

NEWS AND NOTES FROM

# The Prince George's County Historical Society

Vol. VIII, no. 1

January 1980

## The New Year's Program

There will be no meetings of the Prince George's County Historical Society in January or February. The 1980 meeting program will begin with the March meeting on the second Saturday of that month.

## Public Forum on Historic Preservation

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission will sponsor a public forum on the future of historic preservation in Prince George's County on Thursday, January 10, at the Parks and Recreation Building, 6600 Kenilworth Avenue, in Riverdale. This forum, is the first step in the process of drafting a county Historic Sites and Districts Plan by the commission. (See next article). The purpose of the forum is to receive public testimony on historic preservation in Prince George's county. Among the questions to be addressed are these:

How important should historic preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, and revitalization be to Prince George's County?

What should the objectives and priorities of a historic sites and districts plan be?

What should be the relative roles of County government and private enterprise be in historic preservation and restoration?

To what extent should the destruction of historic landmarks be regulated and their restoration or preservation subsidized?

How should historic preservation relate to tourism, economic development, and revitalization?

Where should the responsibility rest for making determinations about the relative merits of preserving and restoring individual sites?

Members of the Historical Society, as well as others interested in historic preservation and its impact on county life, are invited to attend and, if they like, to testify. The Historic Sites and Districts Plan

## **PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

**ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23,1696**

will have great impact on the preservation of our county's heritage. Come on out and show your support. The meeting will be at 7:30 p.m.

"Drafting a Plan to Save History"

At the direction of the County Council, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission in January will begin drafting a plan to protect Prince George's County's historic sites. To summarize the intent of the plan and the steps to lead to its creation, we reprint the following article from the October 12 issue of Councilgram, the weekly legislative report of the Prince George's County Council.

#### Drafting a Plan To Save History

"Prince George's County, by all estimates, is' blessed with some of the finest colonial homes and farms along the East Coast. But by those sane estimates, Prince George's County is losing its historic sites at a rapid clip.

"The County Council is proposing a plan that would put the brakes on the historic losses.

"The County Council has asked the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission to draft a historic sites and district plan as an amendment to the General Plan to map out legislative and other incentives to promote private maintenance and restoration of some of the county's finest historic homes. CR-69 [Council Resolution 69] was authored by Chairman William Amonett. The resolution was enacted unanimously by the County Council this week [October 9].

"According to the resolution, the plan, to be completed by June 30, 1980, is set listing goals for preservation and restoration as well as outline criteria for designating sites as worthy of preservation.

"The plan will include a brief description of each site recommended for preservation and a map showing the general location.

"On the issue of preservation, the plan will pinpoint potential sources of funds for preservation, including possible revenue from publicly-owned sites and development of a tourism program using the historic buildings as a focal point.

"The Park and Planning Commission will be aided by a Citizens Advisory Committee in drafting the plan, which would go to public hearing before final action by the Council. The historic sites plan will be handled in much the same manner as a master plan.

"At least 60 percent of the Citizens Advisory Committee will be composed of trustees of the Prince George's Historic and Cultural Trust and members of the Prince George's Committee of the Maryland Historical Trust and the Prince George's County Historical Society. The panel's membership will include representatives of communities with a concentration of historic sites, the Prince George's Municipal Association, the business community and professionals involved in historic preservation, including architects and lawyers."

#### Perry O. Wilkinson

We regret to inform the membership of the death on December 14 of Perry O. Wilkinson, former Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates and a member of this Society.

Mr. Wilkinson was born in Hebron, Maryland, on the Eastern Shore, and received both bachelors and masters degrees from the University of Maryland. He became a teacher in the public schools of Prince George's County and later established the insurance agency in Hyattsville which bore his name and With which he was associated for many years. In 1942 he was elected to the House of Delegates and served in that body for twenty years. He was its Speaker from 1959 until 1962.

Perry was a member of the Prince George's Chamber of Commerce, Kiwanis, and several Democratic clubs. He attended the Society's meetings and programs with his wife Mabel quite frequently. The Society extends its deepest sympathy to Mrs. Wilkinson and to their son, Perry O. Wilkinson, Jr.

#### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

John L. Pallas	Camp Springs	Mr. Embrey
Tom and Jerry Willoughby	College Park	Mr. Embrey
Mr. & Mrs. Herbert L. Baer	Hyattsville	Mr. Virta
William and Frances Armistead	College Park	Mr. Skarda
Kenneth A. Clagett	Alexandria, Va.	Mr. DeMarr
Frank M. Drane	San Antonio, Tex.	Mr. DeMarr
Richard and Betsy O'Branovich	Bowie	Mr. Virta
Jo Ann Kilbourne	Temple Hills	Mr. Dent
Janice S. Scott	Laurel	Mrs. Marshall
Charles R. Kilbourne	Upper Marlboro	Mr. Dent
Charles and Barbara Dockendorf	Hyattsville	Mr. DeMarr

#### Membership Dues for 1980

The Society's treasurer, Herb Embrey, will be sending out bills for 1980 membership dues in January. New members who joined the Society during the Fall of 1979, however, are covered for 1980.

#### Victorian Valentine, Display

The Surratt Society's 1980 Victorian Valentine Display will be February 9 and 10 at the Surratt House, 9110 Brandywine Road, in Clinton. The hours will be from noon until 4 p.m. For -more information, call the Surratt House at 868-1121.

Public Forum on Historic Preservation-January 10-Riverdale-7:30 pm.

#### "All the World Growing Religious"

During the middle year's of the 18th century, but chiefly during the 1730's and 40's, America experienced a religious revival known as the Great Awakening. The Great Awakening was characterized by emotionalism, enthusiasm, and religious excitement; it was an outburst of intense religious feeling by people who were not satisfied with the older conventional forms of worship. In his book, Seeds of Liberty: The Genesis of the American Mind, historian Max Savelle describes the coming of the Great Awakening in these words:

"The old established religions...were apparently losing their contact with the common people.... Somehow the religions of the Puritans and the Anglicans seemed cold and impersonal and not very useful to the people on the farms and along the frontier who had little time, preparation, or patience for fine-spun theological argument. They needed a religion that was vital, moving, personal.... Religion had 'cooled off'; on the other hand, there was nothing in America as yet to take its place as an outlet for human emotional and social energy. Anyone who could 'warm religion up' again, and renew it as a vital force among the uneducated masses had an almost boundless opportunity lying ripe and ready for him. A group of such leaders, or revivers, appeared in America in the third decade of the eighteenth century."

The greatest of these revivers, according to Savelle, was the evangelist George Whitefield. An associate of John Wesley and the Methodists in England, Whitefield came to America in 1739 at the young age of twenty-four to preach the message of religious revival. Benjamin Franklin attended one of Whitefield's meetings, and was impressed: "The multitudes of all sects and denominations that attended his sermons were enormous, and it was matter of speculation to me, who was one of the number, to observe the extraordinary influence of his oratory on his hearers, and how much they admir'd and respected him, notwithstanding his common abuse of them, by assuring them they were naturally half beasts and half devils. It was wonderful to see the change soon made in the manners of our inhabitants. From being thoughtless or indifferent about religion, it seem'd as if all the world were growing religious, so that we could not walk thro' the town in an evening without hearing psalms sung in different families of every street." George Whitefield came to Maryland, and to Prince George's County, in December of 1739. We print below some excerpts from his journal of his visit.

Joppa [Baltimore County]

Tuesday, Dec. 4 [1739]. Set out about eight in the morning, and took leave of two dear friends, who parted from, us with weeping eyes. Baited [took refreshments] at Joppa, a little town about fifteen miles from the place where we lay. I gave a word of exhortation to about forty people in the church. Oh, that the Holy Ghost may fall on all them who heard the Word, in as real though not in so visibly miraculous a manner as it did once on Cornelius and his household! Maryland, as far as I can hear, seems to be a place as yet unwatered with the true Gospel of Christ and with no likelihood of much good being done in it, unless one could abide there for some time. There is scarcely any town worth mentioning, because almost every planter has a landing-place, from which he exports his tobacco at his own house, which generally lies very near the river. By this means the people are much dispersed, and consequently cannot be gathered together without much previous notice, which, notwithstanding, is difficult to be given, because there are many large ferries between place and place. I trust the time will come when God will visit these dark corners of the earth.

#### Newtown and Annapolis

Wednesday, Dec. 5. Lay last night at Newtown, fifteen miles from Joppa; ate what was set before us; joined in family prayer; and, as opportunity offered, put in a word for God. In the morning we sang and prayed; at noon we baited at a house lying about fifteen miles off, and by four in the afternoon, we reached Annapolis, a little town, but the metropolis of Maryland. The house where we lodged was very commodious, considering it was in Maryland, but the people of it seemed to be surprised when they heard us talk of God and Christ. Notwithstanding, both they and the other strangers attended very orderly at family prayer, and I endeavoured to recommend them, as I was enabled, to the mercy of our gracious and good God. Oh that I may prevail in their behalf! 'It grieves me in my soul to see poor sinners hanging as it were by a single hair, and dancing (insensible of their danger) over the flames of hell. Oh, that God may make me instrumental in plucking them as firebrands out of the fire! For here is the misery of man; he is miserable, poor, and blind, and naked, and yet knows it not. Lord Jesus, send forth, we beseech Thee, Thy light, and lighten our darkness, for Thy mercies' sake!

#### Annapolis

Thursday, Dec. 6 Had an opportunity of writing some letters last night and this morning to England. Waited on Governor Ogle [Samuel Ogle, of Belair, Prince George's County], and was received with much civility....

Friday, Dec. 7. A visible alteration has taken place in the behaviour of the people of the house. Preached in the morning and evening to small polite auditories. The Governor put aside his court to come to morning service, and at noon, upon an invitation sent last night, I and my friends dined with him....

#### Upper Marlborough

Saturday, Dec. 8. Had more last night come to family prayer. Left Annapolis this morning. Baited at Upper Marlborough, about fifteen miles distant, intending to go further; but being desired by some gentlemen to stay and preach on the morrow, I was prevailed upon, and spent the remainder of the day in sweet conversation with my friends, and in writing letters to some under convictions at Philadelphia. I supped with a gentleman who kindly entertained both me and my fellow-travellers. Our talk ran upon the fall of man. I fear Deism has spread much in these parts. I cannot say I have yet met with many here Min seem truly to have the fear of God before their eyes.

#### Upper Marlborough, Port Tobacco

Sunday, Dec. 9. Preached at Upper Marlborough, to a small, polite, and seemingly very curious audience. Dined with the gentleman with whom we supped last night. There being no sermon in the, afternoon, we took horse, and went a Sabbath-day's journey as far as Piscataway, where we were kindly entertained. Wrote some letters to our English friends. Conversed to the use of edifying, and felt an uncommon freedom and sweetness in each other's spirits. Well might our Lord say, "The Kingdom of God is within you;" for they who are truly born of God, carry Heaven in their hearts.

'From Piscataway Whitefield travelled on to Port Tobacco and there he crossed the river into Virginia. While his brief tour through Maryland could not be considered a success in terms of the size of the audience he had reached, his earlier tours through the northern and middle colonies had been. There he spoke to hundreds at a time. --Alan Virta

Sources: Savelle, Max. Seeds of Liberty. Seattle: University of Washington Press. 1948 pp 59-61 (including the quote from Benjamin Franklin, from his Writings).  
Whitefield, George. George Whitefield's Journals. The Banner of Truth Trust. 1960.

### Maryland Antiques Show and Sale

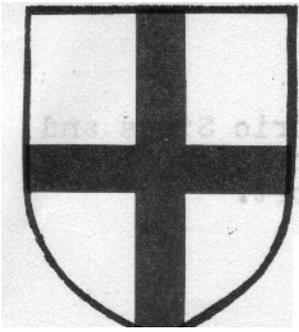
The second annual Maryland Antiques Show and Sale, sponsored by and for the benefit of the Maryland Historical Society, will be held in Baltimore at the Convention Center on February 8, 9, and 10. The show will feature English furniture as well as formal and country American furniture, together with fine porcelains, silver, brass, glass, clocks, dolls, and rare maps. General admission is \$3.00, and the hours are from noon until 10 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and from noon until 6 p.m. on Sunday'. For more information contact the Maryland Historical Society at 301-685-3750.

### The Society of Industrial Archeology

Those who are interested in Maryland's historic engineering and industrial heritage are invited to the January meeting of the Benjamin H. Latrobe chapter of the Society of Industrial Archeology, based in Baltimore. The meeting will be held at the Baltimore Industrial Museum, 217 Fayette Street, on January 26 from 2 to 5 p.m. There will be a film and refreshments. Past projects of the group have included tours of the Weissner Brewery, iron bridges of Frederick County, and the Pratt Street Power Station.

### The Prince George's County Historical Society

Subscription to this monthly newsletter is included in the annual membership dues of \$5.00. Our address: P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20840.



NEWS AND NOTES FROM

## The Prince George's County Historical Society

Vol. VIII, no. 2 February 1980

### Meetings Resume in March

The Prince George's County Historical Society's meeting program will resume in March. The first meeting for 1980 will be on Saturday, March 8, at 2 p.m. at Riversdale. Speaker and topic will be announced in the next issue of News and Notes.

### St. George's Day Awards

The Society will present the annual St. George's Day Awards again this year at the St. George's Day Dinner on April 23. The awards, which were instituted by the Society in 1974, honor individuals and organizations who have contributed significantly to the preservation of our county's heritage. Nominations should be submitted to the Society by March 7th at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20840 or to any of the officers.

### Contribution to the Magruder House

Prince George's Heritage, Inc., which is restoring the Magruder House in Bladensburg, has been awarded a grant of \$1,000 by the Metropolitan Life Foundation. Each year the foundation provides an annual grant of \$1,000 in each of the company's ten territories, and in 1979 the leader and award recipient in the Southeastern Territory was the Prince George's District. The check was presented by Sales Manager George D. Stanton on behalf of District Sales Manager W.C. Craven. Receiving the check for Prince George's Heritage, Inc., were Mayor Cristofane of Bladensburg, Sara R. Walton, and Mary Sue Couser. The Magruder House, listed in the National Register of Historic Places, is the only 18th century stone gambrel-roofed house in Prince George's County. Recognizing the architectural and historical significance and the urgency for its preservation the State of Maryland, which owned the house, conveyed it to Prince George's Heritage, Inc., in March 1979. Plans are underway for its restoration. Contributions will be gratefully accepted and are tax deductible. Interested parties may call 868-5298 or 927-8151

--From a news release

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

## New Historic Marker

Another historic marker will soon be in place in Prince George's County, this one at Fort Lincoln Cemetery. The site of Commodore Barney's gallant but unsuccessful stand during the Battle of Bladensburg in the War of 1812, and the site of Battery Jameson\* a Civil War fortification which helped defend nearby Fort Lincoln and the city of Washington, the cemetery was chartered by Act of the General Assembly of Maryland in 1912. The historical marker will be on the cemetery grounds near the Administrative Offices.

## New Members of the Society:

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

.....		Sponsor
Mr. & Mrs. S. Chester Ward	College Park	Mrs. Seidenspinner
Leslie and Gloria Davies	Bryan's Road	Mr. DeMarr
Erva R. Lewis	Hyattsville	Mr. Cuff
Louis and Lucille Lushine	Greenbelt,	Mr. Virta
Mr. & Mrs. Holton R. Small	Hyattsville	Mrs. Tatspaugh
Mr. & Mrs. F.C. Whitmore, Jr.	silver Spring	Mr. DeMarr
Dr. John K. Whitmore	Ann Arbor, Mich.	Mr. DeMarr
John P. Lautz	Hyattsville	Mr. Virta

We also welcome a new institutional member, the National Colonial Farm at Accokeek, sponsored by Treasurer Herb Embrey.

## The Morsell family

Ted Bissell, a member of the Society, is doing research on the Morsell family of Prince George's County, and submits the following query:

Kidd Morsell (1755-1815) took Oath of Fidelity in Harford County in 1776. Assuming there was just one man of this name, he married (1) Tabitha Clayton in St. Johns Parish, Joppa, Baltimore County, in 1779 (2) Jemima Isaac in Prince George's County, year unknown, and (3) Margaret Buchan, Prince George's County, in 1803. From the first union was born Elizabeth in 1780; from 2nd was born Caroline in 1796. Kidd Morsell died in 1815 and was buried in Beltsville. Desire Kidd's other children and his relationship to Samuel and Benjamin Kidd Morsell who lived south of Beltsville, according to Martenet's 1861 map of Prince George's County. Contact Ted Bissell at 277-4723.

St. George's Day Dinner--Wednesday, April 23, 1980--The 7th Annual

## Boxing in Prince George's County

In the December 1979 issue of News and Notes we asked for memories of boxing in Prince George's County. Don Skarda, of Berwyn Heights, sent in this information on an old boxing arena named "Sportland", once located in Berwyn Heights.

"It was known as Sportland and was located in an area bounded by Berwyn Road, Edmonston Road, Osage Street, and 60th Avenue.

"It is interesting that the Ordinance Number 1 of the fledgling Commissioners of Berwyn Heights granted a license to J.O. Waters to operate a boxing arena on his property at a fee of \$50.00 per performance That was in the spring of 1924; the arena was later declared a public nuisance, and on March 29, 1926 the license was rescinded and further exhibitions were prohibited.

"J.O. 'Ned' Waters was himself reputed to be a competent amateur boxer and participated in some of the bouts.

"The foregoing information is the result of research for the Bicentennial history of Berwyn Heights."

-- Don Skarda

Mr. Skarda was presented one of the Society's St. George's Day Awards in 1979, in recognition of his long research into the history of Berwyn Heights and particularly in recognition of his history of the town which was published in 1976.

Just Arrived...

JUST ARRIVED in the Britannia, Capt. William Scott, from Port Glasgow, About One Hundred Servants, Men, Women, and Children, the Men and Women are under Indenture for Four Years, and their Children by Agreement, are to serve till they are Twenty-one Years old: Those that are married will be sold together; There are some Tradesmen amongst them, but the greatest Part are Farmers; These are Part of the People who were compelled to leave their Native Country by the Oppression of the Land Holders, they are orderly and well behaved, and will be disposed of at Bladensburg, for ready Cash, or bills, of Exchange, by Christopher Lowndes.

--An advertisement in the Maryland Gazette, October 25, 1772, quoted from Prince George's County: Past and Present, by James Douglas Watson (1962).

Economic conditions, including "the Oppression of the Land Holders, were chief among the causes that led Scots to leave their native land in large numbers during the later years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Rising land rents drove many Highland farmers to America, as did practice of enclosure. During these years, the market for British meat and wool increased dramatically. The large landowners found it more profitable to enclose their large tracts of land (with fences, ditches, hedges etc.) and turn the land into sheep pasture than to subdivide it among tenants or allow it to remain as common pasture, or common fields for the small tenant farmers. Enclosure had been going on for centuries, fluctuating with economic conditions and the times, but during the years 1750 -1800 it was particularly intense. Forced off their lands they had rented for generations and deprived of their livelihoods, the Scots saw in America the opportunity to own their own land, even if it meant several years of labor for another as the price of the passage over. Despite the hardships imposed on these small farmers, however, by the enclosure process, it contributed greatly to the efficiency and production of British agriculture. Without the greater amounts of food, the great industrial cities could not have grown, and the Industrial Revolution would certainly have been slowed.

----Alan Virta

Maryland House and Garden Tour

Prince George's County will be on the Maryland House and Garden Tour this Spring for the first time in several years. The date is Saturday, April 19, 1980. The places on the tour are the Surratt House, His Lordship's Kindness, Woodstock, Mattaponi, Mount Calvert, St. Thomas' Church (Croome), Trinity Church in Upper Marlboro (where lunch will be served), Content, Weston, the Marlborough Hunt Club, St. Barnabas Church (Leeland), and Drumsheugh. The local sponsor and coordinator group is the Forest Garden Club.

The Prince George's County Historical Society

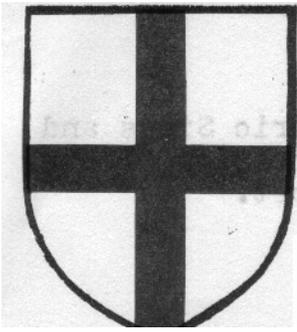
Annual dues of \$5.00 include a subscription to this monthly newsletter. For a membership application, contact the Society at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20840 or any of the officers listed below.

President:	Mr. Frederick S. DeMarr	277-0711
	4010 Hamilton Street, Hyattsville 20781	
Corresponding Secretary:	Mrs. Edith Bagot	927-3632.
	3510 Longfellow Street, Hyattsville 20782	

Newsletter editor-; Alan Virta  
8244 Canning Terrace, Greenbelt 20770  
Treasurer: Herb Embrey  
10414 Tullymore Drive, Adelphi 20783

474-7524

434-2958



**NEWS AND NOTES FROM**

**The Prince George's, County Historical Society,**

Vol. VIII, no. 3

March 1980

The March Meeting

The first meeting of the year of the Prince George's County, Historical Society will be held on Saturday, March 8, at 2 p.m. in the music room of Riversdale, the Calvert mansion in Riverdale. Our guest speaker will be Susan Pearl of Bowie, who will discuss the history of the mansion.

Susan Pearl is project coordinator for the Prince George's County Inventory of Historic Sites, undertaken by the Prince George's County Historical and Cultural Trust, and is a research assistant for John Walton, county historian. It has been in that latter capacity that she has been doing extensive research on the Calverts and the house itself. Her talk will concentrate on 19th century family life at the mansion and on the decorative features of the house. Most of the rooms will be open for visiting after her presentation.

As always, guests are always welcome, and refreshments will be served. The Society has met so often at Riversdale, that it is high time we had a presentation on the history of the house. Now that winter is about over and the cold has let up, come on out and join us at this first meeting of the year. Riversdale is located at 4811 Riverdale Road in Riverdale. For directions, call Fred DeMarr at 277-0711 or Alan Virta at 474-7524.

New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

Frances and Franklin Rafter	Riverdale	Sponsor
Dott Wingfield	Greenbelt	Mr. K. Embrey,
Anita and Spencer Hines Hyattsville	Mr. A. Virta	Mr. & Mrs. G. Myers
Mrs. Helen M. Wells	Upper Marlboro	Mrs. L. Tatspaugh
Ann and Phil Vogel	Takoma Park	Mr. F. DeMarr

We are also very pleased to announce another Life Member, Mr. C. Harold Hutcheson, of Laurel, the Society's Recording Secretary.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

## The Princeton Tragedy

On February 28, 1844, in the Potomac River waters of Prince George's County, there occurred a violent tragedy that shook the entire nation. One of the guns of the U.S. ship Princeton, carrying the President of the United States and 350 other guests, exploded upon firing, killing the Secretary of State, the Secretary of War, and other officers of the ship and the civil government. The City of Washington was plunged into mourning, and memorial services were held in cities and towns across the country.

This was not the first time tragedy had struck the strife plagued administration. Just one month after the inauguration, President William Henry Harrison died. Five months later, the entire Cabinet resigned--save one--in protest of the policies of the new President Tyler. Tyler was hanged in effigy across the country, and many claimed he was not entitled to call himself President at all, but only Acting President. The next year President Tyler's wife died. When the Princeton tragedy of 1844 occurred, then, many asked "Why?" Was the United States being punished by a wrathful God? Sermon after sermon that Sunday following the tragedy was devoted to that theme, and Americans must certainly have been wondering why the nation had to endure such shocks to its national government.

Below we reprint an account of the Princeton explosion taken from Niles' National Register for March 2, 1844. Published in Baltimore, Niles' National Register was one of the nation's leading weekly news magazines. We follow Niles' report with an account of the experiences of a young woman from Prince George's County who was on board the Princeton when the tragedy occurred.

### MOST AWFUL CATASTROPHE

The exhibition of the tremendous apparatus for war which Captain Stockton has been occupied in the preparation of, and which it was supposed had been so far perfected as to render it safe to invite the members of government and their families to witness its effects, has resulted in one of the deepest and most heart rending tragedies that we have ever been called upon to record. Thursday morning's National Intelligencer thus announces the dreadful news.

"In the whole course of our lives it has never fallen to our lot to announce to our readers a more shocking calamity--shocking in all its circumstances and concomitants--than that which occurred on board the United States ship Princeton, yesterday afternoon, whilst under way, in the river Potomac, fourteen or fifteen miles below this city.

Yesterday was a day appointed, by the courtesy and hospitality of Capt. Stockton, commander of the Princeton, for receiving as visitors to his fine ship (lying off Alexandria) a great number of guests, with their families, liberally and numerously invited to spend the day on board. The day was most favorable, and the company was large and brilliant, of both sexes, not less probably in number than four hundred, among whom were the President of the United States, the heads of the several departments, and their families. At a proper hour, after the arrival of the expected guests, the vessel got under way and proceeded down the river, to some distance below Fort Washington.

During the passage down, one of the large guns on board (carrying a ball of 22-5 pounds) was fired more than once, exhibiting the great power and capacity of that formidable weapon of war. The ladies had partaken of a sumptuous repast; the gentlemen had succeeded them at the table, and some of them had left it; the vessel was on her return up the river, opposite to the fort, where Captain Stockton consented to fire another shot from the same gun, around and near which, to observe its effects, many persons had gathered, though by no means so many as on similar discharges in the morning, the ladies who then thronged the deck being on this fatal occasion almost all between decks, and out of reach of harm.

The gun was fired. The explosion was followed, before the smoke cleared away so as to observe its effects, by shrieks of wo [sic] which announced a dire calamity. The gun had burst, at a point three or four feet from the breech, and scattered death and desolation around. Mr. [Abel] Upshur, secretary of state, Mr. [Thomas] Gilmer, so recently placed at the head of the navy, Commodore Kennon, one of its gallant officers, Virgil Maxcy [a Marylander], lately returned from a diplomatic residence at the Hague, Mr. Gardiner of New York, (formerly a member of the senate of that state) were among the slain. Besides these, seventeen seamen were wounded, several of them badly and probably mortally. Among those stunned by the concussion, we learn, not all seriously injured, were Capt. Stockton himself; Col. Benton, of the senate; Lieut. Hunt, of the Princeton; W.D Robinson, of Georgetown. Other persons also were perhaps more or less

injured, of whom, in the horror and confusion of the moment, no certain account could be obtained. The above are believed, however, to comprise the whole of the persons known to the public who were killed or dangerously or seriously hurt.

The scene upon the deck may more easily be imagined than described. Nor can the imagination picture to itself the half of its horrors. Wives, widowed in an instant by the murderous blast! Daughters smitten with the heart-rending sight of their father's lifeless corpse! The wailings of agonized females! The piteous grief of the unhurt, but heart-stricken spectators! The wounded seamen borne down below! The silent tears and quivering lips of their brave and honest comrades, who tried in vain to subdue or to conceal their feelings! What words can adequately depict a scene like this? The bodies of the killed remained on board the ship last night. They will be brought to the city this morning."

The news of this distressing incident threw a deep gloom over our community; every avenue of information from the scene was sought for with intense interest. Flag's were hoisted half mast on all the flag staffs and shipping in harbor and the usual testimonies of respect were expressed by public authorities. From Annapolis where the Legislature of the state, and the Court of Appeals are in session we learn that very feeling announcements of the melancholy news were made in each hall, and they severally adjourned, as a mark of respect.

The Washington papers and letters of Friday brought us additional details. The Globe says: "Capt. Stockton having, on successive days, extended invitations to visit his ship to the executive and committees of congress, and then to both houses--invited the ladies of the city to an entertainment on this, which was meant as the gala day of his beautiful ship. It opened brightly, but; has closed in the most dreadful gloom over our community. The only circumstance calculated to relieve the all-pervading distress is that of the multitude of ladies who were on board the ship, not one was injured. The happy exemption of such a multitude of the tender sex, who witnessed the havoc made in the midst of them of the most distinguished and beloved of their countrymen, while it brings some solace to the circle of their immediate friends, cannot but deepen the sympathies which they, and the whole community, feel for the bereaved of families of those who have fallen."

Other accounts state the party, one entirely of pleasure, embarked about 12 o'clock, and that President Tyler and family, and a large number of ladies and gentlemen in the cabin, were in the act of leaving the dinner table, to proceed to the deck when the movement was arrested for a moment by a gentleman announcing that one of the ladies would give a toast, and but for which it is probable most of the party would have been exposed to the deadly missiles. Some of the ladies were upon deck, and near enough to be dashed with the blood and mangled remains of the victims. One of those was the wife of Gov. Gilmer [just appointed Secretary of the Navy], at whose request (the gov.) the gun on this occasion was fired, in order that he might observe its quality in some peculiar way. This gun had been named "The Peace Maker." The other of the same size on board called "The Oregon". "The Peace Maker" was placed in the bow of the ship, on a revolving carriage, so that it might be fired from either side. An ordinary charge of powder for it was thirty pounds. It carried a ball weighing two hundred and twenty-five pounds; and such was the precision with which it could be-fired; as ascertained from actual experiments, that an object the size of a hog'shead, could be hit nine times in ten, at a distance of half a mile.

The gun being loaded, the first thing was to ascertain the precise distance of the object to be fired at. This is done by means of an instrument, constructed upon trigonometrical principles, the scale on which indicates the distance at a glance. The next thing was to give the gun the proper elevation. This was done by means of a self-acting lock, on an arm of which was a scale which indicated the precise elevation necessary to reach a given distance with the ball. A spring on the top of the lock is then brought up to the point indicated, the hammer pulled back, and at the very point of time when the ship's motion the gun reaches that point, and never before nor afterward, the gun is of itself discharged. The precise means by which this is effected, are known only to the navy department and the inventor.

Some writer gives the following account of the same gun a few days before.

"All the preparation for firing, with the exception simply of putting the powder and the ball into the gun, was made by Captain Stockton personally. By means of a tackle fixed to the breech, a motion was given to the gun similar to that imparted by a heavy swell, and when it reached the point indicated it was discharged. The ball in this case traveled about two miles before it hit the water, and then bounded several times. The Princeton went down the river as far as Mount Vernon. In going down, the "peacemaker" was discharged three times and in returning twice.

"On the fourth fire the ball struck on the land, and its effect was lost sight of by those on board--so the party demanded another fire, and respectfully requested the Captain to put in a little more powder this time. Before firing for the fifth and last time, the captain said he should take the sense of the company. 'All those in favor of another fire will say aye.' The air resounded with "aye!" 'All those opposed to another fire will say, no.' Not a solitary voice.

"The ayes have it" said the captain; 'I have the assent of congress, and I'll go ahead.' Probably fifty pounds of powder went into the 'peacemaker' this time. As before, the gun was fired by the captain himself. The ball went probably four miles before it struck. It bounded fifteen times on the ice, in the course of which it performed a half circle.

"One of these guns, the 'Oregon,' was manufactured in England. The other 'peace-maker,' was made in New York, and is by far the better piece of workmanship of the two.

"The captain told me that when he applied to the manufacturer to do the job, he (the manufacturer) declared that it could not be done and it was not until Captain Stockton had promised him that he would pay all the expense of an attempt out of his own pocket that the manufacturer would consent to make a trial. Before a month had elapsed after this, however, the manufacturer seeing that it was perfectly practicable, became as great an enthusiast in the matter as the captain himself was."

