

## Join us for Cottage Conversations!

The signature lecture series at President Lincoln's Cottage returns this fall with a new conversational format! Join us on October 16 as Harold Holzer speaks with CBS White House Correspondent Major Garrett. Learn more on page 4.

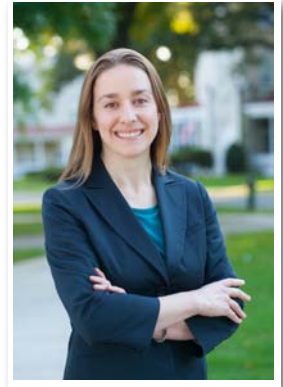
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## From the Director

Dear Friends,

This week, one hundred and fifty years ago, Lincoln was in the midst of his tense, uncertain bid for reelection. On August 19th, 1864, he met with two men, Judge Joseph T. Mills and Governor Alexander Randall, here at the Cottage. Mills recorded in his diary that upon arriving at the Cottage, "Soon appeared a tall slightly stooping gentleman approaching with long, rapid strides - large feet, with large slippers...." Lincoln's physical appearance prompted them to encourage him to take a few weeks leave. Lincoln replied, "3 weeks would do me no good---my thoughts, my solicitude for this great country follow me where ever I go." Throughout the conversation, Lincoln expressed his various concerns about potential fallout should he lose the election. It's difficult now to think of anyone replacing Lincoln as President during the Civil War, sending Lincoln to the sidelines. Of course, five other living U.S. Presidents were already on the sidelines, as chronicled in Chris DeRose's new book, "The Presidents' War: Six American Presidents and the Civil War That Divided Them." It's a fascinating look at how the other living Presidents reacted to and engaged with the war. We're delighted to share an excerpt from his book in this issue.



As promised, our feature-length articles are back. We know that many of you are as interested in the history as you are in how we preserve and share that history. In addition to the excerpt from DeRose's new history book and an update on preservation of the Cottage exterior, we're sharing an article detailing how President Lincoln's Cottage and several sister sites have created partnerships with other organizations to engage more people in the history. The article first appeared in *History News*, the official publication of the American Association for State and Local History.

Though the article highlights one major partnership at President Lincoln's Cottage, collaboration is ingrained in our work and on display in many of our events this fall. We are excited for our first annual Freedom 5K XC race and walk, featuring Olympic Champion Joan Benoit Samuelson. We're also delighted to participate in the Armed Forces Retirement Home's annual Fall Fest, and to be joined by No Greater Sacrifice for our third annual Family Day. Of course, fall also means the return of Cottage Conversations, now in its 7th year and with an exciting twist that makes the program worthy of having "conversation" in the title.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of the newsletter. Let us know what you think by joining our conversation on Facebook and Twitter, or drop me a line by email. As always, I would be to delighted learn your thoughts.

*Erin Mast*

Erin Mast  
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## Run in Lincoln's Footsteps at the 1st Annual Freedom 5K XC with Joan Benoit Samuelson



Join Olympic champion and running icon Joan Benoit Samuelson at the first annual Freedom 5K XC at President Lincoln's Cottage! The Freedom 5K XC, a unique cross country event open to the general public, provides a rare opportunity for runners and walkers alike to race on the 250-acre Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH) grounds. The race traverses the AFRH landscape, on roads and paths that wind past ponds, woods, and fields, before culminating at President Lincoln's Cottage.

**When:** Saturday September 27, 2014 at 8:00 am.

**Register:** [www.lincolncottage.org/Freedom5KXC14](http://www.lincolncottage.org/Freedom5KXC14).

**Fees:** \$30 through August 27, then \$40 through race day.

All proceeds and donations support preservation, award-winning programs, and innovative initiatives such as the Students Opposing Slavery program at President Lincoln's Cottage.

## Celebrate Family Day on September 13!

Explore a Civil War encampment, play with Tad's favorite animals at the petting zoo, make a stovepipe hat, listen to the US Army Brass Quintet, and enjoy a day of FREE family-friendly fun **on Saturday, September 13 from 10 am-3pm** at President Lincoln's Cottage! Register [online](#).



*President Lincoln's Cottage is proud to be joined by No Greater Sacrifice and the Armed Forces Retirement Home on Family Day 2014.*



## Notes from the Desk

"If you ask my Bruce Monroe ES @ Park View second graders, 'What's your favorite field trip?' You will hear a resounding, 'President Lincoln's Cottage!'

Our visit starts with a short walk through the neighborhood from our elementary school. They love discovering that their neighborhood holds such an important, historical landmark and are excited to explore the grounds.



*Bruce Monroe ES @ Park View students model their new hats!*

Sixty students tour each room of the Cottage during the Lincoln's Hat program, gathering details about Lincoln's life piece by piece, room by room. During our time at the Cottage, they learn to study art, such as a mural, statue, and illustrations from a biography, to look for clues and make inferences about what was happening in the time period. They remember each bit of information and acquire new skills in a way that could never be taught through a book, but can only be internalized through the rich experience that President Lincoln's Cottage provides.

Inspired by their experience at President Lincoln's Cottage, my students published a book explaining why Lincoln is an American hero and sent copies of it all over the District. Last year, each student took a photo wearing their tall, Lincoln hat in front of the Cottage and pasted it on a Father's Day card that compared their own father's heroic traits to Lincoln's.

