

# SOTTERLEY TIMES

The mission of Historic Sotterley, Inc. is to preserve, research, and interpret Sotterley Plantation's diverse cultures and environments, and to serve the world as an educational, cultural, and community resource.

NEWSLETTER OF HISTORIC SOTTERLEY, INC.

WINTER 2014

CFC #13401

MEMBERSHIP LIST, P. 4

## Sotterley Christmas Traditions by Candlelight! EXCLUSIVE Members' Night Thursday, December 4

The Members Only celebration will begin at 6:00 p.m. in the Historic Barn. As a very special "thank you," you and yours are invited to "eat, drink, and be merry." The complimentary spread of delectables, wonderful wines, holiday punch, and festive live music. We do ask that you please call the office at 301-373-2280 to schedule your tour time for \$15 per person.

**December 5, 11, 12, 18, 19 & 20, 2014**

**Tours every 15 minutes beginning at 6:30 p.m.  
RESERVATIONS REQUIRED**

Celebrate the season at Sotterley Plantation, all within Sotterley's 300 year-old Plantation House decorated in different historical periods for the holidays. Experience Sotterley's 2014 interactive living history tour, *Common Lives, Shared Sentiments*. Visit family members from the past who called Sotterley their home. Share their lives and conversations to discover how each person's life can transcend generations. Interact with the performers, enjoy light refreshments and live seasonal music at this unique Sotterley event. Advance reservations required. No walk-ins. \$15 per person. Purchase tickets online: [www.sotterley.org](http://www.sotterley.org).



## Family Plantation Christmas

**Saturday, December 13th, 2014**

**10:00 am – 4:00 pm**

Ho! Ho! Ho! It's the most wonderful time of the year and time to kick-off your Christmas season at Sotterley's Family Plantation Christmas on Saturday, December 13th, 2014 from 10 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Begin the day with Breakfast with Santa! We offer two seatings; 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. For the rest of the day's magical festivities, you won't need a reservation - just show up to visit Santa and Mrs. Claus, take a horse-drawn carriage ride, sing along with carolers, make holiday crafts, buy unique holiday gifts at the Sotterley Museum Shop while the children are buying presents at Santa's Secret Shop, and purchase

seasonal greens and hand-crafted items from Sotterley's Garden Guild. Make this Christmas event part of your family tradition!

*The cost is \$5 per person at the gate; children 2 and under FREE. The cost of Breakfast with Santa is \$15 per person (which includes general admission for the day's events). Advance Reservations REQUIRED. Purchase tickets online only: [www.sotterley.org](http://www.sotterley.org).*

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HISTORIC SOTTERLEY, INC. IS A  
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THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE UNDER  
SECTION 501(C)(3) OF THE INTERNAL  
REVENUE CODE. A COPY OF  
THE CURRENT FINANCIAL STATEMENT IS  
AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW AT THE OFFICE.

## A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT



As we conclude the year 2014, I can say that it ends on a bittersweet note. As is often the case, we have suffered losses but also have much to be grateful for here at Sotterley. While we have lost some special individuals that were part of our Sotterley family, we have also gained new friends and accomplished much throughout the year.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I would like to express our deepest gratitude to all of you who have supported Sotterley this past year as volunteers, members, and donors. All of the wonderful things that Sotterley offers our community are made possible by each of you, and I am humbled to be a part of this generous group.

As we look toward the New Year, Sotterley faces many serious challenges as we continue to preserve our heritage and provide the many programs and events offered to people of all ages and all walks of life. It is my hope that you will find it in your heart to continue your generosity in response to our year end appeal. It will truly make a difference in our ability to carry on all that we work so tirelessly to achieve.

I wish each and every one a very peaceful and happy holiday season, and I thank you so very much for your support of this National Treasure.

Sincerely,

Jan Briscoe

*President, Board of Trustees*

### Remembering our Friend

Many of our Sotterley friends and family have heard the sad news of the passing of our beloved friend, Jane Aldridge. Jane and Bob have been longtime members of our Sotterley family. In the absence of a formal curator, for many years Jane was the Chair of our Collections Committee where she helped to oversee their care and maintenance. While Jane and Bob both donated countless volunteer hours to Sotterley, Jane also donated her time and talents to numerous other organizations in our community. Her heart and her actions touched the lives of so many and enriched them, and she will be remembered with love.