The bodies of the killed, shockingly mangled, were left on board the Princeton until morning, and then removed in six hours to the president's house, from which the funeral will take place at 11 o'clock this day.

The latest accounts we have of the wounded, state that Captain Stockton is not dangerously wounded, and will recover from the injury he has received. His anguish is intense.

Mr. Benton [Senator Thomas Hart Benton], who was at the breech of the gun taking her range, was prostrated upon the deck and stunned, but not touched. A servant of the president, a colored lad of about fifteen years of age) was amongst the slain. Eleven of the crew, wounded, were landed at the naval hospital; two of them, it is supposed, cannot survive. The other nine will probably recover.

Mr. Seaton, mayor of the city of Washington, with eight of his family, was on board of the Princeton, and was invited by Mr. Gilmer, and would have accompanied him to the deck to witness the discharge, but for a difficulty in finding his cloak and hat at the moment. A lady, standing upon the deck between two gentlemen, one of whom had his hat, and the other the breast of his coat taken off, escaped unhurt. The daughter of Mr. Upshur, several of the family of Com. Kennon, and the daughter of Mr. Gardiner [engaged to President Tyler] were on board the steamer; but none of them, except Mrs. Gilmer, were apprised of the death of those most dear to them, until after their return to the city.

Mr. Upshur has left a wife and daughter. Mr. Gilmer a wife and eight children--the eldest but fifteen. Com. Kennon has left a young wife, and children by his first wife. Mr. Maxcy has also left a wife and children and Col. Gardiner two daughters, who have been the belles of the city.

One of the guests on board the Princeton was a young woman from Prince George's County. An account of her experience on that fatal day is found in a letter written a few days after the catastrophe by Congressman George Sykes of New Jersey, who was also one of the party. Sykes' letter, written to his sister Ann Sykes, was published in the July 1937 issue of Pennsylvania History in an article by St. George L. Sioussat entitled "The Accident on Board the U.S.S. 'Princeton,' February 28, 1844: A Contemporary News-Letter." Congressman Sykes' letter was long and detailed, and we print below the three separate references to the young woman'.

"Amongst the visitors in Washington was a lady from Mississippi and another a Miss Sommerville from Prince George's County Maryland who were staying at a Mr. Beales--on Capitol hill, and both of whom I had frequently met at Levees--and parties,, These ladies--S.S. Phelps the Senator from Vermont and myself were to take under escort on the occasion--and as we called upon them in the morning before the excursion--Beale kindly ordered his coachman to put the horses to his carriage and take us from his house down to the steamboat wharf."

"S.S. Phelps taking Miss Sommerville by the arm jocularly remarked to her 'you must shew your courage and firmness by standing close to the gun with me and see it fired without even winking' to which she replied with a smile in a bantering manner--I dare go anywhere that you dare.""

"The young lady who was under the escort of Phelps was standing between him and Thos. H. Benton [the Senator from Missouri], both of these gentlemen are perhaps a little over the ordinary size. Both of them were knocked down by the concussion--while she stood firm and erect although her bonnet as well as their hats was blown overboard--her bonnet strings were tied in the usual manner under her chin--the concussion was so great that her bonnet was blown off in the river--leaving the strings still tied under her chin they being torn off from her bonnet where they were sewed to it--her face considerably burnt though in other respects she was less injured than either of them."

Congressman Sykes does not tell us Miss Sommerville's first name. A number of Somervells lived in the Woodville--Aquasco area, so perhaps she was a member of that family. Anyone who knows, please let us know.

--Alan Virta

The Prince George's County Historical Society

Annual dues of \$5-00 include a subscription to this monthly newsletter. Our address: P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20840

President: Frederick S. DeMarr; Corr. Secretary: Edith Bagot; Newsletter editor: Alan Virta; Treasurer: Herb Embrey, 434-2958



**NEWS AND NOTES FROM**

## **The Prince George's County Historical Society**

Vol. VIII, no. 4 April 1980

### The St. George's Day Dinner

The Prince George's County Historical Society will celebrate the 284th anniversary of the founding of Prince George's County with the annual St. George's Day Dinner, to be held this year at the University of Maryland on St. George's Day, Wednesday, April 23.

As is the custom, the dinner (which begins at 7:30 P.m.) will be preceded by a cocktail reception at 6.30, Presentation of the St. George's Day Awards, honoring individuals and organizations have made significant cant contributions to the preservation of our heritage, will round out the evening.

All members of the Society, their families, and friends are invited to attend. Please return the response card which came with your invitation to the Society by April 15. If somehow you did not receive an invitation, you may call President Frederick DeMarr at 277-0711 or Alan Virta at 474-7524 in the evenings. Please note this year's dinner will be at the Center for Adult Education, not in the Student Union as it was last year.

The St. George's Day Dinner always brings out a good crowd of congenial people who share a common interest in the history of our county. If you've joined us before, come again. If you've never come before, do come this year.

### Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimages April 19

Saturday, April 19 will be a banner day for anyone interested in the history of Prince George's County, for on that day, twelve noteworthy and historic buildings--seven of them private homes--will be open to the public for touring, as the Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage comes to Prince George's County for the first time in sixteen years.

The seven private homes, all located in the southern and central portions of the county, are His Lordship's Kindness, Weston, Mattaponi, Mount Calvert, Content, Woodstock, and Drumsheugh. Three historic

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23.1696

churches are also on the tour--St. Thomas's at Croome, Trinity in Upper Marlboro, and St. Barnabas, Leeland. Completing the list are the Marlborough Hunt Club (on-the Patuxent southeast of Upper Marlboro) and the Surratt House in Clinton.

For those unfamiliar with house tours, the procedure is as follows: you may begin your tour at any of the sites, where you purchase your ticket and receive a program book and map. You are then free to visit the other places on the tour at your own pace. Tour hours are 10 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. Tickets are \$8.00 a piece, and this includes admission to all sites. Visitors are asked to wear flat-heeled shoes, and bus groups must contact Pilgrimage headquarters in advance. Lunch will be served at Trinity Church in Upper Marlboro for \$4.00.

Residents of the southern and central parts of the county are probably familiar with the locations of several of the places on the tour--or with at least one, which is enough to get started. For the benefit of North county residents who may not be, however, we offer these directions. For those coming to the tour via the Beltway, the site closest to you is probably Drumsheugh. Drumsheugh is located on Route 202 (Landover or Largo Road) about a mile below the Community College, on the left hand side of the road. For those coming down Route 301 (Crain Highway) from Bowie, St. Barnabas at Leeland is the closest for you. About a mile below Central Avenue, at Second Genesis, turn right onto Oak Grove Road and follow it about 2 miles to the church. Or, of course, you may go straight into Upper Marlboro to either Trinity Church or Content and begin your tour there.

Touring these historic, sites--and stepping into our past--if only for one afternoon--is certainly a fitting way to commemorate the 284th anniversary of this county's founding. We owe a debt of gratitude to the Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage and to the Forest Garden Club, the local coordinator, for making this tour possible. Proceeds from the-tour go to both state-wide and county preservation projects. For more information., or advance tickets, call Mrs. Edward Raffetto at 627-3877.

### Bay Bridge Day: April 27

Get your best walking shoes ready and your camera loaded with film, because on Sunday, April 27, you will have the opportunity to take one of the most interesting and exhilarating walks in the state of Maryland. Sunday, April 27, is Bay Bridge Day, the day when the eastbound span of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge will be closed to motor vehicles and open only to pedestrians. Not only is the short hike across the Bay good exercise, but the view--from 185 feet above the waters of the Chesapeake, on one of the engineering and construction marvels of the 20th century--is nothing less than spectacular.

More than 50,000 persons strolled across the bridge last year, a walk of 4.3 miles. And they were not all young people either--there were probably as many retired folk as any other kind. There were plenty of children, babies in strollers, families in their Sunday best straight out of church, the more casually dressed, the slim and fit, and the obviously not so slim and fit. The walk is from the Eastern Shore to the Western, and the grade is so gradual that you're not aware of any climb. There are numerous comfort stations and places to pause along the way, and water fountains for the thirsty.

Hours for the walk are from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m., but you must begin your walk by 3 p.m. Parking is available at the Navy-Marine Corps Stadium in Annapolis and at Anne Arundel Community College in Arnold. Free buses will then take you to Kent Island where you will begin your walk, and they will meet you on the Western Shore to return you to your

cars after you've walked across. There will be no parking at the bridge--you must use one of the lots. The walk will be cancelled should there be heavy rains or high winds. Listen to the radio for details in case of inclement weather, or call 301-355-2080 for a recorded message that morning.

Bay Bridge Day is intended for the casual and leisurely stroller--no runners or joggers allowed. For more information, call the Maryland Toll Facilities Administration, Public Affairs Division, at 301-286-6400, ext. 205.

For almost 350 years, Marylanders have been crossing the Bay in boats. For the past 28 we've been able to drive across in automobiles. Now you can cross by foot! Don't let this historical opportunity pass.

#### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

Carol J. McLain	Upper Marlboro	Mr. Embrey
Marion L. Beall	Long Beach, Calif.	Mr. Bissell
Mr. & Mrs. C.R. Embrey, Jr.	Melbourne Beach, Fla.	Mr. Embrey
Joyce W. McDonald	Lewisdale	Mr. Aleshire
Velma E. Brown	Hyattsville	Mrs. Wilkinson,
		Mrs. E.R. Lewis
Myra B. Powell	Hyattsville	Mr. Cecil
Joyce Rumburg	Greenbelt	Mr. Aleshire
Mr. & Mrs. Theodore F. Dutko	Bowie	Mr. Aleshire
Mr. & Mrs. Charles T. Douglas	Adelphi	Mr. Embrey
Stewart H. Fisher	Silver Spring	Mrs. Wilkinson,
		Mr. Cecil
Alan F. Ammen	Chicago, Ill.	Mr. DeMarr
Freeman E. Morgan, Jr.	Takoma Park	Mr. DeMarr
James F. Maher, AIA	Hyattsville	Mr. Aleshire

We welcome the following institutions to membership in the Society:

Grace Brethren Christian School, Temple Hills  
Society of Maren Duvall Descendants

And we are very happy to announce 3 new life memberships:

Mr. Forrest S. Holmes, Jr., of Hyattsville  
Mr. and Mrs. J. Spencer Overholser, of Oley, Pa.  
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Bourne, of College Park

We thank all for their support of the Society and our programs.

#### Hall of Fame Solicits Nominations.....

The Prince George's County Hall of Fame is presently in the process of accepting nominations to honor and recognize distinguished local citizens of Prince George's County. Nominations for 1980 must be postmarked no later than April 25, to be eligible for induction this year. Ceremonies honoring this year's inductees are scheduled for late October. The Hall of Fame cordially invites the Historical Society and its members to submit the nominations of worthy Prince Georgians.

To be chosen an honored member in the Prince George's Hall of Fame, a person must have been born in or must have lived in Prince George's County and must also have been deceased for more than two years. The nominees must have

made a worthy contribution to the welfare, enrichment, or benefit of humanity or excelled in science, art, or sports, political office alone does not qualify a person.

Nominations to the Hall of Fame may be submitted by any Prince George's citizen. No nomination should be sent in sooner than one year after the death of a nominee. The nomination application must be typewritten and accompanied by twelve (12) copies and should include the following information: 1) A description of the nominee's contribution 2) A description of the nominee's other life accomplishments 3) Documentation concerning the nominee's birth or residence in Prince George's County, and 4) References to sources of data and a bibliography concerning the nominee and his accomplishments.

Nominations should be submitted to:

The Hon. Robert B. Mathias  
Chairman, Pr. Geo. Hall of Fame  
14605 Cambridge Dr., Drawer 699  
Upper Marlboro, Md. 20870

The Hall of Fame has previously honored Thomas John Claggett, first Episcopal Bishop of Maryland, and John Carroll, the first Bishop of the Roman Catholic Church in America. These two men were the first inductees in 1978. Last year, the Hall of Fame inducted John Roger's and Dr. William Beanes of Marlborough. Portraits and framed plaques honoring these four men currently are on display in the lobby of the County Courthouse in Upper Marlboro.

The Hall of Fame was created by the Prince George's Chamber of Commerce and approved by the County Council but is a totally autonomous non-profit body. An eleven member Board of Directors, originally designated by the president of the Chamber of Commerce is responsible for the final selection of its "residents." Members of the Board hold office for life. An affirmative vote of at least seven of these board members is necessary to admit a person to the Hall of Fame. The current Chairman of the Board is the Hon. Robert B. Mathias, former judge of the Circuit Court, and the Vice-Chairman is John M. Walton.

The Hall of Fame is currently seeking both financial and volunteer assistance from private industry, civic groups and individuals to enable it to support its continuing activities. Since the Hall is a non-profit body and has no one continuing source of financial support it is important that contributions be obtained from every possible source. Volunteer support is also needed to, assist the many working committees. Potential contributors may contact Jack Long, Finance Chairman, at 927-1000. Volunteers may call Judge Mathias at 627-1690. All contributions are tax deductible.

### "A Conquered Country"

Maryland, though she never seceded from the Union, suffered greatly during the Civil War. Her citizens were divided in their sympathies, rival armies marched across her land, battle raged on her soil, her sons fought and killed each other under different flags, and even in relatively calm times, the ever present Federal Army reminded Maryland that a war for the Union was being fought and her loyalty was suspect.

Traveling through the State and recording his impressions of the war's effects in early days of 1862 was Edward Dickey, a young British journalist sent to America to report for MacMillan's Magazine and The Spectator. Dickey was thirty when he came to America, an ardent foe of slavery and a strong supporter of the

North and President Lincoln. When he returned to England he reassembled and edited his serial reports on the war and published them in book form under the title Six Months in The Federal States in 1863. A successful career in journalism awaited him; from 1870 to 1889 he served as editor of The Observer of London.

The excerpt below is taken from Six Months in the Federal States. Dickey was traveling from Philadelphia to Washington by train, on the B & O line that today runs through Laurel, Beltsville, College Park, Riverdale and Hyattsville. His geography is somewhat confused, as the Susquehanna River does not divide Pennsylvania from Maryland. However, and

proceeded southwest from Pennsylvania to Baltimore, the signs of war began to appear after the Susquehanna crossing, so that great river became in his mind the dividing line between Maryland and the North.

Below Edward Dicey on Maryland during the Civil War.

"It was upon the banks of the Susquehanna river that I came first upon the track of the war. Between Pennsylvania and Maryland, between the free North and the slave South, the great deep river, wider than the Rhine at Dusseldorf, rolls as a frontier line. The top-heavy looking steam-ferry, which, in defiance of all one's preconceived ideas of the law's of equilibrium, carries train, cars, rails, passengers, luggage and all, with scarcely a break of continuity, from one bank to another, transports one not only into a new State, but into a new country. The whole aspect of the scenery changes: the broad, thriving, cheerful expanse of carefully tilled fields, dotted over with the villa-like farm-houses, gives place to long, straggling, red-brick towns, half villages, half cities; to broken-down fences; to half-ploughed, hopeless-looking fields, where the negro labourers are toiling listlessly; to dreary tracks of mud, which stand where roads ought to be, and to wide stony spaces of meagre brushwood. The restless activity I witnessed everywhere north of the Susquehanna was exchanged for a sort of fussy idleness. By the house doors, and in the streets through which the train passed slowly, there stood men hanging about idly, loitering languidly, with their hands deep-buried in their trouser-pockets, watching tumble-down carts straggling spasmodically across the deep-rutted roads, and loafing visibly.

"In-this dull winter-time, too, Maryland looked all the drearier for the traces of war, visible on every side. I passed along the same line again in the first burst of the early summer, when the war had moved on far away southwards; and, except for the look of poverty and decay, which even the rich summer foliage could not hide, I should scarce have recognized it for the same country. Hitherto I had hardly been able to realize, from the outward look of things, that the Union was in the midst of a civil war; but here in Maryland the evidence was only too palpable. At Havre de Grace, the river station on the southern side of the Susquehanna, we passed the first camp, and the dingy greyish blue-coated Federal soldiers came running alongside the train to ask for stray papers from New York. Then, at each station as we passed further south, the train became fuller and fuller with soldiers, and the small roadside camps grew more and more frequent. In Baltimore the streets swarmed with troops, and south of this again on to Washington, we seemed to pass through a conquered country. In the grey glimmer of the evening we could see the white tents of the camps, pitched on the hill-slopes that overhang Baltimore. Every roadside station was occupied with troops; at every bridge and crossing there were small outposts stationed; and along the line at short distances there were sentinels at watch to protect the rails. The nearest forces of the enemy lay some fifty miles away across the Potomac, and with the vast Federal army before Washington, it could not be against the Confederates that these precautions were taken. It is true that the maintenance of this single track of rails, the one means of communication between New York and Washington, was of vital importance and therefore, no precaution was too great to take, if necessary. On the other hand, the maintenance of the same line north of the Susquehanna was of equal importance, and yet there it was left unguarded. The inference is a very obvious one--Pennsylvania is a Free State, and loyal; Maryland is a Slave State, and therefore disloyal.

"It was thus, as I entered Washington that the bearing of the slave question upon the war was practically brought home to me. . . ."

Six Months in the Federal States was not published in the U.S., until 1971, when Quadrangle Books of Chicago reprinted it under the title Spectator of America, edited and with an introduction by Herbert Mitgang. Over the years, scholars have referred most to Dicey's book for his recollections of his meetings with Lincoln. Dicey died in 1911. The above excerpt was taken from the 1863 edition.

--Alan Virta

#### Addition to the National Register

The Maryland Historical Trust, in its newsletter SWAP for February 1980, announces the addition of another Prince George's County home to the National Register of Historic Places:

"Wyoming, vicinity of Clinton. A, well-preserved example of Maryland's gambrel-roof colonial architecture, it is also noteworthy an excellent example of Southern Maryland Tidewater architecture."

Wyoming was long the home of the Marbury family, and probably was built by Luke Marbury, father of the distinguished Revolutionary War officer of the same name.

### Takoma Park House and Garden Tour

The eighth annual Takoma Park House and Garden Tour will take place on Sunday, May 4 from 1:30 to 5 p.m. Two years ago, in honor of the opening of the Takoma Metro station the tour featured houses in the vicinity of the station. This year visitors will again have the opportunity to acquaint themselves with the Takoma Metro neighborhoods in both Maryland and the District, and to see the renovation progress of some of the same houses as well as some homes never before opened to the public.

The Metro area is the oldest part of Takoma Park, Washington's first planned railroad suburb. Benjamin F. Gilbert, a Washington developer, purchased about 90 acres of land on both sides of the Metropolitan Branch of the B & O in 1883 and built some of the community's finest houses, including his own (since lost to fire), near the tracks. Because the town has changed little since the turn of the century and because it contains many interesting examples of Late Victorian and bungalow architecture, Takoma Park, Maryland, (partly in Prince George's and partly in Montgomery County) is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. A similar application for Takoma, D.C. is pending.

Advance sale tickets cost \$3.50 each. Send a check made out to the Takoma Park House and Garden Tour and a self-addressed stamped envelope to the Takoma Park Recreation Department, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, Md. 20012. Tour goers may buy tickets at \$4.50 each after 1 p.m. on May 4 at the Takoma Park Municipal Building, 7500 Maple Ave (near Route 410).

Free tour buses will leave from the Municipal Building and light refreshments will be offered. Visitors can also see a slide show on residential stained glass in the lobby of the Municipal Building.

Profits from the tour will go toward projects celebrating Takoma Park's centennial in 1983. For further information, call 270-4048 or 270-5348.

--From a news release

### Soliciting Suggestions

Although we try to cover a wide range of historical topics in News and Notes, we realize that it largely reflects the interests of those who produce it. For that reason, we solicit you for suggestions for future articles--or for leads on potentially interesting documents relative to our county's history. Any member whose ancestors lived here in this county--do you have an old family diary with recollections of the Civil War, plantation life, agriculture, the building of our towns, social life in days gone by--or old letters or other old documents--that you think might, interest other members of the Society through publication in News and Notes? Let us have your ideas. Write to either Frederick DeMarr, President, or Alan Virta, Editor, at The Prince George's County Historical Society P.O. Box 14, -Riverdale, Maryland 20840 Thank you!

Reminder: St. George's Day Dinner--Wednesday, April 23--U. of Maryland

### Spring Activities at Montpelier

A busy calendar of events has been scheduled for this Spring at Montpelier, the colonial home of the Snowden family mansion, just south of Laurel.

Tours of the mansion resume on Thursday, April 10, and will be conducted on Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Saturdays from noon till 4 p.m. In addition to the regular tours, these special events will be offered.

April 12: Harpsichord music by a student from Peabody Conservatory, Baltimore, 1 to 3 p.m.

April 17: Needle Workshop. Kits of all kinds available for purchase.

April 26: Herb bread and tea. Garden workshop with movie, speaker and horticulturist. \$1.50 per person.

May 4: Annual Spring Festival, with music arts, and crafts at the house and Arts Center. Noon to 6, p.m. 10,000 people are expected; buses will carry visitors from Montpelier Shopping Center lot on Route 197 to the grounds.

May 10: American Quilting Association demonstration and exhibit. 1 to 4 p.m.

May 16, 17, and 18: 1st Annual Montpelier Mansion Antiques Show and Sale, \$1.50 per person.

This Summer, beginning in July, the Friends of Montpelier will sponsor a series of five Summer Evening Concerts, generally on Friday nights. Each night will feature a different type of music. Details will follow in later newsletters.

#### "Prince George's Heritage" to be Available at Indian Queen

Prince George's Heritage--a superb history of the county from its earliest days until the year 1800--will soon be available again for sale here in Prince George's County. Written by the late Louise Hinton, a longtime member of our Society, Prince George's Heritage was published in a first edition of 1000 copies in 1972. For the past several years, what's left of that first printing has been available only at the Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore. Through the persistent efforts of member Bill Aleshire, however, a number of those remaining copies have been secured and will soon be on sale at the Indian Queen Tavern in Bladensburg. The price will be somewhere around 12 or 13 dollars. If you would like to reserve a copy, call Bill at 262-5505.

#### The Prince George's County Historical Society

President: Frederick S. DeMarr, 277-0711 Corr. Secretary : Edith Bagot, 927-3632

Treasurer: Herb Embrey Editor: Alan Virta



**NEWS AND NOTES FROM**

## **The Prince George's County Historical Society**

Vol. VIII, no- 5 May 1980

### The May Meeting

St. Mary's City--founded in 1634 by the first Maryland settlers as their first home in the New World--will be the topic of discussion at the May meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society, to be held on this coming Saturday, May 10, at the Calvert mansion Riversdale, Mrs. Mary Combs Barber, Executive Director of the St. Mary's City Commission, will speak on the work being done by the State on the restoration and interpretation of Maryland's first settlement, and our first Provincial capital.

The meeting will begin at 2 p.m. Guests are welcome, and refreshments will be served. The mansion is located at 4811 Riverdale Road, in Riverdale.

### The Laurel House Tour

"Restoration, Renovation, and Rejuvenation" will be the theme of the Laurel House Tour, to be sponsored by the Laurel Historical Society on Saturday, May 17, from 10:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. The tour starts at City Hall, and a bus will be available to carry tour-goers around town. Tickets for the tour may be purchased in advance or on the day of the tour at the price of \$4.00 a piece, \$3.00 for senior citizens. Lunch will be available at the Laurel Women's Club between 11 and 2, but it is requested that you make lunch reservations in advance by calling 490-0818. For general information or bus reservations, the numbers to call are 490-1344 or 953-7312.

### Bowie Heritage Day

The City of Bowie will again celebrate the annual Bowie Heritage Day on Sunday, May 18, at the Belair mansion and at the Stables. Congress' Own Regiment in its Revolutionary regalia will be at the mansion, and horses, exhibits, and other special features will be located at the-Stables. Watch the local newspapers for more details. Hours are from 2 to 5 P.m.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

**ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23,1696**

## The St. George's Day Awards

The Society is very pleased to announce the recipients of this year's St. George's Day Awards, presented at the St. George's Day Dinner on April 23 at the University of Maryland. Our honorees were:

Constance P. Ackerson, of Bowie, whose years of tireless research into the history of one of Prince George's County's historic old parishes was brought to fruition in 1978 with the publication of her much acclaimed book, Holy Trinity, Collington: Her People and Their Church.

Sister Catherine Wright, now of Bowling Green, Kentucky, author and compiler of the Bicentennial history of the historic town of Bladensburg, whose pioneering curriculum for the study of local history at Elizabeth Seton High School has become a model for others developing similar programs in Maryland. Accepting the award for Sister Catherine was the Mayor of Bladensburg, Susanna Cristofane.

Robert Crawley, of Camp Springs an activist in the field of historic preservation long before it became as popular as it is today, whose many efforts on its behalf--as commissioner of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, as chairman of the Prince George's County Historical and Cultural Trust, as chairman of the Citizens' Advisory Committee for the county's Historic Sites and Districts Plan, and as its enthusiastic proponent in his many other civic endeavors--have contributed immeasurably to the cause in Prince George's County.

Mrs. Christine L. Willcox last private owner of Montpelier, whose generous and public-spirited donation of that ancient Snowden home to the Park and Planning Commission has insured for generations to come the opportunity to appreciate and enjoy one of America's architectural gems. Accepting the award for Mrs. Willcox was Jean Speicher, chairman of the Friends of Montpelier,

National Colonial Farm, located on the Potomac River near Accokeek, whose many and varied programs have contributed greatly to the study and understanding of farm life in colonial America, and whose very presence along the shores of the Nation's River protects and preserves the beautiful view George Washington enjoyed from Mount Vernon. The award was accepted by the farm's director, Dr. David McKay.

The Clan Gregor Society, comprised of members and descendants of the Magruder and McGregor family many of whom trace their descent from Alexander Magruder, who established that Scottish family in this county in the 17th century. The Clan Gregor Society's study of Magruder history, particularly as it has been published in the Society's annual yearbook, has added much to our knowledge of early Prince George's County and one of her prominent families. The award was accepted by Joseph C. Tichy, Jr. Deputy Chieftan.

The Marlborough Hunt Club, located on the Patuxent River near Upper Marlboro, which has preserved and fostered the ancient sport of fox-hunting in Prince George's, and which has kept alive the distinguished bloodline of that first pack of fox hounds that Robert Brooke brought with him to Maryland from England more than three hundred years ago. Accepting the award for the Hunt Club was A. H. Smith, Master of the Hounds.

The evening was concluded with remarks from County Executive Larry Hogan on the county government's efforts in historic preservation, and in particular his budget proposal for \$40,000 to begin the architectural study of the Buck House. The Society's thanks are extended to the committee which worked so hard on this year's dinner, and we look forward to another successful affair next year, on the 285th anniversary of our county's founding.

## New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

Mrs. Ethel We Schleiffer

Kirkland, Wash.

Mr. DeMarr

Mrs. Blanche E. Dobbin  
Robert and Joan Jansego

Hyattsville  
Upper Marlboro

Mrs. Tatspaugh  
Mr. Virta

We are also pleased to announce two more new Life Members:

Gertrude L. Poe, of Laurel  
Mrs. Maxie Phillips, of University Park

### Conditions Propounded

With home mortgage interest rates soaring to unheard of highs these days--twelve percent being an excellent buy in today's market--many Marylanders are postponing the purchase of a new home. If what the economists say is true, that the housing industry is a barometer of conditions to come in the overall economy, then we may be in trouble. Housing starts are down, real estate sales are dropping off, and construction workers are losing their jobs. Little solace can be derived from the fact that things were better only a short time ago—that the going rate was eight or nine percent three years ago, and half that twenty-five years back.

Nevertheless, it is interesting to look back to that very first real estate market--when Maryland was nothing but wide-open spaces, and the whole province was being "developed" by Lord Baltimore—to see what the terms of home ownership were back then. Of course, the Lord Proprietor did not build you a house at all--all he did was provide the land. But the terms of the transfer were much more generous than today. The land was yours for the taking, just bring some friends along!

Seriously, Maryland, if it was to survive, needed people. Life was not easy in the new land, and the colony had to grow if it was to become a viable society. Furthermore, all that land did Lord Baltimore no good if he couldn't collect property taxes (called quit rents) from it. So he would gladly grant the land away in return for settlement. The more people you could bring with you to settle the land, the more land you'd get.

Lord Baltimore spelled out his terms in a promotional booklet entitled A Relation of Maryland; Together with a Map of the Countrey, the Conditions of Plantation, His Majesties Charter to the Lord Baltemore, Translated into English. Published in London in 1635, it was written in part by Father Andrew White. We leave Father White's interesting description of, Maryland to later issues of News and Notes, and publish below Lord Baltimore's terms.

CONDITIONS PROPOUNDED BY THE LORD BALTEMORE, to such as shall goe, or adventure into MARYLAND,

I. What person soever, subject to our soveraigne Lord the King of England, shal be at the charge to transport into the Province of Maryland, himselfe or his deputy, with any number of able men, between the ages of 16 and 50, each man being provided in all things necessary for a Plantation (which together with their transportation, will amount to about 20 1 a man, as by an estimate hereafter following may appeare) there shalbe assigned unto every such adventurer, for every five men which he shall so transport thither, a proportion of good land Within the said province, containing in quantity 1000 acres of English measure, which shall be erected into a Mannor, and be conveyed to him, his heires, and assignes for ever, with all such royalties and priviledges, as are usually belonging to Mannors in England; rendring and paying yerely unto his Lordship, and his heires for every such Mannor, a quit rent of 2.0 shillings, (to be paid in the Commodities of the Countrey) and such other services as shall be generally agreed upon for publike uses, and the common good.

II. What person soever, as aforesaid, shall transport himselfe, or any lesse numbers of servants then five (aged, and provided as aforesaid) he shall have assigned to him, his heires and assignes for ever, for himselfe, 100 acres of good land within the said Province; and for and in respect of every such servant, 100 acres more, be be holden of his Lordship in freehold, paying therefore, a yeerely quit rent of 2 shillings for every hundred acres, in the Commodities of the Countrey.

III. Any married man that shall transport himselfe, his wife and children; shall have assigned unto him, his heires and assignes for ever, in freehold, (as aforesaid) for himselfe 100 acres; and for his wife 100 acres; and for every child that he shall carry over, under the age of 16 yeeres, 60 acres; paying for a quit rent 12 pence for every fifty acres.

III. Any woman that shall transport herselfe or any children, under the age of sixe yeeres, shall have the like Conditions as aforesaid.

V. Any one that shall carry over any women servants, under the age of fourty yeeres, shall have for and in respect of every such woman servant, 50 acres paying onely a quit rent as aforesaid.

