

News and Notes From

The PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

JANUARY 1974 Vol. II, No. 1

VOLUME II

With this, the January issue of News and Notes, we begin our second year of publication. When the first issue appeared last March we were uncertain as to whether a second one would see the light of day. However an enthusiastic response from our readers brought encouragement for further effort.

Although the production of News and Notes has been largely a singular effort, your editor desires to take note of efforts put forth by individual members. Regular contributions by Paul Lanham and Ted Bissell have added greatly to the general scope of this publication. In addition, the general knowledge and contacts of Susanna Cristofane, Orva Heissenbittel, John Brennan, James Shreve and James Wilfong have provided information on current happenings on the local scene. These and many others have, hopefully, made News and Notes more interesting for our readers.

Also, we are indebted to our Corresponding Secretary, Edith Bagot. The added burden of circularizing the membership 12 times per year, instead of the usual eight times, has been cheerfully accepted. We are indeed thankful.

In our effort to build a staff to produce News and Notes in the future, we have asked for volunteers. We are pleased to announce that Mrs. Leslie (Betty) Tichnor of District Heights will be contributing to the publication on a regular basis in the future. We hope that others will join us to help improve the quality and scope of our efforts. As always, we solicit the contributions and comments of all of our readers.

INQUIRY – REUBEN LeGRANDE JOHNSTON

Reuben LeGrande Johnston was a Maryland painter of the latter half of the 19th century. Born in Alexandria, Virginia in 1850, he apparently spent a portion of his lifetime painting in Prince George's County, perhaps as the guest of one of our early families. Johnston's work concentrates on pastoral scenes, primarily done in oil.

During the 1930s a Washington hotel (name unknown) going out of business auctioned all of its furnishings. Included was a large number of Johnston's works which he had apparently used from time to time to pay his bills for lodging.

The artist's paintings are signed on the front with "R. LeGrande Johnston" or "R. LeG. Johnston". The full name apparently was never used. If any of the members of the Society have any of Johnston's paintings in their collections or know of the whereabouts of any of his work, or if through family lore know where he may have painted in the County, please contact the President of the Society, Frederick S. DeMarr, at 4010 Hamilton St., Hyattsville 20781 (277-0711).

NEWS ITEM – 1752

"We are told that there will be a concert of music at the great ballroom in Upper Marlborough on Wednesday next, October 19, 1752 by several gentlemen for the benefit of the Talbot County Charity School,"

- Maryland Gazette October 12, 1752

FOUR SEASONS IN MARYLAND

Although the weather might be fierce, we suggest a few items which might help break the monotony of the Winter season at home.

- February 9-10 THIRD ANNUAL CATOCTIN WINTER FESTIVAL. Snowmobiling, cross country skiing and dog sled team. Demonstrations and exhibits of sports equipment, wood-carving and fly-tying at Catoctin National Park. Contact: Mrs. Marian McIntyre, Catoctin Mountain Tourist Council, Box 32, Thurmont, tel. (301) 21-7638.
- February 19-21 22ND ANNUAL ANTIQUE SHOW. St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, Catonsville. Contact: Mrs. Douglas LeCompte, 111 Fairfield Dr., Baltimore, tel. (301) 747-5625.

PAINT BRANCH CHAPEL ANNIVERSARY

During the current year St. Mark's Episcopal Church at Fairland, Montgomery County, is celebrating the 200th anniversary of the building of its predecessor, the old Paint Branch Chapel, in 1774.

Located just across the line in Prince George's County in what is today's Calverton subdivision, the Paint Branch Chapel was a part of Prince George's Parish whose main church was St. Paul's, Rock Creek. Later it was the parish church and then a chapel of Zion Parish, whose present parish is St. John's, Beltsville. In 1875 the old Chapel was torn down and was rebuilt at its present location on the Old Columbia Pike just north of Randolph (Cherry Hill) Road. In 1970 St. Mark's achieved independent parish status once again.

The Rev. Paul Mericle, a native of Hyattsville and formerly assistant at St. Matthew's Church there, is now Rector of St. Mark's.

PROGRESS ON GEORGE WASHINGTON HOUSE PROJECT

We are pleased to note that the documentary historical research on the George Washington House property was recently completed by John M. Walton, Jr. and turned over to John Giannetti, Chairman of the Prince George's Jaycees Restoration Committee. The application for designation as a property to be included on the National Historical Register will be sent to the Maryland Historical Trust in Annapolis momentarily.

The Jaycees have received a loan of \$30,000 for preliminary restoration of the property and it is anticipated that work will be under way in the late Winter or early Spring season.

KNICKERBOCKER DISASTER

Just 52 years ago the Washington area experienced what was perhaps its worst snowstorm in history, and certainly the most disastrous considering the loss of life. A total of 26 inches of snow caused the roof of the Knickerbocker Theater to collapse, killing 97 persons and injuring over one hundred others. The Knickerbocker, located at 18th and Columbia Road, NW, was later rebuilt and remained the Ambassador Theater. It was closed and torn down just recently, about 1972.

The following account of the disaster along with a series of photos was published in booklet form about two weeks after the storm.

THE STORM

Beginning at 4 o'clock, Friday afternoon, January 27, 1922, Washington was visited by a snowstorm which swept in from the Carolina Capes, and within a few hours had demoralized city activities with a foot of snow.

Within five hours after the blizzard had struck the city, traffic was moving slowly, and indications of a real blockade were in evidence.

Sweeping in from the Southwest, the storm's effect was felt early. Trains were reported late early in the evening and reports from nearby towns indicated they were caught in the worst snowstorm of several years.

Street car schedules were thrown behind four hours after the storm had struck Washington. All machinery at the command of the companies for clearing the tracks was rushed into service, but the storm soon gained headway on the apparatus. Traffic became badly jammed at 11:00 o'clock when the theater crowds started home, and two hours later all street traffic was demoralized. Automobiles on the incline streets became uncontrollable when drivers put brakes into use, the slippery pavements failing to hold the wheels. Several accidents were averted through seeming miracles as the machines slid about. Pedestrians crowded near to watch the capers of the floundering cars.

Skidding automobiles caused most of the accidents, according to the police, who also reported eleven persons injured the first day of the storm.

THE SECOND DAY

The storm finally abated after twenty-eight hours, leaving the city blocked under twenty-six inches of snow.

All means at the hands of the District authorities and business interests were thrown into operation in an attempt to dig Washington from the blanket of white.

Every available man and piece of machinery already used during the storm were continued at their stations as the blizzard abated and signs of relief were signaled from weather officials.

The twenty-six inches of snow which fell during the storm, and drifted to five-foot depth at hundreds of points, broke all records for the District. The snow-fall was beaten during the three-day blizzard in February, 1899, but the amount of snow which fell during the period of this storm is unprecedented for that length of time.

One man was frozen to death and several score were injured through traffic accidents, and conditions of sidewalks and streets attributable to the storm.

Throughout the business section, forces of men were bending every effort to clear the streets for traffic. Traffic was confined to one line and an accident to any of the vehicles impeded movement for blocks.

Stores usually busy on Saturday, were practically without customers. Many employees were unable to report, and nearly all stores were closed at 3 o'clock.

Government departments released employees early in the afternoon and the streets were crowded with thousands attempting to foot their way home over the slippery streets. Many of the pedestrians were women of all ages who had braved the elements to attend work.

Many accidents, a large majority resulting to women, were reported as the streets became jammed with the home-going crowds.

THE THEATER DISASTER

Ninety-six persons were killed and 125 injured when the roof of the Knickerbocker Theater, at Eighteenth street and Columbia road northwest, collapsed at p:10 [sic] while the second show was in progress. The audience was disturbed by a groaning sound. A few persons sitting near the exits rose to their feet and started for the door. Before they could get clear of the aisles there was a roar and the entire roof collapsed and fell into the center of the amphitheater.

So sudden was the collapse that many of those in the seats had no warning of what was coming. There were no pillars in the structure to support the roof, it having been built upon the "open house" plan with great steel girders extending from side to side.

The result was that the entire roof collapsed from the center. The steel beams and the concrete roof falling in a "V" shaped mass.

Simultaneously with the roar of the falling roof came the cries and moans of the injured. Policemen on duty in the vicinity turned in alarms of fire, while at the same time hurry calls for aid were sent to hospitals. The streets were so blocked with snow that had been falling in the past twenty-eight hours that it took a long time for the rescue parties to arrive.

The scene was one of tragedy. Standing were the semi-circular walls of the structures; covering the seats was a twisted mass of concrete, wire and shattered steel beams. Moaning appeals for help could be heard coming from beneath the debris. Men, women and children, many of them bleeding from wounds about the head and hands, many with clothing torn to shreds, were sitting or reclining in the snowdrifts that raised waist-high about the theater. Frantic appeals for help could be heard from all sides – residents of the neighborhood, almost besides themselves with the shock of the disaster, rushed to the scene and did all they could to aid the injured who had been able to escape before the debris engulfed them.

Fire alarms for fire were turned in in rapid succession, and police reserves from all precincts were requisitioned to aid the work of the rescue.

A crowd estimated at from 3,000 to 10,000, lined all streets adjacent to the theater and overwhelmed the first police arrivals. The Seventy-first Company, Sixth Regiment of Marines, was placed on duty at 11 O'clock with orders to shoot at the first sign of disorder or rioting. Soldiers from Walter Reed Hospital were also used to keep back the frantic crowds. Columbia Road was roped off from Biltmore street to Eighteenth street.

Rescuers were hampered by the swirling snow. Hundreds of jacks were used to lift the debris. Large portions of the fallen roof remained intact, making it necessary to dig with picks and crowbars to get to those imprisoned underneath. Later saws and acetylene torches were used to clear away the steel girders.

The effect of the calamity was paralyzing.

It was early Monday morning before the last victim had been taken from the ruins.

The damage caused by the storm has been estimated at several million dollars. Ninety-seven persons are dead and almost two hundred injured.

Source: The Storm Published by Martin A. Olmen, Washington: 1922. 32 pp.

(Above publication through the courtesy of Mrs. Margaret Roeder Lewis of Seattle, Washington State, a native of Upper Marlboro).

CONFEDERATE SPY

Perusing a not-so-new book, Spies for the Blue and Gray, by Harnett T. Kane (Hanover House 1954), a credit to Mrs. Rhoda Christmas (Mrs. John D. Bowling) of Croome is noted regarding coverage of Prince George's County's Walter ("Wat") Bowie and his spectacular Confederate espionage activities. Captured in Prince George's County in October, 1861, this young Upper Marlboro lawyer was confined to the Old Capitol Prison (where today's Supreme Court Building now stands) to await execution by hanging. Escaping two days before the scheduled event, he was trapped again at the home of his cousins, the Warings, on the Patuxent River near the village of Bald Eagle, but eluded capture in the guise of "a might tall colored girl." Giving up espionage temporarily for service as a first lieutenant of Company "F" of Mosby's Rangers, he returned again to Maryland in the Fall of 1864 with seven men in daring scheme to kidnap the Governor of Maryland to be held for ransom in the form of captured Confederate soldiers.

Enroute to Annapolis, the eight men surprised a sizeable Union unit of the 8th Illinois Cavalry at the Port Tobacco Courthouse, captured their horses and proceeded to Wat's Prince George's County home, where Wat's younger brother, Brune, joined the group. (The Port Tobacco Courthouse was recently reconstructed on its original site by the Port Tobacco Historical Society and is worth visiting in nearby Charles County, just off Route 301.)

After reconnoitering Annapolis, the ambitious kidnapping project was reluctantly discarded and the party prepared to return via Sandy Spring in Montgomery County. A fatal error in judgment in stopping briefly at a country store on October 7, 1864 in Sandy Spring resulted in a chase by a civilian posse. While counter-attacking, Wat Bowie fell mortally wounded before a point-blank shotgun blast. His brother, Brune, elected to remain with Wat at a nearby farmer's house until he expired, was captured as a result, and incarcerated in the same Old Capitol Prison in Washington, D. C. which had been unable to contain his brother in 1861. Brune, however, was not so fortunate and remained in that prison until the War's end.

The body of Walter Bowie, age 27, was ultimately brought back to Prince George's County for funeral services at Holy Trinity Church, Collington (Route 450, west of Bowie-Belair) and he was buried at his nearby birthplace, "Willow Grove". (Historian James Wilfong's article of 12/19/68 in the Prince George's Post describes Willow Grove in depth. Articles by our beloved late historian, Judge R. Lee Van Horn, in the Enquirer-Gazette of Feb. 2, 9, 16, and 23rd, 1967 provide graphic background of the story.)

■ Paul T. Lanham

RECENT MARYLAND BOOKS

Skipjack Vol. 1, No. 1. (Winter 1973) A Magazine published by South Dorchester High School, Church Creek, Maryland 21622. \$5 for four issues.

Though the first months of this project were filled with constant frustrations such as finding financial backing, supplies, and subscribers, the young staff of Skipjack has produced a refreshingly simple yet deeply perceptive social commentary on little-known natives of Maryland's Chesapeake Bay area – their work, play and history – as told through a series of transcribed tape-recorded interviews. The reader is taken to visit people whom he

would rarely have a chance to meet on this level of intimacy. The magazine reports lengthy discussions about the details of everyday life and ways of making a living which abound in the region. There are accounts of oyster harvesting and muskrat trapping, skipjack construction, and a marshlight phenomena. A 100-year-old native of Bishop's Head, Maryland, tells us her thoughts, memories, opinions, and first-hand historical account of the area throughout her own lifetime. As an extra bonus at the end of this issue, we are given some regional recipes which are most difficult to find in print.

The name Skipjack was selected because it is the name of a sailing vessel found only in the Chesapeake Bay area and is still used for oystering.

Those who worked on Skipjack plan to publish their interviews on a permanent basis, this representing Volume 1, Number 1, for the Winter of 1973. We wish them success in their new venture. Should the following issues be as enlightening and entertaining as the first, perhaps at some future time they would consider expanding their universe to include other parts of Maryland which would prove equally unique in folkways and regional lore.

■ Elizabeth Ticknor

(Skipjack is similar to the well-known Foxfire, published by students in a Georgia high school for the past few years. Material from several issues of this publication has appeared as The Foxfire Book which may be obtained at most booksellers. – Ed.)

MARYLAND CALENDAR

A word of praise is due for the Suburban Trust Company's 1974 "Scenic Maryland" calendar. Although there are no pictures from Prince George's County (maybe next time?), it does contain some unusual and beautiful scenes of our fair state.

BALTIMORE & OHIO COMMUTER SERVICE

A recent announcement in the public press that the Maryland Department of Transportation is considering the takeover of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad's commuter service brings to mind the following announcement which appeared in the National Intelligencer (Washington, D.C.) on September 30, 1835. This was just shortly after the line to Washington was opened.

B. &O. trains over the Washington Branch make the following stops.

The junction of the two railways at the nine mile post (Relay); the intersection of the turnpike at Elkridge landing; at the intersection of the Annapolis road near the 17 mile post (near Jessup); at the Savage Factory Railroad; near Harrison's tavern and the Laurel Depot; near the intersection of the turnpike near Vansville (Beltsville); and the intersection of the turnpike near Bladensburg (Hyattsville).

The bell over the ticket office in Washington will be rung at 20 minutes and again at 5 minutes before departure of the cars for Baltimore.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CARROLL COUNTY

Nearby Westminster, county seat of Carroll County is another gem which must be seen to be appreciated. The Historical Society of Carroll County located there owes its birth, in large part, to the love for an old home. When it was announced early in 1939 that the property at 206 E. Main Street was to be sold, the people learned

that a filling station would be happy to demolish and replace it. This aroused the spirit of those who knew what an important part the Sellman House had played in local history.

They knew that this sturdy Flemish-bond brick house had been built in 1807 by Jacob Sherman on ground purchased from the William Winchester family, founder of Westminster. They knew that Sherman presented it to his daughter, Eve, married to David Shriver, surveyor, superintendent of the Reisterstown Turnpike. They knew that this home had once belonged to John Fisher, cashier of the Union National Bank and that from him it passed to George Jones, who deeded it to his sister, Katherine Jones Shellman, widow of the first burgess of Westminster, Col. James M. Shellman, architect of the Carroll County Court House. They knew that on July 19, 1864, the home served as overnight headquarters for Gen. Bradley T Johnson of the Confederate Army. They all remembered that from the Civil War time on through World War I one of the county's most community-minded citizens lived there. Mary Bostwick Shellman's memory was fittingly preserved when those who cared purchased her home in 1939 to make it the first headquarters of the Historical Society of Carroll County.

The restored Shellman House proudly displays authentic furnishings as well as fine doll and tool collections. Perhaps the most important exhibits in the house, both locally and nationally, is that which deals with the pioneer role played by Carroll County in the Rural Free Delivery. To Edwin W. Shriver of Westminster goes the credit for planning the original route and the mail carrying wagon, after receiving authorization from the U. S. Post Office Department. The new "post office on wheels" left Westminster for its inaugural trip on April 3, 1899. Subsequently, Mr. Shriver visited many other states to help extend the system. This became known nationally as "The Carroll County Plan".

A companion building across the street from the Shellman House houses the library and other museum exhibits. No admission fee is charged for those facilities of the Society. Of special interest is a booklet, "Memories of Westminster 1764-1964", (price: 50¢) since Carroll County was once a part of Prince George's and their history is also ours. The buildings are open only on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. The Society's famed luncheon is available on Mondays from 11-2.

The nearby Carroll County Farm Museum (admission: \$1.25) provides 140 acres under cultivation as a late 19th century farm. Special programs held in the period from April to October. Highlight of the season is the show of agricultural steam equipment which attracts national attention.

We highly recommend a drive up to Westminster some weekend.

■ Paul T. Lanham

CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS

The Society wishes to acknowledge contributions from the following members which have been received since the last issue of News and Notes.

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph C. Longridge
Mrs. Arthur H. Seidenspinner
Mrs. R. Lee Van Horn
Mr. & Mrs. John M. Walton, Sr.
Dr. & Mrs. Bryan P. Warren

THE COUNTY SEAT, THE NEW OFFICE BUILDING AND THE BUCK HOUSE

Many people in Prince George's County were pleased to learn recently that an agreement on the location of the much needed County office building has been reached between County officials and the Town Board of Upper Marlboro. The general location is that of the Buck property which is behind St. Mary's R. C. Church.

It is good to know that the developers at Largo, seeking to enhance the value and development of their property, lost out on this one. Having to run around the County to locate a particular government service is bad enough as it is. Further decentralization would have confused the situation further.

On the other hand we are distressed to learn that the Buck House will join the fate of many of its other past contemporaries of Upper Marlboro and become a parking lot. This structure is one of the few remaining Greek Revival houses in the County. There are many appropriate uses to which it could be put. Among other things, it has been suggested that it be utilized as an official reception center for the County. Certainly there is no other place in the town which can meet this need now or in the foreseeable future.

Considering that both Prince George's County and the Town of Upper Marlboro are over 250 years old, there is little evidence of this past heritage to be seen in the town today. Parking lots and flimsy commercial buildings are mostly what we have to show our visitors. At the present rate, in a very few years there will be nothing to distinguish it from any other small town of the early 20th century.

Most of the destruction of our heritage in other parts of the county has been the work of somewhat greedy developers who in most instances are not native to the local scene. Conversely, it is hard to understand why the piecemeal destruction of Upper Marlboro has been primarily a local matter.

Hopefully the County Executive and the County Council will give the Prince George's County Historical and Cultural Trust their support in the Trust's desire to retain the Buck House to be enjoyed by future generations.

___ F. S. D.

end of Vol. II, No. 1

News and Notes From

The PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FEBRUARY 1974 Vol. II, No. 2

MARCH MEETING

The first meeting of the Spring season will be held at 2 PM on Saturday, March 9, 1974 at Montpelier (Rt. 197, West of Balto.-Wash. Parkway. Laurel). Our speaker will be Alan K. Virta, whose topic will be "The Prince George's Slave Revolt - 1739". Based upon original research in the letter books of Stephen Bordley of Annapolis and the proceedings of the County Court, this incident occurred on the plantation of the Widow Brooke near Cheltenham.

Mr. Virta is a graduate student in the University of Maryland and a member of the Society. He resides in Landover Estates, Hyattsville.

Mrs. Margaret Cook's presentation on "The Early Road System of Prince George's County", previously set for march, has been scheduled for the April meeting because of illness. We wish Mrs. Cook a rapid recovery.

ST. GEORGE'S DAY DINNER

The St. George's Day Dinner commemorating the 278th anniversary of Prince George's County will be held on Tuesday, April 23, 1974 at the Center of Adult Education, University of Maryland.

Invitations will be in the mail by mid-March. Tables will be for six persons each and members are encouraged to make up parties for the occasion.

Mrs. Jean Speicher of Laurel is Chairman.

MARYLAND HOUSE AND GARDEN TOUR

The 37th Annual House and Garden Pilgrimage will commence on Saturday, April 27th. The areas scheduled for 1974 are as follows: Charles County (Apr. 27), Anne Arundel County (Apr. 28), Northern Baltimore County and Carroll County (Apr. 30), Washington County (May 1), St. George's Road, North Roland Park (May 2), Cecil County (May 3), Talbot County (May 4), and Worcester County (May 5). The Chesapeake Bay cruise to Oxford on the Eastern Shore will be on May 11th.

Tickets for each tour are \$7.00 each. The water cruise tickets are \$15.00 each including lunch and Oxford land tour. Tour books giving full information on the houses in each tour will be available after March 1st (\$1. each) from the Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage, 600 W. Chesapeake Avenue, Baltimore 212-4. (301) 821-6933.

A DAY AT THE RACES

On Saturday, March 2, 1974 why not have lunch and spend the afternoon at the Bowie Race Course? This program will be for the benefit of the restoration fund for the Belair Racing Stable. The tickets are \$6.50 and they give admission to the Clubhouse, buffet luncheon, a program and reserved seat. Luncheon is served from 11:30 AM and post time is 1:00 PM.

These special tickets must be bought ahead of time. Information and tickets may be had by calling Mrs. Kay Mayhew at 262-8692. Your support is urged for this benefit which is the major source of funds for the Belair Stable Museum.

POSTSCRIPT ON CAPT. BOWIE

In the preceding issue of this periodical, Mr. Paul T. Lanham provided a thumbnail sketch of the exploits of the fearless Capt. Walter Bowie, who was killed near Rockville, Montgomery County, after abandonment of plans to abduct Governor Augustus W. Bradford and hold him for war prisoner exchange and who was buried at Willow Grove, opposite Holy Trinity Church in Collington.

A recent visit to the Willow Grove family cemetery showed it to have been savagely vandalized. Strange to report, Capt. Bowie's gravestone seems not to have been destroyed, but taken away, and the possibility exists that it is now stored somewhere in someone's cellar and may some day turn up on a dump or alongside a country road. The upright, conventional headstone had been photographed in place and bore the inscription, "In Memory of Walter Bowie (Captain C.S.A.). Born June 27, 1837. Killed near Rockville Md., Oct'r 7, 1864. Aged 27 years. A noble son, true friend, and brave soldier – Gaddess-Balto."

A rather unfriendly but undoubtedly accurate account of the death of Capt. Bowie, at the “Battle of Rickett’s Run”, is contained in a gem of a 63-page booklet written in 1962 by the late Harold B. Stabler of Montgomery County, entitled Some Recollections, Anecdotes, and Tales of Old Times. About 30 copies of the second printing of the booklet are still available and may be obtained by sending \$1.50 to Mr. Richard H. Farquhar, Ashton, Md. 20702.

(Mr. Stabler was a veteran telephone company staff member, which reinforces the observation recently made by Director P. William Filby of the Maryland Historical Society that telephone company employment seems to encourage the production of historians, e.g., James C. Wilfong, Jr., Edwin W. Beitsell (St. Mary’s County), Joseph H. Cromwell (Baltimore County), and Harold B. Stabler.)

■ John C. Brennan

LITERARY MAP OF BALTIMORE

Ten copies of a rather droll and whimsical, but highly informative, “Literary Map of Baltimore, the Almost-Athens of the Upper South”, autographed by author John McGrain (who gave a slide presentation Old Mills before our Society a year ago), have been obtained for resale to those of our members who want them at \$1. They will be available at the next meeting.

BOWIE HERITAGE DAY

Please note on your calendars that the Annual Bowie Heritage Day will be held on Sunday, May 19, 1974 at Belair Mansion and the Belair Stable. The Society has been invited to present an exhibit again this year.

FOUR SEASONS IN MARYLAND

Art and antiques shows bring the Winter season to a close as the first of the local house tours opens in Baltimore. Highlight of the month will be the Maryland Day celebration at St. Mary’s City.

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| March 15-17 | <u>21st ANNUAL WICOMICO ART LEAGUE SHOW</u> . Civic Center, Salisbury. Contact: Mrs. Kenneth McGrath, 705 Alvin Ave., Salisbury. Tel: (301) 742-7980. |
| March 16-17 | <u>20th ANNUAL ANTIQUE GUN SHOW</u> . Largest in the Nation. Fifth regiment Armory, Baltimore. Contact: Raymond Geddes, Jr.’ 503 Overbrook Rd., Baltimore. Tel: (301) 377-6583. |
| March 22-24 | <u>22nd ANNUAL SOROPTIMIST CLUB ANTIQUES SHOW</u> . National Guard Armory, Annapolis. Contact: Mrs. Richard Blaul, 56 Maryland Ave., Annapolis. Tel: (301) 268-5401. |
| March 24 | <u>3rd ANNUAL HISTORIC HARBOR HOUSE TOUR</u> . Beginning at 802 S. Broadway, Baltimore. Contact: Mrs. Jean Crolius, Historical Federal Hill – Fells Point Fund, Inc., 802 S. Broadway, Baltimore. Tel: (301) 267-5517. |
| March 24 | <u>MARYLAND DAY CELEBRATION</u> . Pomp, Pageantry, and symbolic legislative session in State House of 1676, St. Mary’s City. Contact: Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, P.O. Box 301, Waldorf. Tel: (301) 267-5517. |

■ Elizabeth Ticknor

THE WOODYARD

(Located near the intersection of Rosaryville Road and Woodyard Road about ½ mile from His Lordship's Kindness, The Woodyard was burned in the 1870s. This archeological site, one of the most significant in the State, is now threatened by development. The following account was prepared by John M. Walton, Jr. for purposes of nominating the site to the National Register of Historic Places. Mr. Walton will address the May meeting of the Society on "Col. Henry Darnall and His Lordship's Kindness." - Ed.)

The site of the former Woodyard Plantation is of particular importance in the early history of Prince George's County and of Maryland as a whole. It is significant not only for its close association with several important personages, but also for its ties to both the history of industry and the history of the Revolution in Prince George's County and in Maryland.