### Your Support is Appreciated and Needed!

Generous Sotterley supporters have already begun to send in responses to our End-of-the-Year appeal, and we thank each of you who has responded or plans to do so in the weeks ahead. Over the past years your generosity has allowed us to achieve so much, and with such a caring community behind us we will continue to make many more advancements during the upcoming year. This year you may even skip the mail and donate online! Simply go to [www.sotterley.org/donate.htm](http://www.sotterley.org/donate.htm). We sincerely thank each of you for your ongoing and steadfast support.

# Middle Passage Marker Placement Ceremony

## Celebrating Maryland Emancipation

### November 1, 1864 - November 1, 2014

In remembrance of all who perished and those who survived the Middle Passage, Historic Sotterley Plantation held a special ceremony to place the commemorative Port Marker as a permanent structure on site. On this special day, religious leaders, dignitaries, and over 100 visitors gathered in the Historic Barn to remember and honor ancestors and to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Maryland Emancipation.

“It has been an honor to be part of the Middle Passage Marker Project,” stated Nancy Easterling, Historic Sotterley’s Executive Director. “As a site that had slavery for over 160 years, it is both our duty and obligation to acknowledge this part of our history. We must honestly address difficult subjects when they are part of our story, because we cannot pick simply the easy topics to interpret. This gathering and ceremony was a time to both acknowledge and to heal.”



The opening remarks by Dr. Janice Walthour of the St. Mary’s County NAACP set the tone for what was a reverent, spiritual, and deeply moving event. With high winds whipping outside, she reminded all to listen closely for the voices of the ancestors upon the wind. Ann Chin, Executive Director of the Middle Passage Ceremonies and Port Markers Project commended Historic Sotterley for not only presenting our history honestly, but for being the first recognized Maryland slave port in Maryland to place a Port Marker. Sotterley’s Education Director Jeanne Pirtle spoke about slavery in very real terms, reiterating frequently that “it was wrong.” Students Katelyn Kovach and Dartanyen Saunders read the African Nations, names of 1729 Sotterley enslaved, and those who were emancipated in 1864. Sharing the important history of ending slavery, addressing difficult topics, the significance of the Civil Rights Movement, and shining the light on the future were:

- Nathaniel Scroggins - *President of the Unified Committee for Afro-American Contributions*
- Anne Harrison - *Patuxent Friends*
- Michael Brown - *Elder, St. Mary’s County Church of Christ*
- Rork Brown - *Director of Religious Education of St. Peter Claver Catholic Church*
- Dr. Tuajuanda Jordon - *President, St. Mary’s College of Maryland*

In the spirit of celebration, all enjoyed the gospel selections offered by the inspirational St. Peter Claver Catholic Church Choir. Authentic African dance performed by “Spiritual Creations” honored the culture and experience of the African people, with the magnificent drum call and dance drumming by Kevin and Juann Silhead.

Braving the blustery elements, the group proceeded down Rolling Road just past the original 1830’s Slave Cabin to view the Port Marker. Here, 150 years later, we celebrated what became a turning point in our history as a state, as a community, and as a people.

“This history is important to acknowledge, learn, and preserve because it is relevant to our lives and struggles regarding racial equality and opportunity today,” stated Jeanne Pirtle, Education Director of Historic Sotterley. “It is everyone’s responsibility to tell the story. Every person can make a difference!”

**PRAYER OF UNITY**

*All praise to the Divine in us.  
Praise to our ancestors and elders.  
If a person does not know the past,  
then the present  
and the future are not knowable.  
Let the spirit of our ancestors  
help bring us closer  
in unity and to our divinity.*



Historic Sotterley Plantation is part of the Middle Passage Ceremonies and Port Markers Project, a non-profit organization that is helping to discover and recognize middle passage sites. Sotterley served as a trans-Atlantic arrival site in the early 18th century. James Bowles, owner of the then 2,000 acre plantation, was an agent of the Royal African Company. Bowles ordered slaves to be bought along the Gold and Windward Coasts of Africa and shipped to his plantation on the Patuxent River.

On November 1, 1864, slavery was finally abolished in Maryland. Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation did not apply to those in bondage in Maryland, a slave-holding Union state. Emancipation was accomplished by the Maryland State Constitution of 1864, not popular with a large portion of the voting public. But with the final votes of Maryland’s Union soldiers, the state constitution was ratified and 165 years of slavery at this plantation came to an end.

