



Tudor Place

Winter 2018

It Was Thirty Years Ago...

Times

Thirty years ago, a Bureau of Labor Statistics economist looking for weekend diversions happened upon a newspaper notice recruiting docents for Washington's newest museum. When Tudor Place opened to the public on October 8, 1988, she led its very first docent-guided tour. What makes this story remarkable is that, 30 years and more than 400,000 visitors later, Elizabeth Taylor is still leading tours of the historic house, finding what's new or newly known amid the seemingly unchanging surroundings and always learning more. Elizabeth met with me recently to reflect upon early days at Tudor Place and share thoughts about her long experience here.

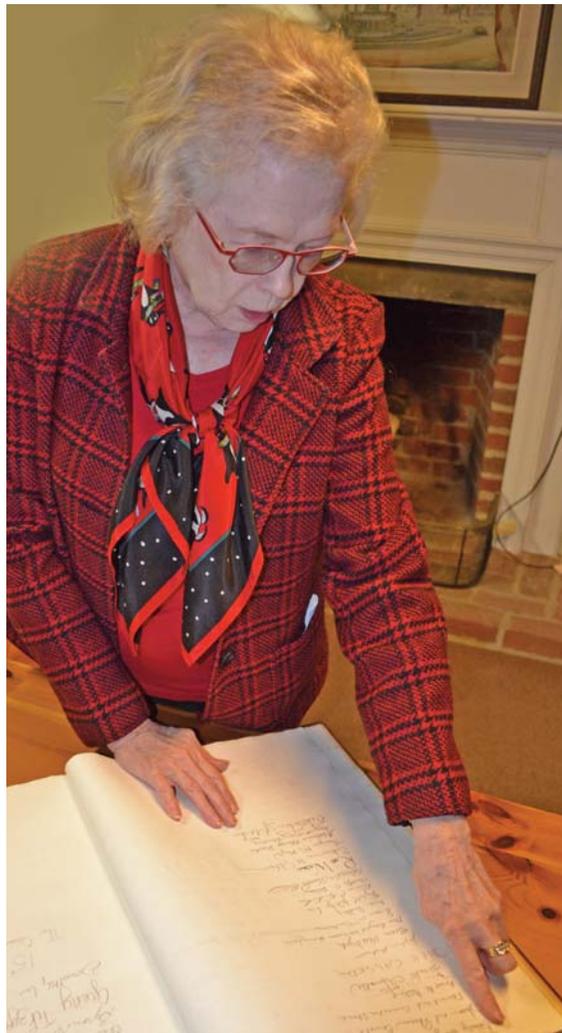
When Elizabeth saw the Tudor Place newspaper ad for docents, she had friends who volunteered at other historic houses and saw this as a way to be active in the community on the weekends. Her docent service also provided a diversion from her career as an economist at the Bureau of Labor Statistics and cultivated her interest in history that began in her childhood in Boston.

After embarking with other volunteers on docent training that summer of 1988, Elizabeth was ready to give her test tour for Curator Leni Preston in advance of opening day. "It must have gone well," she recalled, because she was scheduled to lead the first public tour. "Everybody was apprehensive about giving the first public tour. I always think you get credit for volunteering to go first," Elizabeth said. And so she gave the premiere tour on Saturday, October 8, 1988.

Extensive work travel required Elizabeth to step aside from Tudor Place in 1991, but she rejoined the docent corps in 2006. Throughout her time leading tours here, Elizabeth's followed some simple precepts: "Say what you know. Try to always expand on your knowledge. And never make anything up." When she does not know the answer to a visitor's question, she says so,

always with a pledge to find the answer if she can.