--Alan Virta



NEWS AND NOTES FROM

## The Prince George's County Historical Society

Vol. VIII, no. 6 June 1980

### The June Meeting: Treasures of the Maryland Historical Society

"Treasures of the Maryland Historical Society"--a slide presentation on the many resources and programs available at the Society's Museum and Library of Maryland History--will be the topic at the June meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society, to be held on Saturday, June 14, at the Calvert mansion, Riversdale. Naomi Kinard, a volunteer with the Education Dept. of the Maryland Historical Society, will highlight the Society's fine collection of Maryland furniture, costumes, maritime objects, graphic arts, and other collections, as well as the library and archives and the many programs available to the public. The meeting will begin at 2 p.m. The Calvert mansion is located on Riverdale Road, several blocks west of Kenilworth Avenue. Guests are welcome, and refreshments will be served. Our Society's new bookshelves have arrived and are now in place, and the books are on them, so our upstairs offices in the mansion are now much more orderly, even if curtains are not yet hung and carpeting is not installed. These offices will be open for your inspection after the meeting.

Too infrequently do we in Prince George's County avail ourselves of the opportunities for research and relaxation at the Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore. As you will learn at the June meeting, it is an excellent place to spend some time--either studying or relaxing--and an interesting place to take out-of-town guests. Join us on June 14 to learn more about the Maryland Historical Society.

### A Victorian Wedding Reception and Other Delights

The Surratt Society will stage a Victorian wedding reception at the Surratt House in Clinton on Sunday, June 22, 1900, and the public is cordially invited. The time will be from Noon until 4 p.m., and there will be music, sweets, and savories.

An old Southern Maryland tradition known as a K-9 Frisbee Catch and Fetch Contest will be held at Largo High School on Saturday, June 14 at 10 a.m. If you have a dog that can catch frisbees or just want to watch, call Jane Horst of Watkins Regional Park at 249-9220 for more information. Rain date is June 15

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

**ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696**

## Calvert's Fine Farm

In the year 1854--a year marked by bitter sectional discord over the slavery question--the New York Times sent an enterprising young writer South to observe the agriculture, economy, and everyday life, and to report back for the benefit of the Times' Northern readers. The result was one of the finest American travel journals ever written --perceptive, insightful, and very readable. Required reading in American history courses even today, its publication brought national fame to its author--a Hartford, Conn., native named Frederick Law Olmsted.

Frederick Law Olmsted (1822-1903) would certainly have achieved National prominence even if he hadn't written of his travels South for once his journeys were through he devoted his life to a career that brought him even more national acclaim. Today Olmsted is remembered not only as the author of A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States, but also as one of the pioneers in the field of landscape architecture. Together with the Englishman Calvert Vaux, he designed New York's Central Park in the late 1850's, and embarked on a career in landscape architecture that would last almost fifty years. He designed parks in numerous American and foreign cities, and his crowning achievement was the design of the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. But his contribution was much more than just the parks he designed--it was the concept that urban parks should be carefully Planned, and that they played a truly beneficial role in making cities more livable. His work was of great importance in the development of the profession of landscape architecture, and he lent his influence to the movements for state and national parks and for city planning.

Olmsted began his tour of the South in December 1854 in Washington, D.C., and the first farm he visited was one in Prince George's County, that of Charles Benedict Calvert, of Riversdale. Calvert (1308-1864) was the son of George Calvert and Rosalie Eugenia Calvert, builders of Riversdale, and he was a leader in American agriculture. President of the Prince George's and Maryland State Agricultural Societies, vice president of the United States Agricultural Society, he was founder of the Maryland Agricultural College (University of Maryland, College Park) and a leader in the fight for the creation of a U.S. Dept. of Agriculture. He served in the Maryland legislature in the 1830's and 40's, and from 1861 to 1863 represented the 5th Congressional District in the U.S. Congress.

Calvert was an experimental as well as a practical farmer, as Olmsted's account of his visit will show. The following is excerpted from his A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States, With Remarks on Their Economy published in 1856 by -Dix & Edwards, and republished in 1968 by Negro Universities Press.

### A Maryland Farm

Washington, Dec. 14th [1854]. Called on Mr. C., whose fine farm, from its vicinity to Washington, and its excellent management, as well as from the hospitable habits of its owner, has a national reputation. It is some two thousand acres in extent, and situated just without the District, in Maryland.

The residence is in the Midst of the farm, a quarter of a mile from the high road--the private approach being judiciously carried through large pastures which are divided only by slight, but close and well-secured, wire fences. The mansion is of brick, and, as seen through the surrounding trees, has somewhat the look of an old French chateau. The kept -rounds are very limited, and in simple but quiet taste; being surrounded only by wires, they merge, in effect, into the pastures. There is a fountain, an ornamental dove-cote, and icehouse, and the approach road, nicely graveled and rolled, comes up to the door with a fine sweep.

I had dismounted and was standing before the door, when I heard myself loudly hailed from a distance.

"Ef yer wants to see Master, sah, he's down thar--to the new stable."

I could see no one, - and when I was tired of holding my horse, I mounted, and rode on in search of the new stable. I found it without difficulty; and in it Mr. and Mrs. C. With them were a number of servants, one of whom now took my horse with alacrity. I was taken at once to *look* at a very fine herd of cows, and afterwards led upon a tramp over the farm, and did not get back to the house till dinner time.

The new stable is most admirably contrived for convenience, labor-saving, and economy of space. (Full and accurate descriptions of it, with illustrations, have been given in several agricultural journals.) The cows are mainly thorough-bred Shorthorns, with a few imported Ayrshires and Alderneys, and some small black "natives." I have

seldom seen a better lot of milkers; they are kept in good condition, are brisk and healthy, docile and kind, soft and pliant of skin, and give milk up to the very eve of calving; milking being never interrupted for a day. Near the time of calving the milk is given to the calves and pigs. The object is to obtain milk only, which is never converted into butter or cheese, but sent immediately to town, and for this the Shorthorns are found to be the most profitable breed. Mr. C. believes that, for butter, the little Alderneys, from the peculiar richness of their milk, would be the most valuable. He is, probably, mistaken, though I remember that in Ireland the little black Kerry cow was found fully equal to the Ayrshire for butter, though giving much less milk.

There are extensive bottom lands on the farm, subject to be flooded in freshets, on which the cows are mainly pastured in summer. Indian corn is largely sown for fodder, and, during the driest season, the cows are regularly soiled with it. These bottom lands were entirely covered with heavy wood, until, a few years since, Mr. C. erected a steam saw-mill, and has lately been rapidly clearing them, and floating off the sawed timber to market by means of a small stream that runs through the farm.

The low land is much of it drained, and underdrains being made of rough boards of any desired width nailed together, so that a section is represented by the inverted letter A. Such covered drains have lasted here twenty years without failing yet, but have only been tried where the flow of water was constant throughout the year.

The water collected by the drains can be, much of it, drawn into a reservoir, from which it is forced by a pump, driven by horse power to the market-garden, where it is distributed from several artesian fountain-heads, by means of hose, and is found of great value, especially for celery. The celery trenches are arranged in concentric circles, the water-head being in the center. The water-closets and all the drainage of the house are turned to good account in the same way. Mr. C. contemplates extending his water-pipes to some of his meadow lands. Wheat and hay are the chief crops sold off the farm, and the amount of them produced is yearly increasing.

The two most interesting points of husbandry, to me, were the large and profitable use of guano and bones, and the great extent of turnip culture. Crops of one thousand and twelve hundred bushels of rutabaga to the acre have been frequent, and this year the whole crop of the farm is reckoned to be over thirty thousand bushels; to be fed out to the neat stock between this time and the next pasture season. The soil is generally a red, stiff loam, with an occasional stratum of coarse gravel, and, therefore, not the most favorable for turnip culture. The seed is always imported. Mr. C.'s experience, in this respect, agreeing with my own;--the Ruta baga undoubtedly degenerates in our climate. Bones, guano, and ashes are used in connection with yarding for manure. The seed is sown from the middle to the last of July in drills, but not in ridges, in the English way. In both these respects, also, Mr. C. confirms the conclusions I have arrived at in the climate of New York; namely, that ridges are best dispensed with, and that it is better to sow in the latter part of July than in June, as has been generally recommended in our books and periodicals. Last year, turnips sown on the 20th July were larger and finer than others, sown on the same ground, on my farm, about the first of the month. This year I sowed in August, and, by forcing superphosphate--home manufactured--and guano, obtained a fine crop; but the season was unusually favorable.

Mr. C. always secures a supply of turnips that will allow him to, give at least one bushel a day to every cow while in winter quarters. The turnips are sliced, slightly salted, and commonly mixed with fodder and meal. Mr. C. finds that salting the sliced turnip, twelve hours before it is fed, effectually prevents its communicating any taste to the milk. This, so far as I know, is an original discovery of his, and is one of great value to dairymen. In certain English dairies the same result is obtained, where the cows are fed on cabbages, by the expensive process of heating the milk to a certain temperature and then adding saltpetre.

The wheat crop of this district has been immensely increased, by the use of guano, during the last four years. On this farm it has been largely used for five years; and land that had not been cultivated for forty years, and which bore only broom-sedge--a worthless grass--by the application of two hundred weight of Peruvian guano, now yields thirty bushels of wheat to an acre.

Mr. C.'s practice of applying guano differs, in some particulars, from that commonly adopted here. After a deep plowing of land intended for wheat, he sows the seed and guano at the same time, and harrows both in. The common custom here is to plow in the guano, six or seven inches deep, in preparing the ground for wheat. I believe Mr. C.'s plan is the best. I have myself used guano on a variety of soils for several years with great success for wheat, and I may mention the practice I have adopted from the outset, and wit, which I am well satisfied. It strikes between the two systems here mentioned and I think is philosophically right. After preparing the ground with plow

and harrow, I sow wheat and guano together, and plow them in with a gang-plow which covers to a depth, on an average, of three inches.

Clover seed is sowed in the spring following the wheat-sowing, and the year after the wheat is taken off, this--on the old sterile hills--grows luxuriantly, knee-high. It is left alone for two years, neither mown nor pastured; there it grows and there it lies, keeping the ground moist and shady, and improving it on the Gurney principle. Mr. C. then manures with dung, bones, and guano, and with another crop of wheat lays this land down to grass. What the ultimate effect of this system will be, it is yet too early to say--but Mr. C. is pursuing it with great confidence.

[Olmsted was interested in observing the South's system of slavery but Calvert "was disinclined to converse on the topic of slavery, and I, therefore, made no inquiries about the condition and habits of his negroes, or his management of them. They seemed to live in small and rude log-cabins, scattered in different parts of the farm." Calvert did tell Olmsted that he hired Irishmen for ditching, but preferred blacks for general farm labor because they worked more faithfully at their chores. The Irish, furthermore, according to Calvert, "required more personal supervision than negroes." Olmsted did record that Calvert's patience was sometimes tried by his laborers, and he would "frequently take the duty off hands into his own, rather than wait for them..."]

[Olmsted made these observations on life in and near Washington, D.C. his return to the city from Riversdale:]

The prices of garden productions were high, compared even with New York. All the necessaries of life are very expensive in Washington great complaint is made of exorbitant rents, and building-lots are said to have risen in value several hundred per cent. within five or six years.

The population of the city is now over 50,000, and is increasing rapidly. There seems to be a deficiency of tradespeople, and I have no doubt the profits of retailers are excessive. There is one cotton factory in the District of Columbia, employing one hundred and fifty hands, male and female; a small foundry; a distillery; and two tanneries--all not giving occupation to fifty men; less than two hundred, together, out of a resident population of nearly 150,000, being engaged in manufactures. Very few of the remainder are engaged in productive occupations. There is water-power near the city, superior to that of Lowell, of which, at present, I understand that no use at all is made.

[Note that Olmsted makes no mention of Prince George's County's leading crop, tobacco, in his report of his visit to Calvert's farm. By the time of his visit to Riversdale, far less tobacco was being raised in the northern parts of the county (where Riversdale was located than in the central and southern portions.--Alan Virta)]

### Some Miscellaneous Agricultural Notes

Apologies are in order if this issue of News and Notes, focusing it does on the details of agriculture, has tried the patience of our city readers. Your forbearance is asked for one more page only, and an issue devoted to more urban themes is promised for the near future.

Before leaving the agriculture of the county, however, we will print below these items relating to Prince George's County agriculture in those years, excerpted from Judge R. Lee Van Horn's book, Out of the Past: Prince Georgians and Their Land.

"The same paper [Baltimore Gazette and Daily Advertiser], in its issue published October 28, 1845, informed us that the fifth annual exhibition of the Prince George's Agricultural Society, held in Upper Marlboro on October 22 and 23, was well attended and gave -great satisfaction Dr. [John H.] Bayne exhibited fine specimens of fruit and vegetables; Charles B. Calvert, fine purebred cattle; Thomas Duckett and W. W. W. Bowie, two slaughtered sheep; and Colonel H. Capron, a beautiful team of mules."

"The Sun, in its issue of August 26, 1859, stated that for weeks an unusually severe drought had prevailed in Prince George's County. Since June 17 only sufficient rain has fallen in some localities to lay the dust. Everything was literally burnt up. The Marlboro Advocate [i.e. Planters Advocate] says: "The corn crop is the greatest failure since 1816. So far we have had a frost in every month this year and the cold and dry weather like that in 1816 has made the corn crop almost a total failure. The tobacco crop is but little better. It was planted earlier than usual, mostly in

the month of May and has grown up without the aid of rain to a narrow spindling top. The best judges say that not more than one-half of a crop can be made.

"These misfortunes with the loss of their wheat crop has seriously injured and retarded the prosperity of the farming classes."

We close with some agricultural statistics for the county, taken from the agricultural census of 1860. Tobacco production, pounds: 13,446,550. These crops in bushels Wheat--312,796; Rye-24,234; Indian corn --699,144; Oats--98,073. Hay, in tons: 13,167. The livestock population was: Horses--4701; Asses and Mules--1364; Milk cows--3887; Working oxen--3441; Other cattle--4855; Sheep-8828; and Swine--25,927. The human population was 23,327 in 1860--9650 whites, 1198 free blacks, and 12,479 slaves.

The Prince George's County Historical Society

Subscription to this newsletter is included in the membership dues, which are \$5.00 per year. Apply to the Society at P.O. Box 14 Riverdale, Md. 20840.

# NEWS AND NOTES FROM The Prince George's County Historical Society

VIII, no. 7 July 1980

## Summer Events At St. Mary's City

The summer calendar of events at St. Mary's City, Maryland's 17th century provincial capital, is sure to interest members of the Prince George's County Historical Society.

Perhaps the most innovative program on the calendar is the "living history" dramatization. Professional actors recreate 17th century life in an authentic setting on the Old State House grounds, and visitors are free to wander about and mingle with them, witnessing life as it happened 300 years ago. The "living history" is not just a display of colonial craftsmen going through their work routines--as is common at -many historical parks--but it is a much fuller recreation of daily life and the events which highlighted it.

The living history takes place on Saturday and Sunday afternoon between 1 and 3 p.m. through August 10. Other events of note will be a 17th century militia muster featuring the First Maryland Regiment, on July 19 and 20, and the Third Annual Ebenezer Cooke Poetry Festival on July 27. The Old Day Playhouse will present two of Shakespeare's plays in July and August: Macbeth from July 16 to 27 at 8:30 p.m., and A Mid-Summers Night Dream, from July 30 to August 10 at 9 p.m.

For more information or for ticket information regarding the plays, call the St. Mary's city Commission at 301-863-8522. St. Mary's City is not a long drive down Route 5, the countryside is beautiful, and the programs are excellent.

## New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

		Sponsor
Laurence ("Mike") Nairn	Hyattsville	Mrs. Fleshman
Joseph D. Fanning	Lewisdale	Mr. H. Embrey
Edna McCathran	Riverdale	Ms. Mary Small
Josephine Capece	Adelphi	Mrs. Tatspaugh

## **PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696



“A prejudice, we are aware, exists in the South against factory labor—we are aware that it is looked upon as menial employment--as the prolific source of disease and immorality--and therefore, to all who thus think and believe, we will remark, that they labor under a most lamentable delusion--and here pray leave to assure them, that, if they could with us have looked upon the pretty, rosy-cheeked, and modest behaved girls of Laurel--have witnessed the perfect order and decorum which prevailed, all their prejudices would have been dispelled by the force of unerring truth--for we do not believe that the same number of females can be selected any where, whether in country, or town, whose appearance and deportment would be more indicative of good health and sound morals; and we will venture the assertion, that in no country are the daughters of peasants or farmers, nearly as well clad. We think the females whom we saw engaged at work, in several stories of the factory, must have numbered between 6 and 7 hundred, and although we observed their countenances with that view, we saw but one who bore the appearance of impaired health--and all were dressed genteelly and in excellent taste.

"We have mentioned the flower gardens in front of the workmen's houses, and we must not forget to state that in front of the Factory, Capron has displayed exquisite taste and a love of the beautiful in the devotion of about, a third of an acre of ground to a flower garden, where shrubbery and flowers and gravel walks and green plats present a contrast so rich and varied, that Shenstone, could he revisit the earth, might envy the possessor. Nor are the ladies of the factory behind their public spirited employer; for every window-sill was studded with pots of rare plants, whose blooms were only equalled in beauty by the living roses and lillies which bloomed around them.

The Laurel mill was destroyed by fire in 1855, but rebuilt and worked well into the twentieth century. It was taken down in the 1930's. More information about it and the town of Laurel can be found in at least three sources: Laurel, Md. Souvenir Historical Booklet, edited by Gertrude Poe (1970); The Story of St. Mary of the Mills Church (1976); and Montpelier and the Snowden Family, by William G. Cook.

"We left the Laurel with the impression, that it was one of the best arranged communities we had ever been in, and the loveliest spot which we had ever beheld."

## On Household Manufactures

This second article concerns women working at home, and, like the first, is taken from the 1845 volume of The American Farmer, this time from the month of December. The magazine for that month devoted more than four full pages to reports on the 1845 county fair sponsored by the Prince George's County Agricultural Society. In addition to the report on household manufactures displayed at the fair, printed below, the reporter had this to say of the contributions of Prince George's County women. "The 'bon-vivant' would have dreamed rare dreams of anticipated intoxication in the realms of fun and frolic, upon seeing the rich currant wine of Mrs. Robert Bowie, 15 years old, and the cordials, the bounce, the Peach brandies, and Brandied bruits of our fair ladies, so superior of their kinds, and so ravenously devoured that even your correspondent could only have time to test the excellence of one before all were gone whence no such traveling spirit e'er returns."

"On Household Manufactures --Committee--Robert W. Bowie, Chas. B. Calvert, John Brookes--The Committee on

Household Manufactures report, that the specimens of home industry, in the various departments of domestic economy, submitted to their inspection, evidence an improvement in these useful and meritorious branches, which cannot be too highly commended--more especially should it be noticed that most of the fabrics which have been submitted by the ladies of the county, greatly excel in usefulness and beauty the productions of similar works of any former year. It would seem as if our wives and daughters, heretofore so little regarded as useful operatives in advancing the great interests of the country in its various industrial occupations, have on this occasion, by a simultaneous and almost general effort, emancipated the sex. from the enervating shackles of modern fashion, and shown that woman can and will cheerfully contribute by her labor, whenever needful to increase the independence and general wealth of the country, as well as promote the numberless interests and happiness of the household over which nature seems to have ordained that she should, in all christian and civilized communities, preside.

"The many and beautiful specimens of needle work of knitting, and of the loom, will compare with the best and

most tasteful samples of the same description of Household Manufactures which have ever been exhibited in the country. Indeed, it must strike conviction to all liberal and enlightened minds, that if no other benefit resulted from the establishment of this Society, than that which stimulates our ladies to active and not unbecoming labor, (which is far, however, from being the case,) that alone should irresistibly impel our patriotic farmers and planters and the public spirited of all other classes, to exert every faculty to continue and enlarge the operations of the Society, so that it may become what its projectors and founders intended, a source of profit, of happiness, of sociability, and ameliorated habits and propensities to all. The committee award the following premiums:

- "For the best home made Cloth to Mrs. Leonard H. Early
- "For the best Quilt, Mrs. Dr. R.W. Bowie
- "For the best Counterpane, Mrs. Dr. Chas. Bowie
- "For the best Yarn Stockings, Mrs. Jas. Mullikin.
- "For the best Butter, Thos. Duckett.
- "For the best Worsted Embroidery, Miss Malvina Early.
- "For the best Carpeting, Mrs. Wm. D. Clagett.
- "For the best Cake, Mrs. James Mullikin
- "For the best Wine, Mrs. Robt. Bowie.
- "For the best Bounce, Mrs. Saml. H. Dorsett.
- "For the best lot of Shoes, Andrew Coyle & Son."

We conclude these pages on women working with this request. During the middle years of the 20th century the term "Government Girl" was sometimes applied to young women, usually unmarried, who came to the area to work for the federal government, often at the behest of recruiters who traveled across the country looking for talented workers for the expanding federal government. Did any member of the Society come to this area as a "Government Girl"? What made you decide to come? Where did you come from? Where did you work? Where did you live? And how did you come to live in Prince George's County? Let us know at P.O. Box 14 Riverdale, Maryland 20840.

A Research Inquiry: Jesse Wharton

Jesse Wharton, age 26, fatally shot in Old Capitol Prison circa April 1, 1862, was son of Dr. Wharton, "Professor of Agricultural Chemistry in Prince George's County". Young Wharton was shot for looking out of a prison window--possibly in defiance of an ultimatum of a sentinel. Jesse was "formerly an officer in the United States regular service who had resigned his commission... and was arrested . . . for fear of his going South."

A cache of letters from John Wilkes Booth's sister, Asia, recently rediscovered in the Peale Museum in Baltimore indicates that Jesse (or "Jack") visited more than once at the Booth home, Tudor Hall, in Belair, Harford County, Maryland.

John Brennan and the Surratt Society are trying to find Jesse Wharton's gravesite. If anyone knows, write to John or the Surratt Society at P.O. Box 427, Clinton, Maryland 20735.

#### The Prince George's County Historical Society

A subscription to this monthly newsletter is included in the annual membership dues of \$5.00. For information, write the Society at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20040.

President: Frederick S. DeMarr

Corresponding Secretary Mrs. Frank Bagot

Treasurer: Herb Embrey

Newsletter editor; Alan Virta



# NEWS AND NOTES FROM The Prince George's County Historical Society

Vol. VIII, no, 8 August 1980

## September Meeting at Rossborough Inn

The Society's annual luncheon meeting will be held this year on Saturday, September 13 at the Rossborough Inn on the University of Maryland campus. Built around 1803 by Richard Ross, former proprietor of Bladensburg's Indian Queens the inn is well restored and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is now the home of the University's Faculty Club. Plan to join us for cocktails, lunch, and then the regular September meeting at 2 p.m. further details and a reservation form will be included with the September newsletter. Cocktails will begin around noon, Guests are welcome.

## The Magruder House

Members of the Society are reminded of the fund raising drive now underway for the restoration of the Magruder House in Bladensburg. The Maryland Legislature has appropriated State funds for restoration, but those are matching funds and will not be made available until a like amount is raised privately. The Magruder House is now owned by Prince George's Heritage, Inc., a local non-profit corporation comprised of the members of the Prince George's County Committee of the Maryland Historical Trust. Your support is encouraged for this worthwhile cause. Contributions may be made to Prince George's Heritage, Inc., and mailed to the committee at 7606 Woodyard Road, Clinton, Md. 20735.

## In Another County

"The [Montgomery] County Historical Society will once again be the recipient of \$20,000 from the County's 1981 budget to be used for the salaries of a director and library and museum services. An additional \$4,800 was awarded for architectural work to be done on the Beall-Dawson House, Society headquarters in Rockville." --From SWAP, by the Maryland Historical Trust June 1980.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

**ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696**

## Conventional Madness

Political conventions, it would seem, have the strange power of stimulating unusual behavior in otherwise rational, calm, and intelligent people. Because of this, and thanks to television, watching the great national conventions has become a popular quadrennial spectator sport. Even before TV, conventions were lively affairs, as these accounts from the newspapers of 1899 would indicate.

First, the Baltimore Sun of September 5, 1899.

Republican Party  
A Howling Time in the Prince  
George's Convention  
Delegates Beyond Control of Chair  
man--Rank Rebellion Against All  
Boss Dictation

Upper Marlboro, Md. Sept 4. The Republican Convention of Prince George's County had a stormy time today and finally adjourned over to September 11 without nominating a county ticket. The convention broke up in disorder without doing anything, but taking a sober second thought, reassembled and elected 15 delegates to the State convention, one from each election district, and then adjourned.

The trouble was brewing all the forenoon, which was devoted to caucusing and wire pulling. The convention was called to order by the present chairman of the State Central Committee, Henry W. Claggett. He urged the members to be quiet in their work and nominate a good, strong ticket, and then gave up his seat to E.E. Perkins, who was then chosen chairman of the convention. The committee on credentials retired and reported the delegates were seated, and nominations were then declared in order.

Edward T. Benton, Jr. of Bladensburg, moved that the election of members of the State Central Committee be made after the county ticket had been named, and this was approved by the convention, if shouts and cheers could be considered "Yeas." But J.M.T. Fisher offered as a substitute that the nominations for or State Central Committee be voted upon at once, and named James B. Belt, Clarence Hawkins, W.T.S. Jennings, and S.R. Rollins as the committee.

Mr. Benton said: "The people of Prince George's County did not intend to stand this bossing longer. The Ryon faction, which is running R.N. Ryon as a dark horse candidate [for county treasurer], had fixed up a ticket with Sydney E. Mudd [Congressman] two weeks before the primaries and it was not of the people's choice, but their own."

Then ensued a scene which is hard to describe. All the delegates rose to their feet, crying for recognition from the chair. Numerous leaders jumped upon the platform and addressed the convention. All were shouting and yelling themselves hoarse. No attention was paid to the chairman's cry for order until he finally left the assemblage to let off steam. The confusion continued for some time, and the meeting finally broke up with nothing done and no agreement as to when the convention should be called again. The break up was attended by much disorder and confusion.

The outcome of the whole affairs it was thought, would be that Congressman Sydney E. Mudd, in order to get the State Central Committee, would be obliged to let Mr. Ryon drop and concede the treasurer's place to Robert W. Hunter who had by long odds the best of the primary meetings on Saturday. Mr. Mudd said some time ago he would not interfere, but there were unmistakable evidences of his influence throughout today's convention.

After cooling in the outer air for some time Chairman Perkins got the convention together again. The behavior of the delegates on reassembling was strikingly in contrast with their disorder at the first meeting. They proceeded to the business of electing the delegates to the State conventions and 15 were chosen, after which the convention

adjourned till September 11, leaving the makeup of the Central Committee unannounced and the county ticket not nominated...

A lengthy description then followed of the various factions *in* the Prince George's County GOP. "Wire pulling" must have gone on all week, because when the Republicans finally did reconvene, Mr. Ryon would not find himself off the ticket, as predicted. The story continues in the September 15 issue of the Prince George's Enquirer.

### The Republican Convention

"The Republican Convention reassembled here last Tuesday and nominated the following ticket:

County Treasurer: Richard N. Ryon  
State's Attorney: William M. Lewin  
House of Delegates: John B. Contee, Clay D. Perkins,  
George B. Merrick  
County Commissioners: R.W. Beall, Wallace Pyles  
Judges of the Orphan's Court: Lemuel Dale, T. Fielder Duvall,  
William M. Gallahan  
Surveyor: Edward Latimer  
State Central Committee : James B. Belt, W.T.S. Rollins  
J.R. Jennings, Clarence Hawkins

"The convention was characterized by the same turbulent scenes that prevailed in the first convention.

"The Baltimore Sun correspondent wrote the following graphic description of one incident of the meeting:

'Benton pushed the Sergeant-at-arms [Gillotte] away and in an instant a free fight started. Gillotte struck Benton several blows in the face. For five minutes the 'scrap' continued. Finally the peacemaker prevailed and the convention took a recess for a half an hour.

'Hardly had the hall been emptied before Constable R.H. Vincent, of Bladensburg, the candidate for sheriff, arrested Gillotte with two warrants. One charged him with carrying a concealed weapon and the other with assault and battery with intent to kill. Before Justice Harper [,] Gillotte waived a hearing and was released for court on surety furnished by Wallace D. Pyles, John T. Fisher, and George W. Richardson.

'During the recess the delegates stood around and freely expressed themselves. . .

Somehow the convention did complete its business and nominate a ticket for the Fall elections. Did this conventional madness hurt the Republicans in the eyes of the electorate? If it did, it was not apparent in the voting. The entire Republican ticket was swept into office in November, putting the year 1899 right up there with 1873, 1889, 1895, 1917, and 1950 as one of the banner years for the Republican Party in Prince George's County.

--Alan Virta

### "A Teacher Wanted"

"A man who can cone well recommended and who is capable of teaching the English, French and Latin Languages, and the Mathematics, will find employment in a private family, by applying to

--Robert H. Bowie, near Queen Ann, Prince George's county, Md."

--From the National Intelligencer, May 17, 1815

### The Prince George's County Historical Society

Subscription to this monthly newsletter is included in the annual membership dues of \$5.00. To apply for membership, write the Society at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20840, or call any of the officers listed below.

President-. Mr. Frederick S. DeMarr 277-0711  
4010 Hamilton Street, Hyattsville 20781

Corresponding Secretary: Mrs. Frank Bagot 927-3632

3510 Longfellow Street, Hyattsville 20782

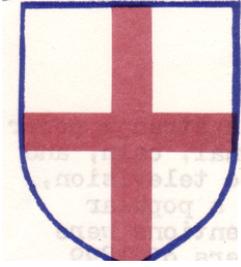
Treasurer of the Society: Mr. Herb Embrey 434-2958

10414 Tullymore Dr., Adelphi 20783

Newsletter editor: Mr. Alan Virta 474-7524

8244 Canning Terrace, Greenbelt 20770

The offices of the Society are located in the Calvert Mansion, Riversdale, in Riverdale.



# NEWS AND NOTES FROM **The Prince George's County Historical Society**

Vol, VIII, no. 9 September 1980

## The September Meetings At the Rossborough Inn

The historic Rossborough Inn on the campus of the University of Maryland will be the scene of the Society's first meeting of the Fall season, on Saturday, September 13, 1980. This first meeting will also be our annual luncheon meeting. Cocktails will be at noon, luncheon at 12:30, and the meeting itself will begin at 2 p.m.

We are quite privileged to have as guest speaker for the occasion Sister M. Virginia Geiger, who will talk on "That Remarkable Carroll Family of Maryland." Among the prominent representatives of the Carroll family she will discuss are two Prince Georgians: John Carroll, first Roman Catholic bishop in the United States, and his brother, Daniel Carroll, signer of the U.S. Constitution. A member of the faculty of the College of Notre Dame of Maryland in Baltimore, and a holder of a doctorate from Catholic University, Sister Virginia Geiger is the author of a book on the Carroll family entitled Daniel Carroll II: One Man and His Descendants.

Plan to join us on September 13 for the fine meal and wonderful hospitality we have come to expect every year at the Rossborough Inn, and for the interesting and stimulating program which will follow. A reservation form for the luncheon is included with this newsletter. Guests, as always, are more than welcome. We hope to see you on September 13.

## Tour Set for October 25

Members of the Society will have the opportunity to visit the historic working plantation Sotterley in St. Mary's County on a tour through Southern Maryland sponsored by the Prince George's County Historical Society this Fall. Scheduled for October 25, the bus tour will visit not only Sotterley, but the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in Solomons and two colonial churches, Middleham Chapel and All Saints, Sunderland, as well. Lunch will be served at Sotterley. This will be the first bus tour the Society has ever sponsored. Details will be presented at the September meeting and in the October newsletter.