The site itself is located on a portion of a 1900 acre tract of land called "Darnall's Delight" which was patented under that title on June 28, 1683 for one Col. Henry Darnall. Darnall was a blood relative of the proprietary family and it was he who sometime between 1683 and 1711 built a 56 ½ by 34 ½ foot two story brick mansion, which soon came to be called "The Woodyard". On the tract. During his lifetime, Colonel Darnall amassed a sizeable fortune which included at his death in 1711 more than 27,000 acres of land in Prince George's County alone. He also served the colony of Maryland in several important political posts. Some of the offices which he held were Deputy Governor (May 1, 1684 - August 1, 1689). Chancellor of Keeper of the Great Seal (January 26, 1683 – August 1, 1689), and His Lordship's Agent and Receiver General (May 8, 1684 – June 17, 1711). Darnall in fact maintained possession of the proprietary seal until his death on June 17, 1711. The site of the Woodyard Plantation thus represents the location of the home of one of early colonial Maryland's most politically and financially powerful men. However, more than that its hidden remains buried beneath the ground contain invaluable information about one of the earliest, large plantations, if not the earliest, in Prince George's County. The construction of Colonel Darnall's brick mansion, as stated above, came sometime between 1683 and 1711, but it is more likely that it was built during the early part of this twenty-eight period – perhaps even before the foundation of Prince George's County itself. In Colonel Darnall's will, probated in 1711, he refers to the mansion in Prince George's County on the tract "Darnall's Delight" as "the house I formerly Dwelt in Commonly Called Ye Woodyard."¹

Woodyard Plantation remained in the hands of the Darnalls until 1734 when it was sold to William Black, a London merchant. The succeeding twenty some years saw the property change hands several times, but in January of 1756 "Darnall's Delight" with its brick mansion was sold to another important figure in Maryland's early history. His name was Stephen West. Woodyard Plantation became West's residence and remained such until his death in the 1780s. West was a member of the Provincial Council and it was he who at least a year before the Declaration of Independence foresaw the need for gathering together arms and ammunition to aid the colonials in a struggle against the British. Stephen West felt so strongly about this need that he hired a gunsmith out of his own funds to manufacture weapons. Even before July 4, 1776 West was engaged in the manufacture of arms and their subsequent sale to the colonial militia. He continued those activities throughout the Revolution. Whether or not West's manufacture of armaments took place at "The Woodyard" is not known at this time. However, it remains a distinct possibility, for in his diary on May 21, 1777 Ebenezer Hazard described a number of other industries that were going on at West's home, "The Woodyard".

Mr. West has here a manufactory of Linen both flaxen and hempen, Cottons & Wollens; a small Brewery, Distillery, etc. Among his machines for manufacturing is one for spinning Cotton, in which one wheel turns 22 spindles & as many Threads are spun at once. . ."²

¹ Wills. Liber 13, folios 223 – 232. Maryland Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland.

² Maryland Historical Magazine. Vol. 46, p. 50.

It is a known fact, though, that West sold clothing items manufactures at “The Woodyard” to the patriot forces during the American Revolution.

It was also probably Stephen West who added an enormous two story brick wing measuring 116 ½ by 34 ½ feet to the original brick mansion built by Colonel Darnall. This large brick wing is first mentioned in 1798 Federal District Tax and it perhaps served as part of Stephen West’s industrial complex at “The Woodyard” during the 1770s and 80s.

After Stephen West’s death in the 1780s “The Woodyard” remained in the hands of the West family for nearly a hundred years. It was during its ownership by General Stephen West, son of the first mentioned Stephen West, that “The Woodyard” became the headquarters of the famous or perhaps infamous Brigadier General William H. Winder. Winder used the mansion house as his headquarters during the War of 1812 on July 23, 1814, just a month and a day before his ignoble retreat at the Battle of Bladensburg.

The site of the Woodyard Plantation thus holds a strong potential for being one of the most extraordinarily important archeological sites in all of Maryland.

■ John M. Walton, Jr.

REUBEN LE GRAND JOHNSTON

Our inquiry last month about the artist, Reuben LeGrand Johnston, brought a prompt reply from Mrs. R. Lee Van Horn (Elizabeth Parker), who as a child living in Beltsville remembered the Johnstons as nearby neighbors who gave her cookies. A telephone call to Miss Ellen P. Emack of Hyattsville, whose family were longtime residents of Beltsville, brought further information. Johnston moved to Beltsville just before the turn of the century and later resided in Riverdale for a few years prior to his death in 1918.

LeGrand Johnston had four sons who served in the military forces during World War I. Another son, Charles Croxall Johnston (1895-1909) was killed in a hunting accident and is buried beside his father in the cemetery of St. John’s Church, Beltsville. The widow of his elder son is now living in California.

Further information is needed on the location of any of Johnston’s paintings. Please contact the Society’s president at 277-0711. Our sincere thanks to Mrs. Van Horn and Miss Emack for putting us on the proper track.

TROLLEY CARS AND LAUREL

One of the 176 things you probably didn’t know about Maryland, included in a new booklet by Edgar Heyl that is available from the Maryland Historical Society (I Didn’t Know That!, #3.), is the fact that the first streetcar line in the U. S. began operating in Baltimore in 1885 and then folded in about a year. In a vaguely related way, and with many thanks to streetcar buff Col. John E. Merriken of Simpsonville, Howard County, we can reveal another bit of early unsuccessful streetcar history that took place in Prince George’s County just eight years after Baltimore’s pioneering and short-lived effort.

Toward the close of 1893, in Laurel, about a mile of streetcar track was put down from the principal intersection of Main Street and the Washington Boulevard southward along what is now Route 1 to a point opposite Congressman Barnes Compton’s home, “The Lawn”, now the site of Frank’s Hardware. The project was undertaken by the Washington-Baltimore Turnpike and tramway Company, nicknamed the boulevard Line, and Laurel was chosen as the scene of initial construction because it was half-way between Washington and Baltimore. Under the aegis of Edmund Sexton of Washington, prominent railway construction contractor, this

ambitious enterprise would include not only some forth miles of electric line tracks, but also a parallel roadway for carriages, presumably for the benefit of people who suffered from trolley car mal-de-mere, as well as sidewalks. The 1893-4 newspaper accounts that Col. Merriken has dug up state that about 200 men feverishly put down the mile of Laurel trackage toward the end of 1893, and then suddenly, as the new year dawned, abruptly did a disappearing act. The explanation was that the temporary track evidently had been laid, not for bona fide streetcar use but as busy-work to keep alive the terms of a franchise. The tracks must have stayed in place for quite a while, because the project was again activated for discussion and consideration about two years later by a succeeding company – which went bankrupt in 1898. Strange to say, none of the old-timers in Laurel, including Judge Ogle Marbury who died recently, have or had any recollection of any of the events recited above or of ever having heard them mentioned.

Trolley tracks did, of course, eventually extend from Washington to Laurel via another route, and the service between the Treasury Building and the trolley station that now serves as a tavern diagonally across from St. Phillip's Episcopal Church on Main Street, continued uninterruptedly from 1902 until 1925.

Several Laurel septuagenarians can remember seeing construction start on a spindly trestle across the Patuxent chasm that would have taken Washington streetcars northward from the Laurel terminus on to Annapolis Junction. At Annapolis Junction, once a bustling transportation center that now doesn't even have a ghost to permit qualification as a ghost town, streetcars from Ellicott City, which was served by Baltimore trolleys, would, it was planned. Complete the hookup between the two metropolises. If information received by word of mouth from several self-appointed authorities is correct, there could have been through-car service from Washington to Baltimore, for the reason that Washington trolleys used tracks the same width as the coal-burning railroads, whereas genteel Baltimore built its tracks to accommodate the wheel gauge of buggies and carriages. Trolley tracks were never laid from either Laurel or Ellicott City to Annapolis Junction.

On October 22, 1904, at 6 a.m., the brakes on streetcar No. 406, failed as she careened, rattled, undulated, pulsed, and clanged helplessly toward the end of the line at Laurel, and, upon leaving the tracks, the vehicle hurtled down into the Patuxent River gorge fatally injuring the conductor. What is extraordinary and contemporaneous about this accident is that, 69 years later, in January 1973, it was learned from our County's affable Clerk of the Court, W. Waverly Webb, that he and his mother, en route from Hyattsville, were aboard a trolley that followed the few No. 406, and that he still clearly recalls the scene and the excitement that prevailed on that long ago day in the somnambulant 1904 village of Laurel.

■ John C. Brennan

RECENT MARYLAND BOOKS

William Vans Murray, Federalist Diplomat. By Peter P. Hill (Syracuse University Press. 1971. PP 241. \$8.50)

Professor Peter P. Hill's latest contribution to the library of international diplomacy is a biographical study of one man's efforts to avert open conflict between the United States and France, toward the end of the eighteenth century when France and England were wrangling for influence in the United States.

In this absorbing account, Hill reconstructs the political life of statesman William Vans Murray.

Murray was born in Cambridge, Maryland, in 1760. After having obtained a classical education, he went to London in 1784 to study law. Returning to Maryland in 1787, he engaged in private law practice which was soon interrupted by his election to the Maryland House of Delegates. In 1790 he was elected to Congress as a Federalist. He was appointed Minister to the Netherlands by George Washington in 1797, and was made envoy to France by John Adams in 1799.

On September 30, 1800, the convention that was signed in Paris and ended the threatened hostilities, between the United States and France, was mainly the work of Mr. Murray. It is this period of his life in which historian Hill examines values, personalities, social ideals, and political tactics of the “Adams Federalist” segment of the party – a faction frowned upon by the hierarchy of the Federalist leadership.

In American history William Vans Murray’s name as a national figure is relatively obscure, except perhaps, among specialists in diplomatic history, yet in retrospect, it can be viewed as a dramatic accomplishment that he served John Adams’ policy of peace when most members of the Federalist party favored war. Murray listened to the peace overtures of France which he personally shaped, certified, and presented to President Adams. As a result of Adams’ favorable response, Murray’s name as peace-maker was established.

Professor Hill is to be commended for the carefully researched historical accuracy and eminent readability of this work. Readers interested in Maryland political history will find the eighteenth century Eastern Shore background, the setting of Murray’s early life and career in this state, particularly enlightening.

■ Elizabeth Ticknor

FUNDING FOR CAROUSEL AND SURRETT HOUSE

We were pleased to note in the public press that the Prince George’s County Planning Board has approved funding for the Chesapeake Beach carousel and Surratt House projects, subject to County Council approval.

About \$70,000 has been set aside for the purchase and removal of the carousel to the County. Commissioner Robert Crawley indicated that “we will still need funds for the repair and refurbishing of the carousel and we are looking for help from the County citizens and groups.”

Of the \$80,000 earmarked for the Surratt House, \$60,000 will match funds appropriated by the State of Maryland last year, and the total will be used for restoration. The balance will be used for architectural and engineering costs. The monies to be used for these two projects are from prior years’ fund balances in the park fund.

Our heartiest congratulations to the Planning Board.

LANDMARK DECISION IN MT. MORIAH CHURCH CASE

The Maryland Court of Appeals has reversed a lower court decision, thereby preventing Anne Arundel County from going ahead with its controversial plans to tear down the 100-year-old Mt. Moriah AME Church in Annapolis for a parking lot.

Judge Wilson K. Barnes’ opinion overturned the lower court’s decision that historic zoning is the same as other zoning in which a county is not subject to a municipal ordinance. Barnes said that if historic districts are to be effective in preserving neighborhoods, their preservation requirements must be abided by “by everyone, whether a private citizen or a governmental body. In short, the historically or architecturally valuable building is just as much lost by destruction by a public body as it would be by a private owner”.

Mt. Moriah Church was built in 1874 by a congregation organized in 1799 by free blacks in the age of slavery. It is a fine example of small-scale Victorian gothic ecclesiastical architecture and it is on the National Register of Historic Places.

SOCIETY AWARDS PROPOSAL

The Committee on Awards composed of Mrs. Felix Cristofane and Dr. Otho T. Beall, Jr. has prepared a report which will be presented for consideration and approval of the membership at the march meeting.

With the thought in mind that recognition is long overdue for the major contributions being made toward preserving the County's heritage, the report contains the following major points.

1. That the Society should honor persons or groups making a significant contribution in such areas as education, literary endeavor and preservation in relationship to the dissemination and preservation of the historical and cultural heritage of the County.
2. Candidates may be nominated by any member of the Society or by any person or group.
3. Selections will be made by a committee composed of the officers and directors of the Society and three at-large members elected by the Society from among the membership.
4. The awards will be announced at the annual dinner of the Society to be held on St. George's Day (April 23rd).

Should the final report of the committee be approved at the March meeting, members should be prepared to nominate the at-large members of the selection committee as well as submit nominees for consideration of the committee.

TO CALVERT COUNTY

For the first time in over 100 years (and more), Lanham is without a Lanham. Last month our good friend and past president, Paul T. Lanham, crossed to the other side of the Patuxent River and became a resident of Calvert County. Joining Shirley and Paul in their home at Holland Cliffs is Shirley's mother, Mrs. Milton (Ann) Pyle, formerly of College Park.

Prompted by the plans of the State Highway Administration to put a road through his property, Paul decided to retreat to the country. However, we are happy to say that he plans to maintain his usual active interest in the programs of the Society.

The Lanhams may be addressed at P.O. Box 371-I, Huntingtown, Maryland 20639. (Tel: 301-535-2862).

end of Vol. II, No 2

News and Notes From

The PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MARCH 1974 Vol. II, No. 3

APRIL MEETING CANCELLED

Because of conflict with the holiday season, the April meeting will not be held. When making up the original schedule of meetings, we did not realize that this meeting would fall on the Easter weekend when most people are busy planning for family gatherings. Our speaker, Mrs. Margaret Cook, has kindly consented to give her talk on "The Early Road System of Prince George's County" at one of our early meetings in the Fall.

ST. GEORGE'S DAY DINNER – APRIL 23RD

Plans are well under way for the Society's first annual St. George's Day Dinner to be held at the Adult Education Center, University of Maryland, on Tuesday, April 23, 1974.

Although the early response has been good, we have not heard from many of you. Members are encouraged to send in their reservations promptly in order that arrangements may be made for our guarantee. Jean Speicher and her committee have planned what promises to be a very enjoyable evening.

The main feature of the dinner program will be the presentation of the St. George's Day Awards, honoring individuals and organizations which have made a major contribution toward the dissemination and preservation of the heritage of Prince George's County. The awards were established by action of the membership at the March meeting.

GIFTS TO THE SOCIETY

The speaker at our meeting last June, Col. Abell A. Norris, Jr. very kindly presented the Society with a hand painted coat-of-arms of the Snowden family. This was followed in October by one for the Waring family. At the March meeting, Col. Norris came forth with a third coat-of-arms, that of the Brooke family.

We welcome these fine paintings to our collection and we are indebted to Col. Norris for his generosity. Col. Norris resides in Rockville and is Governor of the Society of the Colonial Wars in the District of Columbia.

PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

For a variety of reasons this current issue of News and Notes is behind schedule. We hope to catch up in the very near future. Although we are lagging behind at present, a full twelve issues are guaranteed to our members in 1974.

FOUR SEASONS IN MARYLAND

We are thankful that the gasoline crisis now seems to be at an end. Now that Spring is here, go out and enjoy the house and garden tours as well as that old Maryland tradition, the point-to-point races.

- April 7 21ST ANNUAL HORSE AND PONY SHOW. Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship.
Contact: League of Maryland Horsemens, Inc., P.O. Box 2554, Baltimore. Tel: 828-6921
- April 13 64TH ANNUAL MY LADY'S MANOR HUNT RACE MEET. Traditional Maryland point-to-point steeplechase, Monkton. Contact: Col. John E. Rossell, Jr., White Hall, tel: 821-5440
- April 14-
May 3 10TH ANNUAL JURIED ART EXHIBITION. Maryland regional artists
Contact: Academy of the Arts, South and Harrison Streets, Easton. Tel: 822-0455
- April 20 72ND ANNUAL GRAND NATIONAL HUNT RACE MEET. Traditional Spring steeplechase in the magnificent Maryland hunt country. Western Run Valley, Butler. Contact: Walter W. Brewster, Longnecker Rd., Glyndon. Tel: 727-1700.

- April 20 16TH ANNUAL DAY IN OXFORD. Tour of this quaint Eastern Shore village. Contact: Mrs. Robert T. Valliant, Sr., Morris St., Oxford. Tel: 226-5469
- April 27-7 4TH ANNUAL SPRING ANTIQUES SHOW AND SALE. St. John's Episcopal Church, Broad Creek. Benefit for the restoration fund. Contact: Mrs. Orva Heissenbuttel, 6213 Joyce Dr., Camp Springs. Tel: 449-5372
- April 26 -28 5TH ANNUAL ANTIQUES SHOW AND SALE. National Guard Armory, Frederick. Contact: Mrs. Elizabeth Peters, 101 Record St., Frederick. Tel: 742-7781
- April 27 78TH ANNUAL MARYLAND HUNT CUP RACE. One of the most challenging and difficult of the steeplechase events, located in the Maryland hunt country, Worthington Valley, Glyndon. Contact: Charles G. Fenwick, Glyndon. Tel: 833-4188
- April 27 7TH ANNUAL TOWSONTOWN SPRING FESTIVAL. Art exhibits, antique show, performances, refreshments. Contact: Hilda Wilson, 409 York Rd., Towson. Tel: 825-9023.
- April 27 CHARLES COUNTY TOUR. 37TH ANNUAL MARYLAND HOUSE AND GARDEN TOUR. Contact: Mrs. Wallace Brooks, Pilgrimage Headquarters, 600 West Chesapeake Ave., Baltimore. Tel: 821-6933.
- April 28 ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY TOUR. 37TH ANNUAL MARYLAND HOUSE AND GARDEN PILGRIMAGE. For information see previous entry.

THE MUIRKIRK IRON MINES AND THE 1940 WPA MARYLAND GUIDEBOOK

A spotlight has recently been focused upon a unique storehouse of American history through publication of The Dream and the Deal, a book that details the 1935-43 Governmental effort to provide work for unemployed writers and calls renewed attention to the unusual readability of the histories, one for each state, that resulted from the project. Book buffs like James C. Wilfong, Jr., have long made it a hobby to buy up these WPA Guidebooks, some of which now command six to eight times their original \$3 cost, and, having accumulated a complete set, to dispose of them and start all over again. The Maryland Guidebook is available in reprinted form for \$25, but book enthusiasts prefer the original 1940 print, preferably with dust jacket, which, can still be spotted on dealer's shelves at \$15 or \$20. (The 1937 Washington, D.C., Guidebook, consisting of 1141 pages and weighing five pounds, would likely be the second most desirable reference volume for a Maryland history buff to own.)

Exciting to all Marylanders should be the announcement recently made by the State Bicentennial Commission in Annapolis that it intends to update and republish the thirty-four-year-old Maryland WPA Guidebook, and one is tempted to ponder whether an ambition of this magnitude can possibly be realized by July 4, 1976, or even by October 19, 1981, the anniversary of Cornwallis's surrender at Yorktown.

All human beings, careful and conscientious history writers included, sometimes make mistakes, and the 1940 Guidebook authors and compilers seem to have exhibited a bit of their human frailty in what they had to say about the Muirkirk Iron Mines located on Route 1 a few miles south of Laurel. The book recites that "Muirkirk . . . was named for Muirkirk, Scotland by the Scots who in 1747 built an iron furnace here." The account also asserts that the iron works "supplied cannon balls to the Federal Army during the Civil War and later began the production of gun carriages and car wheels." Now first, with respect to the 1747 date, it was a longtime frustrating problem to try to visualize how at a time when there existed only manpower, horsepower, and

waterpower, pig iron could be produced in quantity at Muirkirk in the absence of any river or stream to provide energy to activate the bellows or forge as well as to permit barges to haul away the dead weight final product in the direction of a port or processing center. A definitive solution to these mysteries was ultimately provided by the erudite Frank F. White, Jr., Archivist at the Hall of Records, who was good enough to search the original Guidebook work papers and verify that the 1747 date should have been 1847. So much for the bafflement flowing from a simple typographical error!

The statement that cannon and cannon balls were manufactured at sleepy little Muirkirk during the period 1861-65 (plus gun carriages and railroad car wheels later on) seemed open to question, for the reason that none of the several accounts of Confederate General Bradley T. Johnson's sweep through Maryland in July 1864 (Captain George M. Emack of Beltsville was a member of the General's staff) mentioned any armaments plants that should be or were rendered inoperative during the raid that ended at Beltsville. Inquiry made to the Office of the Chief of Military History of the U.S. Army failed to confirm this armaments-manufacturing allegation, which has been widely reprinted, and the late Miss Susie C. Beall, Grande Dame of Beltsville history, having herself never heard of any iron manufacturing plant at Muirkirk, undertook to query old-tim Muirkirkians – with completely negative results. The late Thomas Mitchell, nonagenarian of Laurel who died about two years ago and who for thirty years worked for and with Charles E. Coffin, a latter day owner of the iron mines, was most emphatic in his denial that any manufacturing activities ever went on there. Mr. Mitchell was equally insistent in denying the frequently seen-and-heard report that the Snowdens conducted mining operations at Muirkirk.)

An authoritative, if unsensational, statement on the Muirkirk mines is to be found in the biography (possibly the autobiography) of Representative Charles Edwin Coffin contained in the Biographical Directory of the U. S. Congress. The account relates that Congressman Coffin was born in Boston in 1841, moved to Maryland in 1863, settled in Muirkirk, “took charge of the ironworks erected by the Ellicotts in 1847, and conducted by the same . . . engaged in the manufacture of charcoal pig iron, and subsequently became the owner of the Muirkirk blast furnaces . . . died in Muirkirk . . . 1912 . . . internment (with the members of his family) in St. John's Church Cemetery, Beltsville, Md.”

The ever-resourceful Frederick S. De Marr has unearthed and made available a well-written and documented paper done by a Maryland University attendee in 1935 on the Muirkirk Iron Works, and this keen-eyed student was sharp enough to spot and quote an unindexed sentence in Passano's 1901 History of Maryland which explains that the Muirkirk Furnace was “modeled after a furnace at Muirkirk, Scotland”. This supplies a better reason for the naming of the place than the shallow one quoted above from the WPA Guidebook and is immeasurably superior to another encountered – which had a Scot named Muir working at the mines every day including Sunday, because the mines served as his church or kirk, they came to be known as a Muir Kirk. (Incidentally, the Ellicotts were not Scots, they were of English ancestry.)

It will be interesting, when the Bicentennial edition of the Guidebook is published, to compare its write-up of Muirkirk with that which appeared in 1940. Also worthy of noting will be the height to which the original \$3 price for the Maryland Guide has ascended since the days of Franklin D. Roosevelt and whether, even on a non-profit basis, the volume can again be put out at a popular, affordable figure.

John C. Brennan

NEW MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY

The following new members were elected at the March meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society held at Montpelier.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>TOWN</u>	<u>SPONSOR</u>
Mrs. Catherine P. Terry	Mitchelville	Mr. De Marr
Mr. & Mrs. Eugene A. Courser	Upper Marlboro	Mr. Lanham
Col. & Mrs. Harry E. Hasslinger	College Park	Mr. De Marr
Mr. Lloyd Knox	Hyattsville	Mrs. Knox (Lois Har
Mr. Stanleigh R. Bowers	Hyattsville	Mr. De Marr
Miss Betty Wynne	Washington, D.C.	Mr. Lanham
Miss Leila C. Rogers	Laurel	Mrs. Musgrave

VIRGINIA BICENTENNIAL HAPPENINGS

Marylanders could well take note of the activities being planned by our Northern Virginia neighbors as a part of the upcoming Bicentennial. Not only are they planning, but they are DOING.

An article in the public press last month enumerated the following projects currently under way in the City of Alexandria.

- The City is restoring the Greek Revival Lyceum, a building part museum, part library, part lecture hall, as Northern Virginia's Bicentennial Center. Vice Mayor Mitchell says the Lyceum restoration will cost about \$1 million. (Can we in Prince George's say and do the same?)
- The historic Fitzhugh Lee House, once occupied by John L. Lewis, is being restored by the Virginia Trust for Historic Preservation at a cost of approximately \$250,000.
- Approximately \$750,000 is being spent on the restoration of the Lloyd house and its gardens.
- Gadsby's Tavern, where George Washington often dined, is also being restored. Two weeks ago the City Council appropriated \$1 million for the work, which eventually will give the city both a small museum and a functioning tavern.
- The Carlyle House, which dates from the 1740s and which served as military headquarters during the French and Indian War, is being restored at a cost of \$2.5 million.
- Restoration of the Bank of Virginia Building, the commonwealth's first bank, will cost another \$1 million.
- About \$750,000 has been spent on new brick sidewalks, Colonial post lamps, and 350 trees, for what the city calls "The Gadsby Tavern Streetscape." A strip of planting has been added to Washington Street, and the overhead telephone lines and wires of Old Town Alexandria are being put underground.

RECENT MARYLAND BOOKS

The Life of Benjamin Banneker. By Silvio A. Bedini (Charles Scribner's Sons – New York, 1972. pp. 434)

Indeed there was no original intention of creating a biography of this magnitude when Silvio A. Bedini, Deputy Director of the National Museum of History and Technology of the Smithsonian Institution, began research into the life of Benjamin Banneker, a Baltimore County, Maryland free Negro who lived from 1731 to 1806.

Students, historians, archivists, and private citizens, motivated by the popular interest in the cause of antislavery and the role of the American Negro in our nation's history had already collected various miscellaneous documents relating to this elusive figure. However, these materials had not been correlated, and many of the written accounts seemed to be based more upon legend and surmise than historical evidence. Reference verification was badly needed, especially in connection with seemingly exaggerated claims of Banneker's contributions to society.

Responding to this need for organization and research of the accumulated materials, historian Bedini undertook the task of producing an account of Banneker's attainments in proper focus in order to evaluate their importance in comparison with those of other early American men of science. Armed with what must have been pounds of out-of-context bits and pieces of previously collected data, the project of bringing historical and literary order out of chaos was launched. Soon though, spurred on by the momentum of his personal involvement, he was in the process of structuring this lengthy biographical narrative.

Essentially, Bedini has focused upon three separate aspects of Banneker's life: Home and family, work and study, and fulfillment and final years.

Banneker was in no sense an underprivileged child, as he was the son of free Negro parents with considerable land holdings. His grandmother, originally an indentured servant from England, taught him to read. Robert Banneker, his father who was a prosperous farmer, sent his son to school where he learned the rudiments of an elementary education. From this point on, his knowledge came through his own reading and study. Most of his books were loaned by his neighbor, George Ellicott, who became his close friend and the one who brought about the major fulfillment of his life. Here it is noteworthy that Banneker, through a self-taught mathematician and scientist, enjoyed the respect and recognition of Thomas Jefferson, as well as many outstanding scholars of the day. There could hardly be better testimony to the excellent quality of his educational background, even though he was without the diploma and blessings of an academic institution.

Banneker was probably best remembered for the part he played in the commission of three that planned the city of Washington, D.C., when he was appointed to the commission upon Jefferson's suggestion to President Washington. With his Quaker friend, George Ellicott, Banneker chose the sites for the White House, the Capital, and several other important government buildings. When the French Commission head resigned taking the printed plans with him, Banneker and Ellicott were able to reconstruct them from memory.