President Lincoln's Cottage staff also participated in our Family Arts Night, giving families information about upcoming activities at the Cottage. Our students' eyes lit up in excitement when they saw the familiar black hats from Lincoln's Cottage, a neighborhood landmark which holds a special place in our hearts and minds at Bruce Monroe ES @ Park View."

-Jackie McMillan, Teacher at Bruce Monroe ES @ Park View, Washington D.C.



## Schedule A Class Visit Today!

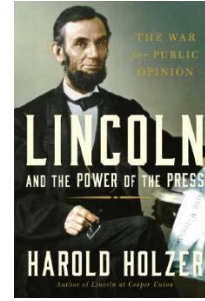
Inspire your students at "the Cradle of the Emancipation Proclamation!" On-campus programs are available for students in kindergarten through 12th grade and include a specialized tour of the Cottage and an interactive program component that meets Common Core and national standards of learning. Teacher materials and lesson plans are available to prepare students for their visit.

Contact the Education Department and schedule your class field trip to President Lincoln's Cottage today. Call 202-829-0436 or email [LincolnEd@savingplaces.org](mailto:LincolnEd@savingplaces.org).

## Cottage Conversations Return This Fall

Cottage Conversations, the signature lecture series at President Lincoln's Cottage, returns this fall - with a twist. This season, featured scholars will be interviewed by a notable guest host. Join us on **October 16** when we welcome Harold Holzer and CBS Chief White House Correspondent Major Garrett, who will discuss Holzer's new book, "Lincoln and the Power of the Press."

*The 2014-2015 Cottage Conversation season is made possible with generous support from Mr. David Bruce Smith, Mr. James Tennies, and Mr. Matthew Tennies.*



Reception: 6 pm, \$10. Lecture: 6:30 pm, \$10.  
Free: \$250+ members. [JOIN NOW.](#)

RSVP: Sahand Miraminy, 202-829-0436 x31232 or [SMiraminy@savingplaces.org](mailto:SMiraminy@savingplaces.org).



## Museum Sidewalk Sale

Shop the best selection of merchandise from Washington-area cultural centers at bargain basement prices! Deals on clearance and one-of-a-kind items are available on a first-come, first-served basis, as long as supplies last.

Featuring: President Lincoln's Cottage, The Kennedy Center, America's National Parks Stores, EAA Gift Shop at Langley, Folger Shakespeare Theater, International Spy Museum, The Navy Museum Store, The Supreme Court, Tudor Place Historic House and Garden, and The Walters Art Museum.

**When:** Saturday September 6th, 10 am-5 pm.

**Where:** Main Atrium in the Kennedy Center, 2700 F Street NW, Washington DC 20566.

**Admission:** FREE. 2 hours free parking in the Kennedy Center garage.

## Enjoy Fall Fest at the Soldiers' Home

We are delighted to participate in the Armed Forces Retirement Home's annual Fall Fest! Join us on Sunday October 5th for history tours, the Antique Car Show, a tasting tent, and more.

**When:** Sunday October 5 from 10 am-3 pm.  
Visit [www.lincolncottage.org/FallFest2014](http://www.lincolncottage.org/FallFest2014) for more information.





# An Excerpt from “The Presidents’ War: Six American Presidents and the Civil War That Divided Them”

By Chris DeRose

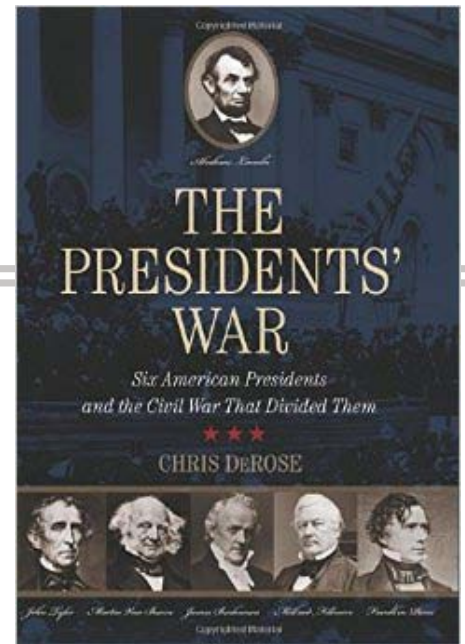
*This passage from Chris DeRose’s newest work, “The Presidents’ War: Six American Presidents and the Civil War That Divided Them,” illuminates the contention between Lincoln and his surviving predecessors regarding the Emancipation Proclamation.*

When Abraham Lincoln became President, he faced a record number of living predecessors - five - who had opinions of their own on the gathering crisis and were completely prepared to take him on. John Tyler quickly joined the Confederates. Martin Van Buren was outspoken in favor of Lincoln, but died in the summer of 1862. James Buchanan was initially supportive, believing that Lincoln’s victory would provide a vindication of his own policies. But Buchanan believed in a negotiated peace, one that would preserve slavery. All had opposed Lincoln’s election as president. And all still living in 1864 would support George McClellan over Lincoln. During one of his most critical moments as President, weighing the promise and perils of Emancipation, Lincoln would inflame the former Presidents with his ultimate decision. What follows is the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation - drafted at President Lincoln’s Cottage - and the fallout among Lincoln’s predecessors.