## **PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

## Addition to the National Register

The Maryland Historical Trust reports the following addition to the National Register of Historic Places;

"Hyattsville Armory, in Hyattsville, the first in a series of armories designed by Robert L. Harris throughout the state, dates from 1918 and is constructed of random coursed granite with beaded mortar joints. Resembling a medieval fortress, the exterior walls are crowned by battlements and the facade is further elaborated by a pair of projecting turrets. The Great Hall of the interior features ceramic tiled walls."

## New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society.

George O. Lindsay	Hyattsville	Sponsor Mr. DeMarr
Henry A. Naylor, Jr.	Baltimore	Mr. DeMarr

Contributors to the Magruder House

Prince George's Heritage, Inc., owner of the Magruder House in Bladensburg, wishes to express its gratitude to the friends and members of the Prince George's County Historical Society who responded to their fundraising appeal contained in past newsletters. Thanks go to: Mr. and Mrs. Herbert L. Baer, Donna Beatley, Eunice E. Burdette, Mr. and Mrs. Felix Cristofane, Col. and Mrs. Samuel Crook, Dr. Robert S. McCeney, Mrs. Robert M. Marshall, Sr., Mr. Kent R. Mullikin, Mrs. Clifford F. Ransom, Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Reinhart, Vera F. Rollo, Mrs. A.A. Seidenspinner, Mr. and Mrs. D.D. Skarda, Mrs. E.B. Smith, EX. and Mrs. James H. Starkey, Jr., Mrs. E. Louise Tatspauagh, Miss Reba A. Turner, Mr. Alan Virta, Miss Margaret Walton, Mr. and Mrs. John Walton, and Dr. Vivian D. Wiser.

Prince George's Heritage, Inc. is a non-profit organization. Contributions may still be made toward the restoration of the house and addressed to Prince George's Heritage at 7606 Road, Clinton, Md. 20735.

### The St. Thomas' Antiques Show

The famous Tobacco Barn Antiques Show, benefiting St. Thomas' Episcopal Parish, will be held, this year on September 5, 6, and 7 at the Edelen Brothers Tobacco Warehouse, Upper Marlboro, Md. Admission is \$2.50 per person, and hours will be from 11 a.m. until 10 p.m. except for Sunday, when the show will close at 6 p.m. There will be free parking and a shuttle bus at the Race Track, and home-cooked food will be offered at the show.

Even if you don't buy anything, the show is a real treat. Don't miss it!

“A scattering of preservationists architectural historians all over the country are developing an appreciation for roadside diners and motels, hot-dog stands and neon signs, auto dealerships and Depression-era drugstores—the sorts of commercial designs that are still generally considered architectural trash and except for the old drugstores, are usually found along the commercial ‘strips’ outside American cities.

"One recent scholarly book discusses the architectural evolution of White Tower hamburger restaurants. Others deal with auto camps, motels, old diners and gasoline stations. ‘I don't see much difference between the strip and Colonial Williamsburg,’ says Peter Smith, chief of the review division for the government’s Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

“There is even a Society for Commercial Archaeology, founded here [Boston] four years ago, which publishes a regular journal and promotes public appreciation of the recent past. Founder Chester Liebs, a University of Vermont professor, says, ‘We're trying to use a building rather than just the written records to understand a period’—an approach used by archaeologists.

“Last November, 120 people showed up at the society’s annual convention in Washington, D.C., to hear talks on subjects like ‘Signage as Salisbury Beach’ and ‘Problems in documenting the Strip’ and to take a bus tour along U.S. Route 1 to Baltimore to admire the Washington-Baltimore strip.”

We were wondering who laid --From an article by William M. Bulkeley in the Wall Street Journal, March 28, 1980.

### Family Reunion at Croome

Sarah and Harrison Baldwin held at Patuxent River Park, 150 descendants and their spouses, from as far away as Florida and Ohio.

that wreath in the old White Tower parking lot in Riverdale last Fall!

The first family reunion of the descendants of of Prince George's County, Maryland, was Croome, on June 14, 1980. It was attended by

Mrs. Baldwin was born Sarah Blanche Stewart on July 10, 1851, at Croome, Md. She was the daughter of Elizabeth Anne Ray and James Stewart. Henry Harrison Baldwin was born in Prince George's County on March 4, 1841, son of Flavilla Chaney and Zachariah Baldwin. They were married at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church at Collington on December 23, 1867, and became members of Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Whitmarsh, along with the members of both families about 1870. They lived in the Collington area until about 1900 when they moved to Baltimore. They have one remaining child, Mr. Robert Raymond Baldwin of Baltimore, Md. He will be ninety years of age on December 10, 1980.

The Sarah Stewart and Henry Harrison Baldwin Association was formed on November 10, 1979, when eleven of the twenty-four grandchildren met in the Branchville Firehouse, Branchville, Md. They elected the following officers: President, Richard (Dick) Hughes of Lewisdale, Vice-President, John E. Vermillion, Parkville, Md.; Secretary-Treasurer Marian Donaldson Smith, Hyattsville, Md. The goals of the association will be to promote close family relationships and to continue the research into this old Prince George's County family.

--Elizabeth Vermillion Donoho

Some Questions on Some Local Families

A member of our Society living in California, Marion E. Beall, has these questions on some local families that some members might be able to answer:

- 1) "I would like to get in touch with descendant's of Anthony C. Page and Winifred Page, children of Sophia Duvall Beall Page by her second marriage."
- 2) "I have lately been given the information that a few years ago a picture of my great-great-grandmother Sophia Duvall Beall Page was in the family of a descendant of her brother Dr. Charles Duvall. If this picture is still in existence, I would like to obtain a copy and would be willing to pay for reproduction and mailing."
- 3) "I would appreciate information on the marriage of Stephen Wilson and Rebecca Nelson, 1722. Does anyone know where it was held, where they were born, when they died, and who their parents and children were?"

4) "Would appreciate information on James S. Wilson, Martha Ann Wilson, Tabitha P. Goodrich, and Thomas N. Wilson. I believe that these were brothers and sisters of my Great-great-grandmother, Narcissa

Any members who might be able to answer any of these questions or provide leads can write Marion Beall at 6256 Seabreeze Drive, Long Beach, California 90803.

A Short Summer

We apologize that the past two issues of News and Notes have been shorter than usual, but plead the excuse that a full calendar of summer events has been the reason behind that, and not willful neglect. October's issue will be a full-size one. And if anyone out there has a topic to write about, please do so and send it in. Thanks!  
--Alan Virta

The Prince George's County Historical Society

President: Frederick S. DeMarr Treasurer: Herb Embrey  
Editor Alan Virta Corr. Sec. Mrs. Edith Bagot

Wilson Beall and children of Elizabeth Morsell and \_\_\_\_\_Wilson. Does anyone in Prince George's County know when Elizabeth was married and where, and when she died?"



NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince George's County  
Historical Society**

Vol. VIII, no. 10  
October 1980

## The October Meeting: Historic Sites

"A Cross-Section of Prince George's County's Lesser-Known Historic Treasures" will be the topic of discussion at the October meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society to be held on Saturday, October 11, at the Calvert mansion, Riversdale, in Riverdale. Susan Pearl of Bowie, who spoke on the history of the Calvert mansion to an enthusiastic and appreciative audience at the Society's March meeting, will again lead the program. Her talk this month, accompanied with slides, will focus on the lesser known historic sites in the county--the ones that haven't been on the house tours or aren't commemorated with historical markers. Many of the homes in this category are architectural gems, yet a combination of factors-- inaccessibility or an owner's desire for privacy among them--have kept them from public view. Others have remained unnoticed because overall they may not be masterpieces--yet they may possess certain outstanding individual features which make them worthy of notice--such as a glorious staircase, a striking roofline, an ancient set of outbuildings, or fine paneling.

Susan Pearl is a researcher in the office of the county historian. She serves as project coordinator for the Prince George's County Inventory of Historic Sites and is an encyclopedia of knowledge on the historic sites in this county.

The meeting will begin at 2 p.m. Guests are welcome, and refreshments will be served. Riversdale\$ the Calvert mansion, is located at 4811 Riverdale Road, Riverdale, a block south of East-West Highway. Plan to be with us on October 11.

### Progress on the Magruder House

Prince George's Heritage, the non-profit corporation undertaking the restoration of Bladensburg's Magruder House, wishes to acknowledge contributions from the following friends and members of the Prince George's County Historical Society last month: Dr. H. Thomas Foley, Mr. Edward J. Griffin, Mr. Forrest S. Holmes, Jr., Dr. and Mrs. Charles G. Kurz, Jr., Long-Branch Sligo Citizens Association, Mrs. George W.S. Musgrave, Rev. Edward C. Raffetto, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. William, S. Schmidt, and Mr. Frederick Tilp. The group's address: 7606 Woodyard Road, Clinton, Maryland 20735.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
**ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23,1696**

### Programs on District of Columbia Records

Members of the Society whose research takes them into the District of Columbia should be aware of two programs on archives and manuscripts in Washington offered this Fall by the D.C. chapter of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference. The programs are:

Thursday, October 23: "Guides to District of Columbia Repositories." The panel will discuss the National Historic Publication and Records Commission's new guide to U.S. archives and manuscript repositories, the newly issued "Researcher's Guide to Historical Institutions in Washington, D.C.," by Mark Sherman; and comments offered by Howard Gillette, Professor of Washington Studies at George Washington University.

Wednesday, November 19: "Local Sources for D.C. History." The panel members will be Esme Bahn of Moorland-Springarn Research Center of Howard University; Roxanna Deane of Martin Luther King Public Library; Perry Fisher of Columbia Historical Society; Don Harrison of First Congregational Church of Washington; and a representative from the Anacostia Neighborhood Museum.

Both meetings will be held from 5:30 until 7:30 p.m. The October 23 meeting will be held at the Harvard Street Library, University of the District of Columbia, and the November 19 meeting will be held at the First Congregational Church at 1001 G Street, N.W. To make it easier on the organizers, they are asking for at least one week's notice by those who plan to attend. Anyone interested may contact Alan Virta at 474-7524 in the evenings.

### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

		<u>Sponsor</u>
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas J. McDermott	Upper Marlboro	Raymond W. Bellamy.
Mary E. Sorrell	Riverdale	Mariane V. Smith
Ruth Keane	Riverdale	Mabel Wilkinson
William R. Hudelson	Bowie	Fred De Marr
Mary M. Zimmerlund	Camp Springs	Mary Parker
Helenita Manning	Camp Springs	Mary Parker
Marilyn Oliver	Bowie	Edith Bagot, Mavis McAvoy
Mr. & Mrs. E. Donald Dietrich	College Park	Helen Brown, Ann Musgrave

### Mrs. William Hallam Tuck

We regret to inform the membership of the recent death of Mrs. William Hallam Tuck, a member of our Society. Mrs. Tuck and her late husband lived at Perrywood, a fine old home several miles outside of Upper Marlboro on the Largo Road. Both were charter members of the Society. Our sympathies are extended to the family.

### The Life and Death of a Steamboat

Prince George's County readers of the Washington newspaper, The National Intelligencer, particularly those who lived near the Patuxent River, must have taken special notice of the following advertisement which appeared in the March 5 issue of that paper in the year 1829;

"For the Patuxent River"

"The Steamboat Mount Vernon is now undergoing a thorough repair, and will be completely fitted out in the best manner for the accommodation of passengers and carrying freight. She will run on the route from Patuxent River to Baltimore, regularly calling, both going and returning, at Herring Bay, and the different villages and landing places on the Patuxent, for passengers or freight. She will be positively be ready to start on the route in all the month of March; at which time notice will be given, of the places she will call at, the days on which she will call, the rate of fare, passage, freight, etc.

I have engaged to take charge of the Mount Vernon and sail her for the proprietors. I hereby give notice, to the inhabitants of the intended route, and all others who may please to favor me with their commands, that as I intend being always on board myself, the greatest attention shall be paid to their interest and comfort, by their obedient servant,

J.A. Sangston, Agent for the Proprietor"

Despite Mr. Sangston's assurance that the Mount Vernon would "positively be ready" during March, another advertisement pertaining to the ship appeared in the Intelligencer on April 21:

"For the Patuxent River"

"The Steamboat Mount Vernon, in consequence of the inclemency of the weather during the past month, has been detained much longer than contemplated, to undergo some necessary repairs. She will be in readiness, to commence her regular trips, in all April. Due notice of the time will be given hereafter.

John A. Sangston  
Agent for the Proprietors"

A quick check of the next few months of the Intelligencer revealed no later "due notice"--although another less hurried reading would certainly be called for before the final history of the Mount Vernon is written. Also in order would be a search through the maritime records at the National Archives. Nevertheless, a sketchy history of that steamboat can still be constructed through the use of secondary sources--and an interesting story it is.

A popular reference work on steam vessels known as the "Lytle List" gives us some basic information on the Mount Vernon. Formally titled Merchant Steam Vessels of the United States, 1807-1868, compiled by A William M. Lytle, and published by the Steamship Historical Society in 1952, the Lytle List reveals that the Mount Vernon was a 148-ton sidewheeler, i.e. her paddle wheels were on the sides, rather than at the stern. She was built in Philadelphia in the year 1820, and her first home port was Georgetown, D.C.

The Mount Vernon apparently became engaged. in the D.C. to Norfolk trade, as she is mentioned several times in John C. Emmerson's work, The Steam Boat Comes to Norfolk Harbor, and the Log of the First Ten Years, 1815-1825 (1947), Emmerson's first record of the Mount Vernon comes from the Norfolk American Beacon of March 17, 1823, which stated that the ship had arrived, with Captain Walker from Philadelphia, and "is intended to run between Potomac Creek and Washington City." Emmerson also records calls by the Mount Vernon at Norfolk in 1824 and 1825, but as his log, ends in that year, so does our record of that aspect of the Mount Vernon's history.

Two of Emmerson's entries deserve elaboration however, for the Mount Vernon saw the great Lafayette at least twice during his triumphal visit to America in 1824 and 1825. The Beacon of October 25, 1824, reveals that the Mount Vernon was part of the squadron of ships that escorted Lafayette up the James to Yorktown, the scene of the final British defeat in the Revolutionary War, and where the marquis so distinguished himself in battle. Then, almost a year later, on September 9, 1825, the Beacon reports that Lafayette left President Adams "at his own door" and took the Mount Vernon down the Potomac to Point Lookouts where the frigate Brandywine waited to take him out to sea.

The next four years must have brought the Mount Vernon to a state of disrepair, or so Mr. Sangston's ads in the National Intelligencer imply. How well she was repaired and whether she did begin the Patuxent to Baltimore run can only be answered with more research. If she did engage in the Patuxent-Baltimore trade, however, she was one of many steamboats that the planters and farmers of Prince George's County relied on to take their tobacco and other crops to market in Baltimore. For despite the county's proximity to Washington, Baltimore served as our chief market for tobacco and, other crops, and it was steamboats like the Mount Vernon --and the many of the famous Weems line--that Prince Georgians for so many years depended upon for the transport of their produce.

We must return to the Lytle List for the sad story of the Mount Vernon's end. She did not stay much longer in Chesapeake or Potomac waters, it appears. This dry entry in the chapter "Losses" brings her story to a close:

"Mount Vernon. 148 tons. Stranded. Dec. 10, 1831. Pascagoula, Miss. Lives lost--O."

Eleven years seems not a long time for a life of a vessel like the Mount Vernon, which indeed once carried the great Lafayette. But eleven short years it apparently was--and we await further research to fill in the gaps in her life story more completely.

--Alan Virta

Who remembers steamboats on the Patuxent, calling on the landings in Southern Prince George's?

### Hall of Fame Selects Gabriel Duvall

Members of the Society are invited by the Prince George's County Hall of Fame to installation ceremonies for Gabriel Duvall, Comptroller of the Treasury and Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court, on Sunday, October 5, at 3:00 p.m., at the County Administration Building in Upper Marlboro. The Master of Ceremonies for the installation will be Russell W. Shipley. The Madrigal Singers of DuVal Senior High School, as well as other members of the student body and staff, will represent the school which is named in his honor, and a new portrait will be unveiled.

Gabriel Duvall is the fifth Prince Georgean to be elected to the Hall of Fame, following Dr. William Beanes, Archbishop John Carroll, Bishop Thomas John Claggett, and John Rogers.

A reception will follow immediately after the ceremonies. Guests are welcome.

The following biographical sketch of Gabriel Duvall was provided by the History Division of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and was edited from a short biography of Duvall written by Shirley Baltz.

#### Gabriel Duvall (1752-1844)

Gabriel Duvall, whose long public career spanned more than sixty years and covered all levels of government, was born in Prince George's County, Maryland on December 6, 1752. Little is known about his early life, except that he resided with his father, Benjamin Duvall, Jr., and his mother, Susanna Tyler Duvall, on the family plantation in the area known today as Glenn Dale.

Before he was twenty, Gabriel Duvall left rural Prince George's County for Annapolis. There he came in contact with the early stirring of anti-British feelings which sparked America's struggle for independence. His first position in Annapolis was that of clerk of the General Court in 1771. Then, in April of 1775, he was chosen to serve as clerk of the first Maryland Convention which replaced the Provincial General Assembly as the governing body of Maryland. Gabriel Duvall also became clerk of the Council of Safety in 1775, as well as clerk of the first House of Delegates under the new state constitution in 1777. He continued in the latter post until the autumn of 1778, when he resigned to practice law.

In July of 1781, Gabriel Duvall was selected by the Governor's Council to replace Colonel Forrest as one of the three Commissioners for the Preservation and Sale of Confiscated British Properties. He continued in that position for the next several years. During this same period, Duvall also served in several other public posts, including prosecuting attorney for the Mayor's Court of Annapolis (1781-1782) and member of the Governor's Council (1782-1784, 1785-1787). In October of 1787, Duvall won a seat in the Maryland House of Delegates representing the city of Annapolis, and was re-elected in 1788 and 1789.

On July 24, 1787, Duvall married Mary Bryce, daughter of Captain Robert Bryce and his wife Frances. The happy occasion of the birth of Gabriel Duvall's only child, Edmund Bryce Duvall, on January 25, 1790, was diminished two months later on the death of his wife at the age of 29. Despite this deep personal tragedy, the pace of Gabriel Duvall's public life continued unabated through the 1790's. In May of 1794, he was selected to fill a vacancy in the Third United States Congress created by the resignation of John F. Mercer, one of Maryland's eight representatives. By November of that year, Duvall was in Philadelphia to take his seat in the House of Representatives as it began its second session. It was then that Gabriel met Jane Gibbon, whom he married on May 5, 1795. There were no children from this second marriage.

Duvall continued to represent Maryland in the United States Congress until March of 1796, when he resigned to become a justice of the Maryland Supreme Court. Later that year, he was chosen as an elector for Thomas Jefferson in Jefferson's first, and unsuccessful, bid for the Presidency. Four years later in 1800, Gabriel Duvall was once again an elector for Jefferson, when the latter was elected President of the United States. Shortly after his inauguration, Jefferson offered the chair of Chief Judge of the District of Columbia to Duvall but he declined to serve. A year and a half later, however, Duvall accepted the post of Comptroller of the United States Treasury after receiving a letter from President Jefferson stating, "The place of Comptroller of the U.S. is vacant.... I shall be very happy if it shall appear acceptable to you, and shall think I have well performed my duty if I can get the office placed in [the] hands [of one] who enjoys and who has so much merited the public confidence. . . ." It was about this time (1802) that Gabriel Duvall moved his place of residence from Annapolis to the District of Columbia.

Duvall continued as comptroller until 1811. In that year a vacancy occurred of the Supreme Court, and President Madison nominated Duvall to fill it. His appointment was confirmed by the Senate on November 15th, and he took his seat on the bench when the Court opened its next session in February of 1812. At that time, Supreme Court justices also sat as judges of the United States Circuit Courts, and therefore each justice had to travel a circuit during part of the year. Duvall's territory covered Maryland and Delaware, and he presided over the circuit court terms held in Baltimore and Wilmington. Residing in Washington, the Duvalls could easily reach their farm in Prince George's County, where they built a country home sometime in the first quarter of the 19th century, and named it "Marietta."

As in all long lives, Duvall's was marked in later years by the deaths of loved ones. The greatest blow was the loss of his only child, Edmund Bryce Duvall in 1831, followed by the death of his daughter-in-law the next year. Then, in April of 1834, his second wife Jane Gibbon Duvall died. At the years passed, observers of the Supreme Court commented not only about Duvall's aged appearance, but also about his increasing deafness. Yet his letters at that time reveal a sharp awareness of the existing political situation and a reluctance to step aside to be replaced by someone of whom he did not approve. It was only after he was given assurances that another Marylander, Roger Brooke Taney, would be his successor, that he resigned in January of 1835. Duvall spent the last decade of his life at Marietta, tending the farm, administering his deceased son's estate, and closely supervising the education of his two grandsons, Marcus and Edmund Bryce Duvall, Jr.

On March 6, 1844, Gabriel Duvall died at Marietta at the age of 91. Announcement of his death in the chambers of the Supreme Court brought forth numerous tributes to his fine character and his many years of devoted service. According to Justice Story, who had been sworn in as a justice of the Court on the same day as Duvall, "His urbanity, his courtesy, his gentle manners, his firm integrity and independence, and his sound judgement, so eloquently and truly stated at the bar, are entirely concurred in by all of us who had the pleasure of knowing him." His remains lie in an unmarked grave in the family burial ground on the "Wigwam" farm, which was originally part of the Marietta estate.

### To Plant in Maryland

In the May issue of News and Notes, we published Lord Baltimore's conditions for settlement in the newly established colony of Maryland, taken from a pamphlet published in London in 1635. Those "conditions" were really incentives in the form of gifts of land in the New World in return for the transportation of other would-be colonists. That many Britons took Lord Baltimore up on his offer, and that Maryland did indeed grow, is a matter of historical record.

Not published in that May issue were logistical details that prospective Marylanders needed to know about the trip across the ocean. Some of those details follow below.

Instructions and Advertisements for such as shall intend to goe, or send, to plant in Maryland.

This Country of Maryland, lieth from England to the Southwest, about 1200 leagues by Sea: the voyage is sometimes performed thither in 5 or 6 weekes, but ordinarily it is two moneths voyage, and oftner within that time then beyond it. The returne from thence to England, is ordinarily made in a moneth, and seldome exceeds sixe weekes.

The best time of the yeere for going thither, is to be there by Michaelmas, or at furthest by Christmas, for he that comes by that time shall have time enough to build him a house, and to prepare ground sufficient to plant in the

spring following. But there is conveniency of passage thither in most moneths of the yeere; and any one that will send unto Mr. Peasleys, or Master Morgans house, may there be informed of the certaine time when any of his Lordships company is to goe away, and so save the charge of unnecessary attendance here in London.

[The foregoing was extracted from A Relation, of Maryland: Together with a Map of the Countrey, the Conditions of Plantation His Majesties Charter to the Lord Baltemore, Translated into English, by Father Andrew White.]

### Historic Takoma

On Sunday, October 26, Historic Takoma, Inc., will sponsor a talk by the well-known author and historian, James Goode, about some District of Columbia buildings that were not included in his recent book about destroyed Washington landmarks entitled Capital Losses. The lecture will be held at 3 p.m. at the Parish Hall of Trinity Episcopal Church, Piney Branch Road and Dahlia Street, N.W., D.C.

Mr. Goode is the curator of the Smithsonian "Castle" building and specialized in urban history and the architecture of the District of Columbia. In addition to Capital Losses, he is also the author of Outdoor Sculpture of Washington, D.C. He is an active member of many preservation and historical societies.

Following Mr. Goode's talk, Historic Takoma will host a Victorian high tea. A. donation of \$2.50 per person is requested. Profits will be used for projects celebrating Takoma Park's centennial in 1983.

For additional information call Mary Anne Leary, 589-5437.

### The Prince George's County Historical Society

Subscription to this newsletter is included in the yearly membership fees of \$5.00. The Society meets six times a year for programs on topics in county history; celebrates Christmas at Montpelier St. George's Day in April with a dinner; and operates a headquarters at Riversdale. For information on membership contact the Society at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20840.

President:	Mr. Frederick S. DeMarr 4010 Hamilton Street, Hyattsville 20781	277-0711
Corresponding-Secretary:	Mrs. Edith Bagot 3510 Longfellow Street, Hyattsville 20782	927-3632
Treasurer:	Mr. Herb Embrey 10414 Tullymore Drive, Adelphi 20783	434-2958
Newsletter editor:	Mr. Alan Virta 8244 Canning Terrace, Greenbelt 20770	474-7524



**NOTES FROM**

**NEWS AND**  
Vol. VIII, no. 11  
November 1980

The Prince  
George's

County Historical Society

A decorative ceramic tile, with a print of the historic Rossborough Inn on the face, is being offered to members of the Society by the College Park chapter of the American Association of University Women. The price is \$3.75. Mabel Wilkinson will have a supply at the November meeting. They make great Christmas presents!

The November Meeting: Mary Surratt

The guest speaker at the November meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society will be Mr. Thomas G. Bauer, a local author, and historian, whose topic will be "The Odd Couple-- Who Hanged Mary Surratt."  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

A specialist in the history of the Lincoln assassination, Mr. Bauer will talk about the two individuals instrumental in the sequence of events which led to the conviction and execution of Mrs. Surratt as an accomplice in President Lincoln's death. His presentation will be accompanied by slides.

The meeting will be held at 2 p.m. at the Calvert mansion, Riversdale, on Saturday, November 8. Riversdale is located at 4811 Riverdale Road, a block south of East-West Highway. As always, guests are welcome and refreshments will be served. Join us to learn more about the tragic fate of a noted Prince George's County woman.

New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

Ann and Richard Sparrough, Jr.  
Patricia A. Gonsalves

Upper Marlboro  
College Park

Sponsor  
Alan Virta  
Carl Flynn and  
Herb Embrey  
Hazel Wyatt

Doris S. Brown

Laurel

Rossborough Inn Tile

## Voting for President in Prince George's County

The approaching Presidential election provides a convenient pretext for publishing some election statistics for Prince George's County which have been in the files for a good while. This long list should be of some interest, if only because it is time to chose a President again.

What follows is a record of the county's vote for President in every election since 1856, the first year of competition between the Republican and Democratic Parties. Since 1856, the Democrats have carried the county 21 times, the Republicans 10 times. Since the end of World War II, however, the score is even: Democrats 4, Republicans 4. In the 31 Presidential elections since 1856, Prince George's County has voted for the national winner 24 times. In recent years, Prince George's County has been right in step with the national mood. The last election in which the county voted against the national winner was in 1908, although, as you will see, there were many close calls.

The candidates are listed in descending order of vote total for Prince George's County. The candidates who were elected without carrying the county are marked with an asterisk

1856:	James Buchanan, Democrat	991
	Millard Fillmore, American	873
	John C. Fremont, Republican	0
1860:	John Breckenridge, Democrat	1047
	John Bell, Constitutional Union	885
	Stephen Douglas, Democrat	43
	*Abraham Lincoln, Republican	1
1864:	George B. McClellan, Democrat	1550
	*Abraham Lincoln, Republican	197
1868:	Horatio Seymour, Democrat	1664
	*Ulysses S. Grant, Republican	164
	Black men acquired right to vote	
1872:	Ulysses S. Grant, Republican	2264
	Horace Greeley, Democrat	1631
1876:	Samuel Tilden, Democrat	2618
	*Rutherford Hayes, Republican	2430
1880:	Winfield S. Hancock, Democrat	2713
	*James A. Garfield, Republican	2672
1884:	Grover Cleveland, Democrat	2970
	James G. Blaine, Republican	2850
1888:	Grover Cleveland, Democrat	3081
	*Benjamin Harrison, Republican	3019
1892:	Grover Cleveland, Democrat	2655
	Benjamin Harrison, Republican	2423
1896	William McKinley, Republican	3350
	William J. Bryan, Democrat	2640
1900:	William McKinley, Republican	3455
	William J. Bryan, Democrat	2787
1904	Theodore Roosevelt, Republican	2845
	John Alton Parker, Democrat	2270
1908:	William J. Bryan, Democrat	2680
	*William Howard Taft, Republican	2639
1912:	Woodrow Wilson, Democrat	2424
	William Howard Taft, Republican	1456
	Theodore Roosevelt, Progressive	1308
1916:	Woodrow Wilson, Democrat	3493
	Charles E. Hughes, Republican	3050
	Women acquired right to vote	
1920:	Warren G. Harding, Republican	6623

	James D. Cox, Democrat	4857
1924:	Calvin Coolidge, Republican	5868
	John W. Davis, Democrat	5088
	Robert LaFollette, Progressive	1483
1928:	Herbert Hoover, Republican	9782
	Alfred Smith, Democrat	6658
1932:	Franklin Roosevelt, Democrat	11,580
	Herbert Hoover, Republican	6696
1936:	Franklin Roosevelt, Democrat	15,067
	Alfred E. Landon, Republican	8107
1940:	Franklin Roosevelt, Democrat	16,592
	Wendell Willkie, Republican	9523
1944:	Franklin Roosevelt, Democrat	14,006
	Thomas E. Dewey, Republican	13,750
1948:	Harry S. Truman, Democrat	14,874
	Thomas E. Dewey, Republican	14,718
1952:	Dwight Eisenhower, Republican	38,060
	Adlai Stevenson, Democrat	29,119
1956:	Dwight Eisenhower, Republican	40,654
	Adlai Stevenson, Democrat	39,280
1960:	John F. Kennedy, Democrat	62,013
	Richard M. Nixon, Republican	44,817
1964:	Lyndon Johnson, Democrat	81,806
	Barry Goldwater, Republican	46,413
1960:	Richard M. Nixon, Republican	73,269
	Hubert Humphrey, Democrat	71,524
	George Wallace, American	32,867
1972:	Richard M. Nixon, Republican	116,166
	George McGovern, Democrat	79,914
1976:	Jimmy Carter, Democrat	111,743
	Gerald R. Ford, Republican	81,027

We should add that if it were not for the Electoral College, Prince George's County's record of voting, for the winner would be 26, rather than 24 times. Twice--in 1876 and 1888--Prince George's County was in agreement with the national popular vote, but both times the winner of the national popular vote failed to win the Electoral College majority.

The voting results from 1892 on came from quite reliable almanacs and compendiums of election statistics. Those before 1892 were derived from various contemporary sources, including almanacs and newspapers. Third-party candidates whose vote totals were negligible in Prince George's County were not included.

### Our Favorite Son

Just once has a Prince Georgean been nominated for the Presidency of the United States--that was in 1832, when William Wirt, a native of Bladensburg, received the nomination of the Antimasonic Party. Wirt finished third in the popular vote in that election, with more than 100,000 votes, but far behind Andrew Jackson and Henry Clay, who received 661,000 and 455,000 votes each. Wirt received the electoral votes of just one state--Vermont--though he ran quite respectably in several others.

