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EBENEZER
MAXWELL
MANSION

Victorian House
Museum & Garden

HOURS OF OPERATION

Tour Schedule:

Thursday, Friday, Saturday

12:15, 1:15, 2:15, 3:15

\$8 for adults

\$6 for age 18 and under

Deep Rivers Tour

Offered on select Sundays

April – December

1:15 and 2:15

\$8 for adults

\$6 for age 18 and under

DEEP RIVERS

DEEP RIVERS EXPLORES THE UNIQUE EXPERIENCES AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF AFRICAN AMERICANS

Beginning in April of this year Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion will offer a new docent led tour. *Deep Rivers – How African Americans Waded through the Waters of Oppression to Achieve Greatness* is an immersive experience designed to help visitors enter into the lives and times of prominent 19th century African Americans. Among those featured are W.E.B. Dubois, Elizabeth Keckley (dressmaker to Mary Todd Lincoln), and prominent Philadelphia caterer John Trower. This tour is part of the Mansion's continuing efforts to add the voices of 19th century African Americans to our narrative. The tour was created by Shav'on Smith, who is also the creative force behind our production of *Tea With Frederick Douglass*. Ms. Smith sees *Deep Rivers* as a vehicle for connecting the story of the Mansion to the story of the African American community. "Ebenezer Maxwell did not exist in a vacuum," she says, "and this tour will help ground the Mansion's story in the larger context of history".



Elizabeth Keckley



John Trower



Julien Frances Abele



Francis Johnson

The tour will be offered on select Sunday afternoons throughout several years beginning on Sunday, April 5, 2020. There will be an opening reception for the tour on Saturday March 7, featuring live music, take-away recipe cards and re-enactors. Tickets for the tour and the opening reception are on sale now at the Mansion website. We encourage all our supporters, friends and neighbors to come out and experience this unique and exciting tour.

by Jackie Jonas

A CENTURY OF MYSTERY

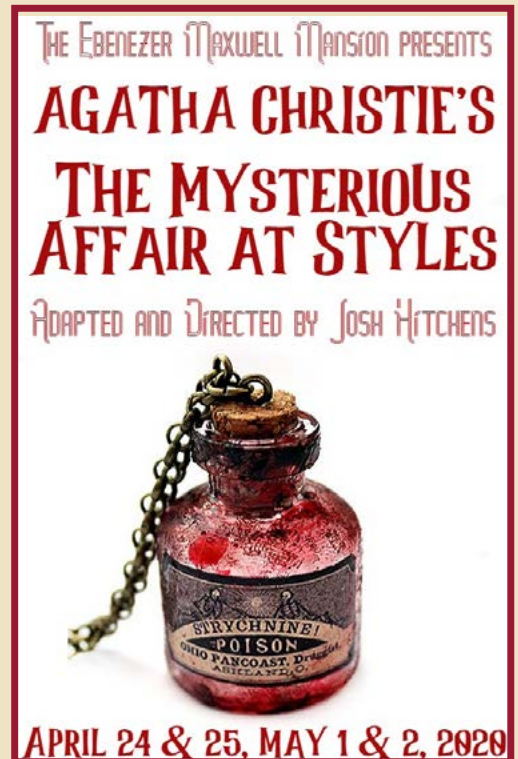
by Josh Hitchens

Agatha Christie is the most successful novelist of all time. She wrote 66 novels, 14 short story collections, and 16 plays. Together, her books have sold more than 2 billion copies, outranked only by the Bible and the works of William Shakespeare. One of her plays, *The Mousetrap*, is the longest running play in history, opening in 1952 and still running in London to this day.

During World War I, Agatha Christie worked as a nurse tending injured soldiers. In 1916, a friend bet Agatha that she could not write a detective novel where the reader would not be able to guess the murderer. Christie took up the bet and wrote *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* in her spare time, inventing a quirky Belgian detective by the name of Hercule Poirot.

The Mysterious Affair at Styles, her first book, was published in 1920. It was an immediate success, although Christie did not earn a lot of money from it. However, she, and her character of Hercule Poirot, were soon to become immortal, known to readers all over the world. This year, 2020, marks one hundred years of Agatha Christie as a writer, and of Poirot as a character. To celebrate this incredible anniversary, the Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion is producing a world premiere theatrical adaptation of *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* this spring.

Adapting Christie's book into a play was exciting and humbling. I got to discover all over again how brilliant she was as a writer, both at mystery and her laser-like understanding of human nature. She was a genius. I invite you join us for *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, where you will have the opportunity to use your "little grey cells of the brain" to match wits with Agatha Christie, and with Hercule Poirot, in the Mansion's parlor.