A major highlight of Banneker's literary experience was the publication of "Banneker's Almanac" which was distributed to Maryland and the neighboring states in the late eighteenth century. It contained, in addition to ephemeris, lists of moveable feasts, a calendar of eclipses, essays, and many commentaries on social problems by Banneker. The success of the publication was particularly remarkable in view of the immense competition in this field at the time.

There is a poignant human interest portion of the book which deals with Banneker's preoccupation with the context of his own dreams, several of which are recorded in great detail. These dreams are written not in the clinical style of a textbook on psychoanalysis, but rather as individual narratives, exciting to read, yet simple and moving in their sincerity. The dreams seem to have an allegorical flavor, punctuated by a healthy respect for the hellfire and brimstone, yet there is no speculation whatsoever by Bedini as to the possible significance in relation to Banneker's personality.

Worth of special mention is a most attractive series of illustrations including several sharp and clear reproductions of pages from Banneker's Almanac, his household account books, and one of his letters written in the elegant penmanship which characterized his handwriting whether ledger or text.

A comprehensive bibliography is included in the book as well as a complete section devoted entirely to the text of various letters, documents, and manuscripts which are privately owned or otherwise unavailable to the public. Here we find texts of Jefferson's letters relative to the Federal Survey. These letters clearly establish Jefferson's recognition of Banneker's important role in this project.

Bedini had the historian's chronic problem of selection, which must have been an agonizing business for him. There was obviously more material assembled than could be constructively used, as well as great imbalance between the trite and the meaningful. Had he included everything, the result would have been a shapeless mass with the clear perspective which was his aim totally obscured.

The overall effect is that Bedini has managed to achieve a narrative line which sustains interest without having strayed from the essential facts. Wandering and speculating must have presented temptations because of the somewhat folk-hero character of Banneker's life. However, in his attempt to separate fact from legend, the author has emerged with the conclusion that Banneker was an impressive human being whose contributions, though modest, were dramatic in their development. It is pointed out in the book's preface that perhaps the most important lesson to be learned from the subject's life is that a thirst for knowledge is not limited to youth, and that the learning process recognized no barriers of race or creed.

Mr. Bedini has succeeded admirably in his project which so easily could have been a somewhat tedious exercise in research. Instead, he has made not only a significant contribution to historians, students, and other specialists currently involved in American Negro studies, but also to those of us who have a special interest in the social history of the Free State.

Elizabeth Ticknor

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION

We are pleased to report that the permanent Prince George's County Bicentennial Commission has been organized and is holding meetings concerning plans for the Bicentennial.

Under the leadership of Chairman Harry L. Durity of Upper Marlboro. The Commission's members are: Edward R. Beisler, Sr., Mitchellville; Linda Calahan, Camp Springs; Mrs. Susanna Cristofane, Bladensburg; Leonard C. Faber, Bowie; Willie Mae Henson, Oxon Hill; J. Edward Houck, Washington, D.C.; James E. Kern, College Park; Mrs. Nadine Leavitt, Bowie; Ernest Peterkin, Camp Springs; Mrs. Victor Romanello, Beltsville; Mrs. Chester Ward, College Park; and Oliver C. Zinsmeister, Greenbelt. Serving as ex-officio members are Mrs. Margaret Cook, Forest Heights; Miss Elizabeth Hage, Laurel and Mrs. Orva Heissenbuttel, Camp Springs. Mrs. Joan Beck serves as Executive Secretary of the Commission.

Members having questions or suggestions are invited to contact members of the Commission. The Chairman and the Executive Secretary may be reached by calling the Court House, 627-3000.

NEW OFFICERS FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S TRUST

The officers of Prince George's Cultural and Historical trust for 1974 are: Chairman, Frank F. White, Jr., Riverdale; Vice Chairman, Mrs. Margaret Cook, Forest Heights; and Secretary-Treasurer, Mrs. John M. Walton, Sr., Clinton.

COUNTY OFFICIALS – 1839

The Maryland Pocket Annual, printed by John Hughes in Annapolis, was a predecessor of the Maryland Manual, edited by Frank F. White, Jr. of the Hall of Records.

The following listing of Prince George's County officials is for the year 1839.

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

--

Sheriff – Samuel Fowler

JUDGES OF THE COUNTY COURT

John Stephen, c.j. Clement Dorsey Edmund Kay

Clerk – Aquila Beall

Sessions – 4th Monday in April and 3rd Monday in November

CORONERS

Samuel Coe Thomas Bruce Samuel Duvall
William Hall Elisha Perry Judson W. McKnew

Surveyor – James Robinson

ORPHANS' COURT

John Brooks Joseph B. Hill T. I. Marshall

Register of Wills – Philemon Chew

LEVY COURT

Wm. L. Marbury Josias Young Benj. Duvall
Robert D. Sewall Nathan Waters of H. Joseph H. Wilson
John L. Turner

JUSTICES OF THE DISTRICT COURTS

For the 1st District – Truman Belt, Richard B. Walker, Joseph I. Jones
For the 2nd District – Robert Wright, Hanson Penn, John Bowie
For the 3rd District – Thomas Bruce, Leonard H. Chew, Wm. G. Carter
For the 4th District – Wm. N. Dorsett, Thos. Holland, Wm. Hall
For the 5th District – Richard L. Jenkins, J. W. Ward, Benedict I. Semmes
For the 6th District – Notley Maddox, Thos. Berry, Henry Tolson

TOBACCO INSPECTORS

At Queen Anne – Wm. B. Mullikin, Samuel Peach
At Upper Marlboro – Nathaniel M. McGregor, E. D. Furguson
At Nottingham – Henry M. Chew
At Piscataway – Horatio Dyer
At Bladensburg – Richard M. Warring, Howerton Cross

At Magruder's – James Baden

NOTARY PUBLIC

At Upper Marlboro – John Brookes

Edith Bagot

CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS

The Society wishes to acknowledge a contribution from the following member which has been received since the last issue of News and Notes.

Forrest D. Bowie

PRINCE GEORGE'S COMMITTEE – MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

The Prince George's County Committee of the Maryland Historic Trust was recently reorganized with Mrs. Bryan P. Warren of Laurel as Chairman; Mrs. John M. Walton, Sr. of Clinton, Vice Chairman; Mrs. Edward Raffetto of Croom, Secretary; and Mrs. Felix Cristofane of Bladensburg, Treasurer. Other members are John C. Brennan, Laurel; Hugh C. Clagett, Upper Marlboro; John A. Giannetti, College Park; Mrs. Orva Heissenbittel, Camp Springs; Mrs. Genella McGinniss, Camp Springs; Ellis J. Parker, III, Upper Marlboro; Mrs. Robert Sasscer, Upper Marlboro; John M. Walton, Sr., Clinton; and Frank F. White, Jr. of Riverdale Heights.

Forrest D. Bowie of Upper Marlboro serves as a Trustee of the Maryland Historic Trust from Prince George's County.

end of Vol. II, No 3

News and Notes From

The PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

APRIL 1974 Vol. II, No. 4

MAY MEETING

Our next meeting will be held on Saturday, May 11, 1974 at Montpelier, located on Rt. 197 in Laurel.

By popular request of the membership, instead of a formal speaker, we will have a "Show and Tell" session. Bring along some item from your collection and share it with us.

COMING IN JUNE

Please note Saturday, June 8th on your calendar. Our last meeting of the Spring season will feature John H. Walton, Jr. who will speak on "Henry Darnall III and 'His Lordship's Kindness'". The meeting will be held at "His Lordship's Kindness" where members of the Society will be guests of Mr. and Mrs. John M. Walton, Sr.

DEDICATION OF THOMAS SIM LEE MEMORIAL

All of the members of the Prince George's County Historical Society and their families are invited to the dedication of a marker at the grave of Thomas Sim Lee, Second Governor of the State of Maryland, in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, approximately one mile west of Upper Marlboro on Route #408, Old Marlboro Pike, on Memorial Day, Monday, May 27, 1974, at 2:00 p.m. The marker is being placed by four DAR chapters of our County: Belle Air Chapter of Bowie, Brigadier General Rezin Beall Chapter of Laurel, Marlborough Towne Chapter of Upper Marlboro and Toaping Castle Chapter of Hyattsville.

INSTITUTIONAL CONTRIBUTORS

The Society gratefully acknowledges contributions from the following business organizations:

Heritage Realty, Inc. Crofton Plaza Shopping Center, Crofton, MD.

Mike Casey Realty 5195 Silver Hill Road, Suitland, MD.

Stan Ridgeway Real Estate, Inc. 3605 St. Barnabas Road, Washington, D.C.

FOUR SEASONS IN MARYLAND

- May 3 CECIL COUNTY TOUR. 37TH ANNUAL MARYLAND HOUSE AND GARDEN PILGRIMAGE. Contact: Mrs. Wallace Brooks, Pilgrimage Headquarters, 600 West Chesapeake Ave., Baltimore, tel: 821-6933.
- May 4 TALBOT COUNTY TOUR. 37TH ANNUAL MARYLAND HOUSE AND GARDEN PILGRIMAGE. For information, see above entry on Cecil County.
- May 4 5TH ANNUAL FLOWER AND PLANT MARKET. Hanging Baskets, bedding flowers, vegetable plants, antiques, music, tours, etc. The Homestead. Contact: Mrs. James M. Shriver, Jr., Rt. 1, Westminster, tel: 848-6536.
- May 4-5 6TH ANNUAL SPRING TOUR OF HARVEY SMITH LADEW TOPIARY GARDENS. Pleasant Valley Gardens, Monkton, also May 11-12. Contact: Mr. Walter Preston, Box 58, Monkton, tel: 692-6069.
- May 4-5 7TH ANNUAL REVOLUTIONARY WAR DAYS. The First Maryland Regiment music and marching highlights demonstrating craftsmen's skills at Smallwood's Retreat, Smallwood State Park. Contact: Tri-County for Southern Maryland, P.O. Box 301, Waldorf, Tel: 645-2593.
- May 5 7TH ANNUAL WINDSOR HILLS' HOME AND GARDEN TOUR. A cross section of life styles with an arts and crafts sale, flea market, and handwork boutique. Contact: Richard Elder, 2707 Lawina Rd., Baltimore, tel: 542-8785.
- May 5 WORCESTER COUNTY TOUR. 37TH ANNUAL MARYLAND HOUSE AND GARDEN PILGRIMAGE. For information, see above entry on Cecil County.

- May 11 16TH ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE WATER TOURS. House and Garden Pilgrimage boat tours from Baltimore. Contact Pilgrimage Headquarters, 600 W. Chesapeake Ave., Baltimore, tel: 821-6933.
- May 12 6TH ANNUAL FEDERAL HILL CELEBRATION. A community festival featuring music, an art show, and many events involving local people. Contact: Mary Frances Garland, 1407 William St., Baltimore, tel: 752-3392.
- May 18-19 18TH CENTURY PUBLIC FAIR. Charlestown, Cecil County. Reenactment of fair authorized by General Assembly in 1784. Crafts, displays, contests.
- May 19 34TH ANNUAL MEMORIAL DAY SERVICES AND PARADE. York Rd., Baltimore. Contact: Milton J. Sloan, 904 Evesham Ave., Baltimore, tel: 342-5400, ext. 1235.
- May 19 6TH ANNUAL BOWIE HERITAGE DAY. Art, crafts and special events at the Belair Mansion and Stable Museum. Contact: Mrs. G.E. Baltz, 12217 Fleming Lane, Bowie, tel: 262-0695.
- May 25-27 7TH ANNUAL STEAM-UP AND MILITIA DAYS. American Revolutionary music, musketry, and battle tactics demonstrations, Carroll County Farm Museum. Contact: Museum, Rt. No. 6, Box 412, Westminster, tel: 848-7775.

ST. GEORGE'S DAY AWARDS PRESENTED AT DINNER

The St. George's Day Awards, instituted by the Prince George's County Historical Society to recognize persons or organizations who have made a significant contribution towards the preservation of our County's heritage were presented at the St. George's Day dinner held at the Center of Adult Education, University of Maryland, on April 23rd.

The seven honored were:

Mrs. Louise Joyner Heinton, author of the authoritative and highly readable County History for the period 1696 to 1800. Mrs. Heinton's 1972 hardback, with 223 information-packed pages, is entitled Prince George's Heritage and was published by the Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore.

Mrs. Helen W. Brown, for her persistence and success in her self-appointed task of indexing and cataloguing the scattered genealogical data lodged in the Hall of Records and elsewhere, and thus to earn the undying gratitude of historians and genealogical researchers and scholars until the end of time. One of Mrs. Brown's compendiums, entitled Marriage Records of Prince George's County, Maryland 1777-1873., has been published by the Genealogical Publishing Company of Baltimore.

Mrs. Susanna K. Cristofane, for her enthusiastic and indefatigable service in heading up and working on innumerable commissions, boards and committees, all of whose aims were directed toward the preservation of the historical lore and prime historical sites of Prince George's County. Mrs. Cristofane saved the Market Masters' House of Bladensburg from destruction and was an organizing member of this Society in the early 1950's.

James C. Wilfong, Jr., former president of the Society, whose popular and readable columns in metropolitan and county newspapers over the past 25 years have built up a phenomenal following and interest in things

historical and architectural. Much of the architectural nostalgia that exists in the County today is directly attributable to Mr. Wilfong's prolific and engaging literary output.

Forrest D. Bowie, former president of the Society, for his lifelong interest and early recognition of the importance of historic preservation as well as for his unobtrusive but effective efforts in this County and State going back to the renowned WPA survey of Historic Buildings in the 1930s. The citation accompanying Mr. Bowie's award expressed gratification that he is now serving as a Trustee from Prince George's County on Maryland's Supreme Court of Historic Preservation, the State Historical Trust in Annapolis.

To the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, in the person of Commissioner Robert A. Crawley who was present to receive the award for their pioneer efforts in preservation which brought the acquisition of such outstanding structures as "Riversdale", "Montpelier", "Marietta", and the Surratt House.

To the Alice Ferguson Foundation of Accokeek, in the person of Executive Director G. Bernard Wareham who was present to receive the award, for the pioneering archaeology and research on the aboriginal and colonial settlers of the Piscataway section of Prince George's County and for the resultant authoritative pamphlets and booklets prepared especially for the use of schoolchildren.

Greetings were extended to the assemblage on the occasion of the 278th anniversary of the founding of Prince George's County by Samuel Hopkins, President of the Maryland Historical Society, and County Executive William Gullett.

Society President Frederick S. De Marr read the award citations and was assisted in the presentations by Mr. Gullett, County Council Chairman Francis B. Francois, County Council Members, Winfield M. Kelly, Jr. and Lucille B. Potts, Lt. Gen. (ret.) C. E. Hutchins, Jr., Executive Director of the Maryland Bicentennial Commission; Dr. Arthur Dorman, Chairman of the Prince George's County Delegation in the General Assembly, and Paul T. Lanham, past president to the Prince George's County Historical Society.

Other guests present were Mrs. Helen Delich Bentley, Chairman of the Federal Maritime Commission; P. William Filby, Director of the Maryland Historical Society; Harry Durity, Chairman of the County Bicentennial Commission; and Frank White, Jr., Chairman of the County Historical and Cultural Trust.

The success of the evening could be attributed to the efficient organization of Mrs. Jean Spicer and her committee composed of Mrs. Vera Rollo, John Giannetti, Mrs. Edith Bagot, Col. And Mrs. Samuel Crook, Connie Bagot and Sally Foster. Flower centerpieces for each table were provided by Mrs. Paul Kea and Mrs. Arthur Seidenspinner.

The dinner proved to be the highlight of the Society's current season and will be repeated as a regular event in future years.

NATIONAL REGISTER

The latest addition to the National Register of Historic Places in Prince George's County is St. John's Church, Broad Creek. The fourth building on this site, St. John's was erected in 1767-68 and is an important example of the 18th century architectural style. It is the parish church of King George's (Piscataway) Parish, one of the 30 original parishes established in the province by act of the General Assembly in 1693.

At present St. John's is in the process of restoration and it is also in the throes of a zoning battle. Proposed nearby commercial zoning not only presents aesthetic problems, but potential flooding problems from the nearby creek as well.

RECENT MARYLAND BOOKS

Wye Oak: The History of a Great Tree. By Dickson J. Preston. (Cambridge, Maryland: Tidewater Publishers, 1972. Pp. viii, 136. \$3.50)

Dickson J. Preston has written the "biography" of a famous American Tree: The Wye Oak.

In this compact paperback, volume the entire history of this tree, now over 400 years old, is related. Preston speculates on the falling of the acorn – sometime between 1540 and 1560 – and carries us through to the present time by tracing ownership of the property on which the tree stands in Talbot County on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

Throughout the latter part of the narrative Preston dramatizes the theme of the Wye Oak's fierce struggle for survival when it was practically doomed because of neglect, internal decay, hazards of the elements, and mutilation resulting from road building activity in the immediate area.

Due to vigorous efforts of a conservation minded citizenry, along with such organized groups as the Queen Anne's Garden Club, this great landmark is alive and well today, maintained by the State as an important natural heritage of Maryland.

For all amateur naturalists, as well as visitors who are already acquainted with this famous tree, A. Aubrey Bodine's handsome and well selected photographs composed in all seasons considerably add to the appeal of the book.

Mr. Preston is a veteran newspaper reporter who was formerly based in Washington, D.C. Now he and Mrs. Preston live in Talbot County in their retreat known as "Bearskin Cove" where he is currently researching and recording historic happenings of Maryland' Eastern Shore.

Maryland Cookbook. (Department of Economic and Community Development. \$1.)

This is Maryland's first official seafood cookbook which contains 68 basic simple-to-prepare recipes, some of which are new while others are variations on traditional recipes. The book incorporates many of the new "convenience foods" as part of their ingredients.

The 36-page book is printed in color and contains almost 40 color pictures. The cover is of a special soil-resistant plastic.

The cookbook can be ordered by mail by sending \$1., plus four-cents State sales tax for Maryland residents. To obtain a copy, write: "Maryland Cookbook", 2525 Riva Road, Annapolis, Maryland 21401. Checks should be made payable to "Maryland Cookbook."

Elizabeth Ticknow

BUCK HOUSE REVISITED

In this publication last fall it was indicated that the Buck House in Upper Marlboro was a potential victim of the proposed new County office Building. We are pleased to report that County Executive William Gullett has included \$100,000 for its preservation in the proposed budget recently sent to the County Council. This amount is contingent upon reports as to feasibility of restoration and the structure's authenticity. Possible uses for this Greek Revival structure would be as a reception center for County visitors and as Headquarters for the Historical and Cultural Trust.

MONTGOMERY HOHNS: MARYLAND COLLEGE TEACHER OF THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY

(The following article by Prof. Theodore Bissell appeared in the Maryland Magazine of the University of Maryland Alumni Association for March-April 1964.)

Shortly before the Civil War, the Maryland Agricultural College, which later merged into the University of Maryland, opened near Bladensburg, Prince George's County. The war period and following years were very difficult for the new school – it was hard to keep either a student body or faculty. One of the numerous teachers in the early days was Montgomery Johns, a graduate in medicine, a man of some skill in writing, and also of some financial means. In fifteen years he held five different teaching positions.

Montgomery was the son of Henry Van Dyke Johns, native of New Castle, Delaware, and Lavinia (Montgomery) Johns. The elder Johns was an Episcopal clergyman, and held churches in Washington, D.C., Rochester, N.Y., Cincinnati, Ohio, Frederick, Maryland, and finally Baltimore. Other members of the family were prominent in politics (Delaware) and church (Virginia). Montgomery was born in Washington, D.C., during his father's ministry at Trinity Church in that city, 1827 to 1830. Henry was also chaplain of the Senate while his brother Kensey, Jr., was a member of the Congress from Delaware. Thus, the boy had the advantage of a cultural and cosmopolitan rearing. I have no information on his early schooling.

Montgomery was a graduate of Princeton University, or College of New Jersey as it was then known, Class of 1847. This happened to be the year of the first centennial of the College and members of the class were awarded diplomas (A. B. degree) during elaborate celebration. Montgomery Johns was listed as being from Maryland, and James Montgomery Johns, who may have been a close cousin, as from Delaware.

The 1850 Census of Baltimore lists Johns as a teacher. About 1851 he entered the University of Maryland Medical School and in 1853 received the M.D. degree. The same year there was published in Philadelphia, under the authorship of Montgomery Johns, "A clinical phrase book; in English and German, containing the usual questions and answers employed in examining and prescribing for patients – with an English-German and German-English pronouncing lexicon, grammatical appendix, table of idioms, . . ." This book in octavo, 16 cm. high and containing 308 pages indicates a thorough knowledge of both medicine and the German language. In the preface the author explains the need for such a work among the many immigrants in the cities along the Atlantic Coast and further proposes the cultural value of learning German. "These materials . . . have accumulated during the daily attendance of instruction in the hospital connected with the University of Maryland . . . My mode being Racamier's plan." Rabbi Abraham Rice of Baltimore aided in translations. "To my brothers who have kindly shared with me every portion of the work, and the labor of reading the proofs, I am deeply indebted."

After receiving his degree Montgomery was Professor of Natural Science at Baltimore City College for about a year. Another source lists him as Professor of Chemistry at Maryland Institute. In 1857, apparently for a short time only, he was Professor of the Practice of Medicine at Iowa College.

On September 16, 1857, Johns married Salome Lydia Diffenderfer of Baltimore who lived 1834 to 1914.

At this time Johns took the chair of Mathematics and Natural History at Washington College, Chestertown and continued there until 1860. The George Avery Bunting Library has several papers relating to him. First is a letter from Johns, about a former student, Joseph T. Burchinal, and an accompanying letter to Burchinal suggesting to him several openings as a teacher; second, a record of Johns' resignation as of June 18, 1860, in the minutes of the Visitors and Governors of Washington College; third, a program of the Commencement exercises held at Chestertown, August 6 to 8, 1860, wherein Dr. Johns is listed as addressing the Mount Vernon Literary Society; and fourth, a letter, Lockerman to Burchinal, which mentions Johns. As Johns in his letter about Burchinal states he taught this man "more than two years", it is concluded that Johns went to Washington College late in 1857 or early the next year as successor to one John Marshall Colby who had resigned in September, 1857.

The name of M. Johns, age 32, Teacher, is recorded in the 1860 Census taken at Chestertown on June 11. With him are his wife, Salome, age 28, and two children, Anne, age 2; and Lavinia, age 8/12.

Montgomery Johns' incumbency at Maryland Agricultural College began in the second year of its operation, 1860, and continued several years. His name is listed in five successive circulars or catalogs of the College: 1860 to 1865, except 1862 when apparently none was issued, with the lengthy title "Professor of the Science of Agriculture, Chemistry, Geology and Minerology". Johns shortened this to prof. Chemistry" in the Burchinal letter which was written from the "Laboratory of Agricultural College, Md. Ap. 25, 1862." At the same time he was teaching anatomy at Georgetown Medical College.

A Maryland Agricultural College student, Thomas L. Lockerman, writing May 11, 1861 to his friend Joseph Burchinal in Chestertown tells that Dr. Johns has treated him for strained muscles, incurred "tusseling in the passage". He quoted the doctor as saying he might "be troubled with it for a year, or maybe not more than a week" – a noncommittal diagnosis or possible an effort to allay the boy's concern. Lockerman also told his friend of soldiers stationed along the road from Washington to the Relay House, "a bad state of affairs". On short rations some soldiers begged food at the College.

Floride Clemson, a visitor at commencement in 1864, found Dr. Johns' lecture on 'Literary Culture' or something of the sort, awfully dull and long". And too she was piqued when "Mrs. And Dr. Johns" raised a report that she was engaged to Mr. Onderdonk, President of the College. Miss Clemson was understandably more interested in the younger and unattached men on the campus and nearby.

There was an exciting event in July, 1864 when a force of Confederates under General Bradley T. Johnson, cavalry leader and a native Marylander, invaded Maryland Agricultural College. Johnson was working under direction of Gen. Jubal A. Early whose force passed through Rockville and threatened Washington, July 11 and 12. The Washington Republican in an unsigned article entitled "Disloyalty Unmasked" bitterly accused the M. A. C. faculty – President Onderdonk, Dr. Wharton, Dr. Johns, Mrs. Johns and "Miss Bettie" in particular – of befriending and lavishly entertaining the Rebels and of scorning the Union investigators who came later. The Baltimore American (July 22, 1864) reprinted the story and demanded an investigation and purge of the college by State authorities. Dr. Johns replied to the American (July 27) with an account of the passage of troops and of his own actions.

Johns said the rebels stopped on the turnpike in front of Rossburg (presently called the Rosborough Inn) ten minutes, then proceeding toward Bladensburg, where met by (Union) skirmishers at "Kenedy's Hill" and turned westward through the campus. Some of the Confederates stopped at the Johns' home and demanded food. Johns was taken to see the leader, Gen. Johnson, "his distant Kinsman". Altogether the troops, stated to five hundred in number, were on the campus "about forty-five minutes." Johns denies disloyalty on his part or that

of any other member of the faculty (he names Onderdonk, Wharton, Glover, Lorina, and Mrs. Johns) and asks that judgment be withheld until an investigation, already started by Union authorities, be finished. He referred to his career as a teacher and stated he had lived in Maryland “above suspicion” for 16 years, apparently referring to the beginning of the family’s residence in Baltimore when he himself was 20 years of age.

Testimony from several local residents filed with the Union military authorities within two weeks (Baker-Turner File 4091, National Archives) overwhelmingly labeled Johns and his associates as Confederate sympathizers and aides, and apparently they were. It was a time of strong feeling on both sides.

(Continued)

BELL TOWER INSCRIPTIONS – ST. BARNABAS’ CHURCH – LEELAND

County churches of the 17th and 18th centuries in Maryland were quite plain in comparison with the ecclesiastical structures built in the more affluent cities of the colonies and in England. The bell tower was a victim of economy during this period. Of all the churches constructed in colonial Maryland, it is believed that St. Andrew’s near Leonardstown, St. Mary’s County. Was the only exception to this practice. Its architect came up with a unique, yet primitive, adaptation of the Palladian façade with twin towers. None of the 18th century churches in Prince George’s County had towers. (Those at St. Thomas’ Croome and Sacred Heart, White March, are late 19th century additions.)

When a church obtained a bell, it was common practice to hang it from a nearby tree. In some instances a small coupola was added to the roof. A more widespread procedure was the building of a free-standing bell tower in the church yard. An example of this practice is the bell tower at St. Barnabas’ Church, Leeland. The tablets located in the Tower tell the story of the tower and its donors.

This Belfry was Erected in the Year 1930/ In Memory of/ John Contee Fairfax/ Eleventh Baron of Cameron/ and of/ Mary Kirby Fairfax/ His wife/ and of/ Caroline Snowden Sanders/ His Mother.

In Memory of/ Albert Kirby Fairfax/Twelfth Baron of Cameron/ in the Peerage of Scotland/ Born June 23, 1870/ Died Oct. 4, 1939.