Wirt was born in Bladensburg in 1772, but once his education was completed he settled in Virginia. He was admitted to the bar of that state in 1792, and there he began a successful legal career. He gained national recognition in 1807 as prosecutor in the Aaron Burr treason trial, and soon came to be recognized as one of the nation's leading attorneys. President Monroe appointed him Attorney General in 1817 and he served until 1829, through both of Monroe's administrations and the single term of John Quincy Adams. His twelve years as Attorney General is the longest tenure of an individual in that office. Following his service in Washington he returned to his native state of Maryland and settled in Baltimore, where he expected to slip into a quiet, private retirement.

To even his surprise, however, he was the nominee of the Antimasonic Party for President in 1832. Indeed, early in life he had been a Mason himself, but as he explained it, dropped out because he did not have the time to devote to Masonic activities.

He had not been previously identified in the public mind as a leading Antimason, but he did fit the bill the leaders of the party were looking for in a Presidential candidate: a nationally respected figure, an opponent of Jackson, and someone who would, at least, pay some respect to the principle of Antimasonism.

Antimasonism and the activities of the Antimasonic Party are one of the more curious episodes in American political history. The movement arose in New York State in the 1820's as a reaction to what some perceived as the inordinate influence of Masons in public affairs. But it was a specific event in 1826--the abduction of one William Morgan of Batavia, N.Y.--that gave the movement the strength to become a full fledged political party.

Morgan was an ex-Mason who publicly resolved to expose Masonic secrets. Charges and countercharges flew about until September of 1826 when Morgan was mysteriously abducted and never heard from again. His abduction was laid, to Masons, and a sensational trial of his alleged abductors followed. Rumors were spread of Masonic influence in the jury, among judges, and even in the State Legislature. The Morgan affair became a national sensation. Across New York and other states, principally from Pennsylvania northward, Antimasonic organizations were formed. Antimasons were put up as candidates to oppose Masonic public officials, and in many instances they were elected. In towns and counties and even State legislatures--Antimasons were now present. By 1831, they decided to try to elect a President.

William Wirt's biographer, John Pendleton Kennedy, writing in 1849, made this comment on the Antimasonic Party: "We may wonder, after this lapse of time, that intelligent and acute men could have persuaded themselves that it had a base broad enough upon which to build a party...." We still may wonder today. But politics was in a state of flux in the 1820's. The federalist Party was dead, and several new parties were striving to replace it as the principal opposition party to the Democrats, the party of Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren. Many prominent politicians, including Thurlow Weed and "William, H. Seward, joined the Antimasonic Party in the 1820's for they saw it as a vehicle to oppose Jackson. These practical men soon gained the actual leadership of the party and tried to steer it toward other issues as well but the rank and file largely remained determinedly antimasonic and resisted any efforts to stray too far from that fundamental principle.

Wirt's nomination, then, in 1832, was a victory for the moderate men of the Antimasonic Party, the ones who hoped to convert the movement into a broadly based party. They courted Wirt, for they saw him as a respected candidate who could reach out to other voters. Historians have debated whether these leaders who tried to lead the party away from the single issue of Antimason betrayed the rank and file but be that as it may, Wirt was the nominee. His acceptance speech disheartened the more extreme members of his party, for he stated that he regarded the Masons as a social organization, and as such, had no quarrel with them. But if they worked secretly to influence the course of government and if they conspired behind the scenes to exclude others from office, then he would oppose that. Hardly a ringing endorsement of the Party's platform by the Presidential nominee.

At the same time the Antimasonic Party was forming, another was coalescing around Henry Clay. It was this other party--in a few years to be known as the Whigs--that won out in the race to become the second party in America's two-party system. The Antimasonic Party declined after their defeat in 1832 and within a few years was just a memory.

John Pendleton Kennedy was right; the fundamental principle of the party was just too narrow a base upon which to build a national political party, one which the voters expected to deal with the broad issues of foreign affairs, taxation, national finance, internal improvements, and the like. The Antimasonic Party is long gone, but William Wirt's place in American history is secure. Not because of his brief, hesitant fling with Antimasonism, but rather on grounds he would certainly prefer: his reputation as a great American lawyer, a distinguished Attorney General, and a noted author and essayist.

--Alan Virta

[Among other sources consulted was Charles McCarthy's The Antimasonic Party, 1903]

A Halloween Story by William Wirt

In 1825 William Wirt wrote for his children a collection of autobiographical reminiscences. Many of the stories dealt with his childhood in Bladensburg. One such story, a ghost story, is printed below. It was previously published in Kennedy's biography of Wirt in 1849. A tale of childhood terror: two full centuries ago:

"On our way home from the schoolhouse to Bladensburg the road passed by an old field, on the outer margin of which a negro man had been buried who, it was reported, had been whipped to death by his master. Besides the boys who went to this school from Bladensburg, there were several from the neighborhood, and, amongst others, one whom I remember only as Zack Calvert. This boy had one evening been detained at school after all the rest of us had gone home, and had to pass the old field after daylight was gone. The next morning full well do I remember how he made my flesh creep and my hair rise, by telling us that, in passing the field, the night before, he heard a whip-poor-will, which sat upon the gravestone of the negro, cry out 'whip him well-whip him well--whip him well,' --and that he could hear a voice answering from below, "Oh pray!"--It was the first time that a superstitious emotion entered my mind, and I now recall how dreadfully sublime it was. My heart quaked, and yet there was a sort of terrible pleasure in it which I cannot define. It made my blood creep with horror to believe it: yet I would not have had it false. That terrible field was never afterwards passed at twilight without a race, in which I, as being youngest, was always behind, and consequently most exposed to the danger and proportionally terrified. I do not yet hear a whip-poor-will, without some of these misgivings of my childhood."



NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince George's County  
Historical Society**

The Christmas Party

All members, their families and friends are cordially invited to the Prince George's County Historical Society's Christmas Party, to be held on Saturday afternoon, December 13, at Montpelier mansion near Laurel

The mansion: which was built by the Snowden family in the eighteenth century, will be decorated for the season. There will be cakes and cookies, fruit and nuts, and other snacks, and the punch bowls will be filled with our traditional recipes and refreshments. Christmas music will be performed throughout afternoon and will add to the holiday spirit as you tour the house, meet old friends and new, and sample the Christmas delicacies on all the tables. In keeping with our tradition, you are invited to bring along your favorite Christmas snack to share--but above all else, you are invited to come, whether you bring snacks or not.

Chairing this year's party, which begins at 2 p.m., is Erva Lewis of Hyattsville. Montpelier mansion is located south of Laurel on Route 197, the Laurel-Bowie Road. Those traveling via the Baltimore-Washington Parkway should exit onto Route 197 and head north toward Laurel. Turn left at the first traffic light beyond the Parkway interchange, opposite the shopping center. A sign will then direct you onto the mansion grounds.

Our Christmas Party is an excellent time to relax and enjoy the advent of the Christmas season. We particularly look forward to seeing those of our members who do not often get to the meetings. Please bring family, friends, co-workers, or neighbors, and treat them, and yourself, to a delightful time in a beautiful setting out of Prince George's County's colonial past.

Christmas-in Our Great Houses

Three of Prince George's County's great old houses--Riversdale, Montpelier, and Belair--will be open for special Holiday tours this Christmas season.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
**ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23,1696**

Riversdale, the Calvert mansion in Riverdale, will be open for its Third Annual Holiday Tour on Saturday and Sunday December 6 and 7, from 1 to 5 P.m. Costumed guides refreshments, a Christmas shop, and a display of antique quilts by the National Quilting Association will highlight the day at Riversdale. Admission is \$1.00 for adults, 75 cents for seniors\* and 50 cents for children under 12. The excellent new brochure on Riversdale, prepared by the History Division of the Park and Planning Commission, will be available for all who attend.

The Friends of Montpelier's annual Christmas Candlelight tours will be held this year on Monday and Tuesday evening, December 8 and 9, between 5:30 and 9 p.m. at Montpelier mansion. As always, there will be colonial decorations, fresh greens, costumed guides, Christmas music, caroling\* and candlelight. The-gift shop will be open. Admission is \$1.50 for adults, children under 12, 75 cents. For more information, call 779-2011.

New to the list of Christmas tours this year is the Belair Mansion, the home of the Governors in Bowie. The Friends of the Belair Estate will sponsor the first Holiday Open House at Belair on Sunday, December 14, between 2 and 4 p.m. Music, refreshments, and tours will be provided, and the admission charge is \$1.00 per-person. The mansion is located at 12207 Tulip Grove Drive. For more information, call 262-0695.

These holiday open houses offer once-a-year opportunities to see these great old homes at their best.  
Merry Christmas!

"A Small Worlds Treasures from Christmas Past"

Because Christmas is a time for children, the Maryland Historical Society has opened an exhibit which should delight children of all ages. The exhibit, entitled "A Small World: Treasures From Christmas Past," features a variety of examples from the Society's collection of doll houses, dolls, toys, games and miniature furniture from the 19th and 20th centuries. Several items made by children, such as samplers and drawing books will also be on display. In order to show the children who come to the exhibit what the owners of the antique playthings would have looked like, mannequins dressed in children's costumes will be exhibited with the toys.

### Historic Sites and Districts Plan

The exhibit will be open through February at the Maryland Historical Society's Museum and Library of Maryland History at 200 West the following Street, Baltimore. When you make a visit to this exhibit with a trip to Baltimore, please call the County Office for Historic Sites and Districts. The plan has been tentatively scheduled for the opening of the new building in 1981, including the new building at the County Administration Building.

Mr. and Mrs. William N. Lancaster  
--Adapted from the newsletter of the M.H.S.

The Historic Sites and District Plan was drafted this year by the Citizens' Advisory Committee appointed by the Park and Planning Commission. The plan, together with an historic preservation ordinance it proposes, would protect Prince George's County's historic structures. Among the provisions of the plan and ordinance are regulations governing exterior alterations or demolition of historic structures, recommendations for tax credits for restoration and preservation work, and provisions for creation of urban and rural historic districts. The ordinance would create an Historic Preservation Commission to oversee the county's historic preservation plan. Among the commission's duties would be to maintain an inventory of historic sites, to act on Historic Area Work Permits (requests to alter historic sites), to advise the Planning Board on the protection of historic properties in zoning cases, to administer revolving funds and grant programs, and to recommend programs and legislation for the County Council and Planning Board. The plan identifies approximately 150 high priority sites, both publicly and privately owned. A secondary list of approximately another 350 sites identifies properties in need of more research with potential historic value.

Copies of the complete plan will be available for distribution in early or mid-December. Details on distribution points--probably county libraries--as well as formal notice of the date and time of the public hearing will appear in the public press in December. For more information, contact the Park and Planning Commission at 952-3514.

The chairman of the Citizens' Advisory Committee, Robert A. Crawley, is a member of the Society who was awarded our St. George's Day Award at the St. George's Day banquet in April. Several other committee officers, as well as many members of the committee, are, also members of the Prince George's County Historical Society.

### Election Update

The election of 1908 was the last time Prince George's County had voted against the national winner of the Presidential contest until this year, when Prince Georgians gave a majority of their votes to Jimmy Carter rather than Ronald Reagan. Our record, then, since 1856 (the first Democratic-Republican contest), is 24 times with the winner, 8 times with the loser. Unofficial totals (without absentee ballots) reported in the Washington Post on November 6 were:

Jimmy Carter, Democrat	96,552 (52%)
Ronald Reagan, Republican	76,241 (41%)
John Anderson, Independent	13,801 (7%)

Addition to the National Register

Happy New Year, 1781!

A Rhapsody on Rum

Two hundred years ago the good planters of Prince George's County were offered some sage advice on the use and abuse of the spirit rum. All or nothing seemed to be the poet's caution: either stay sober and tend to your affairs or drink so much that you don't care anymore. News and Notes offers this "Rhapsody on Rum," reprinted from The Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Virginia and North-Carolina Almanack and Ephemeris for the Year of Our Lord, 1781, which was published in

--Ignigenamque vocant. Ovid.

Presumably the wee hours of Sunday morning.

The Maryland Historical Trust in its newsletter SWAP reports the following addition to the National Register of Historic Places from Prince George's County:

Great Spirit, hail!--Confusion's angry fire,  
And like thy parent Bacchus, born of fire:

Hills, near Upper Marlboro, is a large two-part brick house situated on a hill which features a 360-degree view of the surrounding fields. The grounds are terraced on the north and east sides where several ancient American and English boxes remain. The two story house, built in two sections, features brick walls laid in American bond. The east or main section of the neo-classical influenced house is three bays wide with an easternmost entrance containing a paneled door flanked on each side by rectangular sidelights and pilasters supporting an architrave. In plan, the main block contains side hall-double parlor, with neo-classical woodwork extant throughout the building."

The most recent part of the house was built by Zadock Sasscer around 1850. The earlier portion may have been built by his father, William Sasscer. Pleasant Hills is located on Croom Station Road.

M. D. H. M. C. I. S.

We regret to inform the membership of the deaths of two members of the Society.

Mr. Leon Brunelle of Hyattsville, husband of Thelma Brunelle, passed away in August.

Mr. J. George Gately, Sr., of Silver Spring, died on November 22.

"Lost last Sunday  
morning, at or near

Mr. Grant's  
Fred Tilp of Alexandria is doing research on Jimmie LaFontaine, the operator of the old gambling place at Bladensburg Road and Eastern Ave. If you have any information on Jimmie or the place, or reminiscences of visits there, call Fred at 548-3324. All replies treated confidentially.

The following slate was elected to serve as officers of the Prince George's County Historical Society for the year 1981.

President Frederick S, De Marr, Hyattsville  
Vice - President John Giannetti, Berwyn Heights  
Corresponding Secretary Edith Bagot, Hyattsville  
Recording Secretary Harold Hutcheson, Laurel  
Historian James Wilfong, Prince Frederick  
Treasurer Herbert Embrey, Adelphi  
Directors Paul Lanham , Huntingtown  
Alan Virta, Greenbelt  
Susanna Cristofane, Bladensburg  
Awards Committee Margaret Fisher, Upper Marlboro  
Sarah Walton, Clinton  
Truman Hienton, Hyattsville

Our thanks to this year's Nominating Committee, composed of Theodore Bissell and Carl

The Prince George's County Historical Society

Annual dues, which are \$5.00, include a subscription to this monthly newsletter. Send membership information to the Society at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20840.

President:

Mr. Frederick S. De Marr  
277-0711

4010 Hamilton Street, Hyattsville 20781

927-3632

Corresponding Secretary: Mrs. Frank Bagot

3510 Longfellow Street, Hyattsville 20782

Treasurer: Mr. Herb Embrey 434-2958

10414 Tullymore Dr., Adelphi 20783

Newsletter editor: Mr. Alan Virta 474-7524

8244 Canning Terrace, Greenbelt 20770

Public Hearing on Historic Sites Plan

**NOTES FROM  
The Prince George's County  
Historical Society**

The County Council will conduct a public hearing on the proposed Historic Sites and Districts Plan on Tuesday, January 13, at 3:00 P.m. in the Council Hearing Room, County Administration Building, Upper Marlboro. The product of many months of effort of a Citizens Advisory Committee and the staff of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, the plan, if adopted, will protect the county's historic sites. A detailed summary was published in last month's issue of News and Notes, but basically the plan makes these proposals: the creation of an official inventory of historic sites, establishment of an Historic Preservation Commission, a permit procedure for exterior alteration or demolition of historic sites, and a system of tax incentives for owners of historic properties.

It is important that those sympathetic to the plan and the cause of historic preservation voice their support as certain elements within the county will be at the hearing to make a vigorous attack on it. Plan to attend if you can! The hearing is now scheduled to last until 5:30 p.m., but if more time is needed, it will reconvene at 7:30 p.m.

Copies of the plan are available at Park and Planning offices in Upper Marlboro and Riverdale. For more information, call Park and Planning at 952-3514.

New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

- |                                |                |                |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
|                                |                | <u>Sponsor</u> |
| Mr. & Mrs. Carl C. Schwartz    | Bladensburg    | J. McGraw      |
| William J. Sandoval            | Clinton        | S. Cross       |
| Mrs. Marie McRorie             | New Carrollton | F. DeMarr      |
| Mrs. Frances G. Hunter         | Beltsville     | M. Wilkinson   |
|                                |                | E. Lewis       |
| Claiborne B. Beall             | Upper Marlboro | F. DeMarr      |
| Mr. & Mrs. William E Uber, Jr. | Adelphi        | T. Bissell     |
| (Continued Next Page)          |                |                |

Clarence McMillan

		Sponsor	
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Anderson	Oxon Hill	A. Virta	
Mrs. R.R. Waller	Morrestown, N.J.	N. Oren	
Warren and Julia Rhoads	Bowie	K. Embrey	
Mrs. Sarah J. Harvey	College Park	H. Hutcheson	
Mr. & Mrs. Benjamin C. Miles	University Park	M Phillips	
		and F. DeMarr	

We regret to inform the membership of the death of Clarence McMillan of College Park, a member of this Society.

#### Donations to the Magruder House

Prince George's Heritage, Inc., the non-profit organization restoring the Magruder House in Bladensburg, wishes to acknowledge the generous contributions of the following members and friends of the Prince George's County Historical Society: James G. Boss, Mr. Ashby H. Canter, Dr. Truman E. Heinton, Mrs. George McLeish, Mr. and Mrs. Bernard J. Nees and Mr. Eugene B. Roberts.

#### The Oath of Office

As all of official Washington prepares for the inauguration of a new president later this month, we look back to an oath taken more than three hundred years ago by local government officials here in Maryland. The following oath, transcribed from the Archives of Maryland, was the oath of the sheriffs of the counties in Maryland in the early colonial era. The following is taken from Proceedings of the County Court of Charles County, 1658-1666.

Prince George's County had not yet been erected, and the land which is our county today was divided between Calvert and Charles. The Sherriffwick, then, of Mr. Henry Addams, who swore to this oath on the 13th day of June, "in the year of our Lord God Everlasting 1665," included much of what is Prince George's County, today.

"You shall well and truly Sarue the Lord Proprietari in the office of a Sheriffe of the County of Charles and doe his Lordships Profits in all things that belongs unto you by way of office as far forth as as [sic] you Can or may you shall truly and Rightfully treat the People of your Sheriffwick and doe right as well to the poore as to the Rich in all that belongs unto your office you shall doe no wrong to any man for any gift fauour haet or other affection you shall dewly execute so farre as you may all such writs and warrants as shall bee to you derected by lawful Authority and thearof you shall macke a trew Returne according to the tenor of the Rite so helpe you God."

--"At a Court held in Charleses County the 13th of June, A° 1665. "

Prince George's County's proposed Historic Sites and Districts Plan contains, as an introduction, a brief,

A History of Prince Georges County

broad overview of the county's history written by Alan Virta. This work is an expanded version of a history he wrote as part of the program for the inauguration of County Executive Lawrence J. Hogan and the County Council in 1978. We publish the history, taken from the plan, below.

## Prince George's County: A History

No one is sure when Man first set foot in Prince George's County. Some archeologists believe the first Indians came to Southern Maryland 5,000 years ago; others would say it was long before that. Whatever the case, this land was occupied for thousands of years before the first Europeans sailed to these shores. The first recorded visit to Prince George's County by a European came in the summer of 1608, when Captain John Smith sailed up the Potomac River, probably as far as Great Falls. Two groups of Indians inhabited the County in Smith's time--the Piscataways, whose villages ranged from the Anacostia River southward into Charles and St. Mary's Counties--and the warlike Susquehannocks, who roamed and hunted in the northern part of the County, constantly pressing the Piscataways for more and more land.

John Smith's visit in 1608 was an exploring expedition only--no settlement was intended. Over the next twenty-five years, English traders paid frequent calls upon the Indians here, sometimes to trade, sometimes to fight. But the most significant early contact came in 1634, just days after the first Maryland colonists landed near the mouth of the Potomac River. Advised by an English trader to seek permission from the Piscataways before establishing a settlement there, Governor Leonard Calvert sailed up the Potomac to the tribe's principal town, Moyaone, located on Piscataway Creek in the southern part of Prince George's County. Governor Calvert established good relations with the Piscataways, and with their permission he returned downriver to found St. Mary's City, Maryland's first settlement.

The Maryland colony flourished at St. Mary's City and enjoyed peaceful relations with the neighboring Indian tribes. Settlers soon left the confines of the original settlement. New counties were created, and within thirty years farms and plantations lined both the Patuxent and Potomac Rivers well into the land we call Prince George's County today. The land was not called Prince George's County then, however. The area along the Patuxent was part of Calvert County; the area along the Potomac was part of Charles County. By 1695, sixteen or seventeen hundred people lived here--enough, Governor Francis Nicholson thought, to deserve the Wight of self-government. The General Assembly agreed, and on St. George's Day, April 23, 1696, a new county was established, named for Prince George of Denmark, husband of the heir to the throne of England, Princess Anne. Extending from the Charles County line on the south all the way to the Pennsylvania border, the new county marked Maryland's western frontier. It remained the frontier county until 1748, when the westernmost regions were granted their own government, and Prince George's County's northern boundary became basically the line it is today.

Prince George's County grew in the 1700's. Its land was settled, and frontier became civilization. Men and women from all parts of the British Isles, as well as other countries of Europe, came to find homes here. Some came as freemen, others as indentured servants. Africans were also a part of the growing population, brought here to work as slaves. As the years went by, trading centers along the rivers grew into towns--places like Upper Marlborough, Nottingham, Bladensburg, Queen Anne, and Piscataway. Merchants built stores, lawyers and doctors established practices; clergymen consecrated churches; and innkeepers opened their doors to travelers and residents alike. Some iron was even mined and worked in the upper Patuxent region. But Prince George's County, despite this growth, remained predominantly agricultural. Agriculture was the basis of the economy and directly or indirectly provided the livelihood for every resident. One crop was at the heart of this agricultural economy--and that crop was tobacco.

Tobacco created wealth for Prince George's County, wealth that built fine plantation homes, educated the children of the leading families, supported the work of our religious faiths--including, Maryland's established church, the Church of England--and fostered the arts, such as theater, dance and music that flourished in Upper Marlborough and other places. That wealth also provided the means to enjoy leisure time in activities such as cricket, fox hunting, and horseracing--and enabled planters to devote such care to their horses and their breeding that Prince George's County became the cradle of American thoroughbred racing, a sport still very much a part of our County today. Tobacco, too, provided modest livelihoods for smaller farmers, and even served as legal tender for debts. That one crop contributed more to Prince George's County than anything else, and created a prosperous, sophisticated tobacco society which traded its staple with English and Scottish merchants for goods from all over the world.

The tobacco society that was Prince George's County was not untouched by the great tide of national events during those years. When the Revolution came, Prince Georgians organized county committees to assist the Revolutionary effort here at home; and they sent many of their sons to fight gallantly for the cause of independence. One of their fellow citizens, John Rogers of Upper Marlborough, sat in the Continental Congress which in July of 1776 voted to make the colonies free and independent states. A Prince George's County native, Daniel Carroll, was one of the signers of the U.S. Constitution. In 1790, when the Congress in Philadelphia decided to locate the new federal capital somewhere along the Potomac River, Prince George's County ceded most of the land necessary to establish the District of Columbia. Today, each of the great symbols of our three branches of government--the Capitol, the White House, and the Supreme Court building--stands on land that was once part of Prince George's County. The development of the federal city was aided immeasurably by Benjamin Stoddert of Bladensburg, who acquired much of the land needed by the federal government from local landowners and later served as first Secretary of the Navy. And as American religion began an independent life of its own in the new nation, two Prince Georgians were chosen to assume roles of leadership. John Carroll of Upper Marlboro became the first Roman Catholic bishop in the United States, and Thomas John Claggett of Croom became the first Episcopal bishop consecrated in this country. When the American Catholic Church formulated its first constitution, it met at White Marsh, one of the oldest Catholic establishments in Maryland.

The County had been spared extensive military action during the Revolutionary War, but such was not to be the case in the War of 1812. In August 1814, the British sailed up the Patuxent to Benedict and began a march through Prince George's County--through Nottingham, Upper Marlboro, and Forestville--all the way to Bladensburg, where they defeated an ill-prepared army of American defenders and marched on into Washington to burn the capital city. On their way back to their ships, they seized a Prince Georgian, Dr. William Beanes of Upper Marlboro, and took him with them to Baltimore. Francis Scott Key was on a mission to plead for Dr. Beanes' release when he witnessed the bombardment of Fort McHenry and wrote the poem which became our national anthem, the Star Spangled Banner.

Those early years of the nineteenth century brought changes to the County, too. Although tobacco remained predominant, farmers throughout the County began to experiment with new crops on worn out land. In 1817, the first county agricultural society in Maryland was founded here in Prince George's County, and agriculturalists such as Charles B. Calvert, Horace Capron, and Dr. John Bayne attracted national attention with their agricultural experimentation. The location of the nation's first agricultural research college here in the 1850's--now the University of Maryland at College Park--further attests to the leadership of Prince George's County in that field.

New developments were not limited to agriculture. A new way of working--involving great machines, mass production, and hundreds of workers--had evolved in England and the North during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This new way of working--known as the Industrial Revolution--crept into Prince George's County across its northern border with the establishment of cotton mills at Laurel in the 1820's. Further evidence of change came with the laying of the first rail line across the County in the 1830's and the stringing of the nation's first telegraph line across Prince George's County a decade later. In politics, two sons of Prince George's County achieved national distinction in those early years of the nineteenth century. Gabriel Duvall of Marietta sat for many years on the Supreme Court, and William Wirt, a Bladensburg native, served for twelve years as Attorney General of the United States.

Prince George's County, then, as the nineteenth century passed its midpoint, was prosperous. Its agriculture was diversifying, some industry was developing, the fisheries of the Patuxent and Potomac yielded rich harvests, steamboats plied both rivers linking the County to Baltimore, while proximity to Washington afforded a second market, and above all, the growth of the staple crop, tobacco, remained a profitable enterprise. In fact, more tobacco was grown here than in any other county in Maryland, and more slaves tilled the fields here than any other place in the state. The labor of Prince George's County's black community-- percent of it slave in 1860, and comprising almost 60 percent of the total population--helped guarantee that prosperity.

But the old tobacco society was to end, for forces beyond the control of any Prince Georgean would soon plunge the nation into a bitter Civil War. When that war was ended, the old Prince George's County was gone, and the County began a second life.

Some of the changes were immediately noticeable, such as the freeing of the slaves. Others were more gradual, like the changes in the County's economy. Agriculture remained the predominant way of life, tobacco continued to be the most important crop, and the large plantations by no means vanished; but as the nineteenth century drew to a close, small farms growing tobacco and a good many other crops played a larger role in the County's economic life. Between the end of the Civil War and the turn of the century, the number of farms in Prince George's County doubled, while the average farm size decreased dramatically. Many of these new smaller farms were operated by freed blacks, but many more were owned by newcomers to the County. As our agricultural population grew, so did commercial life and the importance of local commerce in the overall economic picture. Better roads and better rail service encouraged the growth of new towns--places like Suitland, Lanham, Glenn Dale, Huntington, Hyattsville, College Park, and Brandywine. As Prince George's County entered the twentieth century, its population was thirty thousand--thirty percent higher than it had been in 1860. But this second life of Prince George's County--of small farmers and local commerce--soon gave way to a force that would affect this County as profoundly as tobacco had in the old days. That force was the growing, expanding federal government, and more particularly, its growing, expanding capital city, Washington.

Until the 1880s, Washington was not much more than a small town tucked into one corner of the District of Columbia. There was much more farmland in the District than city. People had settled in Prince George's County because of its proximity to the capital, but on the whole, they were a small percentage of the population. As the nineteenth century drew to a close, however, the town of Washington became a city--growing larger and larger until it spread into Prince George's County. All along the County's borders, towns were built--like Takoma Park, Mount Ranier, Colmar Manor, Cottage City, Brentwood, Capitol Heights, Fairmount Heights, and Seat Pleasant. Farming remained the way of life for many in the vast rural areas beyond these new towns, but year by year the percentage of the population earning their livelihood through agriculture declined as the denser suburban population close to Washington grew.

The federal government itself moved out beyond Washington, as huge government installations were placed in Prince George's County--Andrews Air Force Base, the Census Bureau complex in Suitland, Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, and NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, among others. As the twentieth century progressed and the automobile freed suburban commuters from rail, trolley, and bus lines, new communities grew farther out--Greenbelt Cheverly, District Heights, New Carrollton, Glenarden, Bowie, Kettering, and more. What had been a County of thirty thousand in 1900 became a County of sixty thousand in 1930. By 1950, there were almost 200,000. Ten years later, in 1960, there were 350,000; in ten years more, 661,000. But finally the explosive growth came to an end, as the 1970s saw a small decline.

The end of the population boom seemed to bring a new assessment of Prince George's County's place in the region, for County leaders in the 1970's and early 1980's began to seek a new type of growth--an economic life not so closely tied to the federal government, and one not limited to providing homes for workers in Washington. What they began to seek was industry and commercial enterprise that would assume a life of its own in Prince George's County --and transform the County from a bedroom suburb into an equal partner in a dynamic metropolitan area. The challenge of that search is a formidable, adventuresome, and exciting as the taming of the frontier so many years ago.

The witness of three hundred years, then, has seen great change come to Prince George's County. Once a struggling wilderness outpost--where men like Colonel Ninear Beall and his county militia rode the frontier to guard against Indian raids--the County developed during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries into a prosperous, sophisticated tobacco society. When that society met its end in war, the small farm, growing tobacco and other crops, and local commerce, became the dominant ways of life, until Prince George's County finally became part of the growing metropolitan area of Washington, D.C., and a place where men and women of all creeds, religions, races, national origins, and economic positions live and work. But despite these great changes, reminders of the past are all around us, amidst the new, sometimes hidden from sight and sometimes unrecognizable to the newcomer. Even if the

large majority of our citizens live in an urban setting today, it must be remembered that much of our land still retains its rural character, and agriculture is still the way of life for many. If Prince Georgians of today head out of the city, beyond the Beltway and suburban developments) into the large areas that are still country, they can walk into the woods or along the creeks and rivers and see, if for just a moment, a Prince George's County that the first settlers might have seen more than three hundred years ago.

--Alan Virta

## Select Bibliography

Listed below are five general works which provide basic background information on the history of Prince George's County. These books, along with many others on more specific aspects of our County's history (including histories of particular communities, organizations, churches, and families) can be found in the Prince George's County Memorial Library system.

Bowie, Effie Gwynn. Across the Years in Prince George's County. Richmond Virginia: Garrett and Massie. 1947. 904 pages. Reprinted in 1975 by Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, Maryland. Biographies and genealogies of the County's oldest families, often tracing their land holdings.

Hinton, Louise Joyner. Prince George's Heritage. Baltimore, Maryland: Maryland Historical Society. 1972. 223 pages. Very readable history of the County from its founding until 1800. Includes map of tracts laid out prior to 1696.

Hopkins, G.M. Atlas of Prince George's County, Maryland, 1878, edited by Frank F. White, Jr. Riverdale, Maryland: Prince George's County Historical Society. 1975. 48 pages. Reprint of an 1878 County atlas showing property owners, with an index.



**NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
The Prince George's County  
Historical Society**

County Community Renewal Program. The Neighborhoods of Prince George's  
4. 483 pages. Development patterns, land use characteristics, and other  
on the 72 neighborhood units of the County. Includes capsule histories of  
emphasis on 20th century development.  
out of the East: Prince Georges and Their Land. Riverdale, Maryland: Prince  
County historical 1976. 422 pages. Chronological account of events in the County's  
gh 1891, taken mainly from legal and government records and from newspaper  
reports. Includes S.J. Martenet's 1861 map of the County, and an excellent (though  
pre-Bicentennial) bibliography of books and articles on County history.

#### Prince George's County Historical Society

Subscription to this monthly newsletter is included in the annual dues of \$5.00. To apply for membership, write to the Society at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20840.

President:	Frederick S. De Marr	277-0711
	4010 Hamilton Street, Hyattsville 20781	
Corresponding Secretary:	Mrs. Edith Bagot	927-3632
	3510 Longfellow Street, Hyattsville 20782	
Treasurer:	Mr. Herb Embrey	434-2958
	10414 Tullymore Drive, Adelphi 20783	
Newsletter editor:	Mr. Alan Virta	
	8244 Canning Terrace. Greenbelt 20770	474-7524

### The Meeting Schedule

The Society will not meet in February. The next meeting will be on Saturday, March 14, at Riversdale. Details will follow in the next issue of News and Notes.

### The Maryland Antiques Show and Sale

The third annual Maryland Antiques Show and Sale, sponsored by the Maryland Historical Society, will be held from February 12 through 15 at the Baltimore Convention Center. The show will feature formal and country American furniture, English furniture, fine porcelains, silver, brass, glass, rugs, jewelry, dolls, clocks and rare maps. A continuous buffet will be available each day of the show.

Hours will be from noon until 10 p.m. on every day except Sunday the 15th, when the show closes at 6 p.m. Admission is \$3.50 and a directory will be available for \$3.00. Please use the Sharp Street entrance; public parking is available in several nearby garages.

Proceeds from the show will benefit the Museum and Library of Maryland History. For more information, call 301-685-3750.

### Report on Historic Sites Hearing

The County Council hearing on-the proposed Historic Sites and Districts Plan, held on January 13 at the County Administration Buildings brought forth both praise I and criticism for the plan. Among the critics were representatives of several builders and developers who feared that certain provisions of the plan would unfairly limit development of many properties, and several owners, who did not, for various reasons, want their properties included. Numerous individuals spoke on behalf of the plan including representatives of several civic groups and municipalities. Many asked for expansion of the proposed historic districts, creation of even more districts, and addition of several unincorporated properties

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

to the plan. Speaking on behalf of the Society in favor of the plan was President De Marr.

The next step in the process will be work sessions by the Council with staff, analyzing the plan in detail section-by-section. Final action is not expected until late Spring.

#### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

Richard F. Long	Avondale	Mr. DeMarr
Wendy and Richard Palumbo	Hyattsville	Mr. Giannetti
Ruth M. Knott	Hyattsville	Mr. DeMarr

#### New Life Member of the Society

The Society is very pleased to announce another Life Member:

Paul Lanham

Paul is the immediate past president of the Society,

#### Virginia Spence Lescure

We regret to report the death, in late November, of Virginia Spence Lescure, a charter member of this Society.

Mrs. Lescure was the daughter of Thomas H. Spence, a dean at the University of Maryland, College Park, and Charlotte Calvert Spence. Her great grandfather, Charles Benedict Calvert, was the owner of Riversdale and founder of the Maryland Agricultural College, later the University of Maryland's College Park campus, from which she graduated in 1922. She married William J. Lescure in 1928 and lived in Harrisburg, Pa., for many years before returning to this area after his death in 1954.

Besides our own Society, Mrs. Lescure was active in church work and numerous other civic and patriotic organizations. She is survived by a son, William J. Lescure III, two sisters, and three grandchildren. Our sympathies are extended to the family,

#### The St. George's Day Awards

The Society will again present the annual St. George's Day Awards at the annual dinner, April 23, to individuals and organizations who have made significant contributions to the preservation of Prince George's County's heritage. Members with nominations should write to President Frederick S. DeMarr at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, 20840, or call him at 277-0711.

#### Articles of Peace and Amity

When the first settlers came to Southern Maryland in the seventeenth century, they found the region occupied by Indian tribes of the Piscataway Confederacy. The Piscataways lived in small villages along the creeks and rivers, chiefly on the western side of the peninsula, i.e. mainly in today's Charles County and on the Potomac side of Prince George's.

As could be expected, there was some friction between the two peoples, and sometimes isolated and scattered incidents of violence, but in general, relations between the Piscataways and the Marylanders were peaceful. There were no Piscataway wars; indeed, when Maryland went to war against Indians--Susquehannocks and Senecas in particular--the Piscataways either remained neutral or allied themselves with the colonists.

One reason why the Piscataways and the Marylanders lived in peace is that they needed each other for protection. The Susquehannocks and Senecas from beyond the frontier often conducted raids into Southern Maryland--against both the Piscataways and the Marylanders--so the Piscataways and Marylanders looked to each other for assistance. Marylanders hoped the Piscataways would be a buffer between them and the northern tribes; the Piscataways hoped the Marylanders would help them resist the raids.

By the 1690's, however, the Piscataways decided to leave Southern Maryland. The area was rapidly filling up with settlers Prince George's would be populous enough to become a county in 1696--and the Piscataways were being deprived not only of the best agricultural 'Lands but their hunting areas as well. In 1697 they finally left the area for the backwoods of Stafford County, Virginia, beyond the line of settlement where they could live and hunt freely. The Maryland government repeatedly sent emissaries to them, seeking their return, but they never did. They stayed in Virginia for a while, then moved to an island in the Potomac near Point of Rocks, above the Monocacy--where they suffered severely from smallpox--and then moved on to Pennsylvania in 1711, never to return as a tribe to Maryland. The Piscataway Confederacy of Southern Maryland became a memory, leaving behind only the relics of its civilization and a few scattered individuals who chose not to move on.

We publish in this issue of News and Notes one of the many peace treaties between Maryland and the Piscataways. Many of the provisions of this treaty, signed in 1692, were identical to provisions in previous treaties dating back as early as 1666, if not before. The following text, supplied by Ashby H. Canter, is taken from the Charles County court records.

--Alan Virta

Reference source : The Piscataway Indians of Southern Maryland, by Alice and Henry G. Ferguson. Published by the Ferguson Foundation, 1960.

Articles of Peace and Amity Concluded & Agreed upon  
Between - -The Honoble. Lionell Copley Esquire Capt.. Genll. &  
Governour in Chief in & Over this their Majestyes Province &  
Territory of Maryland and Orhotomaqnath Emperor  
of Piscattaway this fourteenth day of May in the years  
of our Lord 1692

Imprs. Itt is agreed upon from this day forward there be an Inviolable peace & amity Between their Sacred Majesty of King William 2; Queen Mary and their subjects the Inhabitants of this Province & Virginia and the Emperour of Piscattaway upon the Articles hereafter in this Treaty to be agreed upon to the world's End to Endure, and all former Acts of Hostility S. Damages of whatsoever by Either party sustained be buried in perpetual oblivion.

2ndly: That if any Indian subject to the said Emperour shall hereafter Chance to kill an Englishman, the sd. Emperour shall be obliged to deliver such Indian up-to the Governour of this Province as a Prisoner.

3dly: For as much as the English Cannot Easily distinguish one Indian from another, that noe Indian shall Come into any English mans plantation painted, and that all the Indians shall be bound to Call aloud before they Cone within three hundred paces of any Englishmans Cleare ground, and lay down their armes whether Guns Bowes or arrowes or other weapons for any Englishman that shall appeare, upon his Call to take up, And in Case that noe one appeare that hee shall there leave his sd. armes if hee Come nearer, and that afterwards hee shall by Calling aloud Endeavour to give notice to the English of his nearer Approach, And if any Englishman shall Kill any Indian that shall Come unpainted and give notice and deliver -tip his armes as aforesd hee shall dye for it as well as Indian that killeth an Englishman, And in case the Indian & English meete accidentally in the woods Every Indian shall be bound immediately to throw down his armes upon Call, and in Case an Indian soe meeting, an English man shall refuse to throw down his armes upon Call hoe shall be deemed as an Enemy.

4ly: The Priviledge for Crabbing, fowling, hunting &, fishning shall be preserved to the Indians inviolably.

5thly: That Every Indian that killeth or stealeth an Hogg Calfe or other Beast or any other goods shall undergoe the same punishment that an Englishman doth for the same offense.

6thly: In Case any servants or Slaves run away from their Masters and Come to any of the Indian Townes within the Territory of the said Orhotomaquath and his subjects, they shall be bound to apprehend the sd. fugitives and bring them to the next English plantation to bee Conveyed to their Masters, and in Case any Indian aforesd. Shall Convey or assist any such fugitives Li their flight out of this Province, that hee shall make their respective Master or Masters of such servants or slaves such satisfaction as an Englishman ought to doe in the like Case.

7thly. That the sd. Emperour shall not make any new peace with our Enemies, nor make any warr without the Consent of the Governour of this Province for the time being.

8thly. In Case the sd. Orhotomaquath or any Indian subject to him shall. kill any Indians or any other in peace & amity with their sd, Majestyes shall be Esteemed as great an offense as killing an Englishman.

9thly. That neither the sd. Emperour nor any of the Indians under his subjection doe at any time hereafter keepe harbour or Entertaine among them or within their fort any foreigne or strange Indians or know or discover any such to appeare or Come into this Province without giving timely and all possible speedy notice thereof to his Excellency the Governour or some Magistrate or other Officer or person of noate by whom the same may be Comunicated with all Expedition to the sd. Governour or Governours of this Province for the time being for his advice & directions therein.

10thly. That as a further testimony of their peace League & friendship with their Majestyes, and as they Expect Protection from them and their Governour here, there be yearly paid by the sd. Imperour as a Tribute to their sd. Majestyes an Indian Bow & two arrowes to be delivered to his -Excellency the Governour or the Governour for the time being at his Residence wheresoever the same shall happen to be on the first Tuesday in Aprill Every yeare successively.

In Confirmation of the promises his Excellency the Governour and likewise the Imperuur aforesd. have mutually signed sealed & delivered these present Articles in the presence of his Majestyes Council and the great) men of the sd. Imperour then present the day & yeare first aforementioned.

Signit;  
Orhotomaquath                      Emperour  
True Copsy Hen. Denton, Clk  
Council

### The George Washington House

The County Council will consider later this month the award of community development funds from the county's apportionment of federal bloc grant programs to the George Washington House/Indian Queen Tavern in Bladensburg. The Prince George's Jaycees saved the tavern from destruction several years ago and developed the building into a museum of county history, are facing a severe financial crisis because of the high operating expenses of this historic site, once owned by the father of William Wirt.

Without major financial assistance, the Jaycees may be forced to sell the building.

A public hearing is scheduled for February 27 in the Council Chambers on the grant request. William Aleshire, who has been a leader in the development of the tavern, urges members of the Society to contact the Council Chairman, Mr. Parris Glendening, in support of the grant. Letters should be addressed to the Chairman at the County Council, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20870. Please ask that a copy of your letter be forwarded to the County Executive. For further information, call Bill Aleshire at 262-5505.

### Governess Desired

"The subscriber wishes to engage the services of a Governess, well qualified to teach the higher branches of English education, French, Music, and Drawing. Testimonials as to character and qualifications will be required. All applications to be post paid.

Robert Ghiselin

Near Nottingham, Prince George's county, Maryland."

--From the National Intelligencer Washington, D.C., Mar. 29, 1845

### Surratt Society Valentine Display

On Valentine's Day weekend the Surratt Society will put on a display of 19th century Valentine cards in the Surratt House library. The cards date from the 1840's to 90's and are filled with the stirring verses and lacy ornamentation valued by the Victorians. There will be special demonstrations in papyrotamia, the art of paper cutting, and in calligraphy and illustration.

Hours of the display, on both the 14th and 14th of February, are from noon to 4 p.m. The Surratt House, is located on Brandywine Road, Clinton.

### The Prince George's County Historical Society

President: Mr. Frederick S. De Marr	277-0711
4010 Hamilton Street, Hyattsville 20781	
Corresponding Secretary; Mrs. Edith Bagot	927-3632
3510 Longfellow Street, Hyattsville 20782	
Treasurer: Mr. Herb Embrey	434-2958
1043-4 Tullymore Drive, Adelphi 20783	
Newsletter editor: Mr. Alan Virta	474-7524
8244 Canning Terrace, Greenbelt 20770	

Annual membership dues of \$5.00 include a subscription to this monthly newsletter. For a membership application, write the Society at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20840, or any of the officers listed above.

**NEWS AND NOTES FROM**  
**The Prince George's County**  
**Historical Society**

The March Meeting: Mr. Jack Burns

One of the Society's more popular meeting programs of the past several years was the visit of Jack Burns with his collection of wildfowl decoys six years ago. Mr. Burns has graciously consented to meet with us again and will speak on the topic, "The History and Art of Wildlife Decoys," at the March meeting of the Society, on Saturday, March 14, at Riversdale.

Mr. Burns, who is a former resident of Greenbelt, now lives in Greencastle, Pa. He will bring many examples from his fine collection of beautiful and antique decoys with him to the March meeting.

The meeting will begin at 2 p.m. Riversdale is located at 4811 Riverdale Road, Riverdale, between Kenilworth Avenue and Route One. Guests are welcome, and refreshments will be served.

The April Calendar

There will be no regular meeting of the Society in April. Members instead are invited to the annual St. George's Day Dinner on April 23. Details will follow with the personal invitations to be sent out soon.

Members are reminded to submit nominations for St. George's Day Awards to the President of the Society, Frederick S. De Marr, at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Md. 20840 or by calling him at 277-0711.

Planning Ahead: The Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage

More than ninety sites, many never opened to the public before, are on this year's Maryland House and Garden Tour. Tickets for each county tour are \$8.00, or \$2.00 for a single house. Water cruise tickets, requiring are \$25.00.

This year's tour calendar is as follows:

Saturday April 25	Anne Arundel County
Sunday, April 26	Calvert County

(Continued next page)

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

Saturday, May 2	Wicomico County
Sunday, May 3	Dorchester County
Tuesday, May 5	Carroll County
Wednesday, May 6	Bolton Hill, Baltimore City
Thursday, May 7	Baltimore County
Friday, May 8	Frederick County
Saturday May 9	Kent County
Saturday: May 16	Cruise, Baltimore to St. Michaels

For tickets, further information, or advance tour books (\$2.00 after April 1, \$1.00 before) contact the Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage, 600 West Chesapeake Avenue, Baltimore, Md. 21204, or 301-821-6933. Weekend tour day phone is 301-269 1714.

### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

Mr. & Mrs. James B. Berry, Jr.	Capitol Heights	<u>Sponsor</u> Mr. Virta
--------------------------------	-----------------	-----------------------------

The following sponsored by Mrs. Wilkinson and Mr. Virta:

Mrs. Pauline H. Bolinger	University Park
Dr. & Mrs. Lloyd W. Hughes	College Park
Mr. & Mrs. W. Stanley Machen	Hyattsville
Mrs. C.E. Callow	Cheverly
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas H. Welsh III	University Park

### County Police Department Celebrates 50th Anniversary

Police Chief John E. McHale, Jr., has announced that the County Police plan to celebrate their 50th anniversary this year. The department will have been in existence, as a separate agency, for 50 years as of June 1981. Research is underway to collect information on persons and events leading up to the creation of the department.

The department is also in the process of gathering memorabilia which will be put on public display. Of particular interest are photographs, uniforms, and newspaper accounts which illustrate the department's early history. Local residents, retired police officers, and their families are invited to share anecdotes and memories. Dennis Campbell of the Training and Education Division is coordinating the project.

If you have any information or memorabilia that would be of value to this project, you may contact Lt. Campbell at the department, 420-0180, extension 228.

--From a departmental press release

### Colonel Tasker's Footman

Among the prominent men of Maryland in the mid-eighteenth century was Col. Benjamin Tasker, a member of the Council and Deputy Secretary of the Province. Col. Tasker had a Prince George's County connection: his sister Anne was married to Governor Samuel Ogle of Belair, and Tasker himself purchased and lived at Belair after the Governor's death.

As one might imagine, a man of Col. Tasker's means and station had a number of servants and attendants in his employ. The following letter was written by one of those attendants to his father in England. In this age of instantaneous international communication, it is easy to forget what it meant to leave the mother country and settle in America two hundred years ago. Home was very far away, and in

most cases never seen again. Col. Tasker's footman clearly missed home and in this letter expresses what many of our own ancestors must have felt in their first years in this new land.

“Richard Tuggey, Jr., to Richard Tuggey, Sr.  
To Mr. Tuggey at Low Tewting in Surrey

Anopolis November the 2 1756

Honerd Father and mother

I take this oportinewtey of riting to you to Lett you know that i an, in maryland and a footman to the Honrable Colnall Taskur and i am in a Good Place and i am much surprisd i never Received a letter from you I have sent 2 too you I Live as well as aney one Can but to be so Long from hering or seeing from you i think you are Ded I live Ass well as aney one Can in the world I am marrad since I Com heer and I hope to be in England in a bout 12 mounths and shall bring my wife with me and Pray send to me som knives some buckls and Butins and Aney thing you think Proper for i Can make Good money heer I have i all about two hundred pound in money since i hive been heer Pray send me a Letter by the first ship Com'g to maryland and DRICT it to mr Teogget at the Honrable Collnl. Taskers in Anopolis i Maryland Pray Give my Love to All my frinds in England as knows me my Love to my sister and broth' Ann and James and i wish them health and hapyness and my most sacret Dewtey to my father and mothar and All my frind frinds P S I have marrad as sweat a gall a Ever was Born shee ls as trew to me as the verelle Sun and i shall bring hur to England will me plees God i Live Pray send me a Letter to me by the firs Ship a Coms for i Long to heer from you Pray Excuse the bad riting to you for you knou i am a bad coler your Dewtful Sun  
Richard Tuggeyy:

Reprinted from Colonial Captivities, Marches, and Journeys, edited under auspices of the Colonial Dames of America by Isabel MacBeath Calder, and published by Macmillan Company, 1935. The original is in the Public Record Office, London, and a photostat is in the Library of Congress Manuscript Division.

A footnote in the above work gives some information on the senior Mr. Tuggey, recipient of the letter. He served as overseer of the poor, surveyor of highways, and church warden of his parish, Tooting Graveney, in Surrey. In 1729 he is recorded as contributing to the poor rate, but he himself was a recipient of public assistance in 1753 and 1757. The History of Tooting--Graveney by W.E. Eorden (London, 1897) was cited as the source of this information.

We cannot say with certainty that Richard Tuggey, Jr., ever actually served Col. Tasker at Belair. His letter home was written more than a year before Tasker purchased the property. And we do not know if the young Mr. Tuggey ever returned to the home he so longed for. Perhaps further research could answer that question. --Alan Virta

#### Quilt Exhibit at Belair

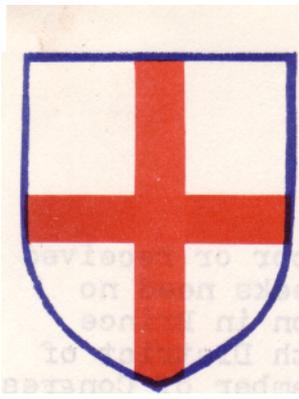
The Friends of the Belair Estate will sponsor an "Old and New Quilt Exhibit" at the Belair Mansion on Sunday, March 22, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$2.00 per person and all proceeds will go toward the Belair Mansion restoration.

#### Prince George Will Stand

"Prince George will stand this season at the subscriber's farm, near Good Luck Post Office, Prince George's County, Maryland. Terms, \$25 for blood mares, \$10 for common, 50 cents to groom. Mares from a distance grain fed for 25 cents per day. Every attention paid, but no liability for accidents or escapes.

G. W. Duvall”

--From the National Intelligencer, March 29, 1845.



NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince  
George's  
County  
Historical  
Society**

The place known as Good Luck was located near the present day intersection of Good Luck and

Greenbelt-Glenn Dale Road (Route 193), not far from the Goddard Space Flight Center.

Additions to the National Register

Williams Plains, near Bowie, and the Greenbelt Historic District have been added to the National Register of Historic Places. Fuller reports will be included in next month's newsletter.

Vol. IX, no. 4 April 1981

The St. George's Day Dinner

Members of the Society, their families, and guests, are cordially invited to celebrate St. George's Day, the 285th Anniversary of our county's founding, at the 8th annual St. George's Day Dinner on Thursday, April 23, at the University of Maryland Center of Adult Education.

This year, for the first time, the Prince George's County Hall of Fame is joining the Society in sponsoring the dinner. As part of the program, the Hall of Fame will induct a prominent citizen from our county's past. Prince Georgeans previously honored have been Archbishop John Carroll, Bishop Thomas John Claggett, John Rodgers, Dr. William Beanes, and Justice Gabriel Duvall. As at past dinners, the Historical Society will present the traditional St. George's Day awards to individuals and organizations who have made significant contributions toward the preservation of our county's heritage.

Invitations have been already mailed to all members, and reservations should be placed no later than April 13. For more information, contact Mrs. Edith Bagot (927-3632), Mr. Herb Embrey (434-2958), or President Fred DeMarr (277-0711).

The dinner begins at 7:30 P.m.; the reception preceding at 6:30. Please plan to join us in celebrating our county's heritage and those who are working so hard to preserve it.

The Historical Calendar

Sunday, April 12. Champagne Brunch to benefit the restoration of the Magruder House -in Bladensburg. 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Back Alley. \$25.00 per person. Checks payable to: Prince George's Heritage. Address: P.O. Box 39, Bladensburg, Md. 20710

Friday, April 24, and Saturday, April 25. 11th annual Antique Show and Sale, St. John's Church at Broad Creek, 9801 Livingston Road, Oxon Hill. Meals available. \$1.50 admission.

Sunday, May 3: Takoma Park House and Garden Tour, 1 to 5 p.m. For details, call 270-4048 during office hours, 270-5798 evenings. Next regular meeting of the Society Will be Saturday, May 9, 1981.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
**ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696**

## Seat in Congress

Those of us who have met a candidate at the door or received political literature through the mails in recent weeks need no reminder that there is an election campaign going on in Prince George's County. On May 19, the voters of the Fifth District of Maryland will be called to the polls to choose a member of Congress to succeed Representative Gladys Spellman, whose continued illness has made this special election necessary. This will be the first special Congressional election in Prince George's County since 1939 and the first time in the history of the United States that the House has declared a seat vacant because of the incapacitation of a member.

The man or woman elected on May 19 will become the 44th such individual to represent Prince George's County in the House of Representatives. The Fifth District's new Congressman will follow in the footsteps of Benjamin Contee of Nottingham, Prince George's first Representative in Congress, and men such as the fiery John Francis Mercer, the physician-politician Joseph Kent of Landover, agriculturalist Charles Benedict Calvert of Riversdale, and the two Sydney Mudds of Charles County, father and son. The district new Congressman will continue the service of the men and women many of us remember--Stephen Gambrill, Ghiselin Sasscer, Frank Small, Jr., Richard Lankford, Hervey Machen, Larry Hogan, and Gladys Spellman. The new Representative in Congress will join Marjorie Holt, whose Fourth District includes the southern half of Prince George's, in speaking for the citizens of Maryland's largest county.

This issue of News and Notes will be devoted to the history of Prince George's County's representation in the United States Congress. Following the obligatory list of all our Congressmen, we will present some additional biographical information on the Prince Georgians on that list and a few notes on the people and politics in this county's Congressional history.

--Alan Virta

## Prince George's Representatives in Congress

Not all of our Congressional representatives have been Prince Georgians, of course, because no Congressional district has ever been composed exclusively of Prince George's County. Even today's Fifth District contains a slice of Montgomery County, and south county shares the Fourth with Anne Arundel. The division of this county into two districts in 1972, brought about by the population boom of the 1960's, was the first time the county had ever been split.

The history of Maryland's Congressional districting is long and complicated, and Prince George's has been a part of several different districts. In the early years of the Republic, through the 1820's, Prince George's was joined with Anne Arundel. In the 1830's the two were separated, and Prince George's became part of a district with Charles, St. Mary's, and Calvert. By the 1850's the district had expanded to include Anne Arundel again, Howard (by then a separate county), and Montgomery. The district so many of us remember, the old Fifth, was formed in the 1860's, when Montgomery was lopped off and portions of Baltimore City were added. That district's boundaries remained fixed for more than one hundred years, save for the subtraction of parts of Baltimore City as the southern counties grew in population.

Maryland's apportionment process had more or less kept pace with population growth and shifts through most of her history, but the Legislature failed to react to the massive shifts of the post World War II period. As a result, a special federal court, basing their decision on the landmark one-man, one-vote rulings of the Supreme Court in the early 1960's, mapped out new Congressional districts in 1966. In the court's ruling, the Fifth was reduced in size to include just Charles and Prince George's Counties. The Fifth contracted even more after the 1970 census to include just the northern part of Prince George's and several precincts in Montgomery. Preliminary figures from the 1980 census indicate that the contraction is over, however, and the Fifth's boundaries will expand once more, probably to include more of this county than it does today.

Prince George's representatives in Congress:

Congress

John C. Weems	Jeff. Republican	19 & 20, 1826-29
Benedict J. Semmes	Democrat	21 & 22, 1829-33
John T. Stoddert	Democrat	23rd, 1833-35
Daniel Jenifer	National Repub.	24-26, 1835-41
Augustus R. Sollers	Whig	27th, 1841-43
John M.S. Causin	Whig	28th, 1843-45
John G. Chapman	Whig	29 & 30, 1845-49
Richard Johns Bowie	Whig	31 & 32, 1849-53
Augustus R. Sollers	Whig	33rd, 1853-55
Thomas Fielder Bowie	Whig, then Dem	34 & 35, 1855-59
George W. Hughes	Democrat	36th, 1859-61
Charles B. Calvert	Union	37th, 1861-63
Benjamin G. Harris	Peace Democrat	38 & 39, 1863-67
Frederick Stone	Democrat	40 & 41, 1867-71
William M. Merrick	Democrat	42nd, 1871-73
William J. Albert	Republican	43rd, 1873-75
Eli J. Henkle	Democrat	44-46th, 1875-81
Andrew G. Chapman	Democrat	47th, 1881-83
Hart B. Holton	Republican	48th, 1883-85
Barnes Compton	Democrat	49-51st, 1885-90
Sydney Mudd	Republican	51st, 1890-91
Dames Compton	Democrat	52 & 53, 1891-94
Charles E. Coffin	Republican	53 & 54, 1894-97
Sydney E. Mudd	Republican	55-61st, 1897-1911
Thomas Parran	Republican	62nd, 1911-13
Frank O. Smith	Democrat	63rd, 1913-15
Sydney E. Mudd, Jr.	Republican	64-68th, 1915-24
Stephen W. Gambrill	Democrat	68-75th, 1924-38
Lansdale G. Sasscer	Democrat	76-82nd, 1939-53
Frank Small, Jr.	Republican	83rd, 1953-55
Richard E. Lankford	Democrat	84-88th, 1955-65
Hervey G. Machen	Democrat	89 & 90, 1965-69
Lawrence J. Hogan	Republican	91-93rd, 1969-75
	County split in 1972	
Gladys Spellman (Fifth)	Democrat	94-96th, 1975-81
Marjorie Holt (Fourth)	Republican	93-present, 1973-

### Prince Georgians in Congress

A good many of the Congressmen who have represented this county have been either residents or natives of this county.

Benjamin Contee (1755-1815). Born at Brookefield, near Nottingham. Served in the Revolutionary War, also Continental Congress. Moved to Charles County, where he became an Episcopal clergyman. Son of Col. Thomas Contee. (In House: 1789-91)

Gabriel Duvall (1752-1844). Born in this county, died at his estate Marietta, near Glenn Dale, was actually a resident of Annapolis when elected to Congress. Held numerous State and Federal posts including Comptroller of the U.S. Treasury and Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. A fuller biography appeared in News and Notes, Oct. 1980, by Shirley Baltz. (1794-96)

Richard Sprig, Jr. Also a county native. Member of State House of Delegates and judge of Maryland Court of Appeals. (In House. 1796-99, 1801-02)

Walter Bowie (1748-1810). Born at Mattaponi, near Nottingham. Revolutionary War veteran, State legislator for 20 years. (1802-05)

John C. Herbert (1775-1846). Born in Alexandria, Ill., was a member of Virginia House of Delegates before removing to Prince George's. Member and Speaker of Maryland House of Delegates. Home was Walnut Grange, now on Beltsville Agricultural Center grounds. (1815-19)

Benedict J. Semmes (1789-1863). A physician, born in Charles but moved to Piscataway. Member and speaker of House of Delegates, lived at Oak Lawn. (1829-33)

Thomas Fielder Bowie (1808-1869). Nephew of Governor Robert Bowie, brother-in-law of Reverdy Johnson. Member of State Constitutional Convention, 1851. Buried at Mount Pleasant, near Upper Marlboro. (1855-59)

Charles Benedict Calvert (1803-1864). Son of George and Rosalie Calvert, builders of Riversdale, he was a noted agriculturalist. Founded Maryland Agricultural College, College Park, and served in the House of Delegates. (1861-63)

Barnes Compton (1830-1898). Native of Charles County, where he was elected to House of Delegates and State Senate (serving as its President). Moved to Laurel in 1880. A legal challenge by Sydney Mudd successfully overturned his election to the 51<sup>st</sup> Congress. (1885-90, 1891-94).

Charles E. Coffin (1841-1912). Born in Boston, came to the county to manage the Muirkirk ironworks. Member of House of Delegates and State Senate. Buried in St. John's Episcopal Cemetery, Beltsville. (1894-97)

Lansdale C. Sasscer (1893-1964). Native of Upper Marlboro. Member of State Senate for 16 years, serving as its president in his last term there. First elected to Congress in a special election. (1939-53)

Frank Small, Jr. Born in Temple Hills, engaged in banking and automobile business. Member of House of Delegates, old Board of County Commissioners. Born 1896, died 1973. (1953-55)

Hervey G. Machen (1916- ). Born in Washington, D.C., practices law in Hyattsville. Member of House of Delegates. (1965-69)

Lawrence J. Hogan (1928- ) Native of Boston, served with Federal Bureau of Investigation for 10 years, became business executive, teacher. Elected County Executive, 1978. (1969-75).

Gladys Noon Spellman (1918- ) Born in New York, N.Y., taught in the county schools. Elected to old Board of County Commissioners and was its chairman; elected to County Council. (In House: 1975-81).

A number of other Congressmen, who did not represent this district, also have Prince George's County connections. Daniel Carroll (1730-1796) was born in Upper Marlboro. His home was Forest Glen, on Rock Creek. He was a signer of the U.S. Constitution and also served in the Continental Congress and State Senate. Richard Potts (1753-1808), another Upper Marlboro native, established himself in Frederick County. He served in the House of Delegates and was a judge of the Maryland Court of Appeals. Potts never served in the House, but was a member of the Senate.