PNC ARTS ALIVE



Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion received a grant of \$10,000 through *PNC Arts Alive*, a multi-year, multi-million dollar grant initiative from PNC and The PNC Foundation. This prestigious grant award will fund an expansion of the Mansion's successful site-specific theatre productions in 2020 and 2021. Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion is located within and serves the Germantown section of Philadelphia, with a surrounding neighborhood population of 77.6% African Americans. In 2018, the Mansion established an institutional

strategic priority of better engaging and serving its local neighborhood. In 2020, this expanded theatre program will thus place a particular emphasis on Black History, including a one-man performance of *Tea with Frederick Douglass* (2020) and a full production of *The Octoroon* (2021).

Just over 30 organizations in the region were selected for support in 2019 – and this notably includes several first-time grantees, through a newly expanded *PNC Arts Alive* initiative designed to support smaller, community-based arts and cultural organizations whose programming directly benefits the neighborhoods in which they operate. For more information about our grant and all of the funded programs, each selected for their bold thinking around increasing arts access and engagement, visit www.pncartsalive.com.



From left: Luke and Marjorie Russell, Linda Corsover, Jeff Smith

HONOREES

On December 7, 2019, Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion was pleased to honor four long-time neighborhood preservation activists, Luke and Marjorie Russell, Linda Corsover, and Jeff Smith. As members of West Central Germantown Neighbors, each contributed to maintaining the historic fabric and character of the Tulpehocken Station Historic District as well as the preservation and support of Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion and the Tulpehocken train station. Below are just a few highlights of service over many years.

Luke and Marjorie Russell moved to Washington Lane in 1967. Then in 1971, they purchased their home at 154 West Tulpehocken Street. For over 50 years, Luke and Marjorie actively worked to maintain the historic character and charm of the Tulpehocken Station Historic District.

In the early 1970s, the Russells and others recognized the need to establish a neighborhood organization to combat the trend of single-family homes being converted to institutions. West Central Germantown Neighbors was formed. Also, in the early 1970s, when the Mansion's stormwater drainpipes needed to be replaced, Luke Russell supervised the neighborhood teens to help shovel the dirt away from the trenches.

In 2011, after the completion of the exterior renovation of the Tulpehocken Train Station, when the neighborhood decided to construct a garden in the space surrounding the train station, Marjorie Russell spearheaded the maintenance of an orchard and garden at the Tulpehocken Train station. WCGN volunteers planted apple, pear, plum and peach trees, berry patches, and a butterfly garden.

Luke Russell served as President of WCGN for three years and interim president for two years. Marjorie Russell is currently WCGN's President.

Jeff Smith was born in Germantown and attended Germantown High School. After high school, he left Philadelphia to return in 1979. Upon retiring as a teacher in the Philadelphia School District in 2008, Jeff began a needs assessment and demographic study of the usage of the Tulpehocken Train Station. On behalf of West Central Germantown Neighbors and with the support of organizations like Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion, the committee negotiated with top SEPTA executives to salvage the station for its historical and functional use. With the providence of the Obama Federal Stimulus Program seeking "shovel-ready projects," SEPTA was able to allocate over \$700,000 for the reconstruction and restoration of the building to its original condition. Preservation on the train station began in 2010; water and sewer were added in 2018, and now historically accurate windows are needed to complete the project.

Linda Corsover moved to Tulpehocken Street in 1995 and immediately became active in West Central Germantown Neighbors (WCGN), becoming treasurer in 1997 and serving in that capacity for nine years. She was President of WCGN for three years. During all those years, she served on the zoning committee. When in 2008, Jeff Smith headed the Save the Tulpehocken Train Station committee; Linda drew up an architectural plan of the building. She also helped to procure funds from the National Historic Trust to hire a consultant to facilitate this project. Linda drew up a design for the train station gardens, created the plant list, and then procured donations from McFarland's, neighbors, and city tree-planting organizations. Linda is married to Steve, a retired engineer who spent his life working on their 1886-89 Queen Anne home at 258 West Tulpehocken Street.



UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH



DEEP RIVERS – OPENING RECEPTION

Saturday, March 7, 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm

OPENING RECEPTION for *Deep Rivers* features an actress portraying Elizabeth Keckley, a former slave who became the dressmaker for Mary Todd Lincoln. Pianist, Stephen Page, performs music by Francis Johnson, the first African American composer to publish his compositions. Food and beverage selections from an 1890 Trower Catering menu are served to reception guests. James Lyons, great grandson of John Trower, will answer questions about his famous great grandfather. This reception is open to the public. Cost: \$10, Residents with 19144 zip: \$5

Reservations at <https://ebenezermaxwellmansion.org/deep-rivers/>



COFFEE FOR NEIGHBORS – FREE EVENT!

