



# The Thomas Balch Chronicle

The Newsletter of the Friends of Thomas Balch Library of the Town of Leesburg, Virginia  
A Library for History and Genealogy

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## Not So Long Ago: A Sampling of Balch's Treasure

Thomas Balch Library's newspaper collection can provide its patrons a past time that is educational, interesting and fun. From time to time, this column will feature some choice items found in the Balch files. These will be just a sample of what is there. We invite you to explore these treasures. You'll be rewarded many times over.

[From the *Loudoun Times Mirror* May 29, 1930]

### Loudoun High Schools to Graduate Eighty Final Commencement Exercises Now in Progress Throughout County

The high schools of Loudoun will this week hold their final commencement exercises when eighty students will be graduated from the nine accredited high schools. Seventy-six graduates received diplomas in 1929; sixty-five in 1928; seventy in 1927; seventy-two in 1926, and eighty-two in 1925.

*Ed. note:* : The high schools were: Aldie, Ashburn, Leesburg, Lincoln, Lovettsville, Lucketts, Round Hill, Unison-Bloomfield and Waterford. 1,806 students were graduated in 2002 from Loudoun's six high schools.



NOVEMBER 2ND! SAVE THIS DATE



FOR THE EVENT OF THE YEAR!

THE BALCH BALL AT BELMONT



This handsome card, sent to patrons, friends and other County residents, is a small preview of the exquisite mural painted by William Woodward. It serves as a reminder of the upcoming Thomas Balch Library Gala. November 2nd is the date for an elegant reception, dinner and dancing in the newly restored Belmont Mansion Country Club. The mural, commissioned by the Friends, will be on display before being installed in the Mercer Room of the Library.

## New WEB Site On Its Way

The Friends of Thomas Balch Library are working on a new WEB site. The site will be operational by June 30, 2002 and will be located at [www.balchfriends.org](http://www.balchfriends.org). EQ By Design Web Service located in Purcellville, Virginia is providing design services for the new site with consultation from AuJen, Inc., a subsidiary of FreeLance Technologies, Inc. located in Leesburg, Virginia. The site will link directly to the Balch library WEB site and will provide information relating to other historical WEB sites in Loudoun County and the surrounding areas. For additional information or content placement, please contact Annie Hulen at 703-771-1484 or email [annie@freelancetech.com](mailto:annie@freelancetech.com).

# The Thomas Balch Advisory Commission Governs The Library

The Town of Leesburg assumed ownership and responsibility for Thomas Balch Library and its collections in 1994, after the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors declined to maintain it as a part of the County library system. The Town Council elected to govern the Balch Library through a newly established Thomas Balch Advisory Commission.

Each of the seven Commission members is appointed by a member of the Town Council. A representative from the Town Council a representative of the County Board of Supervisors and the Library Manager also serve. The Library manager is Secretary for the group. The Commission conducts monthly meetings on the second Wednesdays. The meetings are held at the Library at 7 p.m. The public is welcome to attend. The Commission's primary charge is to assist the Library staff and volunteer groups in setting and achieving long term goals. Guiding Thomas Balch Library in reaching

those goals and marketing the Library to the community are of nearly equal importance.

All who are involved with the Library can be proud of achieving one massive long term goal: the complete renovation of the Library building. Marketing success is evident in the heavy use of the attractive meeting rooms and facilities by various groups for meetings and workshops. Lecture programs sponsored by the Library and its Friends organization continue to expose the Library and its collections to the public, adding to the success of the marketing effort

While the Friends organization is the primary fund raising arm of the Library, the Advisory Commission is instrumental in encouraging monetary donations and acquisition of materials. The Commission oversees the day to day operation of the Library, makes periodic reports to the Town Council, and its chairperson meets with the Mayor on a quarterly basis.

*Frank Buttery, Commission Chairperson*

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## Commemoratives Are Available Through Several Programs

Thomas Balch Library is considered one of the foremost repositories of the history and genealogy of Loudoun County and surrounding counties in Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania. The Friends offer several ways in which individuals, families and organizations may permanently honor, at Thomas Balch Library, those who were born and died here, those who passed through and stopped for a time, and all who contribute to our history and to our culture. The Tree of History is located on the foyer wall at the main entrance of Balch Library. Brass Apples and Leaves are available for purchase, to be engraved and placed on the Tree. Apples are \$1000, Large Leaves are \$500 and Small Leaves are \$250. Within the B. Powell and Agnes Harrison Memorial Garden, located on the west side of the library, inscribed bricks are being placed near the fountain. These bricks honor individuals, families and organizations, in much the same way as the Apples and Leaves on the Tree of History. The bricks are available for \$100. Donations to the collections of the Thomas Balch Library are always welcome, within the



*The B. Powell and Agnes Harrison Memorial Garden*

parameters of the library's acquisition policies. If the contribution is made through the Friends, we will provide bookplates inscribed "in memory of" or "in honor of" and the donor's name. For further information and an order form, please contact me through Thomas Balch Library at 703/737-7195 or write to the Friends of Thomas Balch Library, Inc.