A Congressman from Washington County, Thomas Sprigg (1747-1809). was also a native of Prince George's. He was the uncle of Congressman Richard Sprigg, Jr. Thomas G. Pratt, a U.S. Senator, was for many years a resident of Prince George's County, from which he was elected to the House of Delegates and State Senate and Governor. The list would not be complete without reference to the illustrious Reverdy Johnson (1796-1876), U.S. Senator from 1845-49 and 1863-68, who as a young man practiced law in Upper Marlboro. And another Prince Georgean has served in recent years. Carlton Sickles of Lanham was elected in 1962 and 1964 to the seat Maryland gained after the 1960 census. That seat was elected statewide until the 8th Dist., was created in 1966.

This method was changed to the current system in 1791. Voters may vote only for those persons running in their district, and candidates need not live in their districts.

### A Hot Campaign

The Planters Advocate of November 21 1859, reported that the two Congressional candidates, Democrat George W. Hughes and Alexander Hagner, a former Whig, exchanged blows in Piscataway.

Congress did not meet in Washington until November of 1800.

### Potomac Calls to Chesapeake

Maryland's first Congressional campaign was a contest between Federalists and Anti-Federalists. The Federalist ticket won state-wide, and thus Federalists represented all the State's Congressional districts.

The second Congressional campaign in 1790 was something quite different. Party labels disappeared. Long-time antagonists became allies; allies became foes. A single issue restructured the electoral politics of the state, and that issue was the location of the national capital.

Congress was still meeting in New York, and the choice of the permanent site for the national capital was not yet settled. Two Maryland options were among the possibilities: a site on the Potomac River and a Chesapeake Bay site (either Baltimore or along the Susquehanna River). Marylanders were divided on the issue, and this division transcended party identification.

Those favoring a Chesapeake location, both Federalists and Anti-Federalists, met and nominated a ticket. Those favoring the Potomac site did the same. Both sides earnestly wooed areas of the state in between or not particularly affected by the choice. Both sides knew that under the state-wide system of voting, they could win all of Maryland's seats, and thus give great weight to their side in Congress. The Chesapeakes won--but we all know that Congress chose a Potomac site nonetheless.

Prince George's County illustrates how the campaign turned politics upside down. In 1789, the county voted against Benjamin Contee, the Federalist candidate for the district, by a vote of 272 to 248. In the 1790 election, they chose Contee, a Potomac candidate, by a vote of 973 to 2 over his Chesapeake opponent. In each case, though, the state-wide vote went against Prince George's, and the loser in the county went to Congress.

The Chesapeake-Potomac prompted electoral reform. Potomac men in the legislature, as well as Federalists who saw the Jeffersonian Republicans gaining strength state-wide, changed the law to what it is today, the election of Congressmen district-by-district. Politics in the next election reverted to party-against-party, as usual.

### Special Elections

Prince George's County has had eight previous special Congressional elections. Six were the result of resignations and two were on account of deaths (the younger Sydney Mudd and Stephen W. Gambrill). Lansdale G. Sasscer was the last Congressman from this district to be chosen in a special election.

Charles Coffin, the ironmaster at Muirkirk, was elected twice in one day. Congressman Barnes Compton of Laurel resigned in May 1894 after being appointed by President Cleveland to a government post. The special election to fill his term (extending until March 1895) and the general election for the next term (1895-97) were held on the same day. Coffin won both seats.

### Another Tough Campaign

The Congressional campaign of 1792 was among the bitterest this county has seen. The differences between the Federalists and Anti-Federalists were intense and the Anti-Federalist candidate in this

to a line purely defensive, I shall assuredly not refuse any summons I may receive from you." In gentlemen's language, Mercer invited a duel. Both sides let the matter drop.

There was another controversy in that election. Mercer's campaigners apparently told people that George Washington endorsed Mercer. Washington wrote to Mercer: "I was not a little displeased to find by a letter... that my name had been freely used by you or your friends, for electioneering purposes, when I had never associated your name and the Election together...."

--Quotes from The Papers of Alexander Hamilton, ed. by Harold C. Syrett (Vol. 14, p. 250) 3/26 793) and from The Writings of George Washington, ed. by John C. Fitzpatrick (Vol. 32, 164, 9/26/92).

#### Historical Precedents

The Fifth District has sent quite a few State legislators to Congress, including Senate presidents, but no mayors nor any spouses of former Representatives. Two father-son combinations have represented this district: John Grant Chapman and Andrew Grant Chapman, and the two Sydney Mudds. Politics was not necessarily a bed of roses for these political sons, however. Young Chapman was ousted from office after one term, and young Sydney had to try twice before he could win his party's nomination.

Among the works consulted for this issue of the newsletter were Dorothy Marie Brown's Ph D. Dissertation, "Party Battles and Beginnings in Maryland" (Georgetown U, 1961) and Biographical Directory of the United States Congress (1971).

This newsletter is published monthly. Dues and subscription price, \$5.00 per year. Frederick S. DeMarr, Pres.; Alan Virta, Editor. The Society's address: P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Md. 20840

# NEWS AND NOTES FROM The Prince George's County Historical Society

Vol. IX, no. 5 May 1981

## The May Meetings Early Days of the Telephone

"The Early Days of the Telephone in Maryland" will be the topic of discussion on Saturday, May 9, at Riversdale at the May meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society.

Our guest speaker will be Joseph N. Cromwell, a retired executive of the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company who is active in the field of history. A past president of the Maryland chapter of Telephone Pioneers, he has also served as an officer in the Baltimore County and Maryland Historical Societies. He has written several historical works, including a history of C & P, and has been commended by the Freedoms Foundation of Valley Forge for his articles on citizenship. Mr. Cromwell will have numerous photographs to illustrate his talk.

Twentieth century history, particularly the history of the technological developments which have so shaped our modern society, is probably one of the most neglected areas in the study of local history. Join with us on May 9 for a most interesting look at the highlights of the development of the telephone system in Maryland and Prince George's County.

The meeting will begin at 2 p.m. Riversdale, the Calvert mansion, is located at 4811 Riverdale Road, between Kenilworth Avenue and Route One. Refreshments will be served, and guests, are welcome.

## Tea to Honor Society's Officers: May 17

Mrs. A.H. Seidenspinner cordially invites all members of the Society and their guests to a tea in honor of the officers of the Prince George's County Historical Society at her home in College Heights Estates on the afternoon of Sunday, May 17, 1981. Details and a reply card accompany this issue of News and Notes.

The College Heights Estates neighborhood with its lovely homes and gardens is one of the finest places to celebrate Spring in Prince George's County. Plan to be with us on May 17.

National Historic Preservation Week is May 10-16

New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

Mr. & Mrs. Lee D. Lodge	Adelphi	<u>Sponsor</u>
Virginia B. Nichols	Hyattsville	R. Cecil
Kathleen A. Lowe	El Monte, CA.	Wm. Sullivan
Jean & Joseph Faulkner	Takoma Park	F. De Marr
Lucille Donnelly	Silver Spring	R. Cecil
Hershel H. Helm	Arlington, VA.	R. Cecil
		P.B. Clagett

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

Mr. & Mrs. Walter W. Hauff  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert P. Beaver

Laurel  
Mount Ranier

F. De Marr  
WM. Sullivan

The annual Spring festival will be held on May 3 this year from noon until 6 p.m. There will be an art show, mansion tours, arts and crafts exhibits, woodcarving demonstration, children's activities, and food and drink. Special features include an exhibition of tools from the Duvall farm tool collection and a visit by Miss Betty and her Colonial Trunk. Bring a chair or blanket along if you wish, for there will be continuous music by a service band. Admission is free, save for a small charge for the house tour. Parking is available at Town Center or Montpelier Shopping Center with continuous shuttle service.

A Civil War encampment will be held on the weekend of May 30 and 31. There will be battles both days involving infantry and cavalry. Admission is 50 cents.

Montpelier is located on Route 197 between Laurel and the Baltimore-Washington Parkway. It is across the road from the Montpelier Shopping Center.

Congratulations are extended to the new officers of the Friends of Montpelier, President Helen Hass and Vice-President Caroline Cline. And congratulations, too, to retiring President Jean Speicher, with praise for a job well done.

#### Correction on the First Congressional Election

There was a typographical error in the third line of the article "Election by District" in last month's newsletter (page 24). The correct date is 1789.

#### The St. George's Day Awards, 1981

The Prince George's County Historical Society is proud to announce the recipients of the 1981 St. George's Day Awards, Presented at the St. George's Day Dinner on April 23.

Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Couser, Upper Marlboro. Their "do-it-yourself" restoration of Woodstock will serve as an inspiration to others in their quest to preserve our architectural heritage. Additionally, Mary Sue has given generously of her time and talents to Prince George's Heritage, Inc., and the Citizens Advisory Committee for the Historic Sites and Districts Plan.

James G. Boss, Laurel. His wise counsel and guidance as chairman of the Historic District Commission of Laurel has stimulated neighborhood acceptance and has provided an example for other prospective districts in the county to follow. Likewise his efforts in the Laurel Bicentennial activities, for Prince George's Heritage, Inc., and the Citizens Advisory Committee on the Historic Sites and Districts Plan are highly commendable.

Senator Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., Clinton. His efforts in the Maryland Senate provided permanent funding for the county committee of the Maryland Historical Trust. As representative of the President of the Senate, he serves as a director of the Trust, which has been a major contribution to preservation efforts in the county.

Delegate Charles Blumenthal, Oxon Hill. His efforts in the General Assembly in behalf of restoration efforts in Prince George's County are well known to all, beginning with the Indian Queen/George Washington House in 1975. Such places as Oxon Hill Manor and the Buck House have benefited as well. These efforts have helped the economic development of our county as well as help preserve our cultural heritage.

Eugene Bowie Roberts, Collington. As an organizing member of the Historical Society over thirty years ago and as its second president, he helped generate much needed interest in our county heritage and has lent generous support ever since. Mr. Roberts could not be present at the dinner, and his award will be presented at a later date.

Ivy Hill Association, Inc., Laurel. In 1974 a group of citizens expressed concern for the run-down and overgrown condition of Ivy Hill Cemetery, Laurel's 19th century burying ground. Since then, as a labor of love, a new body of fourteen trustees has through their personal labor, restored the cemetery's quiet

preceding the dinner were our two Congressional candidates, Mr. Steny Hoyer of Berkshire, former President of the Maryland Senate, and Mrs. Audrey Scott, the Mayor of Bowie.

### Addition to the National Register

Greenbelt Historic District., Greenbelt is an incorporated city in northern Prince George's County. The Greenbelt Historic District is the original developed section of the city which was established and expanded between 1935 and 1941 as one of three "green towns" founded by the U.S. government under the New Deal as an attempt to solve social and economic problems confronting the nation. The two other towns were Greenhills, Ohio and Greendale, Wis.

These projects were aimed at creating jobs and demonstrating the applicability of certain garden-city planning techniques to a residential area intended for modest-income families. Of the three towns, Greenbelt is the only one to retain many of the original features such as the buildings and sections of surrounding "greenbelt."

Greenbelt also continues the concept of community responsibility as the majority of the housing is owned by a cooperative. The district contains 789.05 acres and is approximately bounded by the city limits on the north, the Baltimore-Washington Parkway on the east, and property lines on the south and west.

--Adapted from the notice in the January issue of SWAP, from the Maryland Historical Trust.

### Bowie Heritage Day

The City of Bowie invites all its neighbors to join in the celebration of Bowie Heritage Day on Sunday, May 17, from 2 until 5 p.m. Activity will be centered at Belair mansion, where Congress' Own Regiment and a British group will skirmish on the terraces. The Stables will also be open (as they will be every Sunday in May and June from 1 to 4). Admission to all events is free.

### Prince George's Tobacco Society

On April 16 the Smithsonian Institution offered a tour of the Prince George's County tobacco country through its Resident Associate Program. For the benefit of our readers we republish below the tour description found in the February-March 1981 issue of The Smithsonian Associate.

#### Prince George's Tobacco Society

Tobacco trade has been the mainstay of the Prince George's County economy ever since colonial days, when the leaf was even used as currency. As a result of this production, there arose in the 18th century a wealthy, cultured society, with Upper Marlboro as its commercial and social center. This tour, led by historian James F. Turk, focuses on the tobacco tradition, from the 18th to the 20th centuries.

Mount Calvert, the last remaining building of a once-bustling tobacco port on the Patuxent River, and now a private home, offers the group a perspective on the lifestyle of early southern Maryland, as does the manor house Weston, on a farm that has produced tobacco since the 17th century. Two 18th-century Anglican churches (whose ministers were paid in tobacco) are visited: St. Thomas' Church in Croom (1742) and St. Barnabas' Church in Leeland (1774), both beautifully preserved examples of local architectural styles. St. Barnabas' is noted for its Last Supper by Gustavus Hesselius, the first ecclesiastical painting commissioned in the colonies (1721). The exterior of Mt. Lubentia, where a school attended by George Washington's stepson [Jackie Custis] was held in the 18th century is also viewed.

Returning to the 20th century, participants go on to view present-day practices of raising and marketing tobacco at the University of Maryland's Tobacco Research Farm. The farm demonstrates that many of the aspects of harvesting and curing have scarcely changed since colonial days. A tour of one of the tobacco markets still in operation follows.



**NEWS AND  
NOTES FROM  
The Prince George's County  
Historical Society**

"Surprising Prince George's County"

The Travel Promotion Council of Prince George's County has just printed a series of four beautiful, limited-edition posters highlighting some of the beautiful scenes and historic sites in "Surprising Prince George's County."

The posters feature full-color scenes of Fort Washington, Fort Foote, Oxon Hill Farm, and Montpelier Mansion. The posters, which are suitable for framing, are available from the council offices at 6600 Kenilworth Avenue, Riverdale 20840, phone 927-0700.

The posters sell for \$2.00 a piece, or \$7.50 for a full set. If you wish to receive these posters through the mail, be sure to add \$1.00 postage and handling for one poster, \$1.15 for two posters, or \$1.30 for a set of either three or four posters. Full price for the full set, then is \$8.80.

Proceeds from the poster sales go to the Travel Promotion Council, a non-profit organization, to further its efforts to promote the surprising things to see and do in Prince George's County.

--From Tour-isms, the newsletter of the council.

Marlborough Day

Saturday, May 9, is the date of the 5th Annual Marlborough Day, a "star-spangled celebration" featuring a parade, historical tours, an art sale, crafts, clowns, exhibitions, an auction, rides, and plenty of food and drink. The festivities begin at 10 a.m. and end at 4 p.m.

The Prince George's County Historical and Cultural Trust will conduct two walking tours through the town, at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. This year's tour will include the opening of several historic homes and churches; Content, Trinity Episcopal Church, the Sparrough home on Elm Street, St. Mary's Catholic Church, and St. Mary's. Beneficial Society Hall.

For more information call 952-4140 or 248-1260. Free parking and shuttle service are available from the racetrack.

Riversdale Spring Open House

The Calvert mansion, Riversdale, will be open to the public in a Celebration of Spring on Saturday and Sunday, May 16 and 17, from 1 to 5 p.m. An exhibit of a private collection of dolls and doll furniture and a display of quilts from the National Quilting Association will highlight the event. Admission is \$1.00 for adults and 50 cents for children under 12. Riversdale is at 4811 Riverdale Road in Riverdale.

The Prince George's County Historical Society

Subscription to this newsletter is included in the annual dues of \$5.00. Write the Society at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Md. 20840 Frederick S. De Marr, President; Edith Bagot, Corresponding Secretary; Herb Embrey, Treasurer; Alan Virta, Editor.

world events, but the program itself was born only six years ago, and grew from a local event into a national competition.

This year, more than 40,000 students in grades 6-12 competed in the rapidly growing program designed to help students gain a perspective on world events. The public is invited to attend National History Day. For information, call 454-5335."

--from Precis, May 4, 1981, the faculty and staff newsletter for the University of Maryland

The dusty pages of history, indeed.

### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

		<u>Sponsor</u>
Mrs. Emily L. Wenzel	Bladensburg	De Marr
Vicki D. Duncan	Crofton	Virta
Mr. & Mrs. Creighton O. De Marr	Beltsville	Mr. De Marr
Mrs. Charles Ritchie	Adelphi	Mr. De Marr
Mr. & Mrs. Charles B. Garnett	Suitland	Mr. Virta

### Tobacco-Planting

On Sunday, June 28, the Oxon Hill Farm of the U.S. Dept. of the Interior will offer demonstrations of tobacco transplanting between the hours of 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. Now those members of the Society who grew up on tobacco farms in Prince George's County need a demonstration of transplanting like they need a sore throat, but city and suburban folks will find the demonstration most instructive. The transplanting of the young tobacco plants into the field was a most crucial step in the culture of Prince George's County's historic staple crop.

Admission to the demonstrations is free. The Oxon Hill Farm is located just off of Oxon Hill Road, near the Indian Head Highway--Beltway interchange. Phone number is 839-1176. Former and current tobacco planters are cordially invited, too.

### Victorian Wedding Reception

Members of the Society are cordially invited to attend a Victorian Wedding Reception, with music, sponsored by the Surratt Society, also on Sunday, June 28. The reception will take place between noon and 4 p.m. at the Mary Surratt House, 9110 Brandywine Road, Clinton. Phone number there is 868-1121.

Also on the Surratt Society's calendar for the summer is a Civil War encampment scheduled for July 18-19. There is a small admission fee for each

### Telephone History in Prince George's County

We regret that last month's newsletter reached the members, homes so late last month. We had been accustomed to one-or-two day delivery in the past, but the first newsletters to come through the mails last month took a full seven days.

## **PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

service's

Joseph H. Cromwell delivered an excellent summary of the history of the telephone system's

Ironically the topic of the meeting was the postal competitor, the telephone.

Mr. Cromwell presented the Society with two volumes of his book, The C & P Story: Service in Action (1981), covering telephone history in Maryland and D.C. Who remembers early telephone installation and service in this county? Write us, or call.

### A Visit to Fairview

One year ago in News and Notes we published an account of a visit in 1854 by Frederick Law Olmsted to Riversdale, the home and farm of the noted agriculturalist, Charles Benedict Calvert. Now, twelve months later, we will jump forward a generation to the year 1882 and look at another Maryland farm, Fairview, the home of Governor Oden Bowie, of Prince George's County.

Fairview was in 1882--and still is one hundred years later--a large plantation located a little more than a mile west of the Pope's Creek railroad line in the central part of Prince George's County. The many homes of the City of Bowie are now less than two miles away, and motorists on U.S. Route 50 can see Fairview's farmlands on the north side of the busy highway between Enterprise and Church Roads.

Fairview came into the Bowie family when Baruch Duckett, builder of the fine plantation house that still stands, willed the farm to his son-in-law, William Bowie, in the early years of the nineteenth century. Oden Bowie, grandson of William Bowie, was born there in 1826, son of William Duckett Bowie and Eliza (Oden) Bowie. He served gallantly in the Mexican War and returned home to be elected at a very young age to the Maryland House of Delegates. In 1851 he became president of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad, then still only a dream of tobacco planters who wanted to build a railroad across Southern Maryland and all the way to Baltimore. In 1864 Oden Bowie was the unsuccessful candidate of the Democratic Party for Lieutenant Governor of Maryland, but in 1866 he was elected by the voters of Prince George's County to represent them in the State Senate. He was elected Governor in 1867, and after his term in office he became president of the Baltimore City Passenger Railway Company. The rest of his working life was devoted to the management of his farms and the two railroads with which he was associated. He achieved national recognition for the fine thoroughbreds from the Fairview stables and served as president of the Maryland Jockey Club. Governor Bowie died in 1894.

The following account of a visit to Fairview is taken from the January 1883 issue (Vol. XX, no. 1) of The Maryland Farmer.

"...So much for Mr. Bowie's political and social position, but we feel a deeper interest in him as a model Maryland farmer, than in his career as a politician, or civilian connected with works of internal improvement.

"Of his career as an extensive farmer, planter and stock breeder we particularly desire to speak, because in these departments of agriculture he has gained renown, and for that reason we have placed his portrait and a short sketch of his life before the readers of the Maryland Farmer.

"To give an insight into the inner life of Governor Bowie as an agriculturist, we think an unvarnished statement of what we heard, saw and learned during our visit in 1882 to this homestead, 'Fairview,' Prince George's county, Md. is the best way by which we can show to our reading farmers the man on his farm, amidst his flocks, herds and stock of all sorts, his system of management, methods of recuperating lands, breeding, grazing, and rearing stock, &c., &c.

"Governor Bowie owns several farms and woodlands, each lying fortunately adjacent or near to the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad, one of which is his 'Smith's Farm,' about midway from Collington to Upper Marlboro, and which may be called his tobacco plantation, being chiefly devoted to the culture of tobacco, corn and wheat, to each of which its soil seems peculiarly adapted. But it is of his home farm, Fairview, of which we desire to speak, only mentioning the fact of his possessing several farms and superintending several others for his female relatives who look to him as a guardian, to show his indomitable energy in giving almost daily supervision to all these landed interests, and yet rarely missing a day from Baltimore city, thirty miles from his home, attending six hours per day in his office, to his duties as President of the railroads before mentioned, and spending almost every night with his family at Fairview. This also shows the wonderful value and convenience of quick transit furnished by

acres each are well set in grass, and strongly fenced, near the dwelling house, for the accommodation of favorite brood mares, colts and stallions, all supplied with fresh water from pumps or running streams. The training stables are within a short walk of the front door of the mansion. The training track is located in a field a quarter of a mile from the stables. This farm is divided into seven fields, besides lots and paddocks.

"It will be remembered to the credit of Governor Bowie, as a stock breeder, that he sold to the Druid Hill Park Commission [in Baltimore] the first 24 ewes and one ram, from which by breeding since to imported rams has grown the large and superb flock of Southdowns, so celebrated now, that some 75 ram lambs are annually sold at \$25 each and the demand for them by breeders all over the country is far greater than the supply. He is breeding now, Cotswolds, of which he has a splendid flock of about 150. On Fairview farm there are kept a small choice herd of Devon cattle and a few Jersey cows for home supply of butter also 100 head of beef cattle are bought in the autumn, wintered on corn fodder, straw and hay, and grass fed during the summer, until fattened for the butcher in time for another supply. Thus, that number are annually bought and sold during the year.

"Here is a great source from which he increases the fertility of the soil. There are kept also over 100 horses of all sorts, including thoroughbred brood mares, some of which are of the very best and most fashionable strains, fifty or sixty colts and fillies, from sucklings up to four year olds. In one field of luxuriant clover and timothy, were some thirty very promising young things, with the renowned Crickmore, just turned out to recover from a lameness contracted during the year's hard work. He looked thin and battle scarred like a warrior after a long and severe campaign. In a stubble field where the young grass was luxuriant, were the mares with colts by their sides, and in a field of clover turf, adjoining, were the brood mares that had failed to produce this year, but were now supposed to be in foal. In a paddock close to the house lawn were two grand mares, 'Australia', with a fine bay colt with dark points, and no white, by Catesby; and the famous mares 'My Maryland,' with a Catesby colt by her side, the most perfect formed and promising colt of its age we ever saw. He is a rich bay with black legs, and a large star in his forehead, very large size, long neck and head like a deer, with eyes of the gazelle; round body and looking every inch a racehorse in miniature. We predict great things for him.

"Catesby was a most promising young horse, as a racer, but an accident stopped, at an early age, his career as a successful racer. But he proved himself a very superior foal getter, considering the few good mares that were bred to him during his short period in the stud, his death taking place last year, having sired Crickmore, Compensation, Sportsman, and other fast ones, the oldest not yet five years old. His place has just been filled by the purchase of Vassal, a magnificent horse, by Vandal, which with Dickens by imp. Australian, and Legatee by the great Lexington, make three stallions kept at Fairview to breed to the different mares so as to avoid in-breeding, and for judicious crosses of strains of blood.

"The fences, roads and gates were in good order. The crop fields were clean and seem to have been well cultivated. The Governor believes in deep plowing and thorough preparation.

"He uses lime, 50 bushels or more, per acre, applied on the turf, the autumn and winter before the field is plowed for crops, with 200 to 300 pounds of fertilizer applied to each acre of wheat, when the crop is sown; the fertilizer is about equal parts fine bone and Holloway's Excelsior, mixed at home. With these, clovers timothy and plaster, the lands have steadily and rapidly improved in producing crops of grain and grass. Thus large quantities of lime and fertilizers are used yearly. The average wheat crop last year was 26 bushels, mostly on corn land. When necessary, draining is done by open and blind ditches of tile. By such a system he grows heavy crops. We saw about 120 acres in corn which we estimated would average about 10 barrels per acre, and some acres, we felt sure would produce 18 barrels. The crop has been nearly all housed since and is over 1200 barrels. It all had been freed of suckers, hills stood four feet apart, yet it seemed in places like an impenetrable wilderness, such was its growth, owing to the fertility of the soils, cultivation and the favorable season, although owing to the drought in that section, from the last of May to July 3rd, some of it was planted late, and none made any growth until after the July rains. We saw thousands of stalks that were fully eighteen feet tall, with two ears on each, which a tall man standing on the ground could not have reached to pull. This height of corn we do not like. but it shows what Southern corn will do on rich land in a good season. There is

## Historic Sites and Districts Plan

The county's proposed Historic Sites and Districts Plan drafted by a Citizens' Advisory Committee for the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, was passed by the county Planning Board and is now in the hands of the County Council. The Council begins its consideration with a presentation of the various aspects of the plan by committee members on June 9. The plan was summarized in the December 1980 issue of News and Notes.

The expression of citizen support is essential for the passage of the -plan and -protection of the county's historic properties. Write to the Council Chairman, Mr. Parris N. Glendening, at the County Council, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20870, or contact any other, or all, members.

## The Prince George's County Historical Society

Subscription to this monthly newsletter is included in the annual membership dues of \$5.00 per year. To join, write the Society at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20840, or call any of the officers listed below:

President:	Frederick S. De Marr 277-0711	Corr. Secretary: Edith Bagot 927-3632
Treasurer:	Herb Embrey 434-2958	News. Editor: Alan Virta 474-7524

**NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
The Prince George's County  
Historical Society**

**Vol. IX no - 7  
July 1981**

The first three issues of Prince George's Magazine will be issued free and are available at all branches of Maryland National Bank. Volume 1, number 1 is printed on attractive, glossy paper and contains several interesting articles. We recommend making the effort to get a copy!

Mrs. Leon Brunelle

We regret to inform the membership of the death last month of Thelma Brunelle, an active member of our Society who last visited with us at the Christmas Party at Montpelier. Those who attended the teas hosted by Mrs. Seidenspinner in 1979 and 1980 remember that Mrs. Brunelle, a vocalist, entertained at both occasions. The Society extends its heartfelt sympathy to the family.

Thomas Attwood Digges

This month's issue of News and Notes is being devoted to Thomas Attwood Digges (1741 or 42 - 1821), one of the most controversial figures in Prince George's County's past, We have a number of news items, including new members, which will be held until next month.

# PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

story is far from complete, however, and the search for Thomas Attwood Digges will continue as the record of more and more of his life and work comes to light.

Thomas Attwood Digges was born at the family home, Warburton Manor, at Piscataway Creek and the Potomac River. His father was George Digges, his mother Ann Attwood, but the year of his birth--either 1741 or 1742--is in question. The Digges' were one of Prince George's County's most prominent Catholic families, and Thomas received at least part of his education in England. A letter he wrote from Philadelphia in 1767 indicated that he was on his way to Cadiz and Lisbon; apparently he also spent a good part of his young life in Europe. By 1774, however, he seems to have established himself in London as an agent for various shipping interests, work which sometimes took him to other cities in Britain and to the continent.

During the pre-war years in London, Digges was part of a smart young set of Americans who came from the colonial upper class, fancied themselves and acted the part of gentlemen, and made themselves known about town in social and literary circles. Digges was called the "handsome American," and a portrait attributed to Sir Joshua Reynolds, printed in Paul Wilstach's *Potomac Landings*, bears out that sobriquet. It was while part of that London set that Digges became the first American to write a novel, Adventures of Alonso, published in 1775 in London and ascribed on the title page to "A Native of Maryland some years resident in Lisbon," was long attributed to Digges on the basis of internal and circumstantial evidence. A letter by Robert Southey reexamined about a decade ago, however, provides the external proof that scholars so long lacked. It also gives an interesting glimpse at Digges' extra-literary activities. Southey wrote of his aunt, visiting Lisbon in 1774, who "gave more encouragement than prudent to an American Adventurer, who followed her to England. His name was Digges. If I am not mistaken, he wrote a sort of novel called the *Adventures of Automathes*, in which there is a story of a man endeavouring to smuggle diamonds from the Forbidden District of Brazil..."

Though he mangled the title, Southey clearly identified Adventures of Alonso. It is a story of a young Portugese, educated for a career in commerce, who returned home and ruined his career and name by running off with a married woman. He then experienced a series of adventures, pleasant and unpleasant, triumphant and disastrous, that took him, across the ocean and away from his love for many years. The critics of the day found the novel amusing, with a surprise ending, but no classic. Whatever its literary merit, *Adventures of Alonso* earned for this young Prince Georgian, still in his early twenties, a place in American literary history. The novel also serves as an uncanny foreshadowing of a career almost as fantastic as that of the story's protagonist

The shots fired at Lexington and Concord in the Spring of 1775 changed the careers and situations of all Americans then in Great Britain, including Thomas Attwood Digges. Most of his friends slipped out of the country, but Digges chose another course. He remained in Britain, and for the duration of the war he worked for America there, sometimes covertly, sometimes illegally, but very often publicly. It apparently was Arthur Lee of Virginia, one of Digges' friends from the pre-war days in London, who first enlisted him in the Revolutionary cause in an official capacity. Lee had left England to become one of the American commissioners to the French court, and in 1777 he authorized Digges to spend money on behalf of American seamen imprisoned in Britain. Digges worked actively for the prisoners' interests, visiting the prisons, petitioning for the improvement of their living conditions, expending money for them for the American government, and assisting in the arrangement of exchanges. Early in the war, when there was still much open sympathy for the American cause in Britain, he served on a public committee of twenty, which included London aldermen, that raised subscriptions to provide funds for American prisoner relief. He also engaged in some covert activity. Escaped prisoners often sought him out, and he helped spirit a good number of them out of the country.

In September of 1778 Digges began corresponding with another American commissioner in France, Benjamin Franklin. Digges had honored a bill drawn upon Franklin by an escaped American prisoner and sent Franklin a note requesting reimbursement. Franklin's response was quite warm, and the two became frequent correspondents, although Digges often used pseudonyms in case the mail was intercepted. In the Spring of 1779 his role in British-American relations widened considerably when he was asked by his friend, David Hartley, a member of Parliament, to carry peace proposals to Franklin

to live. His work as a shipping agent was drastically reduced during the war years, and with communication with home cut off, so was financial assistance from that quarter. Politically, the atmosphere in London became unsafe. In the early years of the war there was much pro-American sentiment in London, but as the war dragged on and British deaths mounted, the attitudes changed, particularly in the government. The American execution of Major Andre in the Fall of 1780 shocked Britons, and Americans were seized in retaliation. Digges decided to get out of London, so he traveled about England, moving from city to city, usually under false identities. But there was still the money problem. A sympathetic historian characterized Digges' method of personal financing this way: "Thomas Digges, harried, harassed, penniless and, at wit's end, indeed, turned rogue."