In Memory of/ Mary Cecilia Fairfax/ 1871-1935/ Daughter of/ John Contee Fairfax/ and/ Mary Kirby Fairfax/ Dedicated December 28, 1935.

Although a member of the British House of Lords, John Contee Fairfax spent most of his life in Prince George’s County. He was a practicing physician and he resided at “Worthampton.” His mother, Caroline Eliza Snowden, was the daughter of Richard Snowden of “Oaklands”.

end of Vol. II, No 4

News and Notes From

The PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MAY 1974 Vol. II, No. 5

JUNE MEETING

The membership of the Society will be the guests id Mr. and Mrs. John M. Walton, Sr. at 'His Lordship's Kindness' on Saturday, June 8, 1974. Our speaker will be John M. Walton, Jr. whose topic will be "Henry Darnall III and 'His Lordship's Kindness'".

A separate notice giving details and a reply card is enclosed with this mailing.

NEW MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY

The following were elected to membership at the April meeting:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>SPONSOR</u>
Mrs. Patricia C. Ahearn	Oxon Hill	Mr. De Marr
David D. Duvall	Upper Marlboro	Mr. De Marr
Willard E. Entwisle	Forestville	Mr. Lanham
Mrs. J. Alston Fisher	Upper Marlboro	Mr. De Marr
J. Douglas Hallock	College Park	Mr. De Marr
Sara M. Lumpkins	Seabrook	Col. Crook
Mrs. Lester E. Mallonee	Laurel	Mr. Brennan

BOWIE HERITAGE DAY

On Sunday, May 18, 1974 the Society participated in the 6th Annual Bowie Heritage Day held at the Belair Mansion and Stable. An exhibit on the founding of the Maryland Agricultural College was presented by Paul T. Lanham and Fred De Marr.

A highlight of the afternoon was the presentation to the City of Bowie of the official certificate placing the Belair Stables on the National Register of Historic Places. A plaque was placed on the Stable to commemorate the occasion.

MITCHELL CEMETERY

Past President Paul Lanham reports that the stones in the John Mitchell cemetery have been replaced in their proper locations. Some time ago the Society expressed concern to the Levitt Organization about the condition of this site.

The property is now owned by the City of Bowie and the restoration work was accomplished by the city. Our thanks go to the Mayor and Council for their concern and action in this matter.

MONTGOMERY JOHNS: MARYLAND COLLEGE TEACHER OF THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY. (continued)

An important fact of Johns' tenure at the Maryland Agricultural College is that he invested \$6,800 in the bonds of the College, dated July 1, 1860, thus showing confidence in the new endeavor. But the College could not

redeem the bonds in the allotted five years and instead deeded to Johns on May 6, 1865, 62.5 acres of land, “together with the buildings and improvements thereon erected from the southern edge of the college property of 428 acres, known as the Rossburg Farm. In addition to the surrender bonds Johns paid for the property \$855.15. The bonds were secured by a first mortgage executed to Johns Hopkins and George William Brown of Baltimore and George W. Riggs of Washington, trustees for the holders of the bonds. Dr. John, Register of the College, was appointed attorney for the execution of the deed and James T. Earle signed it as President of the College.

The Johns property, which became known as Homeside or Woodside, had a substantial house which stood until September 1961 (4313 Knox Road). It was built for the professors of the college at the beginning, as a companion to the one on the north side of the campus built for the President. The latter was known in recent years as Gerneaux Hall, first dormitory for coeds of the University of Maryland. The two houses had similarities in construction. A wing was added to the north end of the Johns house which traditionally he used as a classroom dormitory for boarding students of preparatory school age. Mrs. O. E. Baker of College Park, a recent occupant of the house found a blackboard covered with paint and coat pegs on the walls of the wing.

Bearing on the Maryland Agricultural College, Johns transactions are several items in a report of the trustees made in 1864. The College had issued coupon bonds in the amount of \$11,900 which netted \$10,873. This sum must have included Johns’ investment. Second item: the trustees, faced with a debt of over \$40,000 had authorized the sale of about 200 acres of the Rossburg farm “which when effected will leave 228 acres with all buildings on the property”. They added in justification that the remaining area would much exceed the required exceed that required by the charter (50 acres) and be amply sufficient for all purposes of the institution. The area was ample for many years but the sale to Johns did include a building. The report further noted that \$7,351.11 had been spent for the erection of suitable buildings for residences of the president and professors.

One of John’s contemporaries at the Maryland Agricultural College was Townend Glover, “Entomologist of the United States, Professor of Natural History, Botany and Pomology”. Glover played with Johns’ children, according to Anna Hopper Evans, his granddaughter, and later helped one child, Lavinia, and her husband to become established in Baltimore. Glover spent his last years with Lavinia Johns Hopper whom the biographer C. R. Dodge calls Glover’s “adopted daughter”.

On August 17, 1869, Dr. Johns and his wife Salome Lydia Johns deeded, for the sum of \$200, two acres of Woodside farm to James Stewart. Johns marked the corners of the plot with marble stones.

Johns’ most significant work was as teacher in the Medical Department of Georgetown College, District of Columbia, for some nine years in the 1860s. The school was opened in 1851 and grew considerably during the Civil War period with the demand for military surgeons. (1862, 3 graduates; 1865, 20; 1868, 47). Johns’ title was Professor of General Microscopic and Descriptive Anatomy, changed in the last years to Professor of Anatomy, General and Descriptive. He served from September 11, 1861, to June 18, 1870, when he resigned “in a huff”. Lectures were given in the evenings beginning at “5 PM”, Monday through Saturday. Prof. Johns in 1869 was scheduled on Mondays and Wednesdays at 8 PM.

The medical school was located in downtown Washington, first at 12th and F Streets and later at 10th and E Streets, N.W., and Johns may well have used the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad from and to his home at “Woodside”.

In 1868 the medical faculty of eleven men had themselves photographed and presented a copy to Georgetown College. Our picture of Johns is reproduced from this copy.

The Library of Congress has copies of two printed addresses by Johns, “Valedictory, delivered at the commencement of the Medical Department of Georgetown College, March 3, 1862” and “Address – delivered at the opening of Georgetown College, October 1, 1868.” The first has 16 pages, the second 23. The valedictory to graduating students in 1862 is beautifully written as an inspiration to new medical practitioners. Johns emphasizes devotion to one’s chosen profession and the need to build on one’s experiences. Johns pays tribute to one of his teachers, Joseph Roby, at the University of Maryland eleven years before, and reviews his association with the Georgetown students during the past year. He concludes with an admonition against forgetting the teachings of literature, philosophy and religion.

The address given at the opening of school in 1868 is also of an inspirational nature. By sketching the practice of medicine from ancient times to the present Johns stresses the need of dignity, a good appearance, “Kind politeness and polite kindness” to patients, and the compulsion of constantly improving the “science and art of medicine”. Johns looks forward to the instruction to be gained from the large collection of “good and bad medicine and surgery” in the Army Medical Museum assembled in Washington during the “recent American rebellion.”

Each address is prefaced by a letter from students asking for publication of the talk just given, and an apology from Johns on the hasty preparation. This may have been a customary relation between pupil and teacher. The second letter Johns writes from Woodside, his home near the M.A.C. campus.

During the Civil War Johns served as a surgeon in Washington and paid a substitute in lieu of military service, says Mrs. Evans, but we find no record of this.

In 1866 he was granted an honorary M.D. degree by the University of Pennsylvania and an honorary Ph.D. degree by Princeton University.

Montgomery Johns died July 28, 1871 at Bladensburg (College Park) and was buried in Greenmount Cemetery, Baltimore.

Theodore L. Bissell

(For an account of student life on the campus of the Maryland Agricultural College see Prof. Bissell’s “A College Boy’s Letter of 1861.” In News and Notes, Vol. I, No. 4, p. 28 (June 1973). Unfortunately we neglected to include the copious notes on this article which contain extensive biographical information. If any of our readers are interested we would be pleased to send them a copy of the original article containing the notes. Ed.)

INSTITUTIONAL CONTRIBUTORS

The Society wishes to acknowledge contributions from the following business organizations:

Anath J. Bright Associates, Realtors, 6001 Baltimore Blvd., Riverdale
Carrollton Realty, Inc. P.O. Box 151, Lanham

COL. SUIT – BUILDER OF A CASTLE . . . AND A RAILROAD.

In recent months a story appeared in the public press concerning a castle in Berkeley Springs, West Virginia which was built by a native Prince Georgian for his young bride. Politician, businessman, agriculturalist and railroad builder, Col. Samuel Taylor Suit was one of the colorful figures of the County during the 19th century.

Suit was born in Bladensburg in 1830. His father, Fielder Suit, was an innkeeper who later operated a hotel in Upper Marlboro during the Civil War. The youngster refused a college education and went West to Iowa. After a few years he migrated to Louisville, Kentucky where he worked in a distillery and married a local girl. Suit later built his own distillery and was one of the most successful men in the business. His title, "Colonel", was of the honorary Kentucky variety.

After the early death of his wife, Suit went to New York City where he eventually gained a seat on the Stock Exchange. He married Aurelia Wilmarth, daughter of the president of the Home Life Insurance Company of New York. Their only child, Arthur P. Suit (1862 – 1919), was destined to become Sheriff of Prince George's County. (Married four times, several of Arthur Suit's 12 children and their families still live in the County.)

Because of poor health, Col. Suit returned to his native county in 1865 and bought 800 acres of land to the southeast of Washington and named the estate "Suitland". Surrounded by a park boasting deer, pheasants, two artificial lakes and imported statuary, the large English-style mansion was the scene of extensive entertainment. Presidents Grant and Hayes enjoyed the Colonel's hospitality as did the British Commissioners sent over to settle the Confederate raider Alabama claims against the United States. The English were not only wined and dined, but were treated to a ride to the hounds as well.

The estate had extensive orchards whose produce went to the Washington market and a large distillery was located there as well. While serving as a judge of agricultural exhibits at the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia in 1876, Suit's mansion burned to the ground. Although he continued to live on the property, the Colonel did not rebuild the house. He did build a more direct route from "Suitland" to Washington, Suitland Road, and presented it to the County as a gift.

Suit's second marriage ended in divorce and later the 53 year old Colonel took as his wife in 1883 Rosa Pelham, age 22, the daughter of Congressman Charles Pelham of Alabama. The couple had met at the health spa, Berkeley Springs, and it was here that Samuel Suit built his wife a "cottage" in the form of a castle. (All mansions built at resorts in this period, including those at Newport, Rhode Island were known as "cottages".) Constructed from designs made by A. P. Mullett, architect of the old State, War and Navy Building (now the Executive Office Building) in Washington, the castle was begun in 1885 and was still incomplete at the time of his death in Washington in 1888.

Col. Samuel Taylor Suit's survivors were Rosa and their three young children, Fielder Pelham, Catherine (Lula Kate) and Samuel Taylor, Jr. His wealth was left to the widow and his first son, Arthur, received only \$2,500 under terms of the will. The Colonel was buried at St. Barnabas' Church in Oxon Hill.

(continued)

end of Vol. II, No 5

News and Notes from

The PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL. SOCIETY

JUNE 1974

Vol. II No. 6

PLANNING FOR 1974-1975 PROGRAMS

Our June meeting at "His Lordship's Kindness" was well attended and it proved to be the highlight of our 1973-1974 season. We are deeply indebted to Mr. & Mrs., John M. Walton, Sr. and Mr. & Mrs. John M. Walton, Jr. for their wonderful hospitality on this occasion.

Now that we are in Summer recess until September, planning is under way for our 1974-1975 programs. During the past year we decided to hold some of our meetings at locations other than "Montpelier". In October we met at the Belair Stable in Bowie and our April meeting was in the form of the St. George's Day Dinner at the University of Maryland, followed by the June meeting at "His Lordship's Kindness". We feel that these three meetings greatly enhanced the calibre of our program and stimulated our membership program as well. Therefore we will continue to meet at various locations in the county in the future.

To aid us in our planning we earnestly solicit your suggestions for topics, locations and-speakers. Please drop us a card in order that our program might benefit from your ideas.

NEW MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY

We wish to welcome the following new members who were elected at the June meeting:

NAME	TOWN	SPONSOR
Mrs. Doris M. Bush	Suitland	Mr. Lanham
Capt. & Mrs. R. A. Kotria	Washington	Mr. Brennan
Elizabeth Love	College Park	Mrs. Seidenspinner
Mrs. Rochelle Zapp	Bowie	Mr. Lanham

WASHINGTON POLITICS A DIFFERENT VIEW

The following editorial appeared In the June 1974 issue of History News, the official journal of the American Association for State and Local History. It is reprinted here because we feel' that it presents a sane position on a current Issue which has been overlooked in the tempest which has beset Washington. This matter will affect greatly the future of historical research in this country. If you agree with the thrust of this editorial, why not share your views with your representatives on Capitol Hill?

While the attention of the news media has been focused on the deductibility of President Nixon's gift of his Vice Presidential papers to the National Archives, the House Ways and Means Committee has been considering a variety of new tax reforms. The nature of these reforms is of no little consequence to historical organizations.

The gist of the President's tax problem is a hastily drawn 1969 reform that deprives people of the right to deduct from their taxable income the fair market value of gifts to charitable institutions of things they themselves have created. The creator cannot deduct fair market value; but if he sells or gives the items to another person that person can then deduct full market value. Fair? Not hardly. The reform was an attempt to stop abuses from over-valuation of gifts by dishonest appraisers and taxpayers - primarily in the art world. But its effects have had much more serious consequences in the area of historical manuscripts.

The need for further reform is made clear by a recent report of the Library of Congress that it has not been given a significant manuscript collection since 1969. Many historical associations can make the same report. So what is happening to the manuscripts that once were given? Many are in private and unsatisfactory storage, slowly deteriorating because their creators have no incentive to give them, but have some slim hope they might someday be sold. Others are being sold piece by piece to autograph collectors, leaving important gaps in once well-documented historical records. Still others are being acquired for capital gains by private collectors who will hold them until they can be sold at a profit (or given for a tax deduction the creator couldn't have).

The long and short of it is that the manuscripts are not available to researchers. Nailing the shysters has impaled the whole history profession in the process - a condition that will continue until historical societies either become wealthy enough to buy collections (don't hold your breath) or become active enough to send a clear message to those who will vote on the new tax reforms.

FOUR SEASONS IN MARYLAND

- July 4 7th ANNUAL FAMILY PICNIC DAY. Carroll County Farm Museum, Westminster. Contact: Museum, Rt. #6, Box 412, Westminster, tel: 848-7775.
- July 14 5th ANNUAL OCEAN CITY SEAFOOD FESTIVAL. A Maryland seafood smorgasbord, Ocean City Convention Hall. Contact,: Col. Norman R. Connell, P.O. Box 366, Ocean City. tel: 289-8346.
- July 14 4th ANNUAL JONATHAN HAGER FRONTIER CRAFTS DAY. Frontier crafts demonstrated on lawn of the Hager House, the 1739 frontier home of Hagerstown's founder, Hagerstown City Park. Contact: Washington County Tourism Division, 40 Summit Ave., Hagerstown, tel: 731-0110, ext. 203.
- July 18-21 5th ANNUAL ANTIQUES SHOW AND SALE. Ocean City College, Ocean City, tel: 742-7781
- July 27-28 8th ANNUAL HISTORIC PAGEANTRY. First Maryland Regiment. 18th century military life re-created by the ".Maryland. Line", Fort Fort Frederick State Park, Contact: William L. Brown III, WMPB 67M, Owings Mills, tel: 356-56000

RECENT MARYLAND BOOKS

The-Lighthouses of the Chesapeake. By Robert de Gast. (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973. pp. 173. \$12.50)

Robert de Gast, a native of the Netherlands now a well known photographer-journalist in the United States, has given us this photographic study of the history and development of lighthouses of the Chesapeake from 1800 to present.

The narrative has been organized in the form of an imaginary voyage around the Chesapeake Bay, beginning at Cape Henry, then sailing north on the Western Shore exploring the James, York, Rappahannock, Potomac, and Patuxent Rivers until Havre de Grace is reached. At this point we turn south along the Eastern Shore to Cape Charles.

The author's commentary in the opening text is perceptive and well documented as he traces the history of lighthouses from the first one known in the Port of Alexandria on the Nile Delta in 280 B.C. He continues on, eventually focusing in on lighthouses in the United States. Here we find a brief yet thorough discussion of their architecture, maintenance, development of illuminants, as well as technical detail relative to their operation.

Following this written introduction, the entire "voyage" is represented by a sequence of extraordinary black and white photographs which frequently have a sombre, almost eerie character. The subjects range from lonely lighthouses at dusk, to lighthouses in dazzling sunlight being reflected in clear water. The most imaginative of all though, are the photographs of small portions of lighthouse interiors and appurtenances: a four-step curve in a stairway, a turnbuckle on a tension rod, the diamond-shaped panes and mullions of a lantern.

After our photographic journey, the final 26 pages of the book are devoted to individual histories of the 42 lighthouses which have been destroyed, some by the elements during long periods of disuse, others by planned demolition.

Robert de Gast's book should certainly appeal to those who are interested in the variety of lighthouses that have been built in our local waters. Those still remaining are conveniently listed in the front of the book, along with a map showing the location each one. Fortunately for those who may wish to explore further, most are within a day's drive of the Washington-Baltimore area and could provide several one-day expeditions which might even combine other points of historical interest in the same trip.

In subject matter, this is a book geared to the special interest of lighthouse affectionados, and this is its basic concern. It is extremely valuable as a single source of a great number of facts which are otherwise scattered in all sorts of publications, some not readily accessible. The photographs are magnificent, the text well researched, authoritative and presented in a manner which is vital and dramatic without becoming involved in the romantic mysticism which so frequently characterizes anything written about lighthouses not excluding historical accounts.

Elizabeth Ticknor

THOMAS SIM LEE CEREMONY

The ceremony on Memorial Day honoring Governor Thomas Sim Lee of "Melwood Park" was held at Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Upper Marlboro. State officers of the D.A. R. , members of the Lee family and members of the Maryland Historical Trust, the Prince George's County Historical and Cultural Trust, the Prince George's County Bicentennial Commission and the Prince George's County Historical Society were among those attending.

Presiding was Mrs. Bryan Warren of Laurel, Honorary State Regent of the D.A.R. The arrangements for this very successful program were under the direction of Mrs. Truman Hinton of Hyattsville.

The bronze tablet placed on Governor Lee's grave reads as-follows:

THOMAS SIM LEE/1745-1819/ Clerk of the County Court 1767-1777 Colonel of the Lower Battalion of Militia In Prince George's County 1777/ Member of Council of State 1777-1779/ GOVERNOR of the State of Maryland 1779-1782,-1792-1794/ who by his patriotic zeal was able to-furnish supplies and recruits for the Continental Army/ and his wife Mary DIGGES LEE/ who inspired the women of Maryland to send extra

supplies./ Placed by Belle Aire Chapter/ Brigadier Rezin Beall Chapter/ Marlborough Towne Chapter/ and Toaping Castle Chapter, DAR./ U. S. A. Bicentennial.

CONTRIBUTING MEMBER

The Society wishes to acknowledge a contribution received from the following member:

Henrietta Hill Arthur,

COL. SUIT BUILDER OF A CASTLE:... AND A RAILROAD. (Continued)

Mrs. Suit spent about \$100,000 to complete the castle at Berkeley Springs and thereafter became known for her extravagant parties. During the winter months she lived in luxury at the Berkeley Springs Hotel. After the Colonel's fortune had been spent, some of the furnishings were sold to pay bills. Later she received an inheritance from the Pelham family and went abroad to live for a short period before returning to the castle and more parties. It was at this time that Rosa began spelling her name "Soult".

Once again peniless, Rosa sold the last of the castle furnishings and went to live near Oakland, Maryland. She later moved to Sleepy Creek District of West Virginia and was often fed and clothed by her neighbors. Her son, Samuel, on a visit from St. Louis, was surprised to discover his mother's condition and took her back to Missouri. In the early 1930's Rosa was known to be in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, probably living with her other son, Fielder Pelham Suit. After this all trace was lost of her. (Daughter Luis Kate, who trained as a nurse in Washington, D.C., died while working on a typhoid fever epidemic in West Virginia and is buried at Mahnes Chapel Church in the Sleepy Creek District.)

In 1914 the castle was sold to a bank under foreclosure for a mere \$3,850. Several persons have occupied the structure since then. Its present owner is Walter M. Bird of McLean, Virginia who opened it to the public for an admission fee.

Colonel Samuel Suit maintained an interest in his native Bladensburg over the years and owned the Spa Spring Hotel there which was located on present-day Bladensburg Road about three lots north of the George Washington House. In the tax records of the Town of Bladensburg he had property valued at \$5,250. This included the hotel (\$2,000), a house and lot occupied by William H. Swaim, probably next-door to the hotel; and 35 acres of land (valued at \$35/acre) which was most likely the site of the Spa Spring. Opposite the hotel. The total town tax at 15c per \$100 valuation was \$7.88. The hotel and house were sold after Col. Suit's death, but the 1890 town tax records show his heirs as still owning the acreage.

Samuel T. Suit's interest in railroading touched two of the lines in Prince George's County, He was one of the early movers in the organization of the Chesapeake Beach Railroad. Suit was also an incorporator and President of the Washington City and Point Lookout Railroad Company which was to play a role in the struggle between the Baltimore & Ohio and the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Although the B. & O. first reached Washington in 1835, by 1870 they still did not have adequate connections to Alexandria and the South. An earlier request to extend their line through the City of Washington had been turned down by Congress. The Civil War had earlier circumvented a B. & O. plan to build a line around the District of Columbia from Bladensburg to a Point opposite Alexandria.

After the Civil War ended the B. & O. secured permission for the entrance of a new branch into the city. However in the meantime the Pennsylvania gained control of the Long Bridge over the Potomac River from Congress. The bridge, plus its interest in the new Baltimore & Potomac Railroad (Popes Creek Line), assured

the Pennsylvania of a monopoly on direct freight and passenger runs from Baltimore into the South. The B & O. in 1871 now had the alternative of routing their traffic to the South via Harper's Ferry, West Virginia or of paying high carrying charges for their cars over the Long Bridge to the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Realizing the Possible financial rewards to be 'gained from this struggle, John E. Bowie Samuel T. Suit, Peter G. Grime and L.W.B. Hutchins of Maryland; and Duncan S. Walker of the District of Columbia incorporated the Washington City and Point Lookout Railroad Company on February 24, 1872. One month later the General Assembly authorized them to extend their line beyond Maryland and on January 22, 1873 Congress approved entry of the line into the District of Columbia. They were now legally free to construct a branch line running from Hyattsville, Maryland, to Marbury's Point, D.C., opposite Alexandria. (The Proposed line to Point Lookout would have been 96.7 miles long.) Within four months an agreement was signed with the B. & O. giving them exclusive rights to use the new line for 99 years, renewable forever. In effect a group of influential citizens (Suit et al.) had achieved for the B. & O. something which might have otherwise been denied.

The branch was constructed-between May 1873 and March 1874. In August 1874 the stockholders agreed to sell the Washington City and Point Lookout to the B. & O. for \$20,000 purchase money. The B. & O. would assume the bonded Indebtedness (about \$800,000 for construction) of the road.

About ten trains daily (freight and passenger) operated over this Alexandria Branch to Marbury's Point (Shepherd's Landing). There they were transferred to barges for the ferry trip to Alexandria. By 1890 this ferry service proved too expensive to operate and it was abandoned. In 1904 a satisfactory agreement was finally reached with the Pennsylvania Railroad for the hauling of B. & O. cars.

As a matter of interest, the stations along this branch were Alexandria Junction (Hyattsville), Deanewood (Chesapeake Junction), Uniontown (Anacostia) and Marbury's Point (Shepherd's Landing.) The line is still used as a freight service, as motorists who have been caught in traffic at the grade crossings in Bladensburg and Hyattsville can testify!

As a sidelight to this story of Colonel Samuel Taylor Suit, we would like to share with you a letter written by him just 100 years ago. Considering the current political climate in Maryland and the National Capital we wonder what the reaction would be if this same letter appeared today bearing the name of some prominent politician who had-written to a potential large donor (Col. Suit was the successful candidate in this campaign for State Senator from Prince George's County.)

The
WASHINGTON CITY AND POINT LOOKOUT- RAILROAD CO.
(Baltimore, Washington and Alexandria Branch.)

President's Office

Washington Oct 21st .1873

Thos H., Osburn Esq
My Dear Sir,

I hope you may may get your consent to support, me for the senate. I know in my present condition and situation I can be of more benefit to our county and people than Mr. Clark. I am doing all In the power of mortal man to increase the value of our property. All I want is the endorsement of the people and at least my old school mates. If elected I will then have political power and influence which I do not now possess. "Help me and I will help you" That was the motto of one of our greatest statesmen,

and I repeat it to my old friend and school mate. "Help me and I will help you." Help Frank Duvall also.
Your friend,

S. T. Suit

-- FSD

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Letter. S. T. Suit to Thos. H. Osburn, Esq. October 21, 1873. Collection of F. S. De Marr.
Tax Book for 1875-1890 Corporation of Bladensburg. Courtesy of Mrs. Felix E. Cristofane.
See also: "The Popes Creek Line Baltimore and Potomac Railroad", News and Notes Vol. 1, No. 5. (July 1973)

INSTITUTIONAL CONTRIBUTOR

The Society wishes to acknowledge a contribution from the following business organization:

M. E. Smith, Inc, Realtors 4806 Silver Hill Road, Suitland

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

President: Frederick S. De Marr', 4010 Hamilton St., Hyattsville 20781. 277-9517
Corres. Secretary: Mrs. Frank Bagot, 3510 Longfellow St., Hyattsville 20782 927-3632

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News and Notes from

The PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

JULY 1974

Vol. 11, No. 7

"IN THE MINDS' AND HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE"

Subtitled "Prologue to* the' American Revolution- 1700 - 1774", this
Current exhibit at the National Portrait Gallery of the Smithsonian
Institution will run until November 17, 1974.

At is composed of eleven portraits by John Singleton Copley, America's leading artist of the Colonial Period, and eight works of the eminent Charles Willson Peale. Add to these a liberal sprinkling of canvasses by Sir Joshua Reynolds, John Wollaston, Robert Feke, John Trumbull, Lawrence Sully, Gilbert Stuart, Rembrandt Peale, Benjamin West and others, and it all adds up to one of the finest collections of American portraiture ever

assembled for an exhibit. Two of the most interesting paintings in the group are Benjamin West's "The Cricketeers" and "Abraham Whipple" by Edward Savage.

Public galleries and private owners from America and England provided the items for this "once-in-a-lifetime" showing which is highly recommended to all Society members and their friends.

The National Portrait Gallery (Old Patent Office), located at F Street between 7th 9th Streets, NW Is open seven days a week.

