and her rescued raccoon! Definitely it was a delightful day for all who attended.

VSFC Participates in Smithsonian Folk Life Festival

On Sunday, July 1st, the Victorian Society at Falls Church participated in the Smithsonian Folklife Festival. As part of the VA 2007 Committee (Jamestown 1607 - 2007, America's 400th Anniversary) for the City of Falls Church, Linda Lau and Midge Wang dressed in Victorian attire and directed considerable attention to the upcoming book publication (not available at the time of the Festival) of *Victorian Falls Church* as well as the comprehensive City Walking Map of Victorian Structures which will also be available soon.

Of course, other members of the Victorian Society were there as well and wearing two or more hats in this case, members Ron Anzalone, Chairman of the Historic Commission for the City of Falls Church; Keith Thurston, City activist and Village Preservation and Improvement Society representative on the 2007 Committee; Ed Henderson and Nikki Graves also representing the Tinner Hill Heritage Foundation; and Barbara Cram, VA 2007 Chair, also representing the Greater Falls

Church Chamber of Commerce. Diane Morse curator of Historic Cherry Hill Farmhouse in the City, and Shirley Camp, author and historian were the representatives attending from the Friends of Cherry Hill. These very active and knowledgeable citizens very ably represented the City's history, diversity, growth, and most of all its "sense of community" and "widespread and very active citizen involvement" in diverse and longstanding endeavors.

The efforts of the citizenry over the years was evident by the 400 square foot display area of "Community through the Years" highlighted by representations of over 40 cultural and civic efforts which have a long history in the City. To illustrate the growth and strength of community the display included: historic timeline, artifacts from excavations over the years dating to the early years including arrowheads, Civil War artifacts, etc.; oversized album sheets, assembled in subject groups, showing the history of various cultural events; civic activities; organized citizen groups over many decades which has continued to strengthen and improve our community; period toys, which including hand-operated wooden playthings for the children; draft Victorian Walking Map, and a copy of our new book *Victorian Falls Church*; and the making of an Historic House Museum, a photo essay showing the progression of early Cherry Hill farm and the commitment of time and resources to create and achieve listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

The City's community history was well represented by members of the VA 2007 Committee who also contributed to two panel discussions conducted by the Smithsonian on the Dogwood Stage, next to our display area. The panels were "Family, Genealogy, and Community" and "Regions and Landscapes," which offered a comparison of challenges facing the two cities' similar circumstances, Falls Church and Kent, England.

It is estimated that 6-7000 people visited our comprehensive display and many lingered to ask questions and visit. Those of us greeting visitors were gratified and pleased by the level of interest, question, discussions, and the overall response of visitors. It was deemed a gratifying success for all members of our VA 2007 Committee.

Submitted by Barbara Cram

Sister City Fundraiser Success!

Many thanks to all who gave so generously to our appeal on behalf of our Sister City, Kokolopori! Members of the Victorian Society donated a total of \$550, making it possible to purchase a focometer so that villagers can be fitted for prescription glasses for the first time in their lives. This piece of medical equipment is simple to use, does not require electricity, and will be of lasting benefit to our friends in this remote African village. Our equipment donation, along with 400 pairs of eyeglasses donated by the Lions Club, will make its way this autumn up the Congo River for eight days and nights by motorized dugout canoe until it reaches the remote corner of rainforest where our sister city is located. Not only will the people there get better vision from this gift, they will get the warm feeling that comes from knowing that, somewhere in the world, they have friends that care. Thank

you for helping to make our Falls Church Kokolopori Sister City Partnership a success!

Merrybrook

Submitted by Terence McCarthy, Program Director,
Friends of Laura Ratcliffe, Inc.

One of the oldest homes (circa 1820) in Northern Virginia is in the endangered species category and needs financial assistance to avoid becoming “another antebellum residence being demolished” for lack of funds to preserve and maintain it. The home – “Merrybrook” – is located on Centreville Road just south of Herndon. Its most noteworthy occupant was Laura Ratcliffe, best known as the Confederate spy who saved Colonel John Mosby’s life, and was a confidant of General J.E.B. Stuart.



“Merrybrook” (formerly known as Brookside) is a well preserved home located on a beautiful property of a little more than 3 acres. The house is a 1 ½ - to 2-story frame farmhouse with several additions, which are

well integrated into its original style. The oldest section extant is a one and one-half story, two-bay front-gabled wooden frame house (circa 1824). An even earlier section – a small one-room shed-like dwelling (circa 1793) - no longer exists. Additional sections were added around 1840, 1853, 1893 and 1940. All of the additions conform to the architectural integrity of the earliest standing building. Laura Ratcliffe moved into the home around 1869 and was bequeathed the residence by her mother who died in 1869.