The first day of 1863 brought with it, like every year, a levee at the White House. When it was done came the important business of the day. After Antietam, Lincoln had announced that he would issue the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1. Now that time had

arrived. The Proclamation was brought to Lincoln on a scroll by Seward and his son Frederick, who served as his aide at the State Department. Lincoln dipped his pen in ink, but paused as he prepared to sign and dropped the pen. After a moment, Lincoln again picked up the pen, but hesitated and dropped it again. Looking at Seward, he said, “I have been shaking hands since nine o’clock this morning and my right arm is almost paralyzed. If my name ever goes into history it will be for this act, and my whole soul is in it. If my hand trembles when I sign the Proclamation, all who examine the document hereafter will say, ‘He hesitated.’” Lincoln gripped the pen a third time and wrote “Abraham Lincoln” at the end. Looking up and smiling, he said, “That will do!”

In Beaufort, South Carolina, controlled by the Union forces after the landing at Port Royal, 3,000 slaves arrived to hear a reading. They were treated to a fine barbecue, and waited on by Union soldiers. For more than a year the emancipation experiment had thrived, as they demonstrated their ability to work the plantations and sustain themselves and one another. Even so, their legal status had been in doubt. But



from a platform the Emancipation Proclamation was now read. The American flag was waved from the stage, by a man who recognized that “now for the first time, it meant anything to these people.” The now former slaves in the audience spontaneously broke into song: “My country ‘tis of thee, Sweet land of liberty, Of thee I sing!”

Franklin Pierce was livid. “The last proclamation of the president caps the climax of folly and wickedness...the most obvious dictates of humanity, honor, and common honesty, to say nothing of patriotism, commands the withdrawal of support promptly and irrevocably,” he wrote his former law partner. “Mr. Lincoln has been and is to what his limited ability and narrow intelligence [allow] their willing instrument for all the woe which has thus far been brought upon the country and for all the degradation, all the atrocity,

all the desolation and ruin which is only too palpably before us.”

Pierce argued that the Constitution had been “deliberately violated and defied by the national executive sworn to maintain it,” that “five hundred thousand men have been induced to take their places in the ranks of the Army under false pretenses,” and “one hundred thousand of them at least have

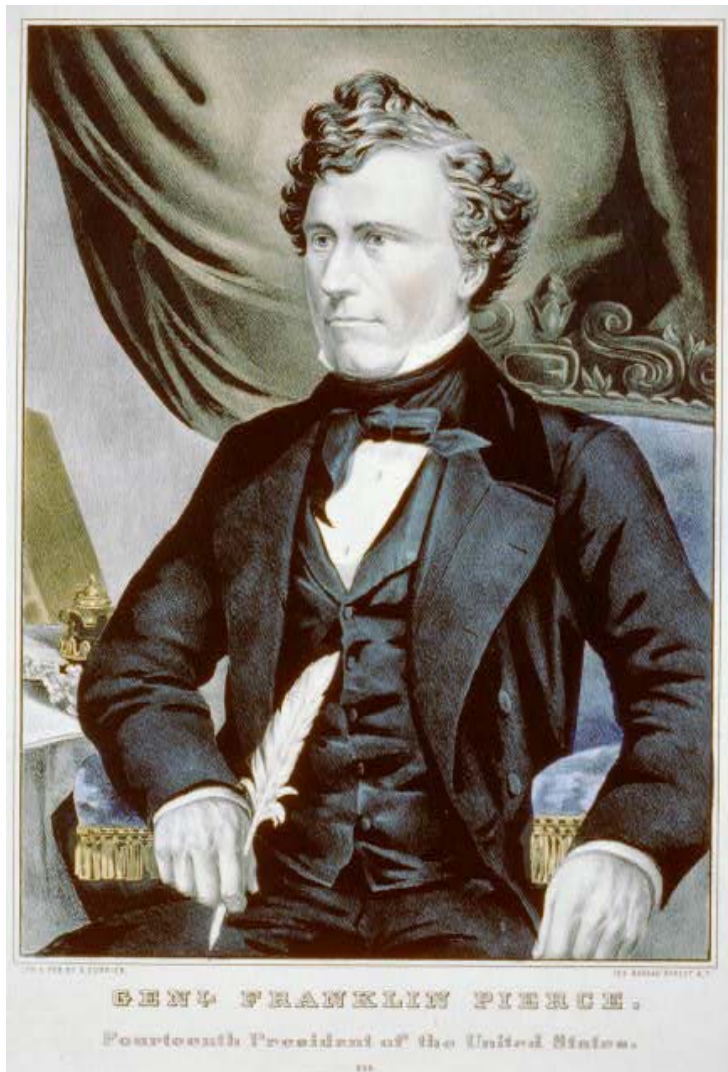
“All of this would have been sufficiently replete with a degree of wrong, disgrace, and honor which admits of no expression. But what will the world say of a proclamation, emanating from the President of the United States, not only in defiance of the fundamental law of the country for the upholding of which he ought to have been willing to pour his own blood, but in defiance of all law human and

was never before contemplated by any nation, civilized or barbarous.