.889

HON. LeROY A. PUMPHREY 1889 -1974

LeRoy A. Pumphrey, a former member of the House of Delegates from Prince George's County, passed away on July 2, 1974. at the age of 85.

Mr. Pumphrey was born in Meadows, now a part of Andrews Air Force Base, and lived in Riverdale at the time of his death. He served 12 years in the House of Delegates and held the posts of Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, Majority Leader and Speaker Pro Tem. A lawyer by profession, Mr. Pumphrey was one of Maryland's best known orators who was constantly on the public speaking circuit.

Mr. Pumphrey was a founding member of the Prince George's County Historical Society.

NATIONAL REGISTER

The latest Prince George's County addition to the National Register of Historic Places is St. Ignatius Roman Catholic Church in Oxon Hill.

St. Ignatius Church is the only surviving example of Queen Anne and Shingle styles of architecture remaining in the Potomac Region of the County.

GOVERNOR'S CONSULTING COMMITTEE ACTION

The Governor's Consulting Committee approved two Prince George's sites at their June meeting to be recommended to the Department of the Interior for inclusion on the National Register. Proposed were the Ammendale Normal Institute near Beltsville and The Woodyard Historic Archeological Site.

The Ammendale Normal Institute, owned by the Christian Brothers, is a very fine brick Victorian structure. The Woodyard nomination, prepared by John M. Walton, Jr., appeared in the February 1974 issue of News and Notes. Unfortunately, the Governor's Committee deferred action on this nomination at their April meeting, supposedly for lack of information on the real significance of the site. Undaunted, John Walton went out and dug up another thirty pages or so of documentary evidence for the Committee. The facts presented verified the importance of The Woodyard as on of the earliest major structures in Prince George's County and as a manufacturing site for clothing and arms used in the-American Revolution.

FOUR SEASONS IN MARYLAND

- August 2-4 9th ANNUAL MARYLAND CLAM FESTIVAL. Steamed and fried clam platters, blessing of the Clam Fleet, Clam Queen contest, Chesapeake Bay cruises, City Dock, Annapolis. Contact: Chamber of Commerce of Greater Annapolis. tel: 268-7676
- August 3 3rd ANNUAL CORN ROAST. Corn roasted in the husk on iron stoves with wood fires, plus a bounty of other food items, including a country store and baked goods. Union Mills Home stead and Mill. Contact: James Shriver, Jr., RD #1, Westminster. tel 848-0536
- August 7 106th ANNUAL JOUSTING TOURNAMENT. St Joseph's Catholic Church Grounds. Contact: Ira A. Shortall, Cordova, tel: 364-5524
- August 9-11 6th ANNUAL BRUNSWICK POTOMAC RIVER FESTIVAL. Small Maryland railroad town displays life on the C&O Canal and the Potomac. Contact: Mary Margrave, .203 Thomas Ave., Frederick, tel: Donald Darr, 834-7500.
- August 18 28th ANNUAL JOUSTING TOURNAMENT. Modern-day knights joust at Horse Range Farm. Contact: Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, Box 301, Waldorf. tel: 645-2693
- August 18 11th ANNUAL HAVRE DE GRACE ART SHOW Tydings Memorial Park. Contact: Gunther D. Hirsch, M.D., 131, S. Union Ave, Havre de Grace. tel: 939-0660.
- August 18 4th ANNUAL JONATHAN HAGER FRONTIER CRAFTS DAY, A blacksmith candle-maker and wool spinner will join members of the First Maryland Regiment to demonstrate everyday life on the American frontier at the Hager House, Hagerstown City Park.

A FIRST FOR ALEXANDRIA!

While most of the rest of the nation is talking about the Bicentennial and how to observe it, nearby Alexandria, Virginia opened the first Bicentennial Visitors' Center on July 11, 1974.

The center is housed in the 1839 Greek Revival Lyceum building which was scheduled for demolition not too many months ago. It was restored with a \$175,000 grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development with a matching amount from the City of Alexandria.

Governor Mills Godwin of Virginia and the national Bicentennial director, John W. Warner, were present for the dedication which launched a 10-day celebration, the first of several planned by Alexandria. The Lyceum will function as a reception center for visitors to Virginia until 1783, the *200th* anniversary of the Treaty of Paris *which* brought the Revolutionary War to a close. Exhibits and information are available on a daily basis.

The Center is but a part of the total effort being exerted by the city with the state and federal governments. Above all, this Center, along with other **restorations and programs** are a product of united local effort.

MARYLAND BOOKS

Charles Willson Peale. By Robert Plate (David McKay Company, Inc., New York: 1967. Pp. 276)

Charles Willson Peale did not regard himself as more than a craftsman. Historians take strong issue with this apparent understatement as Peale has come to be known as one of the earliest Americans to achieve international recognition as a distinguished portrait painter. His subjects include such leading figures as George and Martha Washington, John Hancock, Robert Morris, Nathaniel Greene, Baron von Steuben, Count Rochambeau, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, James Monroe, Andrew Jackson, John Quincy Adams, John C. Calhoun and Henry Clay.

This all started in 1758 when Peale, then only 18, went on a business trip to Norfolk to Purchase Items for his leather shop. While in this city, he had his first exposure to a private collection of oil paintings on canvas. He was very unfavorably impressed. Close observation revealed to Peale's critical eye gross inadequacies in technical and aesthetic quality which he found intolerable. Motivated by a need to prove a point, he returned home to Annapolis, borrowed a coachmaker's paints and brushes and painted a landscape followed soon afterward by a self-portrait. His intention was only to demonstrate to himself that, equipped only with an intuitive sense of harmony and form, plus a steady hand, he could produce a better product than those which he had observed in Norfolk. However, his two initial attempts were so highly regarded by his family and friends that he was immediately encouraged to pursue this field. At this point a long and successful career was launched which spanned over six decades, ending coincidentally, with another self portrait at the age of 81. This was his final painting and is now permanently exhibited in the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia.

In biographer Plate's account one deduces that Peale's life was notable rather for versatility than for real genius in one particular direction, as he was highly accomplished in many trades and professions bringing to each some creative innovation as well as outstanding skill and workmanship. Peale was also a maker of coaches, harness, clocks and watches, and a silversmith; he was a soldier, politician, naturalist, taxidermist, dentist, museum curator and founder. Nevertheless, his fame rests mainly on his achievements as a portrait painter and is partly due to the association of his name with that of George Washington. Since at one time he was the only portrait painter in the colonies, his services were greatly in demand and his practice lucrative.

Included in the book are 16 pages of photographic reproductions of several of Peale's portraits, many subjects having been leaders of America's beginning as a nation in her own right. Readers who wish to explore Peale's life in greater detail will find a comprehensive bibliography of 36 entries at the end of the book.

Author Plate **makes no pretense of presenting a "scholarly analysis"** or an "in-depth probe" for the purposes of reconstructing Peale's life and its influence on American political life, social history, or art. Instead, he gives us a simple and sincere work about a complicated and unusual person who lived life to its fullest and had a lot of fun doing many things - some of which would have been quite mundane in the hands of a less creative practitioner. The book's greatest value, perhaps, is its introduction to a fascinating person, Charles Willson Peale, best described by the biographer as a "Jack of All I Trades, Master of Several."

Robert Plate is a Brooklynite, currently **living** in New York City and Woodstock, New York. After having studied at Duke University he became a successful free-lance writer through a circuitous route which included such occupations as linoleum-technician, lumberjack, shipping clerk, timber worker, and house painter. Other writings include several short stories as well as biographies of two other American painters, Alexander Wilson-and George Catlin.

Elizabeth Ticknor

REFLECTIONS FROM THE REVOLUTION

Writing from Bladensburg to His Excellency, Governor Thomas Sim Lee, Esquire on April 17, 1781, Lieutenant Joshua Beall reported as follows:

"It is with pleasure I can asshure (sic) your Excellency & Honors that the Militia of the County turned out with spirit & alacraty (sic) - - -; inclosed is a list of those brave men who attacked the enemy's boats under the **muzzalls** (sic) of the cannon of their shiping & secured one of their boats and crew out of three that landed- - - .

Lt. Osborn Williams
Ensign J. Queen
Brigade Major (acting) John Oakley,
Guide Henry Lyles
Joseph Cross (of Thomas) 'highly worthy of the esteem of every brave man'

Privates:

Isaac Duckett, Samuel Wheeler, Richard Burgess (volunteer). Zachariah Moore, Walter Williams, Thomas Sansbury, Henry Hilleary, Richard Hill, Thomas Holly, James Perry, Jun., James Buckman, Benjamin Sansbury, William Shaw, Benjamin Oden, Henry Onions, Aaron Beall. James Wood, Waring Belt, William Turner, John Sansbury, James Wilson, John Magill, John Tyler, James Tate, Robert Lanham, Benjamin Fowler, Thomas Bennett, Joseph Gordon."

Lt. Beall would have undoubtedly been deeply concerned had he realized that a scant thirty-three years later some of these same "brave men" of the County Militia would be again confronting a British landing force; this time at the Battle of Bladensburg (August 14, 1814). He would be further concerned that such action would earn the shallow scorn of today's historians because that later effort was to end in defeat, inevitable as it was under the circumstances.

The lengthy report of this fascinating account from the Revolution details that the event occurred on the preceding Friday off Mr. Diggess (sic) Point (vicinity of today's Fort Washington). It was the Lieutenant's stated opinion that the "want of some field pieces and persons who could have managed them well" was all that precluded the destruction of the English flotilla which immediately withdrew after the incident.

It is conceivable that this' opinion may have been a contributing factor to the later selection of that locale for the site of Fort Washington. It is also interesting to note that the British landing at Fort Washington in the subsequent War of 1812 was unopposed presumably because all available militia forces were being marshalled for the ill-fated stand at Bladensburg.

Lt. Beall confessed to "be mutch pusselled about settletng and paying" expenses incurred, including carriage hire and reimbursement for the militia's rations. Further, his quartermaster John Turnbull had been absolutely unsuccessful in being able to "press" men to guard the prisoners enroute to Annapolis or even to obtain horses for that purpose. Notwithstanding such problems, however, Beall had, on his own authority, ordered a sceizure (sic) of all the arms in the county for possible future need. An ex-army armorer living near Bladensburg was recommended as qualified to put these arms into condition but since that worthy artisan was reputed as "somewhat idle", supervision by the "zealous and active" quartermaster was required "should your Excellency or Honors approve of this Scheeme (sic)".

Summing up the tactical situation, the prisoners remained under guard committed to the care of Capt. William Peterson,(a Bladensburg resident formerly in the regular service and who "has shewn (sic) a good deal of spirit - -")and all militia north of Piscataway discharged since Col. Lyles "without my orders" had discharged those below Piscataway.

(Note: This inconsistency of rank whereby a Lieutenant presumes to outrank a Colonel apparently indicated the former as a "regular" and the latter as "militia". Military historians have documented many such problem situations,

viz., Militia Colonel George Washington's problems at Fort Necessity during the French and Indian War, as well as innumerable such instances in the Army of the Potomac during the Civil War. In the military today, this situation is precluded by the activation, when authorized by Congress, of the Army

of the United States, a single entity of regular, reserve and National Guard Forces.)

Paul T. Lanham

(That this invasion interrupted normal activities in the county is evidenced by the action of the General Assembly of Maryland at their May 1781 session, when "An Act to make valid the proceedings of the vestry of Port Tobacco parish in Charles county, and for other purposes therein mentioned." In capsuled form, it stated "The vestry of the said parish, and of several others were prevented, by an invasion, from meeting on last Easter Monday, and they have, notwithstanding, acted since that day. Their proceedings are confirmed, and a power given to choose vestrymen and wardens on the last Monday of July next, instead of the said Easter Monday".

One of the other parishes affected was St. John's (King George's) at Broad Creek, Prince George's County. Notice of the above act failed to reach them in time to take advantage of it, so a subsequent act was passed which enabled them to hold elections. (Acts of November 1783) State regulation of the election of vestrymen in the Protestant Episcopal Church, a carryover from the time when it was the established church of the Province, is still covered by state law.' - Editor)

Source: Archives of Maryland. Vol. XLVII, f. 192-194.

Readers are also 'invited to consult the chapter on county, participation in the American Revolution found in Prince George's Heritage by Louise Joyner Hienton.

A GERMAN TRAVELER IN MARYLAND - 1783

The following account, translated from the German, is a description of Maryland as one traveler found it in 1723. Travel books on America were always best-sellers in Europe. This volume bears the imprint, "Neu-eroffnetes Amphi-Theatrum. Erfurt 1723".

THE MOST CURIOUS OF THE NATION AND THE LAND 1723

MARILAND, which was given its name from Queen Mary, the wife of the English **King** Caroli I / has toward midnight Pennsylvanien toward evening a piece of the Terra Artica, toward morning the Mar del Nort, and at noon Virginien as a boundary.

THE weather in It is healthy / especially since the country has become cleared / and thinned from trees and woods, which filled it in times past; the air is now most suitable for the Englishmen and is contributing to their health. The air here is moderate and pleasant / the heat-in the summer not excessive, since it is cooled down by the sea wind and fresh rain and the winter is gentle and does not inconvenience the inhabitants.

THE EARTH / where it is cleared from woods and bushes is magnificent and blessed: straight and level It produces in abundance not only the native fruits / but as well fruits imported by the Englishmen. There grows in this province terribly much tobacco / much grain, flax, hemp, rape-seed, hops and fruit / all in great abundance. The copious woods shelter deer, wolf, leopards, bears, martens, etc. / and the native rivers and lakes contain innumerable tasty fish. Most notable among the waters is the CHESOPEACK - BAY / which divides the land lengthwise / and is passable to ships for up to 200 miles.

THE NATIVE MARILANDER are in body and disposition similar to people in NEW-YORK. They are inclined toward cruelty and bloodshed / quick to anger. Among themselves, they are divided, lead wars and

destroy one another; they are also cunning, superstitious and jealous; in other words, they are unpolished savages. What may be praised about them is, that they are respectful toward the Sovereigns and careful in their deeds toward them. They consider their present masters, the Englishmen, as more than human / impossible to devour / yes, they believe if they were to kill the Englishmen, those would be capable to take revenge, even after death / During their campaigns they have neither fifes nor drums, but do intone certain songs. Should it occur that they are victorious over their enemies / or anything else that is good has befallen them, then they exhibit their pleasure by building a large fire around which they gather / without any difference of sex or age / and start to clap their hands, thereby making a great noise.

THE RELIGION of the wild Marilanders is very dark, indeed. They believe 1) that there are many gods / in their language called MANTOAC / different in power, honor and characteristics; and only one of those gods is eternal the greatest and most eminent / having created a hoard of other gods for the explicit purpose to give him a hand in creating the whole world / 2) Sun / moon and stars are according to this religion also small gods / 3) they believe / that animals and other creatures came out of the water / 4) that woman was created first and conceived from one of the gods her children / 5) they decree a second place in eternity in which the soul's are kept after death / and that the righteous among them will be led there after death / but the evil among them will be led to a big pit at the extreme end of the country / there to burn for eternity./

This calamitous dwelling place is called POPOGUSSO / and do they know to tell a multitude of absurd bosh about it.

These are the most prominent points of their creed. One of their most eminent gods is the so called KIWASA / who is the guardian and keeper of all dead / This Kiwasa is 4 feet tall / made from wood / and resembles in body an inhabitant from Florida. His body is painted flesh-color / his chest red / and the other parts painted in black / except for the thighs which have white spots. This idol wears chains and strings of seeds around his neck / Kiwasa is attended to by a priest / who does this service day and night / with much growling and muttering / They fashion pictures of their gods after the human body and each Marilander has at least one of those in his house / which he worships with prayers, songs and sacrifice.

The ceremonies are told of by the Englishman Owen Griffin as one / who saw them with his own person / saying, that at all times the oldest among them stands up / while the rest of the group sits / and then screams at the top of his voice: BAW WAW. Thereupon all women fall down and scream BAW WAW / then proceed to jump up and around the fire in great madness / ripping fire from the embers / spreading them on the ground. In the meantime, the younger people have fetched rocks from the river throwing them into the fire with great might.

The Marilanders are not over-whelmed by holidays / inasmuch as they celebrate only one in a whole year.

MARILAND is divided into 10 counties / in which only the following cities are worth to keep in mind: ST. MARIES / the most distinguished city of the Englishmen in the country / at the river of ST. GEORGII / where the county court resides. The place has stately houses, and is also well kept. MATAPANII is also a very pleasant and a nice people / where the English Governor resides. It is 8 miles from ST. MARIES, and that is all.

MARILAND COMMERCE is in the hands of Englishmen / who are sending more than 100 ships a year to Europe / filled with tobacco. Moreover, they trade with hemp, flax, hops, marten-fur / etc. The profit for the country from this trade is not small / and makes the land profitable, indeed.

MARILAND'S FREEDOM is partitioned / and it is ruled by several kings / under the sovereignty of the English nation / this nation having discovered the country ANN. 1497. But for a long time afterwards the land

remained uncultivated / Under the rule of the most calamitous CAROL I it changed appearance and the nation started to cultivate and populate the country / moreover received its name from the Queen Maria / Mariland. This lady transferred the land Ann. 1632 to Lord COECILIO CALVERT BALTIMORE / to possess and have ownership / giving him and his descendants several privileges and claims / such as the right of coinage / to sit in judgment / to bestow honorable titles / and such other perogatives / In return the above Lord, as feudal tenant, was required to duly pay the King 2 Indian arrows yearly / the Tuesday following Easter and at the castle of Windsor. The same Lord Baltimore, being the hereditary Governor for the King / founded the GENERAL-ASSEMBLEE or Superior Court / which resembles in certain ways the English Parliament / and which is divided in the House of Lords and the House of Commons / in the former the Governor himself presiding / and his senators and councilmen / in the latter presiding the deputies from each county.

Edith Bagot

WOODLAWN SAVED

In the August 1973 issue of News and Notes we told of the sad state of "Woodlawn" located on the Largo Road at Oak Grove. We have learned recently that a part of this property has been purchased by the First Baptist Church of Riverdale as a permanent site for their private school. The most pleasing note is that the "Woodlawn" house, one of Prince George's County's finest Greek Revival houses, will be retained and restored as a residence for the pastor.

LAUREL BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

The permanent Laurel Bicentennial Committee has been appointed by Mayor Leo Wilson. Chairing this body will be Mrs. Henry A. Bowie (Doris Lanahan), whose family have been lifetime residents of the city. Other members are Robert J. DiPietro, Cot. Gilbert J. Check, Winifred Elder, Elizabeth Compton, Margaret Speicher, Kenneth Walgren, Helen Haas and Karen Bautz. Three additional members are yet to be nominated.

Mesdames Compton, Elder and Speicher are members of the Prince George's County Historical Society

GIFTS TO THE SOCIETY

In the March 1974 issue of News and Notes we indicated that the Society had received hand painted coats-of-arms of the Snowden, Waring and Brooke families from Col. Abell A. Norris, Jr.

We are pleased to note that since that time Col. Norris has added the Belt coat-of-arms to our collection.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Mr. John C. Brennan (498-1515) has consented to serve again as chairman of the Nominating Committee. Serving with him will be Mrs. Helen Brown (927-7476), Mrs. Vera Rollo (577-2436) and Mr. Paul Deafenbaugh (937-1386).

Members of the Society are invited to contact any of the above committee members with suggestions for nominations. In addition to the nine officers and directors, three members of the Awards Committee will be elected at the first meeting in September.

HISTORY QUIZ

What is the significance of the following names; Gregory, Huntsville, White, McCarthy, Cherry Grove, Lincoln, Randle and Lloyd?

The answer will be given in a future issue of News and Notes.

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

President:

Frederick S. De Marr, 4010 Hamilton St., Hyattsville 20781 277-0711

Corresponding Secretary:

Mrs. Frank Bagot, 3510 Longfellow St., Hyattsville 20782 927-3632

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News and Notes From

The PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

AUGUST 1974 Vol. II, No. 9

SEPTEMBER MEETING

Our first meeting of the 1974-1975 season will be held on Saturday, September 14, 1974 at 2 PM in Montpelier Mansion, Laurel (Rt. 197 just west of Baltimore-Washington Parkway).

There will be no guest speaker at this meeting. The President, will present a report concerning the activities of the Society during his tenure and will also *make proposals* for future goals and activities. The report will contain some major programs which will likely stimulate debate among the membership. Please plan to attend so that we may benefit from your views on the organization's future. Election of officers will also be held.

A social hour will follow the meeting.

HERITAGE DAY – 1974

Prince George's County made history recently when it received an unprecedented sixteen national awards for local government excellence - the most won by any county in the nation this year.

Bestowed by the National Association of Counties, the honors represent recognition by local governments across America of Prince George's leadership in many areas of endeavor.

In recognition of this milestone in the life of our County, the Prince George's County Historical Society is sponsoring Heritage Day to be held at the Marlboro Race Course, Upper Marlboro on Saturday, September 28, 1974 from 10 AM to 4 PM. The Heritage Day Committee which is promoting this celebration is chaired by businessmen A. H. Smith and Albert W. Turner with County Executive William Gullett and Council Chairman Francis Francois and the members of the County Council serving as honorary co-chairmen.

The all day program at the race course will feature over one hundred exhibits prepared by business, civic, labor and educational groups, as well as the county government agencies. Entertainment and refreshments will be

provided for this event which is designed to attract the entire family. County-wide publicity is being given to this free event, which is being funded by the business community.

On Friday evening a fund-raising cocktail party and buffet will be held at the same location and will be hosted by the County Executive and County Council.

All profits incurred in this Heritage Day program will be used by the Prince George's County Historical Society to preserve and promote the heritage of the County. For further information concerning Heritage Day, please call 952-0707.

DR. MUDD TO SPEAK

A special meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society will be held at 8 PM on Tuesday, November 26, 1974 in the Theater of the University of Maryland Student Union.

Our speaker will be Dr. Richard T. Mudd of Saginaw, Michigan who is the grandson of Dr. Samuel Mudd. During his entire lifetime Dr. Richard Mudd has worked diligently to clear his grandfather's name of any guilt in the Lincoln assassination conspiracy. His illustrated lecture will present the facts as he has been able to determine them after extensive research concerning Dr. Samuel Mudd's role as the physician who set the broken leg of assassin John Wilkes Booth.

Last winter Dr. Mudd spoke to a capacity audience at the Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore. This meeting, which will be in addition to our regular monthly meetings, is under joint sponsorship of the Maryland Student Union.

CORRECTION

In the March 1974 issue of News and Notes we mistakenly listed the name of new member Miss Leila C. Roberts as Rogers. Our apologies to Miss Roberts and our sincere thanks to Mrs. G.W.S. Musgrave for bringing this error to our attention.

CONTRIBUTING MEMBER

The Society wishes to acknowledge a contribution received from the following member:

Eunice E. Burdette

FOUR SEASONS IN MARYLAND

- Sept. 2 15th ANNUAL LABOR DAY SKIPJACK RACES. North America's only fleet of working sailboats, the oyster dredging skipjacks, Deal Island-Tangier Sound, p AM. Contact: Jack Willing Chance, tel: 784-2428
- Sept. 6-8 15th ANNUAL TOBACCO BARN ANTIQUES SHOW. Edelen Brothers Tobacco Warehouse, Upper Marlboro. Contact: Orva Heissenbuttel 6213 Joyce Dr., Camp Springs. tel: 449-5372
- Sept. 8 4th ANNUAL BOONESBOROUGH DAY. Shafer Park is filled with Civil War mementoes,

vintage automobiles, talented craftsmen and their wares, antiques, and a variety of country food, Boonesboro. Contact: Washington County Tourism Division, 40 Summit Ave., Hagerstown. tel: 731-0110, ext. 203.

- Sept. 12-14 28th ANNUAL WICOMICO COUNTY FARM AND HOME SHOW. Civic Center Salisbury. Contact: Wallace Luffman, Rt. 4, Dykes Road, Salisbury. tel: 742-5725.
- Sept. 15 3rd ANNUAL TROLLEY CAR EXTRAVAGANZA Eleven historic vehicles including the Washington streamlines the two-car Vienna train and the snow- sweeper National Capital Trolley Museum, P.O. Box 5795 Bethesda. tel: 384-9707
- Sept. 21 5th ANNUAL CANDLELIGHT WALKING TOUR OF HISTORIC CHESTERTOWN Contact: Francis L. Lamb, Historical Society of Kent County, Lankford Road, RD#3, Chestertown, tel: 778-2312.
- Sept. 21-23 5th ANNUAL BALTIMORE CITY FAIR. Baltimore's communities join together to present an array of foods, exhibits, ethnic and cultural demonstrations in the dramatic setting of the new Inner Harbor area. Contact: Richard Davis, 222 E. Saratoga St., Baltimore. tel: 396 -4102
- Sept. 21- 3rd ANNUAL ST. MICHAEL'S DAYS Art exhibits, an antique show, parade and workboat races plus many other events are held in this small Eastern Shore town. Contact: Edward N. Brinsfield, Jr., S. Harrison St., Easton. Tel: 267-7619.
- Sept. 27- 20th ANNUAL HERITAGE WEEKEND AT ANNAPOLIS. Candlelight, waterfront and open house tours. Plantation dinner and hunt breakfast. Contact: Historic Annapolis, 13 Pinkney St. Annapolis. tel: 267-7619
- Sept. 28-29 8th ANNUAL GOVERNOR'S FIRELOCK MATCHES . Invitational Revolutionary War pageantry and weapons competition, Fort Frederick. Contact: L. Brown, III, WMPB- 67, Owings Mills. tel: 356-5600.
- Sept. 29 7th ANNUAL ST. CLEMENT'S ISLAND BLESSING OF THE FLEET. A commemoration where Maryland's first settlers landed in 1634 (Free boat trip to island); entertainment and seafood. Contact: Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, Box 301, Waldorf tel: 645-2793

THE CHESAPEAKE INVASION 1814-1974

The months of August-September 1974 mark the 160th anniversary OF THE British invasion of the Chesapeake Bay region which brought the Battle of Bladensburg, the burning of the City of Washington, Dr. Beanes being taken hostage, the bombardment of Ft. McHenry in Baltimore Harbor and the writing of our National Anthem by Francis Scott Key.

The following letter written by Rear Admiral George Cockburn to the commander of the British forces gives an account of the Washington campaign. Although the destruction of the capital city caused a great storm of protests and investigations both in the United States and England, Admiral Cockburn had the burning of the City of Washington painted as the background in his official portrait which hangs in the Royal Naval Museum in Greenwich, England.

HIS MAJESTY'S SLOOP MANLY, OFF NOTTINGHAM, PATUXENT, 27th AUGUST, 1814
Addressed to Vice-Admiral the Hon. Sir Alex. Cochrane, K.B. &c, &c, &c
SIR,

I have the honour to inform you, that agreeably (sic) to the intentions I notified to you in my letter of the 22d instant, I proceeded by land on the morning of the 23d to Upper Marlborough, to meet and confer with Major-General Ross as to our further operations against the enemy and were not long in agreeing on the propriety of making an immediate attempt on the city of Washington.