In the later part 1861, the first year of the Civil War, Laura Ratcliffe met J.E.B. Stuart while she was ministering to wounded soldiers. Her beauty and manner captivated Stuart and he engaged her in providing intelligence on Union army activities and deployments. Sometime in early 1863, Stuart introduced Laura to John Mosby. Since Mosby conducted many operations in the area where Laura lived, he frequented her home to get information on Union troop movements for the rest of the war. She conceived of a unique way of passing intelligence to Mosby. There was a large rock formation on her property and she made arrangements to stash messages for Mosby there. The site is now known as “Mosby’s Rock”.

Laura cared for her mother until her death in 1869 and for her invalid sister for many years afterward. She received assistance from her neighbor, a Union supporter – Milton Hanna. After the death of her sister, Laura married Hanna on December 4, 1890. Seven years later, Hanna died in an accident, leaving Laura a wealthy widow. In spite of her wealth, she continued her many duties as manager of her farm as well as several others belonging to her family. She remained an active part of her community, involved with her church as well as donating land for a fledgling Presbyterian church nearby. Her charity extended to many of her less fortunate neighbors as became evident after her death in 1923. She is still spoken with great admiration as “the lady with the golden earrings.”

In March 2007, the Friends of Laura Ratcliffe was established and incorporated. Its mission is to preserve and maintain “Merrybrook” so that it can be open to the public, historians, and archeologists and also provide Standards of Learning (SOL) satisfying tours for students.

There is much that needs to be done and significant funds need to be raised to accomplish this mission. Potential donors and volunteers should contact the Friends of Laura Ratcliffe at (703)728-5882. It is significant to note that “Merrybrook” was accepted in March 2007 on the National Register of Historical Places. On September 30 they are planning an open house so if you want to see this historic property that is a good opportunity to do so. If you want to know more about the property and Laura Ratcliffe then check out their website at www.lauraratcliffe.org/Merrybrook.html.



*From the Book Shelf, a
Review by Penny Cullenden*

Thunderstruck

by Erik Larsen

Most of you will remember the author by his previous work, "The Devil in the White City", which intertwined the story of the building of the Chicago Exposition of 1896 with that of a serial murderer who disposed of his victims in the furnace of his Chicago home where he rented rooms to visitors to the Exposition! The same conceit is employed in his most recent undertaking, Thunderstruck, which relates the trials and tribulations of Enzo Marconi and his near-obsession (to many of his contemporaries) to invent and perfect wireless telegraphy and make it available for use on ships and, his dream, eventually to link America and Europe. Marconi's invention of wireless lead to the first use of this new technology to track and eventually capture that infamous murderer, Dr. Hawley Harvey Crippen and his mistress, Ethel Le Neve, whose story is coupled with that of Marconi. Police work had entered a new era as had the media.

Marconi was not a scientist and many in the field of science considered him to be a well-to-do young man who would soon tire of tinkering around with things about which he knew nothing and leave the serious work of perfecting wireless to themselves. There was, in fact, quite a race to see who would succeed in perfecting the technique first and thereby reap the huge financial rewards to say nothing of the fame bestowed on the victor. The obstacles encountered by Marconi--the destruction of towers and telegraphic stations by weather; loss of life of those assigned to man the outposts; a continuing financial drain on his personal resources as well as those of his backers; his self-imposed isolation from society and obsession with work; the ridicule he endured from the scientific community--would have stopped a lesser man from the endeavor. To say Marconi was obsessed is an understatement.

During the same period, the mundane life of Dr. Crippen is laid out for all to read--his less than stellar professional career;

his marriage to a woman totally unsuitable for him; the financial drain on his limited resources to provide his wife, who called herself Belle Elmore and fancied herself an opera singer, with music and singing lessons (although by all accounts she wasn't even a very good music hall entertainer); her various affairs; and his with his secretary, Ethel Le Neve, to whom he was devoted. January 31, 1910 was the last day any of her friends in London, where they lived, saw Mrs. Crippen. Dr. Crippen gave out various stories of her having returned to America to tend a sick relative (they were both Americans living in London); taking sick in California; and eventually dying there. The trouble was, he moved Ethel Le Neve into the house he had shared with his wife within very short order, and began selling some of Belle's jewelry which was understandable as he desperately needed the money to settle some of his and Belle's debts. But he made the rash mistake of giving some of the jewelry to Ethel who wore it when they socialized with Belle's friends! Eventually Scotland Yard was called in by these same friends of Mrs. Crippen's and the good doctor began to feel the pressure. He and Ethel left England for Belgium, touring the low countries, departing Antwerp and sailing for Canada on board the SS Montrose. Neither read the English newspapers while they were abroad so were unaware that the remains of human flesh had been discovered under the basement floor of Dr. Crippen's house on Hilldrop Crescent.