“If it be not too late for the people of the United States to utter a voice which shall terrify duplicity and overcome fanaticism—if it be too late to rescue the Republic from ruin financially and politically—is it too late to stay the restless march of barbarism, to save such remnants of honor as may warrant as to claim and deserve a place among the civilized peoples of the earth.

“But I will say no more now,” Pierce concluded. “My heart is sick of the contemplation.”

Millard Fillmore was similarly incensed, sending Franklin Pierce an article from the *Commercial Advertiser* critical of Lincoln’s Proclamation. Pierce responded with thanks, arguing, “If this war is prosecuted to abolish slavery... what possible justification could be argued for it? A war prosecuted for these objects is itself treason. “If Mr. Lincoln had decided at the outset that he was” to fight a war on this basis, “who would have sprung to arms for such objects?” He encouraged Fillmore to “continue to deliver your heavy blows, thick and fast” against these and all unconstitutional measures.



*Portrait of Franklin Pierce, 1853, N. Currier.  
Image courtesy Library of Congress.*

poured out their life and blood for the consummation of an object to which they never did give and never could have given their approbation.

Divine which invites the black race in six entire states and parts of several others to use and with all the barbaric features...slay and devastate without regard to age or sex...the homes of the descendants of men whose fathers fought with our fathers the battles of the Revolution, and whose fathers with our fathers formed and adopted the Constitution...the women and children brutally violated and slaughtered shall be white women and children.

“What will the civilized world say when they read these words sent forth by the President of the United States...they will say justly that a crime so fearful as that proposed

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*Mr. DeRose is a historian, professor of law, and the 2014-2016 Chair of the Scholarly Advisory Group at President Lincoln’s Cottage. Our scholars provide critical guidance and support for our programs and research, and we are grateful to work with such an esteemed group.*

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## On View Through November 2014: President Lincoln's Carpet Slippers

While Abraham Lincoln's public image was defined by his signature stovepipe hat, his private, more casual nature is highlighted in the newest exhibit at President Lincoln's Cottage in Washington, DC. Meetings at the Cottage were often impromptu and informal, and Lincoln was known to greet guests while wearing carpet slippers. An original pair of Lincoln's own slippers is on public display in the Robert H. Smith Visitor Education Center at President Lincoln's Cottage now through November 2014. The slippers are on loan from the Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center in Fremont, OH.



## Award-Winning Tour Experiences



President Lincoln's Cottage received the top prize from the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) for the best new digital application in 2014. The app, developed exclusively for Cottage tours by Blair Dubilier & Associates, was made possible by a grant from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services. Additionally, we are delighted to announce that TripAdvisor awarded the Cottage a 2014 Certificate of Excellence. This award is only given to establishments that consistently receive outstanding traveler reviews on TripAdvisor.

### Take a Tour of President Lincoln's Cottage!

Guided tours on the hour - Monday-Saturday 10 am-3 pm, Sunday 11 am-3 pm. Purchase tickets online at [www.lincolncottage.org/tickets](http://www.lincolncottage.org/tickets) or call 202-829-0436. Groups of ten or more can save on tickets. Learn more on our [Tour Information](#) page.

*"I made arrangements to bring a bus tour of 30+ people to the Cottage and your staff made it one of the most pleasant experiences I've ever had in the times I've spent putting these tours together. Please extend a giant 'thank you' to the ticket manager, the guides, the folks in the bookstore, and everyone else at the Cottage. It couldn't have been a better experience!" -Liz, Michigan*



## 2015 Civil War Sesquicentennial Ornament Now Available



The fifth edition of the 5-piece Sesquicentennial Ornament Series, depicting President Lincoln shaking the hands of a veteran at the Soldiers' Home, commemorates President Lincoln's last visit to the Cottage.

Lincoln's travels to the Soldiers' Home bookend his presidency. He first rode out the Soldiers' Home a few days after his 1861 inauguration and last rode through the grounds the day before he was assassinated.

All five Civil War Sesquicentennial ornaments are available now in the President Lincoln's Cottage online store. [Shop now!](#)

# CAN YOU WALK AWAY ?

## MODERN SLAVERY: HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN THE UNITED STATES

*Closes August 31, 2014!*

## Host An Event Under the Stars on Lincoln's Lawn

"We were beyond happy with the entire evening – it was meaningful and magical and also – just a ton of fun. **There has not been one guest we have talked to that didn't say that President Lincoln's Cottage was indeed extraordinary.** Your staff will be held in our memories for the rest of our days – as the perfect host, in a perfect spot, during a perfect event! Thanks again for all the hard work, good advice, and sense of humor through our months of planning – the event truly would not have been the same without your team!" - Erin & Nekisha, married at President Lincoln's Cottage, May 2014.



Click [here](#) to learn about site rentals at President Lincoln's Cottage, an enchanting and historic setting for private events. To schedule your site visit, contact Events Coordinator Sahand Miraminy at 202-829-0436 x31232 or at [SMiraminy@savingplaces.org](mailto:SMiraminy@savingplaces.org).



## What Will Be Your Legacy?

As a private non-profit, President Lincoln's Cottage depends on donations and bequests. You can help ensure that this powerful place is here for generations to come by leaving a bequest in your will. In this [video](#), Site Council member Candice Shy Hooper shares why she chose to support this historic site with a bequest.