In conformity, therefore, with the wishes of the general, I instantly sent orders for our marine and naval forces at Pig Point to be forthwith moved over to, Mount Calvert, and for marines, marine artillery, and a proportion of the seaman to be there landed, and with the utmost possible expedition to join the army, which I also most readily agreed to accompany.

The major-general then made his dispositions, and arranged that Captain Robyns, with the marines of the ships, should retain possession of Upper Marlborough, and that the marine artillery and seamen should follow the army to the ground it was to occupy for the night. The army then moved on, and bivouacked before dark, about five miles nearer Washington.

In the night, Captain Palmer of the Hebrus, and Captain Money of the Trave, joined us with seamen and with the marine artillery under Captain Harrison. Captain Wainwright of the Tonnant, had accompanied me the day before, as had also Lieutenant James Scott (acting first lieutenant) of the Albion.

At daylight the morning of the 24th, the major-general again put the array in motion, directing his march upon Bladensburg; on reaching which place, with the advanced brigade, the enemy was discovered drawn up in force on the rising ground beyond the town; and by the fire he soon opened on us as we entered the place, gave us to understand he was well protected with artillery. General Ross, however, did not hesitate in immediately advancing to attack him, although our troops were almost exhausted with the fatigue of the march they had just made, and but a small proportion of our little army had yet got up; this dashing measure was, however, I am, happy to add, crowned with the success it merited for, in spite of the galling fire of the enemy, our troops advanced steadily on both flanks, and in his front; and as soon as they arrived on even ground with him, he fled in every direction, leaving behind him ten pieces of cannon, and a considerable number of killed and wounded; amongst the latter Commodore Barney, and several other officers; some other prisoners were also taken, though not many, owing to the swiftness with the enemy went off, and the fatigues our army had previously undergone.

It would, Sir, be deemed presumption in me to attempt to give you particular details respecting the nature of the battle, I shall therefore only remark generally, that the enemy, eight thousand strong, on ground he had chosen as best adapted for him to defend, where he had had time to erect his batteries and concert all his measures, was dislodged as soon as reached, and a victory gained over him by a division of the British army, not amounting to more than fifteen hundred men, headed by our gallant general, whose brilliant achievement of this day is beyond (sic) my power do justice to, and indeed no possible comment could enhance.

The seamen, with the guns, were, to their great mortification, with the rear division during this short but decisive action; those, however, attached to the rocket brigade, were in the battle, and I remarked with much pleasure the precision with which the rockets were thrown by them, under the direction of First Lieutenant Lawrence of the marine artillery; Mr. Jeremiah M'Daniel, master's mate of the Tonnant, a very fine young man, who was attached to this party, being severally wounded. I beg permission to recommend him to your favourable consideration. The company of marines I have on so many occasions had cause to mention to you, commanded

by First Lieutenant Stephens, was also in the action, as were the colonial marines, under the temporary command of Captain Reed, of the 6th West India regiment (those companies being attached to the light brigade), and they respectively behaved with accustomed zeal and bravery. None other of the naval department was fortunate enough to arrive up in time to take their share in this battle, excepting Captain Palmer, of the Hebrus, with his aide-de-camp Mr. Arthur Wakefield, midshipman of that ship, and Lieutenant James Scott, first of the Albion, who acted as my aide-de-camp, and who remained with me the whole time.

The contest being completely ended, and the enemy having retired from the field, the general gave the army about two hours to rest, when he again moved forward on Washington. It was, however, dark before we reached the city; and on the general, myself, and some officers, advancing a short way past the first houses of the town, without being accompanied by the troops, the enemy opened upon us a heavy fire of musketry from the capitol and other houses; these were immediately stormed by our people, taken possession of, and set on fire, after which the town submitted without further resistance.

The enemy himself on our entering the town, set fire to the navy yard, filled with naval stores, a frigate of the largest class, almost ready for launching, and a sloop of war laying off it, as he also did to the fort which protected the sea approach to Washington.

On taking possession of the city, we also set fire to the president's palace, the treasury and the war office; and in the morning Captain Wainwright went with a party to see that the destruction of the navy yard was complete, when he destroyed whatever stores and buildings had escaped the flames of the preceding night; a large quantity of ammunition and ordinance stores were likewise destroyed by us in the arsenal, as were about two hundred pieces of artillery of different calibres, as well as a vast quantity of small arms. TWO rope-walks of a very extensive nature, full of tar rope, &c. situated at a considerable distance from the yard were likewise set fire to and consumed. In short sir, I do not believe a vestige of Public property or a store of any kind which could be converted to the use of the government escaped destruction; the bridges across the eastern branch and the Potomac were likewise destroyed.

The general devastation being completed during the day of the 25th we marched again at nine that night on our return, by Bladensburgh, Upper Marlborough.

We arrived yesterday evening at the latter without any molestatic (sic) of any sort, indeed, without a single musket have been fired; and this morning we moved on to this place, where I have found his majesty's sloop Manly, the tenders, and the boats, and I have hoisted my flag pro tempore, in the former. The troops will probably march tomorrow or the next day at the farthest, to Benedict for re-embarkation, and this flotilla will of course join you at the same time.

In closing, sir, my statement to you, of the arduous and highly important operations of this last week, I *have a most* pleasing duty to perform, in assuring you of the good conduct of the officers and men who have been serving under us. I have been particularly indebted, whilst on this service, to Captain Wainwright of the Tonnant, for the assistance he has invariably afforded me, and to Captains Palmer and Money, for their exertions during the march to and from Washington. To Captain Nourse, who has commanded the flotilla during my absence, my (sic) acknowledgements are also most justly due, as well as to Captains Sullivan, Badcock, Somerville, Ramsay, and Bruce, who have acted in it under him.

Lieutenant James Scott, now first lieutenant of the Albion, has on this occasion rendered essential services; and as I have had reason so often of late to mention to you the gallant and meritorious conduct of this officer, I trust you will permit me to seize this opportunity of recommending him particularly to your favourable notice and consideration.

Captain Robyns (the senior officer of marines with the fleet), who has had, during these operations, the marines of the ships united under his orders, has executed ably and zealously the several services with which he has been entrusted, and is entitled to my best acknowledgements accordingly; as is also Captain Harrison of the marine artillery, who, with the officers and men attached to him, accompanied the army to and from Washington.

Mr. Dobie, surgeon of the Melpomeme, volunteered his professional services on this occasion, and rendered much assistance to the wounded on the field of battle, as well as to many of the men taken ill on the line of march.

One colonial marine killed, one master's mate, two sergeants, and three colonial marines wounded, are the casualties sustained by the naval department; a general list of the killed and wounded of the whole army will of course accompany the report of the major-general.

I have the honour to be, &c.

Signed) G. COCKBURN
Rear Admiral

James K. Shreve

FROM CALVERT COUNTY

We note with some envy that the nearby Calvert County Historical Society has acquired new and larger quarters for its Solomon's Island Marine Museum in the form of a former schoolhouse on a four acre waterfront lot. Encouraged by a county budget item for renovation, and a \$10,000 private contribution, a unique museum of great interest to Marylanders is envisioned by year's end. Donations of area artifacts have substantially expanded the museum's collection which includes the Chesapeake Bays first clam dredge, the "John Ryder" and early marine engines.

That society has been successful finally in its efforts to acquire title to the abandoned and vandalized Drum Point Lighthouse. For a long period of time, a congressional committee had blocked this move, despite the willingness of the society to pay the asking price for the structure (\$10,000) and despite the willingness of the State of Maryland to budget \$50,000 for its removal, and restoration on a site available to the public.

The Lighthouse will be placed at the museum site on Solomon's Island.

Paul T. Lanham

MARYLAND BOOKS

Tales of the Chesapeake. By George Alfred Townsend. (Tidewater Publishers, 1968. Pp. 285. \$5)

Readers who seek out Chesapeake lore will certainly want to own, if they have not already acquired a copy Tales of the Chesapeake, now reprinted by Tidewater Publishers.

A most absorbing book of stories based on life in rural areas and small towns of Maryland during the second half of the 19th century, in most of the tales a sombre and ghostly atmosphere prevails. All revolve around intense human relationships, frequently ending in tragedy. Townsend leaned heavily on conversational

exchange between his characters, and speeches are often in regional and ethnic dialect. Combined with the character of the atmosphere, this dialogue creates a mood both "folksy" and eerie at the same time.

That would seem, to take precedence over the details of the plots, however, is the rich background in locales so well known to Maryland readers. Geographically, the Eastern Shore from Newark, Delaware, down to the Pocomoke area in Maryland, the lower shore area of Virginia, and to Baltimore, St. Mary's, Washington and other areas on the Western Shore are the regions covered.

Though the stories reflect the spirit and temper of their time, it is indeed remarkable that so much of the picturesque character and disposition of rural Maryland remains unchanged today. While the characters appearing in the tales appear to be localized, many are prototypes to be found in hamlets and villages all over America. They would be equally at home in parts of New England or the Deep South.

Author George Alfred Townsend ("Gath") was a news correspondent who had achieved national recognition as a result of his reporting of the final battles of the Civil War. Going on to become a highly successful columnist, world traveler and lecturer, his fast-paced career in journalism left little time for the creative fiction he had always longed to write. Thus, Tales of the Chesapeake represents one of about twenty books of prose and poetry which he managed to squeeze into an always tight schedule of literary assignments.

Elizabeth Ticknor

Establishing An Historic District. A Guideline for Historic Preservation. Pp. 54. Maryland Historical Trust, Department of Economic and Community Development, 2525 Riva Road, Annapolis, Md. 21401. Single copy \$2. (Students \$1.50).

The State of Maryland has granted counties and municipalities the power to establish, define, and regulate historic districts. This handbook, well illustrated with photographs, drawings, and maps has been compiled to serve the needs of those concerned with establishing an historic district.

The booklet demonstrates how local citizens, with the support of local officials, might act to enhance an area of historic interest, how an historic district might be planned and how the plan might be implemented in keeping with the provisions of the Historic District Ordinance.

Elizabeth Ticknor

NATIONAL REGISTER

Two Prince George's County properties have been added to the National Register of Historic Places recently. Snow Hill the home of Dr. & Mrs. Bryan P. Warren of Laurel was one of those designated. Built by Samuel Snowden and located near Montpelier, Snow Hill is a product of the late 18th century.

Also placed on the Register was the George Washington House in Bladensburg, a structure well known to most county residents. Saved from almost certain destruction by the Prince George's Jaycees, it is now in the process of restoration.

CONCERNING STREET CARS

The May '74 issue of The Montgomery County Story (published quarterly by the Montgomery County Historical Society price 75c per issue) is devoted exclusively to the subject of street car lines of Montgomery County. Of particular interest to Prince George's historians is the comment therein that the 'first full-scale field test' of what later was to be known as a "street car" took place in 1851 between Washington and Bladensburg! Smithsonian Professor Page propelled a small electric car at a top speed of nineteen miles per hour over the course on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad tracks. However, the car's batteries (100 Grove cells) did not survive the run and it was not until the Berlin Exposition of 1879 that a major success in this form of traction was realized.

- Paul T. Lanham

(Col. John E. Merriken, noted authority on this form of transportation will speak at the March 1975 meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society.

WHITE MARSH PUBLICATION

The Historical and Restoration Society of Sacred Heart Church, White Marsh, has prepared a booklet describing this cradle of the Roman Catholic Church in America.

This publication will include ten illustrations, the authoritative White Marsh letters of the Jesuits and other Memorabilia for an approximate total of sixty pages. Pre-publication subscriptions are now being received at the price of \$2.50. To order your copy please write Mrs. Catherine P. Terry, 3111 Mill Branch Road, Mitchellville, Maryland 20716.

MEMBERSHIP LISTS

A membership list of the Prince George's County Historical Society has been prepared and printed by our Treasurer, Col. Samuel Crook. This list, which is current as of August 1974, will be available at the September meeting and will be mailed to all of those members not in attendance.

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

President:

Frederick S. De Marr, 4010 Hamilton St., Hyattsville 20781 277-0711

Corresponding Secretary:

Mrs. Frank Bagot, 3510 Longfellow St., Hyattsville 20782 927-3632

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News and Notes from

The PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SEPTEMBER 1974

Vol. 11, No. 9

OCTOBER MEETING

There will be no meeting in October, due to problems encountered in scheduling a speaker. The next regular meeting will be on the second Saturday in November.

Please remember to note the special meeting on your calendars which is scheduled for Tuesday, November 26 at 8 PM in the Theater of the University of Maryland Student Union. Our speaker will be Dr. Richard Mudd, the grandson of Dr. Samuel Mudd who was imprisoned as a result of the trials following the Lincoln assassination.

NEW MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY

The following were elected to membership at the September meeting:

NAME	TOWN	SPONSOR
Mrs. Henry Anderson Bowie	Laurel	Mr. Brennan
Linda A. Callahan	Camp Springs	Mrs. Heissenbuttel
Mrs. Mary Creedon	Fulton	Mr. Brennan
Dr. & Mrs. Thaddeus Elder	Laurel	Mr. De Marr
Richard L. Fogarty	Bowie	Mr. De Marr
Mr. & Mrs. Robert G. Fuerst	Riverdale	Mr. Brennan
Mr. & Mrs. George B. Gifford	Upper Marlboro	Mr. Brennan
Hon. William W. Gullett	Upper Marlboro	Mrs. Speicher
Willie Mae Henson	Oxon Hill	Mrs. Heissenbuttel
Anne Mildred Hoyle	Hyattsville	Mr. De Marr
Mrs. Anne E. Norair	Landover	Mrs. Speicher
Ernest W. Peterkin	Camp Springs	Mrs. Heissenbuttel I
Dr. R. Calvert Steuart	Upper Marlboro	Mr. De Marr
Mrs. H. Keith Sterzing	Laurel	Mr. De Marr

INSTITUTIONAL CONTRIBUTOR

The Society wishes to acknowledge a contribution from the, following business organization:

Albert W. Lee & Son, Realtor-Appraisers, 71411 Old Branch Ave., Clinton 20735

HERITAGE DAY

A complete report on the activities on Heritage Day will appear in the next issue.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS FOR 1974-75

At the September meeting of the Society the entire slate of officers was reelected to serve until October 1974.

President	Frederick S. De Marr	Hyattsville
Vice President	David F. Rinn	Riverdale
Recording Secty	Mrs. John M. Walton, Jr.	Clinton
Corres. Secty	Mrs. Frank Bagot	Hyattsville
Treasurer	Col. Samuel Crook	Laurel
Historian	James C. Wilfong, Jr.	Hyattsville
Directors	Otho T. Beall, Jr.	Upper Marlboro
	Forest D. Bowie	upper Marlboro
	Mrs. Felix E. Cristofane	Bladensburg
Awards Committee		Officers
	John C. Brennan	Laurel

Leslie R. Ticknor
Frank F. White, Jr.

District Heights
Riverdale

TELEPHONE FIRSTS IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

On Prince George's County Heritage Day visitors were fascinated by the exhibit provided by the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company. The video telephones were the initial eyecatchers, but of equal interest to some was the old-fashioned "tree" telephone, done up in a bright red instead of the somber black as most of us remember it. This model is now available for purchase by the company's subscribers. Also on display was an ancient turn-of-the-century telephone switchboard.

In the exhibit was included a newspaper account of the first telephone installed in Prince George's County, at the Maryland Agricultural College (now the University of Maryland) in College Park. The text, as reported in The Baltimore Sun on Saturday, November 24, 1877 is as follows:

USING THE TELEPHONE

"The telephone has just been successfully tried at the Maryland Agricultural College. A short line of three-fourths of a mile was put up on Tuesday, connecting the institution with College Station, on the Washington Branch of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. It has been fully tested by the professors generally. When everything is quiet the slightest whisper may be distinctly heard. Speeches have been made and distinctly repeated at the other end. Songs have been sung and every word and note beautifully repeated. Whistling, laughing, even the beat of a watch, can be carried along the line. Sunset Cox's now famous quotation, "La Rouge! La Rouge! Embrassez Moi!" was repeated at the other end with laughter. Patrick Henry, Shakespeare and a host of authors have been called upon to test the powers of this wonderful little trumpet. Even the tones of the voice can be distinctly discerned. Mr. Calvert, at the station, has already been able to recognize each professor's voice when he speaks. The arrangement will allow ladies or gentlemen who arrive unexpectedly to send messages to the college when the carriage or anything else is needed."

The first telephone exchange in Prince George's County was opened in Dr. Wells' Drug Store on the corners of Maryland and Wells Avenues (now Rhode Island Avenue and Farragut Street), Hyattsville in 1901 by the Pan Electric Company. It served 18 subscribers among whom were Dr. Charles A. Wells, Alfred H. Wells, George Tise, Joseph W. Aman, Duckett and Ford, and the President's Office of Maryland Agricultural College. Population of the County at this time was approximately 30,000.

The second exchange came into being in Upper Marlboro in 1904 and the third in Laurel in 1905.

As a matter of general interest, the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company has two very fine illustrated booklets on the early history of the telephone. One is entitled The Birth and Babyhood of the Telephone and the other is Alexander Graham Bell. Both are available for distribution to public.

(Our appreciation to Mr. Charles Graham and Mr. Robert Urquhart of the Hyattsville office of the C&P Telephone Company for making this information available.)

GIFT TO THE SOCIETY

Following a recent address to the District of Columbia Society of the Colonial Wars, the President of the Prince George's County Historical Society was presented a hand-painted copy of the Sprigg family coat-of-arms by their Governor, Col. Abell A. Norris, Jr. This is the fifth in a series which have been presented by Col. Norris.

The others reported earlier were those of the Belt, Brooke, Snowden and Waring families. We are indebted to Col. Norris for providing the Society with these arms of early Prince George's County families

Thomas Sprigg emigrated to the Province and the County in 1655. He was a factor in Charles Town, the original county seat, and as a merchant, was one of the original commissioners of the Town of Marlborough. Sprigg also served as one of the early justices of the County Court and as a delegate in the General Assembly from Prince George's County. Prior to the founding of Prince George's County, Thomas Sprigg patented two parcels of property which were then a part of old Calvert County. They were "Northampton" on May 26, 1675 and "Kettering" on September 8, 1685. Both of these parcels are large real estate developments in the County today, at Largo.

The 17th person to serve as Governor of the State of Maryland was Samuel Sprigg, who inherited from his uncle, Osborn Sprigg, in 1815. Samuel Sprigg served in the Government House 1319-1822 and died April 21, 1855. He was buried at St. Barnabas' Church, Leeland was later removed to Oak Hill Cemetery, Georgetown, D.C.

References:

Hienton, Louise Joyner Prince George's Heritage Maryland Historical Society. Baltimore: 1972.

White, Jr., Frank F. The Governors of Maryland 1777-1970 Hall of Records Commission. Annapolis: 1970.

MARYLAND BOOKS

A Matter of Allegiances. Maryland from 1850 to 1861. By William J. Evitts. (Johns Hopkins University Press. 1974. Pp. 212. \$11.)

In scope, this book, published by the Johns Hopkins University Press as part of its series in historical and political science, goes well beyond Maryland's part in the historically controversial decade preceding the Civil War.

William J. Evitts, associate professor of history and chairman of the Department of American Studies at Hollins College, Virginia, has examined the relationship of economic, political, and social changes which took place in the Nation during the period from 1850 to 1861. In having chosen Maryland as a state which represented a composite of prevailing attitudes, changes, and adjustments; he has been able to trace the thinking of a diverse group of citizens who represented Maryland during this turbulent era.

Maryland's complexity as a State was exemplified by its critical borderline and the often conflicting ideals of its people relative to such problems as immigration, slavery, political reform and city development.

In his presentation of these issues the author has concentrated his research upon diaries, newspapers, letters, and political statistics. By employing these sources, rather than Congressional records, he has revealed through their thoughts and voting records the amazing contrariety of principles held by the voters as well as the political leaders.

Featured in this important and well-written text are eight maps, twelve tabular presentations, and a comprehensive index designed to assist students, teachers, historians, and other interested readers in understanding and appreciating the collective attitudes prevailing in Maryland during this period and the relationship of the events in time to the innumerable parts of the whole.

Elizabeth Ticknor

FOUR SEASONS IN MARYLAND

- Oct. 4-5 15th ANNUAL SPRINGS FOLK FESTIVAL. "Pioneer Days" crafts, farm demonstrations and area tours. Co-sponsored by the Penn Alps, Inc. of Grantsville, Maryland and the Springs, Pa. Historical Society. Contact : Dr. Alta E. Schrock. Penn Alps, Inc., Grantsville. tel 1 895-5171
- Oct. 5 24th ANNUAL STATE CHAMPIONSHIP JOUSTING TOURNAMENT. Lassahn Field, Perry Hall. Contact: Alice M. Blum, Rt. 2, Box 14A, Jessup. tel: 799-0398
- Oct. 6 21st ANNUAL PAGEANT AND HORSE SHOW. Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship. Contact: League of Maryland Horsemen, Inc., P.O. Box 2554, Baltimore, tel: 328-6921.
- Oct. 6 8th ANNUAL FELLS POINT FUN FESTIVAL. Arts and crafts, entertainment and tours of historic Fells Point and Baltimore Harbor. Contact: Roland Read, 1906 Aliceanna St., Baltimore, tel:685-5040.
- Oct. 10-13 7th ANNUAL AUTUMN GLORY FESTIVAL. Celebrates Maryland's colorful mountain foliage with tours, State Fiddler's Championship and "Grand Ole Opry", Oakland. Contact: Oakland - Mt. Lake Park Lions Club, Oakland. tel: 334-3888.
- Oct. 11-13 6th ANNUAL OKTOBERFEST. Baltimore s German community heralds autumn with major culinary, cultural and folk art presentations, Fifth Regiment Armory. Contact: Kurt Kuenzel, 1215 Hillside Rd., Pasadena. tel: 437--2068.
- Oct. 11-13 11th ANNUAL COLORFEST. In Camp David Country, a potpourri of activities and entertainment in the picturesque mountain communities and Catoctin National Park. Contact: Mrs. Marian McIntyre, Catoctin Mountain Tourist Council', Box 32, Thurmont. tel: 271-7638
- Oct. 12 13th ANNUAL ROCKVILLE ANTIQUE AND CLASSIC CAR SHOW. Rockville Civic Center. Contact: William A. Edwards, City Hall, III S. Perry St., Rockville. tel: 424-8000, ext. 225.
- Oct. 12 8th ANNUAL FALL HARVEST DAY. A variety of colorful 19th century farming demonstrations, Carroll County Farm Museum Contact: Museum Rt. 6, Box 412 Westminster. tel: 848-7775
- October 12-13 17th ANNUAL OLDE PRINCESS ANNE DAYS. Candlelight reception at Teackle Mansion highlights "Open House" in lovely 18th and 19th century Eastern Shore homes, Princess Anne. Contact: Old Princess Anne Days, Inc., Princess Anne, tel.: 651-1705.
- Oct. 13 8th ANNUAL ST. MARY'S OYSTER FESTIVAL. Delicious bivalves, country store, entertainment at fairgrounds near Leonardtown, Contact: Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland P.O. Box 301, Waldorf. Tel. 645-2693

- Oct. 13 7th ANNUAL AMERICAN SOLDIER PAGEANT - FIRST MARYLAND REGIMENT.
"The American Soldier, 1775 -presenting period uniforms and weapons, Fort Frederick, 4
p.m. Con-tact: William L. Brown, 111, WMPB-67, Owings Mills. Tel: 356-5600
- Oct. 13-14 19th ANNUAL POTOMAC COUNTRY HOUSE TOUR. Contact: Mrs. Richard Scott, 9606
Falls Road, Potomac, tel: 299-9581
- Oct. 18-20 11th- ANNUAL ATLANTIC FLYWAY WILDFOWL CARVING AND ARTS EXHIBIT.
Civic Center, Salisbury. Contact: Ward Foundation, Inc., P.O. x 703, Salisbury. tel : 742-3131
- Oct. 19 4th ANNUAL APPLE BUTTER FESTIVAL. Old-time apple butter making, costumes,
demonstrations and food in the old country atmosphere, Morgan Chapel Church, Woodbine.
Contact: Jack Marsh, Festival, Woodbine. Tel. 795-3045
- Oct. 27 7th ANNUAL OCTOBERFEST. Presents Bavarian cultural and folk life in the manner of the
Munich original, Bowie Race Course. Contact: Terry Weber, Recreation and Arts Office, Bowie
tel: 262-1200.

CHESAPEAKE & OHIO CANAL FUNDS APPROVED

For the past two years, those of us who have seen the C&O Canal in Georgetown or in other places have witnessed a dry ditch brought by the devastation of Tropical Storm Agnes in 1972.

Senator J. Glenn Beall, Jr. of Maryland informs us that the Senate Appropriations Committee has approved an additional \$1.25 million to spend on repairs and restoration of some of the sections of the Canal in time for the Bicentennial. This amount is in addition to \$3 million approved earlier for the project. Although this is a large **SLIM**, it is but a fraction of the total amount that will be needed to complete the job.

CONCERNING THE FUTURE OF THIS PUBLICATION

Nineteen months ago the first issue of News and Notes was mailed to the membership. When the decision was made to launch this publication it was the general feeling that a need would be fulfilled.

The Prince George's County Historical Society had functioned for eighteen years. During this period the only contact with members had been through the monthly meeting notices. Although the Society has maintained an attractive lecture series over the years, many have been unable to participate on a regular basis because of distance or schedule conflicts. This publication was designed to help maintain continued interest and support as well as to bring information concerning the heritage of Prince George's County's past and the latest developments affecting it.

In general, the response to News and Notes has been gratifying. Many old members have renewed their support of the Society's program and new ones are constantly being added to the rolls. The impression received is that these pages have brought desired results.

At present News and Notes faces an uncertain future. A new editor and others to assist must be found in order for it to continue appearing in your homes each month. Your president assumed the editorship with the idea in mind that it would be easier to turn over an established publication to a staff, rather than try to interest individuals to start it from nothing. Aside from occasional contributions of articles and news items from a few,

and from one regular contributor - all of which have been deeply appreciated - no volunteer force has been forthcoming. This dilemma has been brought to the attention of the members at two regular meetings of the Society, and now to our reading membership through the medium of this article.

Along with personal obligations and responsibility for the Society's total program, the editing and production of News and Notes is more than can be fitted into your president's daily schedule. Unless a new staff can be found, News and Notes will have to cease publication with the next (October) issue.

If you have any suggestions which will help solve this problem, please call Fred De Marr at 277-0711 (home) or 454-2801 (office). FSD

PRINCE GEORGE'S HERITAGE

From travels around the County it is surprising to learn how many people are unfamiliar with Mrs. Louise Hinton's excellent history, Prince George's Heritage. Ready availability is perhaps part of the problem. It may be a bit of a drag to order it from the Maryland Historical Society, 201 West Monument Street, Baltimore (\$12.50 per copy), but it may also be purchased at the Maryland Book Exchange, Baltimore Boulevard & College Ave., College Park. Also, beginning with the November meeting, the Society will have copies available for your convenience.