Saturday, March 14, 9:30 am to 11:30 am

Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion invites anyone living in the 19144 zip code to join us on select Saturday mornings for complimentary coffee, tea, hot chocolate, and pastries or cookies. Learn about the 1860s section of our museum and chat with your neighbors. A trained docent will be on hand to answer your questions.



TEA WITH FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Friday, March 20 at 7pm; Saturday, March 21 at 2pm and 7pm

Friday, March 27 at 7pm; Saturday, March 28 at 2pm and 7pm

A one-man, one-act performance written and directed by Shav'on Smith. Frederick Douglass is having "guests" over for tea to discuss the speech he is writing for the 76th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence celebration in Rochester, New York.

Tickets are \$30; \$25 for members

\$15 for residents with 19144 zip code

Tickets at <https://ebenezermaxwellmansion.org/tea-with-frederick-douglass/>



LITERARY PARLOR

Eight Cousins by Louisa May Alcott

Sunday, March 29 at 1:30 pm

Eight Cousins by American novelist Louisa May Alcott was published in 1875. It is the story of Rose Campbell, a lonely and sickly girl who has been recently orphaned and must now reside with her maiden great aunts, the matriarchs of her wealthy Boston family. Join 19th-century bibliophile, Kate Howe, for an interesting discussion.

Cost: \$15/ \$1 for residents with 19144 zip code

Make reservations online at <https://ebenezermaxwellmansion.org/literary-parlor/>

Make reservations online at <https://ebenezermaxwellmansion.org/> or call 215-438-1861

AT THE MANSION

APRIL/MAY



THE MYSTERIOUS AFFAIR AT STYLES

Friday, April 24 at 7:00 pm; Saturday, April 25 at 2:00 pm and 7:00 pm

Friday, May 1 at 7:00 pm; Saturday, May 2 at 2:00 pm and 7:00 pm
The year is 1917 and England is in the midst of the Great War. While Captain Arthur Hastings is visiting a friend's country estate, the family matriarch is murdered at midnight. Hastings asks his old friend, the famous Belgian detective Hercule Poirot, to solve the case. What Poirot finds is a family filled with suspects and mysterious secrets. This world premiere adaptation of Agatha Christie's very first novel comes to life in the ornate parlor of the Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion. Adapted and directed by Josh Hitchens, and starring Jacob Glickman as Hercule Poirot.

Cost: \$35; Member cost: \$30; Young friends cost: \$15

Buy tickets online at <https://ebenezermaxwellmansion.org/victorian-theatre/> or call 215-438-1861 for tickets and information



DEEP RIVERS

Sunday, April 5 at 1:15 pm and 2:15 pm

Sunday, May 3 at 1:15 and 2:15 pm

DEEP RIVERS: How African Americans Waded Through the Waters of oppression to Achieve Greatness in the 19th-century.

An interactive docent-led tour. Each interior museum room tells the story of 19th-century Black men and women – their life stories and achievements. The tour features sound elements, take-away recipe cards, and identity cards featuring 19th-century Black individuals. There will even be cookies made from a recipe from Abby Fisher's 1881 cookbook, Tour cost: \$8 for adults. \$6 for children 18 and under. Call 215-438-1861 for reservations or buy tickets online at <https://ebenezermaxwellmansion.org/deep-rivers/>



OLD FASHIONED PICNIC

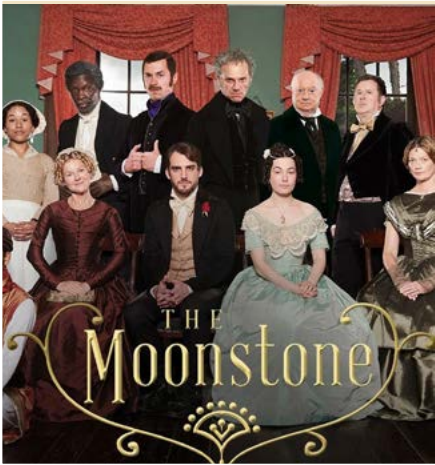
Saturday, May 16 from 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm

As sunny days grow longer, one often desires a happy excursion to whittle away the hours with friends. What better way than a Victorian picnic? Visit the gardens of Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion for lawn games (croquet, ring toss, scavenger hunt), photography, good conversation, 19th-century kitchen gadgets. Suggested attire (not required) – summer whites, garden party frocks, tea dresses, steampunk, Goth. Photographs to take home. Victorian hat contest – a 19th-century hat or one you make (fancy or paper plate hats). Refreshments include craft beer, sodas, hot dogs, and ice cream. Admission is free; activities are pay as you go.