## The Sotterley Society

The Sotterley Society designation recognizes individuals (rather than organizations) whose aggregate giving over the course of a year makes a profound difference to Sotterley. Giving can take place in many forms: membership, annual giving, sponsorship, endowment, in-kind donations, stocks, and bequests. The aggregate donations of those designated as The Sotterley Society truly keep the doors of this special place open to the public. They allow Sotterley to fulfill its mission of preservation, interpretation, and sustaining an outstanding educational and cultural resource.

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\$15,000 & Above

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*The Sotterley Society reflects FY 2014  
(July 1, 2013-June 30, 2014)*

*All other Membership Levels are current to date*

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The Boeing Company  
The Ganlee Fund

### CORPORATE CIRCLE SILVER MEMBERSHIP \$5,000

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## Sotterley Unveils New Signage and Extends Season!

Each year as the end of October approaches, we begin preparing for the end of the guided tour season and the closing of our Visitor Center. This year, however, we are pleased to announce that our Visitor Center will remain open every weekend through Saturday, December 20, 2014 (with the exception of Thanksgiving weekend) to enhance the experience of all visitors coming to Sotterley.

Once checked in at the Visitor Center, guests will be invited to view our introductory film and shop for unique gifts at the Sotterley Museum Shop. They can also take our fascinating Self-Guided Audio Tour, hike the over six miles of Nature Trails, stroll the Colonial Revival Gardens, and check out the NEW exhibit panels displayed throughout the grounds while being guided by our new site brochure.

Sixteen panels have been installed on site to engage, inform, and direct viewers through our rich history, telling the stories of the people who lived and worked at Sotterley over three centuries. The panels combine text and images that bring to life the experiences of owners, servants, workers and members of the enslaved community. Many panels have interactive components designed especially for children, in which a question is posed, and part of the panel moves or changes to reveal the answer. Some panels also feature textured objects that help visitors learn about crops, textiles, and materials and equipment used during Sotterley's many years as a working farm.

Sheila Gibbons Hiebert of Communication Research Associates, Inc. in Colton's Point, researched the historical content and wrote the text that appears on the signage and our new brochure. She worked closely with Sotterley Education Director Jeanne Pirtle, an impeccable source of Sotterley history who chose the images for the panels, and St. Mary's College Professor Emerita Merideth Taylor, chair of Sotterley's Interpretation Committee. The signs were fabricated by exhibits specialist Dennis Kund. The signage project was funded in part by a grant from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority.

"The new site exhibits have enhanced the Sotterley experience and we wanted to give the public more opportunities to come and be re-introduced to the site," stated Nancy Easterling, Executive Director of Historic Sotterley, Inc. "Our dedicated volunteers are also making it possible for us to extend the season by their willingness to man the Visitor Center every weekend - and we couldn't be more grateful!"

November 1 - December 20, 2014  
Saturday Hours: 10:00 am to 4:00 pm  
Sunday Hours: 11:45 am - 4 pm

### Yes, We CAN Hear Each Other Now!

Recently, the number of our functioning walkie talkies started dwindling and we found ourselves in the rather uncomfortable position of needing to purchase new ones without the available funds. With our site being close to 100 acres, this is our best form of communication with one another during our educational programming, general tours, and special events. Thanks to a combined grant from the Southern Maryland Heritage Area Consortium and the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority, and with a matching donation from Brad and Linda Gottfried, we were able to acquire 40 new walkie talkies to support our many efforts. We are grateful for their generosity which directly impacts our day to day work at Sotterley!

## EDUCATION CORNER

This fall welcomed schools from St. Mary's, Calvert and Charles Counties. To meet the demand for educational field trips, new instructors have been in training and learning our programs. We welcome Lisa Zimmerman, Pam Igoe, Mary Ann Stamm, Katherine Humphries, and Mary Ann Granada, as education instructors/facilitators for Sotterley. Thanks to Leslie Burgess, Karol Wolgemuth, and Mary Sothoron for their continued expert instruction and training help.

Our official tour season has come to a close. Thanks to our wonderful docents, Bob Aldridge, Dave Brown, Julie Woods, Craig Tyer, Karen Lowry, Karol Wolgemuth, and Mary Ellen

Borland. It just could not be done without you. New this year, our Museum Shop is open on weekends (except Thanksgiving) until December 20. Craig Tyer has valiantly volunteered to continue to give holiday "insider" tours of the house as it transitions to our holiday programming. Thanks, Craig!