Dr. Crippen and Ethel set sail as Mr. John Robinson and his 16 year old son but their disguises caught the attention of Captain Kendall, who had read the papers and was aware of the happenings in London. The Montrose was equipped with the new wireless telegraphy and Captain Kendall sent a message to the ship's owners relating his suspicions, which information was passed to Scotland Yard. Inspector Dew, who had been in charge of the investigation into Mrs. Crippen's disappearance from the beginning, sailed from Liverpool on the Laurentic, chasing the Montrose across the Atlantic. Meanwhile, Captain Kendall had collected all the English newspapers on the ship so no one on board knew what had happened. He chatted with Crippen about many things, including the newly invented wireless telegraphy--Crippen remarked "What a wonderful invention wireless is!" not knowing that this "wonderful invention" would lead to his downfall.

After Kendall's ship was out of receiving range from land, he was able to listen to reports from other ships fitted with wireless and used them to communicate with Scotland Yard. Newspapers around the world were full of the story of the chase across the Atlantic, of Crippen and his mistress, and of the wonders of wireless. The Laurentic arrived in the St. Lawrence Seaway prior to the Montrose and Inspector Dew boarded the Montrose and arrested Crippen and Le Neve (who apparently knew nothing of the murder of Mrs. Crippen). They were both returned to London, tried, and Crippen was executed while Le Neve was found innocent.

The sensational success of the radio-assisted chase was a heaven-sent advertisement for wireless and Marconi, who could not have wished for more in his wildest dreams. Within a year, the number of merchant ships equipped with wireless increased enormously and there was an irresistible demand

from the public for wireless to be compulsory for all but the smallest ships. Thanks to Marconi and Crippen, then, the Titanic was fitted with wireless and was able to signal her distress to all ships within range. Those passengers rescued from her lifeboats in 1912 by the Carpathia owed their lives to wireless.

Thunderstruck is available at local bookstores. The retail price for the 400 page hardcopy is \$25.95

Miss Gabrielle's Beauty and Fashion for the Socially Astute

After a brief hiatus Miss Gabrielle returns to provide you, dear devoted readers, with the best possible advice that she can possibly muster. And, dear readers, please be assured that Miss Gabrielle has not been resting on her laurels these past few months. In fact she has been traveling much of the United States looking for what is the newest in Victorian beauty and fashion trends. And, she has found the perfect source for latest in ladies' toilet advice especially as concerns a ladies most important asset, her complexion: *Perfect Etiquette, Or How to Behave* (published circa 1873).



Washes for the Face

We do not approve of face-washes; but as some ladies will use them, we commend the following as harmless; -- Damp the face with glycerine, tempered with rose-water, then powder with the finest magnesia. It imparts a charming whiteness. Less harmless, but more frequently used, is the following: -- Procure five cents of bismuth, of flake white, and of powdered chalk. Mix with five cents of rose-water. Great care must be taken to wash off this preparation before retiring to rest, as the bismuth is of a poisonous nature. (Editors note: This is less harmless?)

Cold Cream

Put into a jar a pint of sweet oil, half an ounce of spermaceti, and town ounces of white wax. Melt in a jar by the fire; add scent.

Another method. Melt together a pint of oil of sweet almonds, one ounce of white wax, half an ounce of spermaceti, and half a pint of rose water; beat to a paste.

Improving the Complexion

To improve the complexion, some flowers of sulphur should be mixed with a small quantity of milk, and, after standing a few hours, it may be rubbed on the skin.

Wrinkles

The pomade d'Hebe, used for the removal of wrinkles, is made in this way. Melt white wax, one ounce, to gentle heat, and add juices of lily bulbs two ounces, and honey two ounces, rose water two drachms, and otto of roses a drop or two. Use twice a day.

Lip Salve

This indispensable adjunct to the toilet may be made by melting in a jar placed in a basin of boiling water a quarter of an ounce each of white wax and spermaceti, flour of benzoin fifteen grains, and half an ounce of oil of almonds. Stir till the mixture is cool. Color red with five cents of alkanet root.

Sweet Tea Sandwiches



When we think of tea sandwiches we usually think of the savory kind – those made with cucumbers or asparagus, chicken salad, smoked salmon, egg salad, and the like. Recently we received several vintage cookbooks that listed a variety of recipes for “Sweet Sandwiches for Afternoon Tea.” So knowing how our members love sweet things, we decided to publish a few of these interesting and we’re sure yummy recipes. Maybe you’ll want to include one of these on your next tea menu.