For more information about using your will to protect President Lincoln's Cottage and the big ideas of freedom and equality that live here, please contact John Davison, Associate Director for Development, by emailing [JDavison@savingplaces.org](mailto:JDavison@savingplaces.org) or calling 202-829-0436 x31225.



## Vestibule Restoration: Identifying Causes of Moisture Damage



President Lincoln's Cottage is a National Monument and a historic treasure, and it is imperative that we act to identify and treat any issues that threaten the integrity of the building as soon as possible. Last summer, Catherine Myers of Myers Conservation began efforts in the cottage vestibule to help stabilize deteriorating wall plaster and Lincoln-era decorative painting caused by moisture infiltration. Ms. Myers, a specialist in architectural finishes and mural paintings, returned to the Cottage this summer to begin the next phase of vestibule work, including carefully removing paint layers to reveal areas of decorative painting not seen in almost 150 years. This effort will allow us to better understand how the walls looked during Lincoln's time, and to discover what materials were used to paint the walls. With this information we are better equipped to continue preservation efforts and possibly reproduce the decorative painting that was stabilized in 2013.

This project is funded in part by the Civil War Dance Foundation and the DC Commission on the Arts & Humanities, an agency supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts.

## Follow @LincolnsCottage and Stay Connected!

Get the latest updates from the Cottage by following our social media accounts:



## Students Opposing Slavery: Finishing Lincoln's Unfinished Work

*"I believe that each and every one of us can end human trafficking. So when I went inside Lincoln's Cottage, I felt as if Lincoln... he talked about his unfinished work, you know. He understood that slavery hadn't completely ended. I feel that he was passing the torch on to us. And I believe that we will [be], and we are, the generation that says enough."*

Thirty teenagers from eight countries united at the Cottage earlier this summer for the second annual Students Opposing Slavery (SOS) International Summit. Students like Abshishek Basu (quoted above), felt inspired by Lincoln's legacy in this historic place to take up the fight against human trafficking. Read more about their experiences on the [SOS blog](#). Contact Callie Hawkins, Associate Director for Programs, at [CHawkins@savingplaces.org](mailto:CHawkins@savingplaces.org) for more information about SOS.



## Double Your Impact!

When you donate to President Lincoln's Cottage, the Robert H. Smith Family Foundation generously matches your contribution. For example, a gift of \$250 becomes \$500. Your support is critical because President Lincoln's Cottage:

- is the only National Monument in the country that receives no government operating support;
- has no endowment (but budgets responsibly and has no debt either); and
- is making a substantial difference through original, transformative programs such as our international Students Opposing Slavery initiative and our effort to bring every DC public school student to Lincoln's beloved home free of charge.

**Click here to  
DONATE**

***Help us build a sustainable future for this historic treasure by making a gift today!***



# "Greater than the Sum of our Parts"

By Erin Carlson Mast

*This article was previously published in History News, the magazine of the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH), as the theme article for the 2014 AASLH Annual Meeting. To learn more about AASLH, visit [www.aaslh.org](http://www.aaslh.org).*

You know the story. A poor and hungry stranger comes to a town and goes door to door asking for something to eat. Each household tells him they do not have enough food to spare. The stranger fills a large pot with water from a stream—or maybe it was a spring—and drops in a stone. Curiosity gets the better of the townsfolk and one by one they ask the stranger what he's making, to which he replies, "stone soup." He muses aloud about what would make the soup better, and the townsfolk individually realize that they have something useful they can spare after all. The townsfolk moved passed their mindset of scarcity, and found meaningful ways to contribute. Added together, the ingredients yielded a veritable feast, enough for everyone to enjoy. But they created much more than a meal, they created food for the soul, the establishment of community.

A new study could help explain the benefit of taking a step back and evaluating partnerships and collaborations that can alleviate resource concerns, rather than concentrating on the lack of resources you have to spare or

contribute. In Scarcity, Eldar Shafir, a psychologist at Princeton University and Sendhil Mullainathan, an economist at Harvard University, demonstrated that when we are constantly made aware that we have less time or resources than we need, it has a measurable, negative impact on our ability to solve problems. As NPR put succinctly in their review of the study, the impact of being reminded about resource

augment resources, freeing mental bandwidth to solve problems effectively.

Of course, collaboration does not always yield a greater sum. To take the stone soup metaphor further, what elements of a collaboration support tasty soup, great conversation, and bonds that hold long enough to push the equation from equal to greater than? To find out, I turned to my colleagues at National Trust sites for examples of how they have pushed their work to the next level through collaborations. It was a welcome opportunity to learn more about the work of colleagues I seldom see. The examples that follow were selected from the many ideas they shared plus a President Lincoln's Cottage experience that helped inspire the 2014 AASLH Annual Conference theme.