Elizabeth most enjoys small groups of highly interested visitors, allowing her to cater to their particular interests. She also embraces the opportunity to learn from our guests. Take Thomas Peter's wooden flute, for example, displayed in the Saloon. When a visitor explained the transition from wooden to metal flutes in the 19th



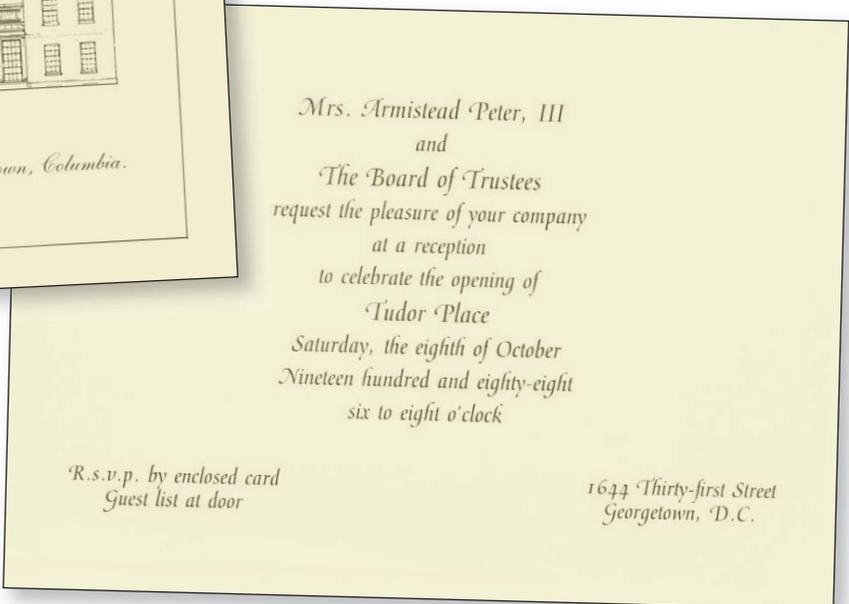
Elizabeth points out her name on the October 8, 1988 page in the guest register

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**Invitation to the Tudor Place Opening
on October 8, 1988**



century, and how the materials' tonal qualities influenced flute composition, Elizabeth incorporated the new information into her tours for other groups.

The freedom to make each tour unique is another thing Elizabeth loves about volunteering here. "Our tours aren't all cookie cutter and we are not all scripted," she said of Tudor Place docents. At the beginning of each tour, she asks about particular interests; at the conclusion, she invites visitors to return, because another tour with another docent will be different.

Elizabeth credits Curator Grant Quertermous for helping her keep tours fresh. By rotating items on exhibit and sharing rich stories behind those objects, Grant keeps her and all the docents from falling into ruts. "For somebody who has been giving tours for years, it is so welcome to have something new to talk about," she exclaimed.

I asked Elizabeth how her docent experience has changed since 1988. As they were three decades ago, she said, today's visitors today are drawn by an interest in American history. What has changed is the breadth of Tudor Place's reach. In the early years, "the typical visitor was a Washingtonian, even more specifically, probably people who lived in the neighborhood," she

observed. Her tours today are filled with business travelers and tourists from across and beyond the United States.

Another important change from 1988 is the many new ways we serve the community through programs for families and students. "As a citizen of the country, I am very concerned about the state of education—are they studying history?" she wondered. In the face of these doubts, she celebrates the work of the museum's Education Department: "I believe that is a really important thing Tudor Place does—to teach young people to appreciate history."

We tend to assign a certain permanence to the institutions around us, assuming they have "always" been here. An anniversary reminds us, though, where preservation is concerned, to take nothing for granted. It is mainly thanks to the support of its community and the love of donors, members, and dedicated volunteers like Elizabeth that Tudor Place has grown and thrived since she led its first tour. As Elizabeth said herself, "I love Tudor Place and am so happy that it is flourishing." Loyalty like hers will help ensure that it continues to.

—Mark Hudson, Executive Director

Tudor Place Meets World

Two upcoming projects will expand Tudor Place's international reach.

Colombian Orchids at Tudor Place

This spring, Tudor Place joins the Embassy of Colombia and a select group of D.C. venues to showcase Colombian culture with the theme,



Colombia: Land of Sabrosura. At the invitation of the Colombian Embassy, from April 16 to 22, the Conservatory and

South Lawn will be home to an exhibition celebrating Colombian orchids through the eyes of naturalist Alexander von Humboldt, who explored Latin America between 1799 and 1804. Panels describing his expedition, reproductions of his botanical illustrations, and live Colombian orchid specimens will tell the story. The exhibition will be a highlight of our Earth Day Plant Sale and Picnic on April 22. We are grateful to the Colombian Embassy for including us in this celebration and for their assistance in making it happen.