Bananas and Red-Raspberry

Spread entire wheat or graham bread with butter, then with ½ cup banana pulp mixed with ½ cup red raspberries, 1 tbsp. sugar, and 2 of cream.

Bar-le-Duc

Mix equal portions of red currant, Bar-le-duc, or home-made currant jam with cream cheese, soften with cream, and put together with white bread.

Flower

Put a layer of flowers in bottom of jar or covered dish, put in ¼ cup fresh creamed butter wrapped in wax paper, cover with flowers, cover closely, and leave in the cool for several hours. Remove paper from butter, and spread between white bread, and the sandwich will have a strong flavor of the especial flower used.

Tutti Frutti

Chop candied cherries, peaches and apricots, add a very little maraschino and mix to a paste. Place between thin slices of buttered white bread. Cut in strips.

And, in case you have never heard of it, Bar-le-duc (used in recipe two above) is a type of jelly which was originally composed of selected seeded whole white currants but now is also composed of red or black currents as well. Bar-le-duc is manufactured in the French town of Bar-le-duc. The bottled currant preserves of Bar-le-duc look like a deep winehued jelly in which tiny jewels of fruit are suspended. One company, House of Dutriez, still makes Bar-le-duc by hand where seed extractors de-seed the currents with goose quills, flicking out the tiny seeds without disturbing the small fruit's flesh. Most brands are simply mashed currents. About 200 currents go into an approximately 3 ounce jar and since seed extraction is a time-consuming process, Bar-le-duc is quite expensive selling for as much as \$50 a jar here in the U.S.



Welcome New Members!!

Barbara, Charles & Andrew Fluharty, 1917 Legacy Woods Drive, Fredericksburg, VA 22407, 540-548-4312

Karla Pringle, 9612 Shipwright Drive, Burke, VA 22015, 703-455-5132

Meet Your Fellow Members

Contributed by Maryll Kleibrink

Elinor Coleman

The owner of Elinor Coleman’s Vintage Mirage, a store in Alexandria selling vintage clothing and jewelry, Elinore moved to Virginia three years ago. Prior to that she lived and worked in New York City for 23 years, where she directed a modern dance company called the Elinor Coleman Dance Ensemble/Danse Mirage, Inc. She created choreography, danced, and designed stage sets and costumes for her concert stage productions performed throughout the U.S., Canada, Japan and Europe. It was through that experience that she developed her keen interest in vintage fashion and antique jewelry. Her shop, on the second floor of 210 North Lee Street, specializes in 1940s and 1950s fashions, although she has many items dating from Victorian times as well, such as hat pins, petticoats, linens, and summer whites.

Elinor possesses a wealth of knowledge about the history of jewelry. Thirty of our members visited her shop recently for her presentation on how jewelry was made and used in the Victorian era, and how to preserve antique pieces of jewelry. She also offers her expertise in how to properly store, repair and preserve historic clothing and accessories. An active member of the National Button Society, Elinor has an extensive collection of antique and contemporary buttons. She offers re-buttoning services for vintage clothing, as well as other repair work such as finding matching sequins and beads, and re-beading vintage garments.

Another facet of her business is to advise on the pro’s and con’s of various means of liquidating an estate or downsizing into a retirement home or smaller living space. Sometimes, she explains, this involves finding the right buyer, choosing between an auction house or an estate sale, or deciding whether and how to preserve items for future generations. Elinor first learned about the Victorian Society at Falls Church through one of our founding members, Edith Bradbury, who visited her shop to offer to sell her one of the fine antique hats in her collection. She was thrilled to connect with a group of people as taken as she is with the craftsmanship and sense of history that antique and vintage fashion imparts.

Debi Wurdack

One of our newest members, Debi joined the Victorian Society at Falls Church through our outgoing President, Linda Lau, who called her in response to a flyer announcing a program Debi was giving on Queen Victoria for her Questers Club. Questers is an international organization whose members are interested in antiques and historic preservation, offering a wide variety of programs and field trips. Debi is starting a new chapter in Burke, which has met four times already, and she would welcome any of our members who would like to join. A long-time collector of Victorian era artifacts, Debi greatly enjoyed the research she did on the Victorian era in preparing her Questers presentation, and was very interested in what Linda had to say about our chapter’s activities. In the end, both women are joining the other’s group. Debi is a realtor, who enjoys reading and taking tea, and in fact also belongs to a tea club. Debi and her 17-year

old daughter, Katie, are taking a trip to England in July, where they hope to shop, sightsee and – of course – have tea! If you are interested in joining Questers, Debi can be reached at 703-455-5354 or debiburke2@verizon.net.