I then contemplated what questions might help you find similar success. Before you dismiss

the following examples as not applicable to your situation, forget what you think you know about National Trust sites. They come in all shapes and sizes, with and without endowments, from cities



*The Civil War Washington Museums Consortium welcomes teachers from across the nation to D.C. each summer for a dynamic week of immersive educational workshops.*

issues causes people's performance on IQ tests to drop by "at least a quarter — or approximately the same mental hit a person takes after staying up all night." Thoughtful, strategic collaboration can help

and towns of all stripes. There is a persistent myth that National Trust sites are centrally funded—they are not. They have different operational and governance structures. And they represent a range of physical, human and financial resources. Please also note that while these examples are compatible with operating a historic site, they do not depend on it.

I have been party to many conversations at the National Trust that dealt with scarcity in the field generally and at our sites specifically: lack of time, lack of staff, and lack of financial resources to address all the demands before us. Despite all that, passion for the work was always in abundance. Although that tension occasionally led to some hand-wringing, it has led to hard questions, trial and error, determination, and great successes.

As you read through these examples and questions, try to imagine your own organization, or institutions you've been affiliated with, and your own successes and challenges with forming alliances that become "Greater than the Sum of Our Parts."

### ***Culture Change - Drayton Hall***

George McDaniel, Executive Director of Drayton Hall in Charleston, South Carolina, is no stranger to grassroots advocacy efforts. Along with members of its community, Drayton Hall fought a mega-development that would have jeopardized the historic environs, replacing scenic drives with gridlock. In McDaniel's words, "Drayton Hall's past has been shaped by the fate of the Ashley River region, and so will our future. What happens

'upstream' affects us."

McDaniel was amongst the citizens who supported the designation of the Ashley River as a State Scenic River. Several years later, when the county contradicted a river management plan by refusing to buy land adjacent to the Ashley River to create a park, McDaniel and other members of the Ashley Scenic River Advisory Council, went together to testify before the county council about the importance of purchasing the property. When they were told it was too late, they began a grassroots campaign. At the next county council meeting, 200 people packed the council rooms. Through the Advisory Council's combined efforts and the help of local council members, the Rosebrock Park (named after one of the councilmen) was purchased and created. In addition, further land diagonally across the river became the Ashley River Park.

By seeking out fellow, committed stakeholders, identifying and cultivating political allies, and using those combined networks to rally support, they succeeded in their conservation effort. That alone would have made the collaboration a success. But because of the inclusive nature of their work, they achieved something greater—culture change. According to McDaniel, the result of the successful campaign is that "a preservation ethos" now exists "in Dorchester County, which used to be hostile to historic preservation and environmental conservation." For Drayton Hall and its partners, creating culture change started with a structured advocacy effort.

Lesson Learned: A classic, "If you want to go far, go together."

Questions to consider:

- What are you doing to advocate on behalf of your institution or the field at the local, state, or national level?
- Are local, state, and national decision makers familiar with your organization and its impact? If not, how can you raise your organization's profile among these groups?
- What type of advocacy work are you engaged in? Is it consistent with your mission?
- If you are preparing to start an advocacy effort, how will you unite committed stakeholders on a specific issue?

### ***Neighborhood Pride - Villa Finale***

Villa Finale is located in the heart of the King William Historic District of San Antonio, Texas. The Historic District predates the site's public opening, but is closely connected to it. Walter Mathis, the last private owner of Villa Finale, was a driving force in local preservation. Villa Finale is continuing in Mathis's footsteps. According to Executive Director Jane Lewis, the site is "very involved with the King William Association, "a neighborhood group. "Each year when the King William Fair — a giant street fair that covers the entire district — is held, Villa Finale is the VIP retreat for board members and top sponsors of the King William Association. Villa Finale members are also invited to enjoy the grounds of the museum during the fair."

By identifying that what they bring to the table is unique, and



positioning themselves as an asset to the lead organization, Villa Finale has established itself as a place of neighborhood pride and authority. Says Lewis, "This event is the largest annual fundraiser for the King William Association." There is a measurable, direct benefit to Villa Finale as well. The retreat-like atmosphere and behind-the-scenes exposure as the VIP retreat results in new members each and every year.

A leader in their neighborhood, Villa Finale also plays an active role in fostering state pride through preservation advocacy. They participated in the "I Love Texas Courthouses" campaign, a joint effort of Preservation Texas and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and participate annually in Preservation Day lobbying activities in the state. "It expands our reach and engages us in more outreach programs within the state," says Lewis. "By expanding our 'presence' through these other organizations, we become more visible within the community." For Villa Finale and its partners, neighborhood and state pride are a proven formula for community and donor support.

**Lesson Learned:** What happens behind the scenes is as important as what happens out front; make the most of your role, whatever that may be.

**Questions to consider:**

- What resources are you willing to put toward a collaborative event or campaign?
- How is your organization uniquely situated to provide that added value?

- Do the tangible and intangible benefits of the event justify the investment?

### ***Enlightenment - Montpelier***

For organizations in culture-saturated areas, partnership is both necessity and opportunity. According to Doug Smith, the Director of the Robert H. Smith Center for the Constitution at James Madison's Montpelier located in Orange County Virginia, "The sheer number of historic sites near Montpelier and related to the founding of the United States provides a unique opportunity where unified programming can create value for all partners." Sites in the region have made a concerted effort to complement — rather than compete with — one another's programming. Smith notes, "Montpelier, through its Robert H. Smith Center for the Constitution, is a leading partner in the Presidential Precinct, a consortium uniting five landmark institutions." The institutions include three major presidential sites: Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, James Monroe's Ash Lawn-Highland, and Montpelier, as well as two major universities with direct connections to the history of the sites: The College of William and Mary, where Jefferson and Monroe studied the intellectual underpinnings of the American experience in self governance, and the University of Virginia, which Jefferson founded, with assistance from Madison and Monroe.