Washington Old Hall Meets Tudor Place: Sustainable Historic Sites

For obvious reasons, American Independence Day isn't widely celebrated in the United Kingdom. One English site bucks that trend,

however — Washington Old Hall (W.O.H.), a U.K. National Trust site in Sunderland tied to George Washington's ancestors. As part of a sister cities project several years in the planning, staff from Tudor Place and W.O.H. will exchange site visits this summer to explore shared ties to Washington as well as our common commitment to thoughtfully steward our historic houses and landscapes.

With support from the D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities' Sister Cities Grant Program, four staff members from Washington Old Hall will visit Tudor Place in June. In July, Kellie Cox, Hillary Rothberg, and Mark Hudson will return the visit, partaking in the British site's novel July 4th observances.



Through our Sister Cities relationship, we are promoting understanding of our sites' programs and practices that advance sustainability and providing the public opportunities to share in that exchange.

For more information about Washington Old Hall, please visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk/washington-old-hall.

This project was supported by the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, which receives support from the National Endowment for the Arts.



Washington Old Hall is a National Trust site in Sunderland, England

From the Executive Director

Dear Friends,



Against the backdrop of a bleak February afternoon, the delicate purple blooms of crocus are emerging in the North Garden. I am reminded that Tudor Place is a year-round historic site with much to explore and celebrate in any season.

Although we close for tours during January each year, the site has been alive with activities in anticipation of re-opening February 1. This year, accomplishments in the Main House included replacing rug pads, completing collections inventories, and repairing plaster in the Servants' Sitting Room. On the grounds, we performed our annual inspection and cleaning of the witness trees and said goodbye to the large stump of the tulip poplar that had stood at the southeast corner of the South Lawn for years.

Once a month of slow transition, February has exploded in recent years, due to the success of our Dollar Days promotion, into one of the busiest months of the year, with nearly 1,800 people taking tours during this shortest month. This clamorous interval prepares us for the busy spring ahead: Eggstravaganza, the Earth Day Plant Sale, and a flood of field trips all come in the final months of the school year, amid the beautiful blooms of spring. The Spring Garden Party on May 23 will have special meaning to us this year as we honor and remember former Garden Party Chair and Trustee Elizabeth Powell.

During the warm summer months, we will welcome colleagues from Washington Old Hall, a historic site in Sunderland, England, before some of our staff embark upon a journey to their site a few weeks later—all of this as part of a Sister Cities cultural exchange. The summer months conclude with teacher workshops and day camps (newly reimagined) for curious kids.

In fall, the annual food festival returns in September, and October brings our 30th-anniversary celebration, and Trick-or-Treat in the Garden. As the leaves fall from the witness trees and the winds grow colder, we will again open our doors to greet visitors for specials teas and tours, gingerbread and wreath workshops, and other holiday events.

The sweet arrival of crocus is just the inspiration I need to launch into another exciting year at Tudor Place. And it reminds us that Tudor Place offers experiences to share in every season.

Executive Director

2018 Tudor Place Board of Trustees

We are pleased to welcome Marjorie Calvert and Braxton Moncure to the Tudor Place Board of Trustees. Marjorie was elected at the Board Meeting in October and Braxton at the Annual Meeting in December. At the Annual Meeting, the Board elected new officers, including President Beverly L. Jost, Vice President Marcia Mayo, Treasurer Kate Carr, and Secretary Nancy Sidamon-Eristoff.

Our thanks are extended to President Thomas Crocker, Treasurer Jerome Libin, and Trustee Page Evans, who completed terms on the Board of Trustees at the end of last year.

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New Faces at Tudor Place

We are pleased to welcome three new members to the Tudor Place team.

Visitor Services Assistant Katrin Richter

Katrin joined the team in November and runs the Visitor Center on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Sunday, assisting visitors, coordinating tour groups, and helping with shop inventory. She is studying toward her Master of Science degree in library and information sciences from The Catholic University of America. Katrin previously worked at the Newell House Museum in St. Paul, Oregon, as intern, employee, and docent.