In addition to a well-researched and written text with excellent pictures, this volume contains that fantastic map of Prince George's County showing the land holdings at the time of founding in 1696.

What better Christmas gift could you find for a relative or friend?

end of Vol. II, No 9

News and Notes from

The PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OCTOBER 1974

Vol. II, No. 10

NOVEMBER MEETING

We are pleased to announce that our speaker for the regular meeting on November 9th will be Mr. Harry L. Durity, Chairman of the Prince George's County Bicentennial Commission. Having been associated with the Bicentennial program in the Count from the beginning, Mr. Durity will share with us the progress and plans of this body.

The meeting time on Saturday is 2 PM at Montpelier Mansion on Rt. 197, Laurel. Refreshments will be served. Bring a friend.

SPECIAL MEETING - THE DR. MUDD STORY

The Society, in cooperation with the Student Union of the University of Maryland, will sponsor an illustrated lecture by Dr. Richard D. Mudd of Saginaw, Michigan on TUESDAY evening, November 26, 1974 at 8:00 PM.

Dr. Mudd is the grandson of Dr. Samuel A. Mudd of Charles County, who was imprisoned because of the medical attention given John Wilkes Booth during his escape following the Lincoln assassination. Dr. Richard Mudd over the years has devoted most of his free time toward an effort to clear his grandfather's name.

The lecture will be held in the theater of the Maryland Student Union. The theater entrance is on the street which runs off Campus Drive between the Student Union and Cole Field House. A parking garage is located across the street from the theater.

The lecture is open to the public. Please come and bring your friends. We are fortunate to have Dr. Mudd as our guest.

ROSS HOUSE

The current November issue of House Beautiful contains an article on the Dr. Ross House, formerly of Bladensburg, now located in Baltimore County. Several very fine color illustrations are included as a part of the story.

ST. GEORGE'S DAY AWARDS

Although St. George's Day is six months in the future, the Awards Committee will begin its deliberations shortly after the beginning of the new year. Both individuals and organizations are eligible to receive a St. George's Day Award for contributions toward the preservation of the County's heritage.

Members are encouraged to send nominations to the secretary of the Awards Committee, Mr. John C. Brennan, 513 Main Street, Laurel, 20810.

FOUR SEASONS IN MARYLAND

Nov. 2 10th ANNUAL CHESAPEAKE APPRECIATION DAY The Nation's last oyster fleet under sail competes for "top skipjack" title. The world's "best attended" sailboat race attracts over 10,000 people on shore and a spectator fleet of 2,000. Sandy Point State Park, near Annapolis. Contact.-Division of Tourism, 2525 Riva Road, Annapolis. tel: 267-5517.

Nov. 8-10 4th ANNUAL WATERFOWL FESTIVAL Decorative and working decoys, waterfowl art, artifacts, antique gun collection. Easton. Contact., Bill Perry, 239 Brookwood Avenue, Easton. tel: 822-4240.

Nov. 22-24 9th ANNUAL ANTIQUE SHOW AND SALE American Legion Home, Cambridge. Contact: Philip L. Cannon, 408 Cemetery Avenue., Cambridge. tel: 228--4336.

HISTORY QUIZ

In the July 1974 issue of News and Notes we asked the significance of the following names: Gregory, Huntsville, White, McCarthy, Cherry Grove, Lincoln, Randle and Lloyd. An answer was promised in *the* following issue, however time has not been found to write the story to accompany *the* answer.

Rather than draw out the suspense, we will give you a short answer. Add to the above names the following: Bennings, District Line, Dodge Park, Glen Arden Ardmore, Buena Vista, Dell, Hillmeade, High Bridge and Bowie. By now you will have recognized them as being the stations on tile D.C.-Prince George's segment of

the Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis Electric Railroad, the interurban line which ceased operations in the 1930s.

A complete story will appear in a later issue.

ANOTHER FACET OF THE CHESAPEAKE CAMPAIGN

Local historians will be interested in an article in the Baltimore Sun Magazine of September 23, 1974 by Albert J. Silverman, former head of the history department at Baltimore Polytechnic Institute. Mr. Silverman's article, "The Chesapeake Blacks of Nova Scotia" reports his research into a little known effort by British Admiral Cochrane during the War of 1812 to liberate blacks residing in the Chesapeake area and recruit them into his combat forces. Mr. Silverman reports that one such company of 120 black recruits served with the British at the Battle of Bladensburg. An estimated 3500 of the liberated Virginia/Maryland blacks ultimately were settled in Nova Scotia but many returned thereafter to this country as the climate and environment of that rocky barren land were factors of incompatibility which defied resolution.

Paul T. Lanham

PRESERVATION ACTIVITIES

It is a pleasure to report that there has been an abundance of preservation activity in the County during the past several weeks. In the August 1973 issue we reported the uncertain fate faced by WOODLAWN. Our July 1974 issue indicated that the property had been purchased by the First Baptist Church of Riverdale as a site for their school and that the house would be used as a parsonage. At present restoration work is in progress and a substantial sum is being spent to return the house to its former proud state. Vandals had left their mark and it is our understanding that the former owner (Levitt) had planned to burn it down and only the sale to the church had saved Woodlawn. Much of the decorative woodwork (fireplaces, stair rail, etc.) had been removed however the new owners have located some of this material and have purchased and placed it back in the house.

Ultimately a church, a private school and some faculty residences will be built on the property, In the midst will still be WOODLAWN. Who said that miracles do not happen?

Our congratulations to the members of the First Baptist church of Riverdale and their Pastor.

On Wednesday, October 23rd, nearby ST. Barnabas' CHURCH at Leeland was rededicated by its parishoners in a service conducted by the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in the United States, Dr. John M. Allin. Restoration work was begun last Spring and the committee was chaired by past PGCHS president Forest D. Bowie. Although St. Barnabas' had been changed very little over the years, its present appearance more nearly resembles the structure turned over to the Vestry of Queen Anne's Parish in 1774 by contractor Christopher Lowndes.

Finally, anyone who has driven through Bladensburg recently has noticed a great deal of activity at the GEORGE WASHINGTON HOUSE. The long anticipated restoration is now under way. Under the present contract the building is being made structurally sound and the outside will be completely refurbished and painted. In the process all of the stucco and asbestos shingles have been removed from the clapboards of the rear wing. Also, the old two-story porch will be rebuilt on the front of the main structure. At a later date the interior work will be completed.

Because of safety factors, the interior of the building is not open to visitors at present.

Although no details are available at present, we also understand that restoration work has commenced at the MARY SURRAT HOUSE after encountering some problems with that scourge of all restorations, the building inspector!

We hope that this pace in the restoration field will continue in the future.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE REVOLUTION

Probably the most exhilarating of all events ever to occur in Prince George's County took place between July 19 and July 25, 1782. A countryside still wildly exuberant from the news of the combined French/American victory at Yorktown the previous October, was treated to witness the spectacular march northward of the French Army.

Under the command of Marshal Jean Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur Rochambeau, the army had been proceeding northward since June 28 at a rate of 10 miles per day. It arrived at Bladensburg from Georgetown (then in Maryland) on July 19, 1782 after breaking its sixteenth camp in the vicinity of the P Street Bridge over Rock Creek. The Bladensburg area was well known to the French engineers as its wagon train had passed through that town almost a year before (September 23, 1781) enroute from Annapolis to the eventual encounter at Yorktown.

Two days rest was permitted at Bladensburg and local tradition attributes this in part to the enthusiastic reception of the patriotic townspeople. This may be debatable as one chronicler (Chastellux (4) 11 615) had earlier reported (July 15 at Alexandria) that many of the soldiers participation in the dancing had disengaged themselves of their clothes, retaining 'not an article of dress except their shirts, which in general were neither extremely long, nor in the best condition, nor die this occasion the least embarassment to the ladies, many of whom were of highly polished manners, and, the most exquisite delicacy". In retrospect it is not improbable that the army was truly fatigued and that ,a rest interval amid the serenity of Bladensburg was highly beneficial, if not a vital necessity!

The eighteenth camp was recorded as Snowden's Iron Works (Birmingham Manor) on the Patuxent river on July 22, eighteen and a half miles away. The journal of one of the marchers, Blanchard by name, notes that he was well lodged on July 25 in the house of a wealthy Major (Thomas) Snowden where he had excellent ham for dinner and again for supper, in the company of Major Snowden's attractive wife and daughter. (The locale, of course, was today's Montpelier on Route. 197 east of Laurel,, Maryland)

History records that despite the diverse hazards of such long trips under such conditions the French army did return home safely in due course embarking from Boston in September. Original maps, in color, prepared by the Army's engineers at each encampment are filed in the Map Division of the Library of Congress (in Alexandria, Va.). These show the assigned bivouac areas of the various Army's units and a wealth of historical detail with respect to landmarks of that time at each campsite.

Paul T. Lanham

Reference:

Rice and Brown, eds. The American Campaign of Rochambeau's Army Princeton Univ. & Brown Univ. Press. 1972

BICENTENNIAL PROJECT HONORS ARCHBISHOP CARROLL

To honor the memory of Archbishop John Carroll, a recognized patriot and the first Roman Catholic bishop in the United States, plans are being made to erect a monument at his birthplace in Upper Marlboro.

The project is under the auspices of the Society of the Pilgrims of St. Mary's, an organization founded by Father John LaFarge, S.J., in 1934, when Maryland was preparing to celebrate the Tercentenary of the settlement of the Colony at St. Mary's in 1634. Since its beginning, the Society has remained dedicated to preserving the traditions, the shrines, and the words and deeds of Maryland's most outstanding citizens.

Among these is Certainly John Carroll. Born in 1735, he is notable not only as a churchman, but as a patriot and an educator. At the request of Congress in 1776, he accompanied Benjamin Franklin Samuel Chase and Charles Carroll of Carrollton (his cousin) to Quebec and aided in keeping Canada neutral during the War for Independence. He was an active pioneer of American liberty and an ardent supporter of religious toleration. He was also the founder of Georgetown University. As a Bishop after 1790, his vast diocese included all of the United States at that time.

When the Carroll property in Upper Marlboro was sold to Prince George's County by the Archbishop of Baltimore in 1938 for purposes of enlarging the Court House, the privilege of erecting a suitable monument to John Carroll was recorded in the deed. County officials and distinguished representatives of the church and the state have approved of the project as being appropriately connected with the National Bicentennial Celebration. Encouraged by this, the Pilgrims of St. Mary's have begun a fund drive in order to be ready for 1976. Being a small organization, the Society is reaching out beyond its membership and inviting interested and sympathetic friends to join with it in properly and faithfully carrying out this historical objective. They are fortunate to have the well-known sculptor Felix de Weldon as their artist.

The Society is ecumenical and its membership is not limited to Marylanders. Under Internal Revenue Service rulings, contributions to it are tax deductible. Anyone desiring to contribute to this Bicentennial project may make their checks payable to "Pilgrims of St. Mary's Bicentennial Fund" and mail them to Mrs. Kondrup Gray, "Eden House" Beaufort Park, Fulton, Maryland 20759.

This Project has recently received the official endorsement of the Maryland Bicentennial Commission. Any members of the Prince George's County Historical Society who may desire further information may contact PGCHS member Esther Brooke Christmas (Mrs. Donelson Christmas), 8200 Rosaryville Road, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20870. Telephone! 868--2231.

Mrs. Christmas serves as Secretary of the Bicentennial Committee of the Society of the Pilgrims of St. Mary's.

- FSD

MAGAZINES WANTED

A small reference library is planned in conjunction with the museum displays to be located in the George Washington House when it is completed. Any member having back issues of the Maryland Historical Magazine is invited to contribute them to the collection if they are no longer wanted. Other appropriate books will be received as well. Please call PGCHS member Bill Aleshire at 474-3360 and he will arrange to pick them up.

DESCRIPTION OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY - 1372

Prince George's County, organized 1695*, has an area of 500 square miles, and is bounded by the Patuxent River on the northeast and east, on the south by Charles County, and on the west by the Potomac River, and on the north-west by the District of Columbia and Montgomery County.

The soil consists mostly of the best loam and sand intermixed with clay. The underlying strata is marl and cemented sand, resembling sand-stone. The surface is rolling, and well supplied with springs and running streams flowing into the two boundary rivers. These streams have considerable waterpowers, some of them improved with saw and grist mills. At Laurel, on the Patuxent, is a large cotton factory.

Prince George's is an agricultural county, and ranks with the best counties in the State. The district known as "The Forrest" is celebrated for its fine farms, and is unsurpassed in fertility and productions. The principal products are tobacco, corn, wheat, and rye. Tobacco is the great crop of the county, and amounted in 1860, to 13,446,550 lbs., being much the greatest production of any one county in the Union, and about one-third of the crop of the whole state. The corn crop is also very large.

Iron ore is abundant in several localities, and near Oxen Creek are large supplies of sulphuret of iron, which it is thought might be manufactured into sulphuric acid. At Fort Washington there is a ferruginous clay, known as "bole", which is employed to dye cloth and thread a red color. Tripoli is also found in many localities, and some of it has been exported from, Nottingham.

The State Agricultural College is situated north of Bladensburg, in a locality surrounded by some of the finest farms in Maryland.

Prince George's has some of the largest shad and herring fisheries on the Potomac, and on the Patuxent are extensive beds of fine oysters.

The county has, for transporting produce, the Potomac and Patuxent Rivers, which are traversed by many sailing-vessels, besides lines of steamers to _____ and Hill's Landing on the latter river. The Baltimore and Washington Railroad also crosses the northern part of the county.

The county-seat is Upper Marlborough, a small town. The other towns of importance are Laurel, a thriving manufacturing village on the Patuxent River and Baltimore railroad, and Bladensburg also near the railroad and but a few miles from Washington, and near the battle-ground of the last war with England in 1814.

Contributed by Edith Bagot

The act of the General Assembly creating Prince George's County was passed in 1695. It specified that the county should begin _____ officially on St. George's Day, April 23, 1696.
-ed.

Reference

Martinet S.J.; Walling, H.F. and Gray, W.D. Atlas of Maryland, District of Columbia and the United States. Published by Stedman Brown and Lyon Baltimore: 1873.

NEWS AND NOTES

Next month's issue will appear, but more volunteers are still needed.

end of Vol. II, No 10

News and Notes From

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NOVEMBER 1974

Vol. II, No. 11

DECEMBER MEETING

The Society's traditional Christmas party will be held on Saturday, December 14, 1974, at 2:00 p.m. at Montpelier Mansion. Please bring your friends and celebrate with us.

We would also appreciate it if those of you who have a particular Christmas food speciality would share a sample of it with us. Such variety makes the party more interesting.

Montpelier is located on Route 197 just south of Laurel. There will be no formal business meeting.

MONTPELIER CANDLELIGHT TOUR

The Women's Club of Laurel has extended an invitation to members of the Prince George's County Historical Society to join them for their third annual Christmas Candlelight Tour of Montpelier to be held the evening of December 3, 1974, from 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Family and friends of Society members are also invited to attend. Start this Christmas season with an evening amidst the sights, sounds, and aromas of Christmas of yesteryear. A donation of \$2.00 for adults and \$1.00 for children is asked.

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Members of the Society may be interested in receiving some of the materials available for free from two national organizations coordinating celebrations of the bicentennial of the American Revolution, the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration and the People's Bicentennial Commission, both of Washington, D.C.

The American Revolution Bicentennial Administration, an agency of the United States government, publishes a monthly newspaper called Bicentennial Times. ARBA will add you to the mailing list at no charge. Write to: The American Revolution Bicentennial Administration, 2401 E Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20276.

The People's Bicentennial Commission is a public foundation not affiliated with the federal government. The PBC believes that the business and political establishment has corrupted fundamental American values, and calls for

Americans to dedicate themselves to "a new patriotism--one that calls for allegiance to the revolutionary democratic principles that launched our first national rebellion to tyranny."

The People's Bicentennial Commission publishes a monthly newspaper on Revolutionary history and current events called Common Sense. A free introductory packet may be obtained from the PBC by writing: People's Bicentennial Commission, 1346 Connecticut Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. 20036

FOUR SEASONS IN MARYLAND

Cold Winter weather has finally hit the area, but that's no excuse to stay home. There are several events in Maryland this month that shouldn't be missed. Last minute changes sometimes occur in dates and times, so it would be wise to call ahead to confirm.

December 1 9th ANNUAL HOLLY TOUR
Downtown Baltimore homes and churches, especially decorated for the Christmas season
Road, Towson. Tel: 301-323-4207.

I

December 3 3rd ANNUAL CANDLELIGHT TOUR OF MONTPELIER
Women's Club of Laurel. 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. Adults \$2.00,
Children \$1.00.

December 6-8 3rd ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CRAFT SHOW AND SALE
Greenbelt Recreation Center. Contact: Mrs. Richard L. Taylor,
Dept of Recreation, Greenbelt. Tel: 474-6878.

December 7-8 7th ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BAZAAR
Unusual and handsome gift items from world markets and local
craftsmen. Carroll County Farm Museum. Also December 13-15.
Contact: Museum, Rt 6, Box 412, Westminster. Tel: 301-848-
7775.

December 8 10th ANNUAL CHRISTMAS MUSIC PROGRAM
Civic Center, Salisbury. Contact: Frank Buob, Civic Center, 500
Glen Avenue, Salisbury. Tel- 301-742-3201.

December 12 16th ANNUAL CHRISTMAS GREENS SHOW
Christmas 200 years ago in the historic Hammond-Harwood House, one
Contact: Mrs. H. W. McDonald, 19 Maryland Avenue, Annapolis.
Tel:,301-263-6773.

December 13-15 7th ANNUAL CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE
Tour of candlelit mid 19th century farm home, Carrol County Farm
Museum. Contact: Museum, Rt 6, Box 412, Westminster. Tel: 301
848-7775.

December 14-30 8th ANNUAL CHRISTMAS AT MOUNT CLARE
Open House in this exquisite 18th century mansion. Contact: Mrs.
George Harrison, Stewart rd, Stevenson. Tel: 301-486-3646.

December 15-29 3rd ANNUAL CHRISTMAS AT THE MILLER HOUSE
Hagerstown. Contact: Washington County Division of Tourism,
Hagerstown. Tel: 301-731-0110 ext 203.

- January 1 ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE AT THE GOVERNOR'S MANSION
Annapolis. Still in the planning stages. Call the State House or watch the papers for details.
- All winter FROSTBITE SAILING RACES
On Sundays in Annapolis. Contact: Annapolis Yacht Club,
Annapolis. Tel: 301-263-9279.

"MUSICAL CHAIRS--COLONIAL STYLE--1696"

Most county history enthusiasts are aware that Prince George's County was created by an act of the legislature in 1695 and that "erection" of the County actually took place on St. George's Day, April 23, 1696. However, it is not generally recognized that four Maryland counties were directly involved in this historic shuffle of land, people and civic offices!

When the 1696 dust settled, so to speak, "Calvert County had lost all of its land west of the Patuxent River to St. Mary's, Charles and Prince George's Counties. St. Mary's County gained land east to the Patuxent River from Calvert County. Charles County lost its land north of Mattawoman Creek to Prince George's County but gained land east to the Patuxent from Calvert County, and Prince George's became the new western frontier county, made up of all land draining west into the Potomac River from Mattawoman Creek north to the Pennsylvania line, which came from Charles County, and the land draining east into the Patuxent River between Swanson's Creek and the forks of the Patuxent, which came from Calvert County."(--quoted from Prince George's Heritage by Louise Joyner Hinton)

"Calvert County, formerly the largest of the counties of Maryland in area, now became the smallest in size. The County lost not only the larger portion of its geographical area by this partition, but also many of its leading citizens such as the Addisons, Brookes, Bealls, Claggetts, Greenfields and others. This upper territory of Calvert County had been found to contain the most fertile soil of any of the counties of Southern Maryland. Not only had the more recent immigrants taken up land there, but also many representatives of the old families from the lower county had moved to (what would become) the Prince George's area. In 1694, Calvert County had possessed 1787 freemen and was the most populous of all the counties, Anne Arundel with 1539 being the second. In 1695, after the organization of Prince George's County, the number of freemen remaining in Calvert County was 1040. Although a blow to local pride, the partition of Calvert County in 1695 was a logical action and was inevitable historically." (--quoted from A History of Calvert County, Maryland by Charles Francis Stein)

The two authoritative writers quoted above have succinctly summarized the impact of the erection of the new Prince George's County from their respective viewpoints on opposite sides of the Patuxent River. As competent historians who have done their "homework" well, there are no conflicts of significant facts. Yet, remembering the recent furor generated by the overlapping boundaries of Prince George's and Montgomery Counties, in the vicinity of Laurel, Maryland, and the vigor with which both sides pressed their

respective claims, the casual reader is left dangling between the lines as to how this momentous change in 1695 could come about with such efficiency, dispatch and lack of recorded rancor!

Even in those early days, a change to reduce the largest county of Maryland to the smallest must have been the product of some powerful motivations or political expediency! Was Calvert County retreating from its expanding responsibilities to its vast northern landholdings or was Calvert County politically outmaneuvered by a jealous Charles and St. Mary's coalition? Did the creation of Prince George's County represent a secession led by a group of "up-county" entrepreneurs" looking to the influential political and judicial positions to be filled in a new county? Was the General Assembly punishing a recalcitrant Cavalier aristocracy? Somewhere there must be more facts behind this matter!

History must encompass more than a bare documenting of "what happened on what date." The thread of "why did certain events occur" is of equal or even greater significance. Somewhere in the writings of the day or in the musty files of the Hall of Records at Annapolis there must exist some clue as to how or why the entity of today's Prince George's County was conceived. The sweetness and light philosophy expounded by the only written words available today just do not ring true to those of us always suspicious of political hanky-panky, even as far back as 1695!

--by Paul T. Lanham

THE BOWL GAMES

The-Holiday season is also the season of collegiate football bowl games, and the University of Maryland will be making a bowl appearance again this year when the Terrapins travel to Memphis, Tennessee, for the Liberty Bowl Game on December 16.

The Terps have appeared in six previous bowl games-and have a record of two wins, three losses, and one tie. Until last year, the Terrapins had not appeared in a post-season game since the years of Coach Jim Tatum.

The University's bowl record:

1947	Gator Bowl,, Jacksonville	Maryland	20, Georgia	20
1949	Gator Bowl, Jacksonville	Maryland	20, Missouri	7
1952	Sugar Bowl, New Orleans	Maryland	28, Tennessee	13
1954	Orange Bowl, Miami	Oklahoma	7, Maryland	0
1956	Orange Bowl, Miami	Oklahoma	20, Maryland	6
1973	Peach Bowl, Atlanta	Georgia	17, Maryland	16
1974	Liberty Bowl, Memphis	Opponent is	Tennessee	

The University is not the only area team that has appeared in bowl games. The Naval Academy has appeared in several, and both Catholic University and Georgetown played in early Orange Bowl games.

THE CLAGETTS

Mr., Brice McAdoo Clagett of Holly Hill, of Friendship, Maryland, will soon publish a multi-volume history of the Clagett and Claggett families of the United States and their descendants of other names.

The Clagett family has long been associated with Prince George's County and the state and colony of Maryland. Among the county's fine homes that were once or still are Clagett properties-or are properties of allied families are Beall's Pleasure, Weston, Compton Bassett, and Mount Lubentia. Captain Thomas Clagett brought the Clagett name to Southern Maryland about 1670.

Mr. Clagett has been researching the history of his family for many years. He has corresponded with several thousand living Clagett descendants over-the past ten years and has traced lines of descent through females as well as males. In 1965 he spent five weeks in England doing research and photographing houses, tombs, and other sites connected with the family.

Members of the Society will be informed through News-and Notes as soon as this work is published.

AN ADVERTISEMENT-1768

The Snow
APOLLO
Capt. John Midford

(being a Free Bottom in Maryland)
bound to Patowmack River, is expected to leave Barbados in
January or February next. Any Gentleman inclined to ship
West India GOODS in her, from thence are requested to inform
their Correspondents thereof. She will also take in MERCHANDIZE
for any other Part of Maryland; provided it is agreeable
to the owners to receive them in the Eastern Branch of said
River. CHRISTOPHER LOWNDES. (The Maryland Gazette, Dec. 8, 1768)

MAIL SERVICE IN THE BELTSVILLE AREA SINCE 1804

(This article was originally published in the March 1974 issue of BITS OF BARC, the 'newsletter of the Agricultural Research Center Employees' Association, as a tribute to Virginia Neuman who retired in February 1974 after serving 41 years as Beltsville's postmistress. The author's sources were articles from the old Beltsville, News, The

Historical Booklet of Laurel, Maryland, and notes and articles by the late Ethel Woodward given to the author by the late Miss Susie Beall-- Editor.)

The first post office in the Beltsville area was established in 1804 on Vansville Hill in Van Horn's Tavern. Edward Hall was the first postmaster. This establishment came only 14 years after the establishment of the new United States mail service, so the Van Horn post office has the distinction of being one of America's earliest. It was the only one on the Washington-Baltimore Turnpike between Bladensburg and Relay (or Frenchtown, as Relay was called at the time).

In 1937 Postmaster General James A. Farley, while dedicating a new post office for Laurel, stated that one hundred years earlier a similar dedication had taken place in Laurel Factory, as the town was known until 1875. Edwin Snowden was the Laurel postmaster. This shows that the Vansville post office was established 33 years before Laurel Factory's though Laurel's first industrial building, a stone grist mill, was erected on the edge of The Patuxent River by Nicholas Snowden in 1811.

The mail was carried to and from the post offices in the early days in one of the Post Office Department's specially designed fast mail coaches, which could also carry three passengers besides the mail. The passenger compartment was often called the "monkey box." The mail pouches were carried in a tight wooden box on the back axles. This fast mail coach was abandoned for the regular coach after a short trial period because of the horrible clatter it made over the bumpy muddy roads. The main North-South mail route ran between Baltimore and Georgetown and the "fast" coaches left Washington at 4:00 in the morning and arrived in Baltimore just before midnight the same day. Bladensburg, one of the first 13 established post offices in the United States, and Vansville were the two stops between Georgetown and Laurel.

Gabriel G. Van Horn, son of Gabriel Peterson Van Horn, was appointed postmaster on April 1, 1808, to succeed Edward Hall. He served until his death in 1815, when James Edmonston was appointed. He served from November 25, 1815, until October 1816 when William Lanham was appointed. Elma Bell was appointed March 30, 1818 and served five years. Hugh Drummond was appointed next on December 6, 1823 and served until 1832 when Thomas C. Duvall was appointed.

At this point I would like to insert data discovered on a label in an old Eli Terry Patented Clock dated 1834 concerning postage rates at the time. These labels were almost almanacs in themselves, giving date, maker's name, postage rates, post road mileage from Washington to the north and to the south, and the population of the United States, which then consisted of 23 states, the territories of Florida, Arkansas, and Michigan and the District of Columbia.