Smith explained, "The Presidential Precinct creates an environment that fosters inspiration and enlightenment, and provides a singular destination for inter-national dialogue, critical

thinking, and collaborative problem solving" in the heart of Virginia. "The goal of the Precinct is to advance the development of democracy around the globe. As a consortium, our institutions are able to leverage the strengths of each site." The sites have capitalized on the fact that they offer a concentrated store of knowledge about "three of the most formative leaders in American history and the principles of self-governance that they espoused." The power of the Presidential Precinct's concentrated, collaborative effort caught the notice of the White House. Smith noted that they, "recently secured a financial commitment from the White House's Young African Leaders Initiative to train 225 leaders at sites in the Precinct over the next five years. One of the greatest legacies of sites like Montpelier is that we can continue to share the stories of our own founding period with domestic and international leaders actively forming constitutional democracies and building civil societies. The State Department and White House see tremendous value in our collaboration." For Montpelier and the other members of the Presidential Precinct, the power to inspire and enlighten today's leaders stems from their credibility as places that inspired enlightenment in past leaders.

**Lesson Learned:** The history of your organization may contain clues for meaningful collaborations with regional, national, or even global impact.

**Questions for consideration:**

- If your region is saturated with like-organizations, how can you position your organization as a distinct and desirable partner?
- If there is a dearth of like-organizations in your area, how might you connect to organizations with compatible missions or themes in other parts of the country or world?
- What is preventing you from partnering with certain competitors who have compatible missions or themes?
- Do you avoid partnering with larger organizations for fear of being steamrolled, or conversely, smaller organizations because you assume they have little to offer?

### ***Community Volunteerism - Filoli***

The centerpiece of Filoli in Woodside, California is a 1915 mansion, but their assets extend well beyond that one building. Executive Director Cynthia D'Agosta emphasizes that "Filoli's assets include many 'parts' that we consider and market as the whole, including the mansion and auxiliary buildings, the sixteen acres of historic formal gardens, over 200 varieties of heritage orchard trees, more than 660 acres of nature preserve, as well as the café and gift shop." It takes a considerable amount of human resources for Filoli to thrive. According to D'Agosta, "we have fifty-eight staff and 1000 volunteers who work together extremely well to make this place great."

Filoli has managed to engage a highly diverse and skilled network of volunteers who in turn support the site in a variety of ways. Local environmental

education nonprofits provide input on Filoli's Nature Hikes, school visits, and educational curriculum. The institution has engaged MBA students from California College of the Arts to assess and make recommendations on Filoli's development strategies and ability to meet the demands of a new demographic in the area. Pro-bono food service specialists advise on improvements to the café, catering and hosting operations. And a local television station covers Filoli's biggest annual events, increasing visitation and exposure for the site while helping the station fulfill its "community service" needs. D'Agosta concluded, "Our entire volunteer community is a network we could not operate without and we nurture that relationship on many levels!" Taken separately, each volunteer or pro-bono project has a specific purpose and benefit. Taken as a whole, Filoli's massive, coordinated network of staff, volunteers, and pro-bono partners result in an organization that is able to maintain infrastructure, vitality, and relevance to its community.

**Lesson Learned:** When it comes to volunteers and partnerships, you can only expect to get out what you put into it.

#### **Questions:**

- How are the physical assets at your organization marketed, supported, and utilized?
- If you have a volunteer program, how functional is it?
- How diverse are the opportunities for volunteering? Are you maximizing the skillset of your volunteers, or are their skills being squandered?
- If your volunteer program is

nonexistent, what is holding you back?

### ***Cultural Capital - Brucemore***

If you visit Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and ask the locals what you should do while you are in town, there is a good chance the response will be, "Go to Brucemore." For over 30 years, Brucemore has pursued a strategy that promotes the site as an authentic setting for "unique cultural experiences" in their region – experiences that draw approximately 40,000 people each year in a city of 200,000, according to Executive Director David Janssen. He explained that, "Brucemore's broad and diverse menu of events has included almost every genre imaginable, from blues and rock-and-roll, to jazz and symphony, to the Joffrey Ballet (twice). Brucemore also produces annual theater events on a natural slope near the estate's duck pond. Additionally, the site has hosted garden and art shows, Scottish heritage festivals, and old house fairs. In 2013 alone, the estate hosted or produced 37 performances as part of 13 distinct programs."

Janssen shared, "The secret—and the challenge—is that none of these is a simple turnkey event. Each has unique challenges, cost centers, and audience appeal, requiring months and years of planning, trial, and error before they flourish. What they all have in common is a complex inter-play among multiple stakeholders, including: cultural part-ners, food and service vendors (who often acquiesce with discounted rates), volunteers, sponsors, city leaders,



and contractors. Each program relies heavily on collaborators motivated to supplement the capacity of site staff. None of the events would be possible to host or produce relying only on in-house resources.”

