

Maureen McDonnell
First Lady of Virginia



The Executive Mansion
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Oyez! Oyez! Oyez! Calling All Virginians!

Family homes are prized possessions, and it can be challenging to pass them from one generation to the next. However, when we are able to do so, we gain a much fuller understanding of our ancestors' lives, surrounded by the furnishings and art that reflect their history.

For four years, Governor McDonnell and I have the honor of living in one of Virginia's oldest "family" homes ~ the Executive Mansion. Celebrating its 200th anniversary in 2013, the Executive Mansion is the oldest continually occupied governor's residence in all the fifty states.

As you can imagine, this translates to a home full of history and stories of everyday family life. With the 200th birthday of the mansion approaching, we are looking to gain a more intimate understanding of this historic home, one that has not yet been told in the history books.

This fall, the official book of the Executive Mansion's 200th Anniversary will be released. Our commemorative coffee table book will chronicle the experiences of the fifty-four governors' families who have occupied the mansion. It is being written by Virginia historian, Mary Miley Theobald, with an introduction by Virginia author David Baldacci and designed by Carol Roper Hoffer. We are also planning a yearlong celebration with special events, exhibits, and programs to commemorate this bicentennial.

I believe that the key to unlocking the untold stories of the mansion lies with the people of Virginia, and I'd like to involve you in this endeavor. If you are a descendant of a former "First Family" or of someone who worked in the mansion, we'd love to hear your stories about your ancestors and the mansion. We are looking for old photographs of governors' families taken in the mansion and any letters and objects with a history of having been in the mansion that we might exhibit. You may have to dig them out of your great-great Aunt Matilda's trunk that's been sitting in Grandma's attic, but they will help shed light on this wonderful home's proud past.

If you have stories or images of Virginia's Executive Mansion, please join us in this opportunity to recapture them as we celebrate the bicentennial. Please contact us by mail at Commonwealth of Virginia, Executive Mansion, P.O. Box 1475, Richmond, Virginia 23218; or by email at ExecutiveMansion@governor.virginia.gov <mailto:ExecutiveMansion@governor.virginia.gov>, and help us bring the history of Virginia's Executive Mansion to life!

With warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Maureen McDonnell'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Maureen' being particularly prominent.

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