Letters:	Not exceeding 400 miles	18¢
Single letters less than 30 miles 6¢	Over 400 miles	25¢
Not exceeding 80 miles 10¢	Double letters --double the rates	
Not exceeding 150 miles 12¢	Triple letters --triple the rates	

Newspapers:		Pamphlets Which are not periodical	
Not exceeding 100 miles	1¢	Not exceeding 100 miles	4¢
Over 100 miles	1 1/2¢	Over 100 miles, per sheet	6¢
Periodical magazines and pamphlets			
Per sheet not over 100 miles		1 1/2¢	
Any greater distance		2 1/2¢	

These rates make one think, and not too harshly, of the 10¢ "bargain", rates we have per letter today.

The mail coach traveled the main post road north from Washington, D.C. to Portland, Maine, a distance of 572 miles. The southern route went as far as Tallahassee, Florida a distance of 896 miles-; New Orleans, Louisiana, a distance of 1230 miles; Little Rock, Arkansas, a distance of 1066 miles; and Monticello, Mississippi, a distance of 1230 miles. The route to Detroit, Michigan was 526 miles. Consider how long it took for the coaches to travel these routes when the time from Washington to Baltimore was around 20 hours.

Thomas Duvall was the last Vansville postmaster. In 1835 the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, with a contract for carrying the mail, established a stop at the site of Beltsville. This was a severe blow to the Vansville community. The railroad brought the center of local activity to the stop. The railroad named its stop "Beltsville" after Truman Belt, whose land had been purchased for the right of way, though some will dispute the origin of the name. The post office was moved to William Belt's store in 1835 and Mr. Belt was named post master. The store was on the turnpike near the railroad tracks. Belt served until 1838 when John T. Holtzman took over. He was followed in 1840 by Judson McKnew and Henry Wright in 1841 and then by Jacob Hall who was appointed in 1841. John Holtzman again was appointed in, 1843 and served for 9 years.

On February 16, 1852, John Simms, merchant and farmer, was appointed postmaster, and had the office in his store located by the railroad station. At the time of his death his son-James succeeded him and ran the store and post office from 1887 to 1891. Miss Sarah Simms-was appointed in 1893. She moved the office into her home. It was entered from the front porch, a bell tinkling as one opened the door. A few boxes, maybe 30, stood on a table. She resigned because of ill health and Kennedy Simms was appointed in 1903. In 1908 Mr. Charles Fox was appointed and a rural route was established. In 1909 Miss-Helen Whalen was appointed, and as far as can be determined, was postmistress until Virginia Neuman, then a very young girl, took over the job to make it her life's career.

At the time of Virginia's appointment on February 13, 1933, the post office was in the corner of Simms General Store, with no conveniences that a young girl should have. This building still stands on the corner of Prince George's Avenue and Route 1.

Beltsville began to grow, and more space was needed for mail service, so the post office moved across Prince George's Avenue to the Bowman Building in the shop next to the

quarters occupied by the Gun Shop at the present time. Moves were more and more frequent under Virginia's leadership, and in the 1950s the post office was moved to the building on the corner of Route 1 and Harford Avenue. The final move came in 1961 to the new building, built especially to house the post office, on the corner of Rhode Island Avenue and Prince George's Avenue. This facility was built to serve a rapidly growing community and to absorb the neighboring small office of Ammendale and Muirkirk. Virginia Neuman has the distinction of serving the people of Beltsville as their postmistress longer than any of her predecessors.

--Edna C.

Holliday

A QUERY: THE DESCENDANTS OF THOMAS LANCASTER LANSDALE,
1748-1803

Thomas Lancaster Lansdale was a prominent and wealthy figure in 18th century Prince George's County. He served in the Revolutionary War and achieved the rank of Major in General Smallwood's Brigade of the Maryland Line. Taken prisoner at Fort Washington, he was later present at the surrender of Yorktown.

In February of 1782 he married Cornelia Van Horne. He probably established his wife at St. Mary's where he had a plantation. Later they moved to Prince George's County, Thomas and Cornelia had five children; four married and had issue. In Thomas' will he named them and left vast sums of money to his heirs. They were:

William Moylan Lansdale, born 1782, married his cousin Eliza Moylan in 1807, and was left \$20,000
Cornelia, born 1784, married Philip John Thomas in 1804, and was left \$16,000

Violetta, born 1787, married Samuel Sprigg about 1810/1811 (he became Governor), and was left \$16,000

Eliza, born 1789, married John Florentius Cox in 1809 and was left \$16,000

Philip, born 1791, died without issue, and was left \$25,000.

Prince George's County families of DuVal and Duckett enter the Lansdale family through Thomas' son William. The DuVal line stems from Edmund Bryce DuVal who married Caroline Donaldson Lansdale in 1846 in Alexandria, Virginia. They had 11 children, all born at Marietta. Eight of them married and had issue. They are:

Catherine Moylan, Married Daniel M. Kent in 1872, res. Oakland, California, 4 daughters.

Gabriel, married Elizabeth W. Miller in 1884, res. Baltimore, 2 sons, 2 daughters.

Edmund Bryce, married Agnes S. Jay in 1889, res. Baltimore(?), 3 daus.

Gabriella Augusta, married Marion Duckett in 1879, res. Bowie, 4 sons 5 daughters.

Maria Hornor, married Philip S. Dickey in 1879, res. Baltimore, 3 sons.

Cornelia Lansdale, married Arthur C. Cleborne in 1890, res. ?, 2 sons.

William Moylan, married Martha L. Agard in 1891, res. Oakland, California, 2 sons, 1 daughter.

Mary Frances, married Howard Sill in 1892, res. Baltimore, 2 sons, 3 daughters.

The Duckett line stems from Marion Duckett who married Gabriella "Ella" DuVal in 1879 at Holy Trinity Church, Collington, Prince George's County, Maryland. They had 4 sons and 5 daughters. Of the 9 children at least 8 married. They are:

Thomas Howard, married Josephine Dent in 1905, res. Hyattsville, 2 sons 2 daughters
Caroline Lansdale, married John Selby, res. Bladensburg
F. Marion, married Margaret R. Stephen, res. "Forest Hill," a son and a daughter
Edmund DuVal, married Mary Eliza Harrison in 1921, res. Virginia, 3 sons
Violetta Lee, married Clifford Lee Johnson
Allen Bowie, married Margaret Hildreth
Margaret Louise, married Burton Glenn
Agnes Jay DuVal, married 1) William Turner Wooton, a son and a daughter, 2) John B. Thomas.

I would like to contact or correspond with as many of Major Thomas Lansdale's descendants as possible, especially those residing in the Metropolitan Washington area*. Please contact: Mrs. Jesse Brown, 3719 Irongate Lane, Bowie, Md. 20715.

BAY CRUISES

The Washington Star-News of Sunday November 24 reports that the American Cruise Lines will revive the overnight passenger cruise of the Chesapeake Bay late next year. A new 150-foot diesel powered steel ship is being built for the line in South Bristol, Maine, and will begin its 6-day cruises around the Bay next November.

The ship will carry 62 passengers in 28 staterooms and is fully carpeted, paneled and airconditioned. The vessel will cruise in the morning and arrive at port in the afternoon. Oxford, St. Michaels, Cambridge, Tangier, and Smith Island are among the bay ports on the itinerary.

Although some sailing vessels have offered cruises to Bay ports with overnight accommodations on land, the American Cruise Lines is the first line in many years to offer accommodations on board.

Does any member of the Society remember the overnight cruises of the past, and has any member taken such a cruise?

NEWS AND NOTES

A few months ago the President of the Society began broadcasting appeals for more help in preparing this publication. Without more help he said, News and Notes would have to be discontinued.

Several members of the Society pledged their assistance and I agreed to edit the publication. I hope I can be as successful in that task as Mr. De Marr has been, for News and Notes has become an important part of the Society's overall program.

A publication such as News and Notes will continue to grow if it consists of **three types of writing**: "news stories" on historical goings-on, articles presenting interesting facts in county history, and articles of historical analysis. Paul Lanham has eloquently pointed out the need for more articles of historical analysis in his contribution to this issue. I hope such works will be forthcoming from Society members. It will be my goal to maintain a balance between the three types of writing in News and Notes.

Almost as important as the content of any publication is the actual presentation of the material. Over the next few months we will look into the possibility of converting to offset printing so News and Notes can include photographs and drawings and be presented in a format that is easier to read.

News and Notes is produced by volunteers. More are always needed. Please call me with your ideas and offers of assistance.

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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end of Vol. II, No 11

News and Notes from

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DECEMBER 1974

Vol. II.,

No. 12

The Holidays in Maryland--A Message for the New Year

"All the good things of a plentiful country decorated the table of our Munificent host; the wines were excellent, and various; and cheerful blazing fires with enlivening conversation, exhilarated the spirits, and rendered us totally regardless of the rigour of an American winter. On the ensuing day, the whole company proceeded to Rousby Hall, where we continued in the full enjoyment of genuine hospitality, till the third [of the] month; and it was with the utmost reluctance that we were then permitted to take our departure."

The above are the words of William Eddis, Crown Surveyor of the Customs in Annapolis, recollecting his Holiday trip to Southern Maryland in the 1770-71 Holiday season, as recorded in Wilstach's Tidewater Maryland. We wish you and your families such a pleasant Holiday season and a prosperous New Year.

The Future of Montpelier

It was reported earlier this month in the Star that State Senator Arthur Dorman and the three members of the House of Delegates from Prince George's 21st Legislative District (North County) were looking 'into the possibility of acquiring office space in Montpelier Mansion in Laurel. Senator Dorman felt that the delegation would be more accessible to its constituents with an office there, rather than with the rest of the County's legislative delegation in Riversdale, the Calvert Mansion, in Riverdale.

The latest word, however, is that the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, operators and owners of both Montpelier and Riversdale, has denied the request.

New Carrollton

Recognizing the inevitable loss of names, dates, and occasions which results from the passage of time, the city of New Carrollton has documented its own such vital statistics in a colorful forty page illustrated booklet commemorating its 21st birthday. Mr. Richard Eibel conducted the research, while Mrs. Peggy Maio and Earl Klinger were editors and production managers. The publication is available from the city administrative offices at a cost of \$2.00. The title is New Carrollton: Coming of Age, 1953-1974.

--Paul Lanham

Maryland and The Shoulder Weapons of The Revolution

As the nation's Bicentennial approaches, small arms enthusiasts of Maryland are increasingly interested in the types of shoulder weapons which their ancestors may have carried in the Revolution.

Although British officers of that period were armed with a very light musket of the "fuzee" design (a corollary of the carbine carried by U.S. Company grade officers in World War II), General Washington strongly disapproved of his infantry officers carrying firearms and attempted to abolish the practice. Washington's belief in this regard was that tile attention of an officer could be better applied in warfare to more important efforts. Reluctantly, however, officers were permitted hand guns for personal protection.

During the first years of the war, the colonies' "Committees/Councils of Safety" contracted for such military muskets as they could procure, and as a consequence, collectors today tend to improperly consider all American made muskets of the period as

"Committee of Safety" muskets. Actually, the term is applicable to a small proportion of the total acquired.

The early "Committee" muskets were close copies of the second model caliber .75 British Brown Bess smooth bore, but the Congress subsequently recommended, late in 1775, the rudiments of a standardized design for American use. Until Pennsylvania enacted a law precluding export of arms from that nearby colony without a license, however, Maryland did not find it necessary to follow the example of many of its sister colonies in prescribing its own official design.

In August 1775, Maryland defined its standards by requiring a 3 1/2 foot barrel of three quarters of an inch bore, double bridge locks, walnut/maple stocks, and brass mountings - Bayonets were to be seventeen inches long, and for every eighty muskets, a pair of bullet molds was to be provided (one side for molding twelve musket balls, the other for shot of such size that three could be simultaneously chambered). Maximum cost was not to exceed ten and two thirds dollars. (It is noted that barrel length was two inches shorter and bayonet length one inch shorter than the recommended design of the Congress. Further, production shortages forced an eventual waiver of the brass mountings for iron and acceptance of a single bridge, in lieu of a double bridge, on the gunlock. Also, some one inch bore muskets were later authorized.)

Thomas Ewing of Baltimore was appointed as an inspector and rigidly proofed all weapons with two balls and one ounce of powder; at one time. He reportedly rejected 19 of 32 muskets presented for acceptance. Details of his proof mark are vague, but it apparently somewhat resembled a fleur-de-lis.

Wartime shortages ultimately forced Maryland to import barrels and locks for local stocking and mounting. The shortage of locks however became sufficiently acute that the Council was forced to establish a state gunlock factory in Frederick in 1776.

Expert opinion varies as to the effectiveness of the military musket of the Revolution. However, it is generally accepted that a well trained soldier with a well-bored musket could sustain a lethal rate of fire of one shot every fifteen seconds at a range from eighty to one hundred yards. These characteristics dictated a basic infantry formation of massed ranks, shoulder to shoulder, which could be expected to deliver two devastating effective volleys against a charging force on open ground. From that point on, the bayonet and capability in its use became the deciding factor.

A popular conclusion from the Revolution concerns the American rifleman using a long barrel rifled weapon firing from cover with great accuracy at massed Redcoat formations. The frontiersmen (particularly Marylanders) of the day could and did use such weapons/tactics and history records their effectiveness at Kings Mountain and the harassment of the British retreat from Concord and Lexington. However, the written word offers some graphic evidence of serious limitations of the light rifle in the Revolution, viz:

1. Samuel Webster (after Bunker Hill): "tis barbarous to let men be obligated to oppose bayonets with only gun barrels."
2. General Mad Anthony Wayne stated he never wanted to see another rifle, at least without a bayonet, and even then he would prefer a musket:
3. The Secretary of the Board of War in response to Maryland's offer of a company of riflemen: "were it in the power of Congress to supply muskets, they would speedily reduce the number of rifles and replace them with the former, as they are more easily kept in order, can be fired oftener and have the advantage of bayonets."

In summary, for the purpose solely of presenting a provocative opinion, one widely recognized authority is quoted: "The rifle was not, as some have claimed, the gun that won the American Revolution, but supported by musketry and used in accordance with its special attributes, it was a very, useful and deadly weapon." (Harold Peterson)

Collectors readily recognize that many colonists owned British muskets from the Colonial Wars and many additional British muskets were captured during the Revolution. Further, as a result of improved designs which evolved directly after the Revolution, older weapons were quickly disposed of thereafter. Consequently, relatively few authentic American muskets from the Revolution have survived. However, the light weight rifle of the Revolution, although quite fragile as compared to the smooth bore musket, represented a state of the art advance in accuracy (200 yards) not to be surpassed for many years. This fact, coupled with its high investment cost and its light weight suitability for civilian hunting and protection, despite its slower reloading rate shielded the rifle from the oblivion which rapidly overtook the revolutionary musket. As a consequence, splendid examples of the "American-Kentucky-Pennsylvania" rifle can be seen in many public and private collections today while the heavy smooth bore musket with bayonet is a relatively scarce item.

References: The Book of the Continental Soldier by Harold Peterson.
Harrisburg Pa.. Stackpole Books, 1968.

Guns Throughout the Ages by Geoffrey Boothroyd. New York:
Bonanza Books, 1961.

American History, Illustrated. Vol. 11, no. 10. Gettysburg, Pa.
February 1968.

--by Paul T. Lanham

Prince George's County, The Maryland Gazette., and Christmas 1774

The year end is traditionally a time of both review and anticipation; a time for taking stock of what has been accomplished during the past 365 days and a time for making plans for the year ahead. Personal and professional plans are never made in a vacuum,

though, for some of the events of the world and the nation will always affect our personal lives.

Two hundred years ago this month the residents of Prince George's County were undoubtedly going through the same processes of review and planning that many of us are today. Unlike today, however, the problem of December 1774 that most affected the personal plans of Marylanders was not the state of the economy but the state of the political system. The Lord Proprietor's government had collapsed in the Spring, and an impromptu Provincial Convention took power in Maryland. Committees of observation and correspondence were elected in each county to administer local government and encourage a spirit of resistance. In the Fall, the First Continental Congress voted to boycott British goods, and Marylanders staged their own version of the Boston Tea Party by burning the Peggy Stewart in Annapolis harbor. Perhaps the most alarming occurrence, though, was the recommendation of the Provincial Convention in November for the county committees to form military companies and to arm them.

The residents of Prince George's County learned of the events of the province and the world from a variety of sources, one of which was Maryland's principal newspaper, the Maryland Gazette. The Gazette in 1774 was published weekly, with four pages per issue and three columns per page. There were rarely any drawings and never any large headlines. The dispatches and news articles were almost always arranged in the same order in each issue: first came the international news, then news of Britain and the Empire, then news from other colonies, and finally news of Maryland and the counties. There were no column fillers; articles ran one right after the other from the beginning of column one to the end. Unlike modern newspapers, the Gazette was not designed for easy browsing.

At least six of the Gazette's twelve columns were devoted to advertising. These were always the final columns of each issue, for advertising was never mixed with the news. Advertisements were rarely more than one column wide and were separated from each other by heavy dark lines.

The Maryland Gazette did not have paid reporters in the other colonies or in Britain. Like the other colonial papers, it relied on English newspapers, official documents, letters from friends, word from travellers and merchants, and other colonial newspapers as its sources for outside news. The Gazette was part of an informal cooperative news network, for like the rest of the colonial press, it felt free to lift articles directly from other papers and print them word for word. Nevertheless, news dissemination was much slower than now because surface transportation was so much slower. **News** from Europe and Britain was often two months old before it was printed, and news from other colonies was often a month old. Datelines were generally provided along with each article, however, so the reader would know just how old the news he was reading actually was.

Reproduced below are selections from the Maryland Gazette of December 29, 1774, that illustrate what might have been on the minds of the local citizens as they celebrated Christmas and looked forward to the New Year of 200 years ago. A few advertisements,

particularly those that relate to the County, have also been reproduced. This issue is somewhat atypical, however, for the individual counties were rarely given as much space as Prince George's County received in this news section. Indeed, local news usually comprised a very small percentage of the paper's content. The implementation of a call to arms was a revolutionary step, however, and the actions of the militant Prince Georgians must have been a topic of conversation at Holiday gatherings across the Province.

The Maryland Gazette

Annapolis,

December 29, 1774

[The] Hague, October 27--Prince Gallitzin, envoy extraordinary from Russia to this republic [Holland], has received the following letter from Count Stackelberg:

"Sire, as the death of the Grand Vizir Mouffon Oglou [of Turkey] gave occasion to our enemies to raise false rumors in relation to the late peace [between Russia and the Turks], I take it my duty to send you the following facts. Marquis Count Romanzow, who is almost recovered from his late illness,* has sent me word that the change in the Ottoman ministry hat made no change with respect to the treaty of the late Grand Vizir, whose death was natural. His successor has notified, by an express to Count Romanzow, that the peace signed by his predecessors shall continue firm and unalterable in all its articles, and that its conditions shall be religiously observed...."

Utrecht, [Holland], October 27--They write from Leghorn [Livorno, in Tuscany], that an English ship has informed them that an English squadron of eight men of war, three frigates, and two bomb-ketches, are ready to sail from Mahon [on Minorca] to Algiers, in order to bombard the Bey's residence for his having declared war against the English nation.

London, October 8--The liveries of the servants of the Lord Mayor elect, and for the porter at the mansion-house gate, are to be scarlet, richly embroidered with silver, with silver shoulder-knots, and according to directions given, the new Lord Mayor will make a grand appearance.

The letters received from Boston, dated the first of September, are of the most alarming nature. They assert that the inhabitants of Boston, and of the province of Massachusetts Bay, are now in arms. They have put themselves into constant exercise, and observe the most regular discipline. The governor (General Gage) alarmed to the last degree, at this state of things, sent to New-York for more troops, but the people of New York refused to furnish transports to convey the troops....

We read in the gazette, that the King in council orders of publication of an act of parliament, forbidding the exportation of arms, ammunition, and powder; alas! This will not distress the people of Boston and America; the French and Dutch at this hour are

supplying them with every necessary, and so great are the American demands in Holland and the ports of Bayonne and Bordeaux, that they cannot supply them quick enough.

Williamsburg, (Virginia) December 8--Sunday last, in the afternoon, his excellency the governor arrived at the palace in this city, from his expedition against the Indians, who have been humbled into a necessity of soliciting peace themselves, and have delivered hostages for the due observance of the terms; which cannot fail of giving general satisfaction, as they confine the Indians to limits that entirely remove the grounds of future quarrel between them and the people of Virginia, and lay a foundation for a fair and extensive Indian trade, which if properly followed, must produce the most beneficial effects to this country.

Annapolis, December 29--On the --- instant, about nine in the morning, a storehouse belonging to Col. Fitzhugh took fire, supposed by a spark from his office chimney; the wind blowing hard, it was soon destroyed, together with wine, spirits, molasses, &c. to a very considerable amount; it was with the utmost difficulty he saved his dwelling house, which stood but a few feet from the store.

Prince George's County, December 21, 1774-- At a meeting of the committee for said county at Upper-Marlborough, to consider of a method to raise the sum of eight-hundred and thirty-three pounds, according to the resolution entered into at Annapolis by the provincial Congress--it was agreed to raise the said sum by subscription in classes--the first class not less than five pounds, the second class three pounds, the third class two pounds, the fourth class one pound, the fifth class from ten shillings to two shillings and sixpence; and a very liberal subscription was immediately made by the committee and others present. Copies of the plan are making out for the same purpose through the county, and no doubt is made of the whole sum being very readily raised.

A general meeting of the county is earnestly requested on important affairs (that could not be entered on at this meeting) at Upper-Marlborough on Monday the sixteenth day of January, if the weather proves favorable, if otherwise, the next fair day.

It appears to this committee that ten companies may be enrolled in this county, viz: At Upper-Marlborough and its neighbourhood one company. At Queen Anne and its neighbourhood two companies. At Bladensburgh and its neighbourhood two companies. At Broad Creek and its neighbourhood one company. At Magruder's Landing and its neighbourhood one company. At Piscataway and its neighbourhood two companies. At Nottingham and its neighbourhood one company.

The committee for Upper-Marlborough intends to meet at that place on Monday the ninth of January next, if fair, if otherwise the next fair day, and it is recommended to all inhabitants to meet at their respective towns, or convenient places on the same day, to form themselves into companies, and choose their officers, according to the resolutions entered into at Annapolis on the eighth of this instant. By order, Hugh Lyon, Clerk.

Advertisements

Baltimore, December 20, 1774--Just arrived in the schooner Industry, William Woofey, master from Dublin: A parcel of healthy, indent[ur]ed men and women servants, amongst whom are, one cooper, one rope maker, two house-carpenters, one forgerman, one gunsmith, two bricklayers, one blacksmith, two schoolmasters, one watchmaker, one tailor, three weavers, two barbers, and several men used to country work; the women used chiefly to house work and spinning; whole indentures will be disposed of for cash or country produce, by the captain, on board the vessel in the Bason, or --**Woolsey and Salmon**.

Piscataway, December 6, 1774--Just imported in the Ocean, Capt. Dixon, from Whitehaven, and to Le sold at a moderate advance for cash or bills of exchange:

About £ 260 prime cost of goods; they consist of one hundred and four pieces of Kendal cotton in four packages of five or six different prices in each package, five packages of felt hats, with a few casters in each package, the cost of each package about £ 22; some course lawns, silk handkerchiefs, and white --- ounce thread make up the rest.--John Baynes

To Be Sold By Me Subscriber: for cash or London bills, the following tracts of land, lying partly in Charles, and partly in Prince George's Counties, viz: Littlewood Forest, 500 acres. Stephen's Hope, 90. Tanyard, 312. These three tracts lie together and have good improvements for quarters. The Curtail'd Rebecca, 2262 acres: on this is a tenement that is rented at 951 lbs. of tobacco annually. Poplar Thicket, 133 acres. It will be needless to enumerate on the quality of the land, as the land itself will show its value; a good title will be made the purchaser by

--Clement Wheeler

To Be Sold To The Highest Bidder, on Thursday the 25th day of -December [sic] next (unless disposed of in the Interim at private sale):

A very valuable tract of land, lying in Prince George's County, four miles from Upper Marlboro, nine miles from Queen-Anne, ten miles from Bladensburg, and twelve miles from Alexandria, containing about five hundred acres, whereon are four good fifty feet tobacco houses covered with lapped shingles, with overseers houses and negro quarters; the soil is excellent, and suitable either for planting or farming; it is well watered, and contains a great proportion of valuable meadow land, reclaimable with very little trouble and expense, timber sufficient to supply it for many years, with two apple orchards, &c. The terms and title (which is ---) may be known, and the land seen at any time between this and the day of sale, by applying to the subscriber, or in his absence to Mr. George F. Magruder, Mr. Peter Young, or Mr. Basil Magruder, living near the premises.

NB. The terms of sale will be tendered easy to the purchaser, as credit will be given for part of the purchase money; on giving bond, with security, if required. The sale to be on the premises.

--Thomas Magruder

Ten Pounds Reward. Ran away, or supposed to be stolen by Anthony Moorningdollar, a Dutchman, on the 25th of December last, a likely dark mulatto man slave named Samuel, about seventeen years of age, five fact eight or nine inches tall; had on when he went away, a new felt hat, --- shirt, roll trousers, and an old cotton jacket much wore and mended with country cloth. Moorningdollar was seen lurking about the neighbourhood for some days before the fellow went off, with light Me cloaths and a great surtout, and as he absconded about the same time, I am apprehensive he has carried the above slave along with him: whoever secures the supposed thief so as he may be punished accordingly, or brings the said slave to the subscriber, living near Piscataway, shall be entitled to a reward of five pounds currency for each, or for both the above reward of ten pounds.

--Elizabeth Green

This day is published, by William Aikman, bookseller and stationer, Annapolis, in two large volumes, handsomely bound and titled, price 16 s currency: A Kew Voyage Around the World, in the years 1768, 1769, 1770, and 1771, undertaken by Capt. James Cook in the ship Endeavour, drawn from his own journal and from the papers of Joseph Banks, Esq.; and published by order of the admiralty by John Hawkesworth, L.L.D. with cuts, and a map of the whole navigation.

This edition of Cook's voyages contains the whole of the second and third volumes of Hawkesviorth's collection of voyages, which was published in London in three volumes, and sold for three guineas.

-- Where may be had Poor Will's Almanack for 1775, price 8 d and Father Abraham's pocket Almanack, interleaved with writing paper, price I s.

December 1, 1774--The copartnership between the subscribers will end and be dissolved the 23rd day of next March, which has been carried on under the firms of Thomas Contee and company, and Contee and Bowie at Nottingham therefore all persons indebted to them on bond, bill, or open account, are desired to make speedy payment: those that fail payment by the first February next must excuse us for disagreeable consequences, as vie must take legal methods to enforce payments without respect to persons.

Thomas Contee
Fielder Bowie

[Original punctuation and spelling were maintained throughout, except in cases in which the original would unduly confuse the modern reader--Editor]

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Meetings

The annual observance of the Holiday Season at Montpelier has brought the Society's Fall meeting schedule to a close. The Spring schedule will commence on the second Saturday of March, 1975.

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