Being a beloved cultural center in the region with a reputation for collaboration can make it difficult to say no or to sunset once-popular programs. After years of adding programs, Brucemore recently made the difficult decision to end a signature program known as “Bluesmore.” While the decision to end the program and its associated

and the lasting impact of a regional reputation as the go-to place and partner for diverse cultural experiences.

**Lesson Learned:** Take the long view. Being a cultural pioneer with stick-to-it-iveness can result in true sustainability, as long as you are willing to make tough decisions.

**Questions to consider:**

- If a tourist asked a local in your area what attractions they should visit, what would be their first response? If you don’t have public visitation, are you visible in other

- How can you create a culture of collaboration within your organization? Within your community?

### ***Building A Foundation - President Lincoln’s Cottage***

The inspiration for the 2014 AASLH Annual Conference theme was its location and a past AASLH conference session. Minneapolis and St. Paul, the “Twin Cities,” developed to meet different needs. St. Paul grew as the state capital and the port at the head of navigation on the Mississippi, while Minneapolis developed around the industrially powerful and majestic Falls of St. Anthony. Minneapolis and St. Paul complement one another just as so many historical organizations across the country do today. Their historic partnership—and occasional good-natured ribbing—serves as a vibrant example of how strategic networks of complementary efforts benefit everyone.

The idea behind the theme also grew out of a lively panel developed first for the AASLH 2010 conference in Oklahoma City by the members of the Civil War Washington Museum Consortium: President Lincoln’s Cottage, Ford’s Theatre Society, Tudor Place Historic House and Garden, and Frederick Douglass National Historic Site. The consortium members realized they were better together as a “one-stop shop” for teachers’ Civil War Washington needs. As Callie Hawkins, Associate Director for Programs at President Lincoln’s Cottage recollected, “The



*Thousands annually bring their picnics to enjoy Orchestra Iowa’s season opening concert on the Brucemore estate. Photo courtesy Visions Photography.*

partnerships wasn’t easy, it was the right move to maintain the quality and integrity of programs with deeper support and broader interest. Brucemore’s strategy has the annual impact of showcasing an attractive slate of differentiated events with a variety of partners,

ways?

- How much time are you willing to give a collaboration to develop before you determine whether it’s a success or failure?
- What is your exit strategy for a collaboration that has run its course?

consortium group had worked with several Teaching American History grants to create week-long field experiences for national groups of teachers using our own model for the Civil War Washington Teacher Fellows. We were surprised when each of these groups remarked on how unique it was that four distinctive, yet alike organizations worked so well together to provide a seamless week of learning experiences for their teachers.” It is noteworthy that the teachers found the functionality and productivity of the cultural partnership so novel. According to Hawkins, prior to committing to the partnership, the consortium members took a hard look at their resources, compatibility, and the program’s objectives and needs. What they discovered was that when it came to needs such as physical space, expertise, staff resources, or budget, they each had an area of scarcity and abundance. They each contributed something unique. In short, they were near-perfect complements for the purposes of the teacher fellows program partnership. After comparing content and methodology, they discovered that not only were they able to offer a well-rounded perspective on the Civil War together, but each site used different methods for engaging teachers, which ensured instructional variety. The group then agreed on the parameters of the partnership itself. Not only has the partnership endured and evolved, it has created a foundation of trust for additional collaboration.

Hawkins reported that when the consortium presented on their process and outcomes to the AASLH membership in 2010 and

again through a different panel in 2011, the responses were mixed. But in both cases, session attendees focused on the fact that the consortium members were fortunate that they had compatible personalities, expressing concern that if any of them left, the partnership would likely fall apart. The members of the consortium did not deny that individual personalities are a major factor in the success of any collaboration, but noted that since each of them were able to demonstrate the value of the collaboration with



*Teacher Fellows tour the Cottage.*

competitors; the organizations had come to regard the partnership as indispensable. For President Lincoln’s Cottage and the Civil War Washington Consortium, leading with friendship and an open mind paved the way for a collaborative peer network and invaluable partnerships that enhance resources and transcend individual personalities.

Lesson Learned: Partnerships will be more enjoyable if not more

successful and enduring, if you are honest about what you have to offer and what you have to gain, and if you check your ego at the door.

Questions to consider:

- Is a potentially powerful partnership being sidelined due to personality conflict? What role do you play in the success or failure of that potential partnership?
- Are you realistic about what your organization has to offer?
- How will you determine who to have around the table?

Looking across the range of National Trust sites, there are many more examples of collaborations, from joint-ticketing ventures, to staff exchanges, to partnerships with universities, nonprofits, and businesses that vary widely place to place, year to year. Partnerships and collaborations form the basis of our work. Not every partnership is desirable or destined to succeed, but each will contain valuable lessons and potential templates for future collaborations. While there is no formula that will ensure successful, transcendent partnerships every time, many of my colleagues were quick to offer words of caution, lessons they have learned and tested along the way. Partnerships need to be well structured. Diplomacy and honesty go a long way. Responsibilities and decisions need to be carefully articulated and agreement documented. And it never hurts to have a Plan B.

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*Ms. Mast is the Executive Director of President Lincoln’s Cottage and the 2014 AASLH Annual Meeting Program Chair.*

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