Flowers, Flowers, Flowers

Do you need silk flowers for flower arranging, hat decorating, bouquets, or any other craft projects? If so, Dee Beck has many boxes of silk flowers that are for sale for only \$1.00 per stem, a very low price indeed. If you are interested in some, they are located at Mt. Hope and you can contact Midge Wang, 703-534-8394, to go through them.

Dirty Linens?

Do your vintage linens need some whitening? Are your summer white dresses showing the stains of too many picnics? Then perhaps you need Restoration, a product by Engleside Home Care Products of Lancaster, PA, and brought to our attention by Anne Willis. According to their website this product “removes most stains: coffee, blood, tea, grape juice, ketchup and much more * removes yellowing: mystery spots and yellowing caused by water damage, age, UV rays and even discolored fold lines * Will not harm fine delicate material fibers: Contains no chlorine, will not leave residue or harm fibers in any way. A two pound jar is \$14.95 and the five pound jar is \$26.95. Their website is www.englesideproducts.com or you can call them at 1-717-397-9497.



Recollections has 'Summer White' dresses

The on-line re-enactment clothing company, Recollections, has several different ‘summer white’ dresses as well as cotton dresses in many Victorian and Edwardian designs. These dresses would definitely be appropriate for our Victorian picnics and outdoor parties. Each month they have a selection of dresses on sale. Their website is www.recollections.biz. And if you are interested in a Victorian or Edwardian style bathing suit you will find several different styles at both Recollections and Premier Clothing (www.premierclothing.com). Recollections even has one that comes in a variety of colors including purple and candy pink!

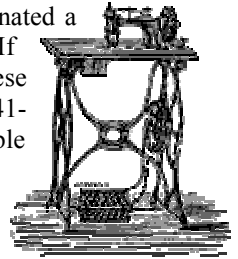
Victorian Style Purses

Beyond the Garden Gate a small specialty shop in downtown Falls Church has Victorian style beaded purses with a metal clasp and chain. These purses are of a generous size so you can actually get your keys and ladies accoutrements in them. They would work nicely with your Victorian afternoon and evening outfits. *Beyond the Garden Gate* is located at 450 West Broad St. Suite 120, physically located on Pennsylvania Ave. around the corner from Panera Bread, Falls Church, VA 22046, 703-752-5226.

Patterns Available

Member Carol Weakley has generously donated a number of ladies clothing patterns to us. If you are interested in borrowing any of these patterns, please contact Linda Lau at 703-241-2751. There are some great patterns available including:

1850-1860 Dated Bodice
1850-1860 Gathered Bodice
1850-1863 Skirt
1850s -60s Basic Gored Skirt
1860s Ball Gown Bodice
Victorian bonnet
Hoop skirt (2 different styles)
1890's Blouse (4 different styles)
1890's Skirt (4 different styles)



Important!

Notice of Annual Meeting and Election of Officers

At its July 19th meeting, the Board fixed the date of this year's Annual Membership Meeting for Saturday, September 27, at 5:00 p.m. at Pam Jones' home in Arlington, VA (see page 2 of this Messenger for additional information). All members are hereby officially notified of that date and asked to attend this meeting. We will elect nominated members to the Board for the 2007/2008 session. As was indicated in the previous Messenger, at the May 17th board meeting, the Nominating Committee presented the following slate of candidates and the board nominated the following members for election:

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| President: | Gil Siegert |
| Vice President: | Midge Wang |
| Secretary: | Shirley Camp |
| Treasurer: | Terry Hooper |
| Board: | Deanna Beck Penny Crittenden Mack Gross Anne Willis |

All nominated have accepted the nomination and the responsibility that goes with it. Accordingly, this slate will be presented for approval by you, the Victorian Society at Falls Church members at the annual meeting on Saturday, September 29 at Pam Jones' lovely Victorian house in Arlington, VA.

The Victorian Society at Falls Church

A chapter of the Victorian Society of America

P.O. Box 7436, Falls Church, VA 22040

Vicsocfc@hotmail.com

Officers

Linda Lau, President 703-425-0292

Ron Anzalone, Vice President 703-241-0538

Terry Hooper, Treasurer 703-241-2751

Penny Crittenden, Secretary 540-788-9552

Board Members

Deanna Beck, Priscilla Gibson, Mary Jane Lyons,

Anne Willis, Midge Wang

Membership – Gus Knapp 703-241-2751

Newsletter Publisher – Linda Lau 703-425-0292