MAY

Make reservations online at <https://ebenezermaxwellmansion.org/> or call 215-438-1861

LOOKING BACK



LITERARY PARLOR RETROSPECTIVE

In 2019, the Mansion continued its well-loved Victorian Book Club a.k.a. Literary Parlor. Led by 19th-century bibliophile, Kate Howe, the club read and discussed a variety of book genres – mystery, romance, thrillers. Lively discussions around books such as *Olive* by Dinah Mulock Craik, *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad, and *The Big Bow Mystery* by Israel Zangwill. In October 2019, we hosted a Spooky Literary Parlor where guests selected and read scary stories while enjoying craft beer from Attic Brewing Company and pretzels. Then in January 2020, our Literary Parlor offered its first movie in the parlor, Wilkie Collins' *Moonstone*.

VICTORIAN THEATRE PRODUCTION

Oscar Wilde's *Salome*

Written in 1891 and initially banned by censors, *Salome* is Oscar Wilde's only tragedy. Seldom produced even to this day, this powerful play is filled with beautifully poetic language and startling imagery. King Herod wants his stepdaughter Salome to dance for him, and in return, will give her anything she wants. She wants the head of John the Baptist on a silver platter. Allison Kessler gave a stunning performance as Salome.



Allison Kessler as Salome



Brandon Drummond as Puck

MURDER MYSTERY 2019 – WHO KILLED WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE?

The interactive play *Who Killed William Shakespeare?* was written and directed by Josh Hitchens with special effects by Jay Efran. William Shakespeare is dead. A character from one of his plays committed this dastardly deed. Upon entering the Mansion, guests received a clipboard with a list of suspects and then moved from room to room greeted in each room by an actor portraying a suspect in this who-done-it. Was it the witch from *MacBeth*, Juliet's nurse, Puck, Hamlet's ghost, or Lady MacBeth? Over 300 people attended.

COFFEE WITH NEIGHBORS WITH SANTA

In 2019, the Mansion hosted Coffee for Neighbors on four Saturdays sprinkled throughout the year. Anyone living in the 19144 zip code was invited to visit the Mansion for complimentary coffee, hot chocolate, tea, and pastries. A docent was available to give guests a tour of the 1860s section of the museum. On Saturday, December 14, Santa was at the Mansion for Coffee with Neighbors. Children and families had photos taken with Santa to take home. Our guests enjoyed Christmas cookies, along with hot chocolate, coffee, and tea.



Santa with Judah and Maxine Jackson

PLEASE SELECT MEMBERSHIP LEVEL:

{ } **Young Friend** (Under 30) \$25

- Unlimited docent-led tours
- Research privileges in the library
- Invitations to members-only events
- Advance notice of programs and events
- Discounts to Victorian workshops and events

{ } **Mansion Friend** \$50

- All privileges listed above

{ } **Mansion Sponsor** \$75

- All privileges listed above
- Membership for immediate family

{ } **Mansion Conservator** \$150

- All privileges listed above
- Membership to the North American Reciprocal Museum Program – free admission to over 985 museums nationwide-
BEST VALUE!

{ } **Mansion Sustainer** \$250

- All privileges listed above
- Two guest passes for docent-led tours

{ } **Mansion Preservation Circle** \$500

- All privileges listed above
- Acknowledgment in newsletter
- Two additional guest passes

{ } **Mansion Benefactor** \$1,000

- All privileges listed above
- Gift membership for a person of your choosing

* * * * *

{ } **Business Bronze** \$250

- Business logo on the Mansion's website with a link to your website and acknowledgement in the Mansion newsletter

{ } **Business Silver** \$500

- Same as above with special silver acknowledgement.

{ } **Business Gold** \$1,000

- Same as above with special gold acknowledgement.

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EBENEZER MAXWELL MANSION
Gazette

Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion
200 West Tulpehocken Street
Philadelphia, PA 19144

WHAT'S INSIDE:

A Century of Mystery

Deep Rivers

Upcoming Events



Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion is grateful to the Philadelphia Cultural Fund for general operating funding received in February 2012



**HISTORIC
GERMANTOWN**
Freedom's Backyard

freedombackyard.com

Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion is a member of Historic Germantown's Freedom's Backyard


EBENEZER MAXWELL MANSION
Victorian House Museum & Garden

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