Katrin Richter

Private Events Manager Michaela Wright

Michaela jumped right in to her new position in January, spending her first day on the job on her feet promoting rentals to crowds at the Washington Wedding Expo. In addition to energy and enthusiasm, she brings experience with the Smithsonian Folklife Festival and the Freer Sackler Galleries. Michaela manages site rentals, group tours, and events and is the person to see if you are organizing a social occasion or business event.



Michaela Wright

Director of Development Janet Wall

With a background in business and nonprofits and a passion for decorative arts and historic preservation, Janet brings essential skills and talents to Tudor Place. She will be leading fundraising efforts including the Annual Fund and Spring Garden Party and overseeing all marketing and communication activities. Janet relocated to the D.C. area from Charlotte, North Carolina, and began in the position in January.



Janet Wall

Make Your Next Event Historic

Whether it is a wedding, reunion, birthday party or business meeting, the staff of Tudor Place stand ready to ensure your special event will be memorable. Outdoor spaces on the South Lawn, Bowling Green, and Tennis Lawn, as well as an indoor venue in the Dower House are available for rent. Tudor Place is also the perfect venue for photography to accompany your special day. Please contact Michaela Wright (events@tudorplace.org) to learn more about rental packages and how we can make your next event historic.





TUDOR PLACE

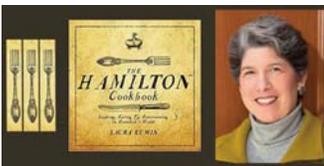
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Please join us for these upcoming events.

Tuesday, March 13 | 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Landmark Society Lecture: At Hamilton's Table with Author Laura Kumin



Meet Laura Kumin, author of *The Hamilton Cookbook: Cooking, Eating, and Entertaining in Hamilton's World*, in a lively talk about Hamilton's tastes, Federalist foodways and their tie-ins at Tudor Place.

Please pay what you can.

www.tudorplace.org/programs/122/landmark-society-lecture-at-hamiltons-table

**Saturday, March 24; Friday, March 30; Saturday, March 31
10:00 am to 12:00 pm**

Eggstravaganza!

The event kicks off with a lively egg hunt and egg roll on the South Lawn. Cap off the experience by decorating a scratch art Easter egg, making a festive crown, and playing traditional children's games. Bring your camera for photo ops with the Easter Bunny.

Member children: \$10 | Non-member children: \$15 | Adults: \$5

www.tudorplace.org/programs/121/eggstravaganza

Tuesday, March 27 | 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Landmark Society Lecture: Painting L'enfant's D.C. with Artist-in-Residence Peter Waddell



See Washington as it was more than 200 years ago, through the eyes and images of history painter and Tudor Place Artist-in-Residence Peter Waddell. He will discuss his monumental work in progress — a pair of paintings depicting the Washington of Peter ("Pierre") L'Enfant — and the extensive research behind

them. The L'Enfant bird's eyes were commissioned by Albert H. Small for the Albert H. Small Center for National Capital Area Studies at the George Washington University Museum, where they will be exhibited upon completion.

Please pay what you can.

www.tudorplace.org/programs/124/landmark-society-lecture-painting-lenfants-dc

Sunday, April 22 | 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Earth Day Plant Sale and Picnic

Celebrate Earth Day and Arbor Day at Tudor Place! Spend an afternoon exploring our historic gardens and take advantage of this once-a-year opportunity to enjoy a picnic on our grounds. The annual Plant Sale will feature heirloom and native sun to



shade perennials for your garden, as well as tropical and house plants. New this year: herbs and other edible plants.

Free

www.tudorplace.org/programs/119/earth-day-plant-sale-picnic

Thursday, May 3

Tudor Nights: Hamilton



Everyone's buzzing about the D.C.

debut of the hit musical, *Hamilton*, in June.

Whether or not you have tickets, get your Alexander Hamilton fix early at this cocktail party and mini-exhibit devoted to the man, the memory, and the family he left behind. Enjoy drinks, appetizers and sweets, and a close-up look at artifacts Hamilton himself might recognize.

Member: Free | Non-members: \$15 | Must be 21 or older

www.tudorplace.org/programs/129/tudor-nights-hamilton