

Sheila Arnold Biographical Information

Sheila Arnold currently resides in Hampton, VA. She is a Professional Storyteller, Character Interpreter and Teaching Artist. Through her company, History's Alive!, Sheila has provided storytelling programs, historic character presentations, Christian monologues, dramatic/creative writing workshops, professional development for educators and inspirational/motivational speeches at schools, churches, libraries, professional organizations and museums, in 36 states since 2003. She is also a sought-after historical consultant for museums and exhibit designers helping to develop engaging stories from historical documents, artifacts, buildings and the historical use of land and water. Sheila has grown tremendously in her field – being selected as a Mt. Vernon (George Washington estate) Research Fellow and a noted artist selected as part of 2019 Hewnoaks Artist Colony summer residency. Most recently, Sheila was awarded an artistic fellowship at McDowell in Peterborough, NH for December of 2021.

Sheila has been a featured Storyteller at several Storytelling Festivals: twice at the National Storytelling Festival (Jonesborough, TN); Timpanogos Storytelling Festival (Lehi, UT), White Mountain Storytelling Festival (Plymouth, NH), three times at Paris Storytelling Festival (Paris, KY); Connecticut Storytelling Festival; Georgia Mountain Storytelling Festival (Young Harris, GA); Hearts Afire Storytelling Weekend (Richmond, VA); Stories: From Sea to Shore Storytelling Weekend (Norfolk, VA); twice at Culpeper Tells (Culpeper, VA); twice at Storytelling Festival of the Southeast (Laurinburg, NC); three times at Southern Ohio Storytelling Festival (Chillicothe, OH), Moonshell Storytelling Festival (Omaha, NE), Stone Soup Storytelling Festival (Woodruff, SC), Story Celebration Weekend (Kansas City, KS), Florida Storytelling Festival, The Clearwater Festival (Croton-on-Hudson, NY), Lititz Storytelling Festival (Lititz, PA); and twice at Colonial Williamsburg Storytelling Festival (Williamsburg, VA). She also has twice been a Teller-in-Residence at the International Storytelling Center, Jonesborough, TN, and in 2019 was the initial presenter and storyteller for the International Storytelling Center's National Endowment of Humanities project "Freedom Stories". Sheila collaborates with storyteller, Darci Tucker, to produce the Tucker-Arnold Storytelling Concert and Retreat in Williamsburg, VA featuring nationally known Storytellers. Ms. Sheila, what she is commonly called, has also presented Professional Development sessions, Storytelling Programs and Character Presentations at educational conferences and teachers' institutes, including Colonial Williamsburg Teacher Institute, Valley Forge Teacher Institute, Mt. Vernon Teacher Institute, Westchester Regional Social Studies Conference and Social Studies, and Reading Association Conferences in New York, Louisiana, Virginia, South Carolina, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Mississippi, the National Council of Social Studies and for many Teaching American History Grant programs around the country and has presented and performed on a variety of topics.

Sheila has 2 books: a picture book, "Weeping Willow, or, Why the Leaves Change their Colors", and an historical fiction using biblical persons, "David's Mighty Man: Benaiah". She also has two storytelling CD's, "Mini, Many, Minnie Tales" and "Hands Wide Open". Books can be purchased by contacting Sheila at sheilaarnold39@aol.com and the CD's are available through her website, www.mssheila.org and for download at CDbaby.com.

As an Historical Consultant, Sheila has worked with Montpelier in the creation of the script, along with arranging performer and coordinating and assisting in voice over for their short film, “The Mere Distinction of Colour”, a part of their African American exhibit. Also, she created scripts for Montpelier’s recreated buildings as portrayed by the enslaved persons on this site. She has also worked in creating scripts for the Niagara Falls Underground Railroad project, collaborating with Abigail Schumann in creating a theatrical reading for the premier of historian Edward Ayers book, *The Thin Light of Freedom*.

Previously, Sheila worked at Colonial Williamsburg Foundation as a Coordinator with the Teacher Institute, in Public Relations and Event Manager, and as a Storyteller and Theatrical Interpreter. Also, she has been a Social Worker, Hampton City Schools Substitute Teacher and a Mary Kay, Inc. Independent Senior Beauty Consultant. She is a graduate of UNC-Charlotte with a B.A. in African American & African History.

Sheila is fortunate to live close to her son, Krisstopher; her grandson, Brooklyn, and her father and stepmother, Wallace & Vera Arnold, and she communicates often with her Atlanta-based sister, Stephanie. (www.mssheila.org)