



Spring 2017

Spring has given rise to signs of the Shiloh School construction and maintenance, paving the way for upcoming spring and summer activities. We hope to see you at some or all of them.

April 29 at 2 p.m.

Past, Present, Future of Historic ‘Ditchley’

The past, present, and future of one of the Northern Neck’s historic landmarks, Ditchley in Northumberland Country, is the focus of an April 29 2 p.m. presentation by owner Cathy Calhoun.

The Ditchley program is presented by the nonprofit Northumberland Preservation, Inc., NPI, and its nearby iconic one-room Shiloh School. Ms. Calhoun will offer first-hand insights into the historical past of Ditchley and ongoing renovation efforts to the manor house. Speaking at Shiloh School, she will also describe how Ditchley is being used to develop a profitable small scale sustainable agriculture business.



Ditchley dates from 1651 when it became the property of Colonel Richard Lee, the original Lee emigrant and ancestor of the Lee family of

Virginia. First built around 1762 by grandson Kendall Lee, the manor house is a classic example of a Tidewater Virginia Georgian plantation. It sits on 162 acres between Dividing Creek and Prentice Creeks in sight of the Chesapeake Bay. The interior retains the character of the original structure, including a detailed Georgian staircase and Federal period formal parlor.

Ditchley was purchased by Alfred I. and Jessie Ball du Pont in the 1920s. Jessie became one of the nation’s leading philanthropists, and The Jessie Ball du Pont Foundation today remains a major benefactor throughout the Northern Neck.

Now owned by Cathy Calhoun and Paul Grosklags, Ditchley is one of the most widely recognized historic residences in the Northern Neck. The Calhouns are building on its legacy and securing its future through a combination of sustainable agriculture initiatives and hands-on renovation work.

“With any residence of the historic stature of Ditchley, the challenge is to be loyal to its illustrious past and mindful of how its future can pay homage to that history,” Ms. Calhoun said.

Guests attending the Calhoun presentation on Ditchley are encouraged to arrive at Shiloh School, where Jessie Ball du Pont had taught, by 1:45 p.m. on April 29 and are invited to enjoy light refreshments in the historic school house afterwards. Shiloh is located off Route 200 east of Kilmarnock, at the intersection of Shiloh Road (Route 606) and Balls Neck Road (Route 605).

May 12 and 13, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Bag lunches for ‘Just Gardens’ Tour Visitors

Shiloh School will be a one-stop lunch-time sandwich and beverage provider for those enjoying the May 12-13 rain- or-shine 2017 “Just Gardens” tour. And this year the Shiloh School site offers the relative luxury of six newly acquired picnic tables to make those lunches even more convenient and enjoyable.

The tour runs from 10 to 4 those days, and Shiloh School will be selling bag lunches complete with sandwiches, chips, a clementine, home-made cookie and soft drink for just \$10.

The bagged sandwich lunches, while benefiting Shiloh School, are designed to ease the day for the hundreds of expected visitors to Just Gardens, which each year benefits the Haven Shelter in Warsaw.

The 1906 Shiloh School building will be open and volunteers will be on hand to answer questions about its history and renovations, along with questions about the 1884 school also on the site

This year, the Shiloh School team hopes to pick up some practical advice from the Just Gardens visitors, many of them accomplished gardeners, about where, how, and what specific varieties of native plants make most sense for the Shiloh site.

“We know Just Gardens regulars bring a wealth of expertise as they go from one amazing garden to another,” said Jack Moore, who chairs the Shiloh School board of directors. “We want to pick their brains about native plant gardening ideas for the Shiloh School site. We welcome practical suggestions that will add to the beauty of our Northern Neck lands.”

June 3, 4:30 p.m.

Lots New at Shiloh’s June 3 Open House

This year’s Shiloh School Open House, scheduled to start at 4:30 on Saturday, June 3, will showcase lots that has happened at the site to enhance its beauty and practical usefulness to members and visitors. A potluck dinner and informal presentation will provide background on those changes.

Come learn too about summer plans for conducting classroom presentations for school-age children, with involvement by youth organizations in Northumberland and Lancaster counties.

With a new well for the first time providing water to the site, Shiloh School now offers a unisex restroom for visitors.

Northumberland Preservation Inc., NPI, will provide fried chicken and soft drinks, with attendees bringing side dishes or desserts to share. As with some past Shiloh School events, entertainment and old-time music will be provided by the Shiloh String Band.

We’ll also use the June 3 open house to express our appreciation to several members who have offered generous support and supplies for the site. David and Sheila Todd have donated two old clocks appropriate to the period. The Lambs, Jim and Shawn, have donated a 48-star U.S. flag to reside in the 1906 building and a microwave oven. John and Ann Olson donated portrait of George Washington, circa 1870-1880, for the 1884 school house once current renovations are completed. And Joe Hudnall recently donated a refrigerator for the new auxiliary building.

Please RSVP to (804) 580-8629 by no later than May 31 that you plan to attend and will bring a potluck contribution.