

FRIENDS OF THE DR. WALTER REED HOUSE NEWSLETTER

April 2019



Since the Murfreesboro Historical Association, Inc. began its extensive restoration of the Dr. Walter Reed House in 2016, there have been monthly progress reports at board meetings as well as periodic updates printed in the Association's newsletter. All of these have been brief, and we thought that more information about the restoration was vital, not only to present where we are in the process, but also, perhaps more importantly, to explain why this is an historically significant endeavor.

The 2018 Candlelight Christmas Tour

This year the weather cooperated, and the 2018 Candlelight Christmas Tour was a wonderful success! Before Candlelight we received a number of lovely period furnishings that made it possible—for the first time—to open the second floor bedrooms to visitors. Both floors of the house were decorated with local greenery gathered from Murfreesboro gardens. Boughs of cedar, spruce, and magnolia leaves were placed around the house. Pineapples and holly decorated the mantels. Jars filled with colorful Victorian hard candy were scattered throughout the house, and oil lamps burned in every room.

We would like to thank our docent volunteers: **Dr. Garth and Erin Faile**, and **Mrs. Trudy Gibson**. They did an outstanding job answering questions and telling our visitors about Walter

Reed's accomplishments. They also talked about the history of the Dr. Walter Reed House, which is one of the few historic parsonages open to visitors in our country. We would also like to express our appreciation to the musicians who provided delightful Christmas music for our guests touring the Dr. Walter Reed House, **Dr. Mary Hellmann and Dr. Christopher Cook** from Chowan University. **Mrs. Carole Farnham** brought a lovely late Victorian dress from her collection and exhibited it in Rev. and Mrs. Reed's bed chamber. We appreciate all of you so very much!

The Dr. Walter Reed House Restoration Update

Restoring and furnishing the house has been a group effort and we are grateful for the many donations that were received over the past year. **Mr. and Mrs. John Parker** donated eleven pieces of 18th and 19th century furniture, including a Federal period mahogany candle stand originally owned by Governor John Branch, Jr. Gov. Branch served as a U.S. senator, Secretary of the Navy, the 19th Governor of North Carolina, and was the sixth and last territorial governor of Florida. **Laurie Brook and Randy Roberts** donated eight pieces of 19th century furniture and accessories. Visitors especially enjoyed seeing the 1830 coverlet on display in the small bedroom on the first floor. Other beautiful items were donated this past year by **Mrs. DiAnne Bryant, Ms. Jeannie Petre, Mrs. Elicia Revelle, and Capt. and Mrs. Lamar Van Brackle**. Photographs of just a few of these items are featured at the end of this newsletter. More will be shown in future newsletters.

With **Raymond Benthall's** help we were able to plant a number of small boxwood bushes in front of the house before Candlelight. The bushes were donated in memory of **Mrs. Lynn Warren** who passed away unexpectedly last year. Many thanks to everyone who contributed to this project.

Finally, we also want to thank everyone who generously responded to news about the funding shortfall that the Walter Reed House was experiencing because of Hertford County budget cuts—**Dr. Kirk Dickie, Dr. and Mrs. Colin Jones, and Dr. and Mrs. Garth Faile**. Your support has helped the Dr. Walter Reed House more than you know.

The Future

We have nearly completed the first phase of the restoration. We still need window coverings in the second floor bed chambers, and are looking for a few decorative pieces, including period Victorian prints or paintings, an oriental runner for the entrance hall, and another Victorian or Empire mirror. Let us know if you have something you would like to donate, and, if you haven't already done so, please come and take a tour of the house and Annex. We would love to show you what the **Friends of the Dr. Walter Reed House** have accomplished in the past three years.

Christmas at the Dr. Walter Reed House



Dr. Reed's portrait in the parlor



Another view of the parlor and a few of our latest gifts, including a Victorian bookcase attributed to R. J. Horner, donated by Laurie Brook and Randy Roberts, and a Victorian Eastlake rocker donated by John Farnham.



Rev. Reed's study with a view of the Dr. Gary plantation desk, donated at the bequest of Cora Louise Harris & Virginia Harris Finch, and a Victorian fire screen with needlepoint, donated by Frances Van Brackle.



The Lewis Parker table, circa 1848, donated by Mr. & Mrs. John Parker, and 19th c. "Peanut Lamp," donated by Capt. & Mrs. Douglas Deets.