On Dec 3, Education Director, Jeanne Pirtle will be a member of the Interpreting Slavery in America panel at SMCM between 4:45 pm - 6:45 pm in the Auerbach Auditorium, St. Mary's Hall - <http://www.smcm.edu/calendar/events>. Members of this panel will also be visiting Sotterley earlier in the day.

# Volunteer Corner

We are in need of volunteers for our final two events of 2014:

Sotterley Christmas Traditions by Candlelight  
December 5, 11, 12, 18, 19 & 20, 2014

Family Plantation Christmas  
December 13, 2014

What an amazing year it has been at Sotterley largely thanks to YOU, our wonderful volunteers! Your dedication and donation of your time and talents has made such great things happen here. You realize that it takes many people to help with Sotterley's day to day operations, as well as our annual special events. Perhaps you would like to rally your friends to join in the fun - easy to do! Please contact me at [coordinator@sotterley.org](mailto:coordinator@sotterley.org) or (301) 373-2280.

Thank you, Stacey Svendgard, Volunteer & Membership Coordinator

## New at the Museum Shop!

The Museum Shop has extended its hours and is now open weekends. We are open Saturdays 10:00 am to 4:00 pm and Sundays 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm, through Saturday, December 20, 2014 (except Thanksgiving weekend, closed November 29th and 30th.)

Sotterley in the fall is beautiful! It's a perfect time to check out the new Middle Passage Exhibit in the Visitor's Center, tour the house, walk the trails, and shop for that perfect gift. We have handspun and solar dyed yarns from Christina Allen and even a lap throw made with her sheep's wool, Christmas ornaments from Wine Bottle Art, more prints including a few of Sotterley from Mary Lou Troutman, and more.

This holiday season give a gift that will also help this local historical treasure thrive for centuries to come.

### COMING SOON!

- The 2014 Corn Crib Ornament arrives in December! E-mail: [museumshop@sotterley.org](mailto:museumshop@sotterley.org) to reserve your ornament. The Corn Crib is an iconic building on our site boasting the curled cedar siding. The Corn Crib is undergoing restoration, and the beautiful but aging siding will soon be replaced. Years down the road age will again feather and curl the new shingles, but in the meantime this distinctive siding will be preserved in the 2014 ornament.
- Santa's Shop opens Saturday, December 13, 2014. All Santa's Shop gifts under \$5.00, most priced at just \$2.00.
- The Shop is getting a face lift for the 2015 season.



*Our sincere thanks to all who helped bring about success for the 2014 Riverside Winefest and Ghosts of Sotterley!*

*Please visit our blog for complete Thank You:*

*[www.sotterleyplantation.blogspot.com](http://www.sotterleyplantation.blogspot.com)*

Mail this card and your payment information to:

**Historic Sotterley, Inc. | P.O. Box 67  
Hollywood, MD 20636**

Renewal       New Member

- Student . . . . . \$25
- Individual . . . . . \$35
- Family . . . . . \$65
- Patron . . . . . \$150
- Sponsor . . . . . \$300
- Preserver . . . . . \$500
- George Plater Society . . . . . \$1,200
- Rousby Circle . . . . . \$2,500

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Memberships are now available online!  
Visit our new website for a full list of members'  
benefits and enrollment forms.**

# A GLIMPSE AT SOME OF OUR 2015 EVENTS!

*Backstairs/Upstairs! Spring Break at Sotterley! Plant Sale & Free Plant Exchange! Gala in the Garden! Junior Docent Academy! Small Fry Fridays! Sotterley Barn Bash! Riverside WineFest at Sotterley! Ghosts of Sotterley! Family Plantation Christmas! Speaker Series!*  
 Visit [www.sotterley.org](http://www.sotterley.org) for more information

## AmazonSmile Donates on Your Behalf

Your Amazon shopping = dollars for Sotterley! You can select Historic Sotterley, Inc. as your charitable organization to receive .5% of your purchase price (on eligible items) from Amazon through the AmazonSmile program. It's easy! All you need to do is visit: <https://smile.amazon.com/> and register by providing your Amazon account information and selecting: Historic Sotterley, Inc. Once this is done, whenever you shop in the future simply log onto AmazonSmile (this site also has all of your Amazon settings and information), and the rest is done for you! It only takes a few seconds and will make such a difference for Sotterley. Many thanks for taking the time to choose Historic Sotterley!



BEQUEATH

Remembering Sotterley in your Will is an incredible gift that ensures the continuation of our mission for future generations.  
 For information, please call us at 301-373-2280



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