*Susan Webber, Memorials Chairperson*

## Letter from the President

Over the years the Friends' support for the Library has been largely to provide funds for tangible items such as furniture, computer equipment and art work. Increasingly the Friends are funding special programs. The largest such funding was just approved by the Friends' Board. The Friends will fund a part-time archivist to assist with processing the collections the Library receives. The volume of material

## Message from the Treasurer

I am pleased to report that the financial affairs of the Friends are in good order. A full report on our finances was presented at the last Annual meeting. This year our plan is to mail out this report prior to the Annual meeting in November – it is hoped this will generate some more discussion. For your information: The Friends operate on a two-year financial plan. Our two largest expenditures this calendar year will be for the completion

## Library Manager's Column

On May 8th, Balch Library hosted the Ulster Historical Foundation in Belfast, Northern Ireland at a workshop. The event was interesting and successful. Apart from the fact that Irish research is a particular passion of mine, I was very pleased to see the meeting room used as we had envisioned it when we planned the new addition. We had the right technological features, a comfortable space to meet and a lovely garden in which to eat lunch and chat with the speakers in a relaxed setting. It was for me personally a culmination of much work and many dreams about what Balch Library can do for the Loudoun community and beyond. Many successful programs have been held in our meeting room. From a panel on the Carver School to a class on genealogy, our patrons have had a variety of events from which to choose.

donated to the Library has increased considerably. Since the processes of recording, indexing and archiving such materials are very time-consuming and require specially trained personnel, the backlog of these materials has grown. To address this problem, Library Director Jane Sullivan requested additional staffing from the Town of Leesburg. Unfortunately, the Town's tight budget could not support the requested staff position. Accordingly, Jane asked the Library's Acquisition Committee to put together a proposal

of the frieze (\$40,000 more is due against the contract for \$80,000) and for the preparation of the articles by Gene Scheel for publication (\$30,000). Other major expenditures will be funding a part-time archivist to process materials acquired by the Library (see discussion in the *Letter from the President*), publishing the second volume of *Essence of a People* by the Black History Committee and completing the Black History Committee's oral history project. Receipts from the gala scheduled for November 2<sup>nd</sup> are

We have also taken our show "on the road" with presentations given at Falcon's Landing, Leisure World, the Rotary Club, senior cafes, schools and other libraries. The library staff is equipped to speak on many aspects of genealogy, as well as on Loudoun History and preservation techniques for documents and photos. We are also willing to come to any club or group and talk about Balch Library and its collections.

Please take advantage of all we offer and spread the word to others. We welcome suggestions on programs you would like to see offered in our meeting room or taken "on the road" by our talented and knowledgeable staff.

*Jane Sullivan, Library Manager*

for funding a part-time archivist by the Friends. The Friends' Board approved this request unanimously at a special meeting on May 7<sup>th</sup>. The Acquisition Committee will monitor the progress made in processing collections and Wynne will report this progress regularly to the Board of the Friends. Questions or comments on this or other matters? You can reach me by letter to the address given on this newsletter or by E-mail. My E-mail address is [morefieldf@cs.com](mailto:morefieldf@cs.com).

*Fred Morefield, President*

expected to offset all expenses for that event. Therefore, this matter is in the budget at a zero cost. All funds of the Friends are invested. The checking account balance is invested overnight in a money market account. Funds not needed in the short term are kept in somewhat higher earning Certificates of Deposits. If any of you have questions on the above or would like to see most recent financial statements, please give me a call at 703-779-8554.

*Paul Bice, Treasurer*

### The Friends of the Thomas Balch Library invite you to join us!

Yes! I wish to join the Friends and play an important role in supporting the collections and programs of the Thomas Balch Library.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Individual	\$20.00
Family	\$25.00
Student/Senior	\$15.00
Patron	\$50.00
Sustaining	\$150.00
Benefactor	\$250.00

No, I do not wish to join, but I would like to make a tax deductible contribution of \_\_\_\_\_.

The Friends of Thomas Balch Library, Inc., is a 501(c)3 corporation

Please forward with your check to:

**Friends of Thomas Balch Library, Inc**  
**P.O. Box 2184**  
**Leesburg, VA 20177**