More precisely, what Digges did was take some of the money forwarded to him for prisoner relief and use it to support himself" in allegedly a none too modest way. Could this not be justified, based on his devoted and sometimes dangerous service to the American cause? Perhaps it could have, but Digges did not let Franklin know that that was what he was doing. Instead, he let Franklin think he was applying all the money to prisoner relief. Franklin only learned the truth from a third party. The sympathetic historians think Digges meant to repay what he had advanced himself; others, including the outraged Franklin, labeled him an embezzler. There was not much Franklin could do about it, however, except denounce Digges in letters to a good number of people. With a war on, he could hardly press charges in England.

After Yorktown, when the heat was off, Digges returned to London and resumed his activities on behalf of American prisoners, albeit without funding from Franklin. Those who felt Digges had embezzled the money shunned him, so he worked with whomever he could. Again he was asked by British friends to serve as an intermediary carrying peace proposals, and again he consented. He visited John Adams in the Netherlands at British expense, but was treated coolly, as were the proposals he carried. It is from this later service that the worst charges against Digges arise. Judging his character on the basis of Franklin's letters and interpreting his financing by the British in the worst possible light, many diplomatic historians have concluded that he was a British spy. Not even Franklin went that far, however--his denunciation of Digges was based solely on the money problem--but the charge continually resurfaces, even in modern works, despite lack of absolute proof and strong evidence to the contrary.

Little is known of Digges' activities in the years immediately following the war. Presumably he returned to his work as a shipping agent, for he remained in Britain. He surfaces briefly in 1785, in a letter to Benjamin Franklin from Franklin's nephew, who gleefully reported that Digges was in jail in Dublin. What the charges were was left unsaid--perhaps more money problems--but another intriguing possibility is suggested by well documented, illegal activities on his part a few years later: the smuggling of industrial secrets out of Great Britain and Ireland.

Britain was jealous of her industrial development and actively tried to prevent the spread of her Industrial Revolution to other countries, It was illegal to send certain industrial equipment out of the country, and also illegal to encourage the emigration of the skilled artisans and mechanics who operated and built that equipment, Digges did both of these things, George Washington summarized Digges' activities in this way in 1794: "Since the war, abundant evidence might be adduced of his activities and zeal (with considerable risque) in sending artizans and machines of public utility to this country."

That Digges was involved in this covert activity by 1791 is documented in his letters. He traveled about Britain and Ireland and claimed in a letter to Alexander Hamilton in 1792 that in the previous year he had "been the means of sending 18 or 20 very valuable artists and machine makers" to America, his role in the celebrated case of the emigration of William Pearce, loom maker, has been studied in detail. Digges had Pearce's loom disassembled and shipped to the United States in several parts in separate ships and placed Pearce on a boat under an assumed name, a precaution which proved to be entirely justified, as the authorities came aboard ship looking, for him. Digges' experience in covert activities during the war must have served him well, for one historian claimed that none of the American smugglers of artisans and machinery mastered the art as completely as he had.

resolution, a genius fertile in expedients and a most consummate knowledge of commerce and politics."

Yet even in this activity, there is a cloud hanging over Digges' name. Somehow a letter of Tone's, in which he frankly admitted separation of the two countries to be a long-range goal, fell into the hands of the authorities. It has never been proven, but some suspected Digges, who had seen the letter and had acquaintances in the Irish administration. Furthermore, he again had money problems. He could not repay a large loan by one of his Irish friends and apparently brought the man to, at least, a temporary financial ruin. And then, Tone's biographer reports—without providing the references—that later in 1792, on a visit to Glasgow, he was caught shoplifting! Indeed, Wolfe Tone recorded in his diary (in a passage suppressed by his son in the published version) that Digges had been caught stealing, but he added, "Miss that unfortunate Digges. Two weeks later he was boast of Digges' talents and knowledge in a letter to the Irish leader Henry Grattan "How curious," wrote MacDermott, "that . . . we find him puffing Digges to Grattan and making no mention of his peccadilloes!". Curious perhaps to an historian who never met Thomas Attwood Digges.

Of the rest of Digges' life little has been recorded. He was back in London by 1793, where again he was called upon to work for the American government, this time by the Consul General who enlisted him to find the Yorkshire heirs of a deceased Virginian. In either 1798 or 1799 he finally returned home to Warburton Manor. He reestablished his acquaintance with his neighbor across the river, George Washington, whose diaries record several dinners and social occasions with him. He maintained a correspondence with Madison and Jefferson, and for several years played host to Pierre L'Enfant, during and after the latter's work on Fort Washington, which was built on part of Warburton Manor. Of the twenty-odd years he spent back in Prince George's County little more is known. His death, in late 1821, was recorded by the National Intelligencer, which described him, as "an undeviating Republican." The career of one of Prince George's most interesting and enigmatic sons was at an end.

What sort of summary can be made of the life and work of Thomas Attwood Digges? The historical record and the testimony of his contemporaries offer mixed reviews. His irresponsibility with money is proven. He could play fast and loose with the truth when he felt compelled to. He delighted in covert, mysterious, and even illegal activities. His cultivation of friends on all sides of bitter issues raised the suspicions of not a few. Yet there is much to be said in Digges' defense. If he was irresponsible with the money of others, so was he with his own. But perhaps he saw it as generosity, for he gave much of his own money away to escaped American prisoners during the Revolution and spent a good deal of his own funds during his personal industrial missions. The amount of time he devoted to the American cause, during and after the war, is incalculable. The covert and illegal activities he engaged in were generally for the benefit of the United States. And his record of patriotism and loyalty to this country is clear, despite the allegations of those who have lifted one small portion of his life out of context.

Thomas Attwood Digges was a man with a charming, compelling personality that enabled him to make friends easily and inspire trust and confidence. Perhaps that is why the revelation of his shortcomings engendered such feelings of betrayal. Many, however, accepted the shortcomings as part of the man. In his final diary entries, before joining the rising of 1798 that would claim his life, Wolfe Tone thought and wondered about Digges. "I remember what Digges said ... five or six years ago. "If ever the south is roused, I would rather have one southern than twenty northerners." Digges was a man of great sense and observation. He was an American and had no local or provincial prejudices. Was he right in his opinion?"

The life of Thomas Attwood Digges provokes many questions and will inspire continued searching, Frank Mac Dermott, the biographer of the mercurial Tone, wrote: "There are some men whom you must forgive, even if they rob a church." Mac Dermott thought Tone was one of those men. Thomas Attwood Digges certainly was.

-- Alan Virta

[The Sources for this Article](#)

We did not footnote this article because all of the citations would be to just the few works discussed

History and Biography. (vol. 77). This article contained many quotations from Digges' contemporaries regarding him, and also examined the way Digges has been treated by historians over the years.

The detailed study of the case of William Pearce and Digges' role in smuggling industrial secrets was made in the article "Thomas Digges and William Pearce: An Example of the Transit of Technology", in William and Mary Quarterly, 3d series, vol. 21 (1964). Frank Mac Dermott's work, Theobald Wolfe Tone, was published by Macmillan in 1939. Tone's Autobiography (i.e. collection of letters and diaries) was published in 1893.

### Was Digges a Spy?

The most serious charge leveled against Thomas Attwood Digges is that he was a British agent during the Revolution. It first surfaced in the 1880's and has been repeated in diplomatic histories of the Revolution ever since. The story of the creation and spread of that charge, with an exhaustive refutation, has been written by William Bell Clark and was published in the October 1953 issue of The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography.

In the article, entitled "In Defense of Thomas Digges," Clark traces Digges' activities during the Revolution in detail. The charge of spying was based upon Digges' second peace mission (to Adams in 1782) which, in Clark's opinion, has been totally misinterpreted by most historians. One of the earliest influential historians to raise the charge was Francis Wharton, who edited the multi-volumed The Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States, published in 1889. Wharton used a letter written by Lord Shelburne, one of the leading ministers in the British government after Lord North's, to convict Digges of betraying his country. Digges, wrote Shelburne, was "employed by the late administration in an indirect commission to sound Mr. Adams. . . ."

Wharton interpreted this phrase in its worst possible light. It is true that there were British agents active at the time who sought to alienate the U.S. from France and thus make a separate, more agreeable peace treaty possible for Britain. But Clark has several points arguing against Wharton's interpretation:

(1) Digges' record of service to America, before and after this mission, suggests that he did not have malicious intent, which would be necessary to convict him of betraying his country.

(2) The British by all rights should have- paid for the trip and reimbursed Digges for his time, as he was a private citizen acting at their behest.

3) There was no difference between this mission and his first to Franklin in 1779, for which he has not been called a spy.

(4) Nowhere in Franklin's bitter denunciations is Digges' loyalty or patriotism questioned--just his honesty when it came to financial matters. Had Franklin thought Digges was a betrayer and a traitor, *he* certainly would have said so. Other contemporaries vowed never to trust him, or deal with him, but not on patriotic grounds.

Historians who followed Wharton repeated Wharton's charge as a fact. Even after the publication of Clark's article, it still surfaces. No less an historian than Richard 13. Morris, in his book The Peacemakers (1965) accepts it.

Why have historians accepted Wharton's conviction of Digges? First, because of Wharton's general credibility. Secondly, because every time the charge is repeated, it gains more weight and reinforces itself. Thirdly, because if that mission is lifted out of the context of Digges' life, it is possible to interpret it in a way unfavorable to Digges. Unfortunately, the historians have not known the full story of Thomas Attwood Digges and have thus made what seems to them a reasonable assumption based on the Shelburne letter and the fact that British agents were active at the time. The case of Thomas Attwood Digges is just another that proves that a bad reputation can convict one of crimes one has not committed.

--Alan Virta



## NEWS AND NOTES FROM **The Prince George's County Historical Society**

Vol. IX, no. 8  
August 1981

### Kent Island Celebration

Kent Island, located right at the other end of the Bay Bridge, will be celebrating on August 14, 15 and 16, and the good people there invite Marylanders from all the other parts of the state to join in. What they are celebrating, however, is somewhat controversial--the 350th anniversary, they say, of Maryland's first settlement. Now the history books tell us that St. Mary's City, founded in 1634, was Maryland's first settlement, and indeed, it was the place that Lord Baltimore's settlers first made their home. But William Claiborne of Virginia claimed to have established a trading post on Kent Island in 1631, three years before the first Marylanders arrived at St. Mary's. Claiborne's presence within the boundaries of the new colony, and particularly his attitude that he did not have to recognize the authority of the new government, were great sources of controversy and conflict in early Maryland.

Leaving the historical dispute aside, the Kent Island Festival will offer plenty to see and do. A professionally produced pageant entitled "A Patent for Conflict" will be staged at 8:30 p.m. on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday evenings, and will dramatize Claiborne's landing and the island's early days. During the days, artisans and farmers will display their wares, sailboat races will circumnavigate the island, and there will be docking contests, seamanship demonstrations, and other events. On Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., there will be a heritage tour of six sites of local interest.

Kent Island is right across the Bay Bridge, and signs will direct you to particular events. Call 301-643-2617 for more information. Just don't tell your cousins in St. Mary's County you're going.

### Society Receives Ray Portrait

A fine oil portrait of the Hon. J. Enos Ray (d. 1934) was presented to the Society by the Prince George's County Board of Education on June 15. This painting formerly was located in the J. Enos Ray Elementary School in

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

Takoma Park, a gift to the school from his widow at the time the school was named for him in 1936. Ray Elementary was one of those closed by the Board of Education this year because of dwindling school populations.

J. Enos Ray was Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates (1908) and served the county his entire lifetime as an attorney, banker, and political leader. As a close associate of the late Governor Albert C. Ritchie, Mr. Ray served in several appointive offices and was a leading political force on the state level. He was the first president of the Prince George's Bank and Trust Company, which later became Suburban Trust during the presidency of his colleague, T. Howard Duckett, (Mr. Duckett was the founding president of the Prince George's County Historical Society.)

Mr. Ray lived on the family farm in the Chillum-Takoma area. In 1927 he and others convinced the school board of the need for a school in the Prince George's County section of Takoma Park. In September of 1928 the new four-room building opened with three teachers and 100 pupils. By 1970 the school had twenty classrooms.

The portrait of Mr. Ray was formally presented to the Society's president Frederick S. De Marr at a meeting of the Board of Education in Upper Marlboro by board member Mrs. Catherine Burch (District 3), who sponsored the resolution making the gift to the society. Earlier, on May 5, at the final meeting of the school's PTA, which brought together parents and students from across the years, a symbolic presentation of the portrait was made by longtime principal Mrs. Rogene Higgins to society member Robert A. Cecil, a former Ray faculty member.

The portrait now hangs in the library of Riversdale.

### The Washington Star

The Washington Star, known until the 1970's as the Evening Star, will be out of business by the time this newsletter is in print, a victim of declining circulation and plunging advertising revenues. The first issue of the Star appeared on December 16, 1852, making it the older of the two city papers. In its first issue, this note appeared at the top of the editorial column:

Today the "Daily Evening Star" appears, on the horizon of the newspaper world, and greets, with warm and kindly beam, a metropolitan public. Whether it shall be a fixed or wandering "Star," depends upon the patronage it will attract. Though the "Sun" of a neighboring city blazes in the same firmament, our little "Star" will not pale even in its luminous presence if it be encouraged to shine.

In recent years, sadly, it was not encouraged to shine. A daily circulation of more than 300,000, a Pulitzer-prize winning staff, and the reputation as the best afternoon paper in the country were not enough to attract the advertising patronage needed to keep the Star beaming.

### "Fired Off in Prince George's County"

In the Fall of 1884, an event of some significance in the history of the women's movement in America took place here in Prince George's County. The event was the kickoff rally for the Presidential campaign of Belva Ann Lockwood, and the place was Wilson's Station, a small community on the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad, now considered part of Landover.

Belva Ann Lockwood, born Belva Ann Bennett, was one of the leaders of the feminist movement in the late 19th century, a contemporary of Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. In the year 1884 many feminist leaders decided that a presidential campaign would be an ideal vehicle for promoting their causes--among them voting rights, equal pay for equal work, and reform of divorce, inheritance, and property laws. Mrs. Lockwood, an attorney in Washington, D.C., became their candidate, and she launched her campaign in Prince George's County.

We publish below two items relating to her campaign kickoff. The first is an account, in her own words.

Progressive and thinking women from all parties had attended in greater or less numbers all of these conventions, and were pressing forward for recognition. About this time Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Mrs. Susan B. Anthony came out in a circular, directed to the leading women of the country, urging them to use their influence for the republican party: a copy of it was sent to me. I had been present, as had also Miss Phoebe Cousins and others, at the convention in Chicago which had nominated Mr. Blaine, and we had besought the resolutions committee in vain to adopt a plank giving some recognition to women.

The circular of these distinguished ladies appeared to me to be so out of harmony with real conditions...

I had now been ten years in the practice of law before the supreme court of the District of Columbia, and four years before the United States supreme court of claims, all of which courts I had opened to women by hand to hand work and dogged persistence, in the last two instances drafting the bill and lobbying it through congress in 1879.

I had also secured the passage of an act in 1872, giving the women employes [sic] of the government equal pay with men for equal work; had secured the passage of an act appropriating \$50,000 for the payment of bounties to sailors and marines; had secured the appointment of a matron in the district jail, and a sitting room and retiring room for women witnesses and women lawyers in the court house. My hands were full of legal work, often two or three cases a day, and my patronage, for a woman, was really marvelous. But I stopped at nothing, took hold of any class of case, from a common assault to a murder; had plenty of civil cases, giving no more thought to the nominations, when suddenly, like a clap of thunder from a clear sky, came a nomination to me for the presidency from the women of California.

Fired by the situation, and believing that I had some grit, the women had called a convention and had nominated me for the presidency, with Marietta L.B. Stow as a running mate. I was utterly taken by surprise, was too busy in my profession to stop, and for three days carried the letter of nomination in my pocket before mentioning it to any one. On the Monday morning following, with the answer in my pocket, I went up to the supreme court of this district, where I had two civil cases to file, and three in the court of claims, with a claim to look after in the war department, when Mr. M.A. Clancy, assistant clerk in the District of Columbia court, then as now, who was filing my papers, said:

“Mrs. Lockwood, you ought to vote for Ben Butler.”

“Why?” I asked.

“Because he is a woman suffragist, a temperance man, and a labor reformer.”

Clancy had formerly been a private secretary to Butler in congress. I looked at him half in doubt as to whether I should give the matter away, and then, pulling the letter out of my pocket, and warning him not to mention it, replied:

“Clancy, I’ve got the nomination myself.”

He glanced at the letter, and burst out laughing, saying:

“That’s the best joke of the season.”

I again warned him not to mention it, and especially not to tell the court reporter, and sped away on my wheel to the post-office to mail my answer to the California women, and thence to the court of claims and the war department. . .

In the meantime I had formulated a platform, thinking that we must take up every one of the current issues of the day. and at the same time make it so brief that the newspapers would publish it and the

Again the typewriter's fingers flow over the keys, and he was supplied with a copy...

The secret was out and next morning I was famous. The letter of acceptance and the platform was not only copied in all the large dailies but in every country newspaper of any standing in the United States. The campaign having been uncorked, it seemed disposed to run itself. It was in vain that Mrs. Stanton and Miss Anthony and Lillie Devereaux Blake rose up and published in the newspapers that they had not made the nomination and, therefore, that it was not regular...

Then the women of Washington became aroused, and determined on a ratification meeting, but no one in Washington has a vote. An electoral ticket was therefore gotten up for Maryland, and Mrs. Amanda Best, who at that time had a country home within the confines of Prince George county, and near to the railroad station, offered to act as hostess.

Notices of the meeting and how to get there were published in the Washington papers and billed on the streets. On arriving we found a rambling old farmhouse, which was used as a dressing-room for the occasion. Huge, spreading old apple trees in the background were used for reception rooms and to shade the long tables of lemonade, sandwiches, pies and cake that had been spread under them. In the foreground on a pole was a large white streamer containing the names and portraits of the candidates, joined with the stars and stripes, a rough board platform and board seats in front, while the bright women of Washington and the sturdy old farmers of Maryland, who were almost amazed at the audacity of women holding a political convention, made the welkin ring.

There was a lively speech from the presidential candidate, in which she counseled the women to rise up, and by their votes take possession of the affairs of government. There was a response from Maryland, and from the District of Columbia, with a marked appreciation of the repast spread under the apple trees a little later; and as the sun went down the merry ratifiers hied themselves to the railroad station to take the train back to Washington. There, sitting on the railroad ties with note books in hand, were nine reporters from Baltimore and Washington striving in the twilight to make an abstract of the candidate's speech for their respective papers before the cars came rushing down. What they did not remember they unconcernedly made up, never losing chance of an opportunity to add a little color. The scene was both laughable and serious, of course, both Baltimore and Washington had the report of the meeting next morning, with embellishments. . . .

All of the Baltimore and Washington papers covered the rally. The following account appeared on page one of the Baltimore Morning Herald, September 19, 1834, under the heading "Mrs. Belva's Boom Afloat" and two sub-headlines:

Hospitable Mrs. Amanda Best, of Prince George's county, adorned her farm-house in its gayest garb yesterday. She was expecting to entertain the Equal Rights party's nominee for the Presidency. Mrs. Belva Lockwood, the Washington lady Lawyer who rides a tricycle. Mrs. Best's house is situated about half a mile south of Wilson's Station on the Baltimore and Potomac railroad. It is an old frame building, two stories high. Built as it is upon an airy eminence, wind and rain have nearly rubbed off all the whitewash that once brightened its exterior.

The situation, however, is delightful, and the spot is appropriately named Pleasantview, When the atmosphere is clear as it was yesterday afternoon, the capitol dome at Washington is distinctly discernable in the distance. At night the lamps of Washington cause a ruddy glow to skirt the horizon. The farm house is surrounded by corn patches, tobacco plots, a vineyard and an apple orchard.

Early in the morning, Mrs. Best had a little platform erected near her house. Then a lot of pine logs were rolled out in front and planks placed on them, for seats. The platform was gaily trimmed with patriotic bunting, print mottoes and an engraving of Mrs. Belva Lockwood, by Mrs. Best, Mrs. Catharine McCullough and Miss McCullough. When that was done a big "stars and stripes" was hoisted to flap in the breeze on a tall pole behind the platform.

A little way off several tables, covered with immaculate linen, were freighted with cups, saucers and

A great big country wagon was waiting as a car of state. Nearly everybody piled in except Mrs. Lockwood, who said she was fully able to "foot it." Arrived at the farm house the party was met by a score or two of the residents of the vicinity, among others George T. Suit, Isaac Magruder, C.C. Magruder, Lewis Magruder, J.K. Wilson, G.C. Nichols, T.B. Lewis, Geo. Nagle, the Misses Magruder, Mrs. and Miss Brown, and Miss Nurse.

When everybody was seated Mrs. Lockwood stepped on the little platform and sat just under her picture....

[The reporter then told of the preliminary remarks and the convention officers.]

Mrs. Lockwood's turn came next. She advanced toward the front the platform with a firm, be-sure-you're-right-then-go-ahead tread. She took a roll of manuscript out of a side pocket, and proceeded to read her speech in slow, incisive style, holding her manuscript in her left hand and gesticulating angularly with her right. At times she swung her entire arm out at right angles with her body; then she emphasized her remarks by describing imaginary perpendicular lines in the air with her forefinger.

[The reporter then summarized her speech in two paragraphs. Among her remarks were these: "The two great parties of this country, with blast of trumpets and rattle of drums, have set up their Presidential candidates, each, like a heathen god, for his opponents to throw mud at and his followers to worship. Neither is fighting simply for any high principle. The contest is a vile scramble for office, to decide who shall rule or be ruled. No great moral questions are involved." She continued: "Meanwhile woman is disenfranchised and enthralled. We want representation. We ask who are the people of the United States? The men and women or only the men? Is a woman a person or not?... The women of the country fling the equal rights banner to the breeze and demand political liberty to all."]

Three cheers were given for the Next President of the United States when Mrs. Lockwood had concluded. Then all were invited to that generous country collation which was prepared on the spot. The favorite dish seemed to be home-made huckleberry tart, which was promptly christened "Presidential pie." Supper over, several dozen torches were lighted, patriotic songs were sung and a few more speeches were made. . . .

Mrs. Amanda Best, the hostess, and Mrs. Caroline H. Miller, of Sandy Springs, were then chosen with hilarious unanimity Presidential electors on the Lockwood ticket for the Fifth district of Maryland.

When this had been done the visitors from Washington, headed by Mrs. Lockwood, formed in procession and with torches blazing and general good feeling all marched down to the station and took the train for Washington.

Mrs. Lockwood will hold another meeting in St. Mary's county on October 15. She will also be present in Baltimore at the Woman's Congress, of which Mrs. Julia Ward Howe is president, and which meets here [Baltimore] October 23, 29 and 30.

Mrs. Best's property is now known as Grigsby Station, and it is located at the corner of Landover Road (Route 202) and 75th Ave. There are two houses on that property now--Grigsby Station proper, believed to have been built a few years after the rally by a later owner, and a smaller one and one-half story structure which is much older. That older house may be the one referred to in the above accounts, or there could have been another house on the property, since destroyed. Whatever the case, the scene at Grigsby Station today reminds one of an earlier era. Grigsby Station and the smaller house are surrounded by trees and situated on a hill high above the hub-bub of the road below--an island of tranquility in a sea of hamburger stands, drive-in barks, and apartment complexes.

It is easy to imagine the bunting, flags, tables under the trees, and women in 19th century dress assembled there even today. That scene will soon vanish for all time, however. Current plans for the property involve cutting the trees, grading the "airy eminence" down to road level, building a funeral home, and paving the rest for parking.

Unfortunately, Elias and Finch were unable to uncover any family or personal letters, nor were their able to locate the whereabouts of the portrait attributed to Sir Joshua Reynolds that was published in Potomac Landings. If any member of the Society has knowledge of the existence of any Digges letters still in private hands or the whereabouts of the portrait, Mr. Elias would be happy to hear from them. Contact Alan Virta at 474\_7524 or Fred DeMarr if you have any information in this regard.

Mr. Elias' and Mr. Finch's recent research has filled in some of the gaps in our knowledge of Digges' life and has answered some of the questions raised in our newsletter. We eagerly look forward to the publication of Digges' letters with their essay next February.

#### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

		<u>Sponsor</u>
Mrs. Florine Deckman	College Park	Dr. Hughes
Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Korab	College Park	Dr. Hughes
Rebecca Huffman	Summot Parl, Utah	Mr. DeMarr
Mr. and Mrs. Victor E. Vermillion	Saudi Arabia	Mr. DeMarr
Martha Roy	Beltsville	Mr. DeMarr

#### The Prince George's County Historical Society

Special thanks this month to Joyce McDonald of Hyattsville who passed on the information about Belva Ann Lockwood.

This newsletter is published monthly. Subscription price is included in the annual dues of \$5.00. Contact the society at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Md. 20737, or any of these officers: President: Fred De Marr, 277-0711; Corr Sec.: Edith Bagot, 927-3632; Treasurer: Herb Embrey, 434-2958 Editor: Alan Virta, 474-7524

The next meeting will be Saturday, Sept. 12, at Riversdale, 2 p.m.



## NEWS AND NOTES FROM **The Prince George's County Historical Society**

Vol IX, no. 9 September  
1981

### The September Meeting: The War on the Patuxent

Donald Shomette, of Nautical Archeological Associates, Inc., Upper Marlboro, will speak on "The War on the Patuxent, 1814: The Search for the Chesapeake Flotilla" at the September meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society.

During the summer of 1814, Commodore Joshua Barney's American flotilla became trapped on the Patuxent River by a larger British force at its mouth. In late August of 1814 the British began moving up the river in pursuit of the flotilla. At Pig Point, near the mouth of the Patuxent's western branch (which flows from Upper Marlboro), Joshua Barney destroyed his own ships to prevent their capture. They went down to the river bottom, there to rest for more than 160 years.

Mr. Donald Shomette was the supervisor of the archeological project which went down to the bottom of the Patuxent to search for the remains of the scuttled flotilla. Not only did he find the ships, but he brought up a number of artifacts left aboard that illustrate the daily lives and routines of American seamen during the War of 1812. He has prepared a slide presentation and talk which describe both the results of the search and his methods. For anyone interested in archeology--especially underwater archeology, it is a most interesting presentation.

The September meeting will be held on Saturday, September 12 at 2 p.m. at Riversdale, the Calvert mansion in Riverdale. The mansion is located at 4811 Riverdale Road, between Kenilworth Avenue and Route One. As always, guests are more than welcome. If you've been a member but never made it to any of our meetings yet, you are especially invited.

### The October Meeting: At the Rossborough Inn: October 3

The annual luncheon meeting at the Rossborough Inn, University of Maryland, will be on Saturday, October 3 this year. Please note that this will be on the first Saturday of the month, not the usual second. As is the custom, cocktails and lunch will begin about noon, followed by the meeting at 2 p.m. A reservation form will be enclosed with the next issue of News and Notes.

Progress on the Historic Sites and Districts Plan

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

Preservation which will establish the Historic Preservation Commission and give it the power to enforce the plan. Without the ordinance, the program will have no teeth. Also before the council is a proposed bill to enact tax credits for restoration: work on historic sites.

Let your council member know how you feel about the ordinance. News and Notes will keep you informed of the Council's actions.

### Washington, D.C. International

An exhibit commemorating the 30th running of the prestigious Washington, D.C. International thoroughbred race will be on display at the Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore this Fall, from September 11 through November 15. Run every year at Laurel Raceway (which celebrates its 70th season this year), the International attracts the elite of the social and racing worlds like no other race can. Queen Elizabeth and Winston Churchill, as well as Nelson Bunker Hunt, have sent horses to the race, and among the spectators have been found Whitneys, Mellons, duPonts, Vanderbilts, Embreys, Rothschilds, and others of the jet set.

The exhibit will be opened with a reception on Friday evening, September 1), from 5 to 8 P.m., to which the public is invited (cash bar). The show will feature painting, sculpture, artifacts, photographs, and memorabilia celebrating the 30 years of the International.

The Museum and Library of Maryland History, Maryland Historical Society, is located at 201 W. Monument Street, Baltimore. Phone 301-685-3750.

St. Thomas' Parish 22nd Annual Antiques Show and Sale--\$2.50 each September 11, 12, and 13--Edelen Bros. Tobacco Whse--Up. Marl.

### Spaniards into the Shade: The War of 1812 Comes to Prince George's County

August 24th just past marked the 167th anniversary of the Battle of Bladensburg the most important military engagement ever to take place in Prince George's County. In this issue of News and Notes we publish a British account of that battle and the two naval and military operations which immediately preceded it: the pursuit of Joshua Barney's American flotilla up the Patuxent River and the British Army's march across Prince George's County from Benedict.

The account below comes from the April 1840 issue of the United Service Journal, a British naval and military magazine devoted chiefly to the recollections and reminiscences of participants in battles past. The article from which it was taken was written anonymously by "An Old Sub" (i.e. subaltern) and was part of a three-part series describing operations during the War of 1812 in the Chesapeake and at New Orleans.

From the United Service Journal:

Recollections of the Expedition to the Chesapeake, and Against New Orleans, in the Years 1814-15  
By An Old Sub

. . . There are few of the old "Peninsulars" now living who do not recollect, with feelings of pride and pleasure, the glorious termination of the victorious career of the army of Spain, by the crowning campaign, in France, in the year 1814, and the subsequent "gathering" of the strongest regiments from the "broken-up" divisions, at the camp near Bordeaux, previous to embarkation to America. The military annals of England furnish no parallel of such a force as was there assembled--a force composed of the elite of the finest army in the world--veterans of a hundred battles, and with whom "to fight" and "to conquer" were synonymous terms. The destination of the largest portion of these troops was Canada, and the remainder... it was understood was to be employed on a particular service on the coast of the United States.

covered by riflemen in the woods; might keep the British fleet in check; but the fact is, that the Chesapeake, and the numerous magnificent rivers that flow into it, present such an extensive line of assailable coast, that the Americans knew not where or when to expect our attacks; and as to guarding the whole of the sea-board, that, for centuries to come, will be impossible; particularly when steamboats are likely to be employed. Still it appears extraordinary that Commodore Barney, who proved himself both a brave and skilful officer, did not offer some resistance to us at Point Patience.

Our large ships had not sufficient water to proceed more than a short distance beyond this Point; but troop-ships, transports, and the Anaconda [a brig-of war], steadily pushed on as far as Benedict [in Charles County], a small village about fifty miles [thirty as the crow flies] from Washington, where the troops were disembarked on the 19th and 20th August [1814].

Rear-Admiral Sir George Cockburn [pronounced Co-burn], who, with a battalion of Marines, and a detachment of Marine Artillery, had for several months previous been carrying on a series of successful operations against the enemy, in this and other quarters, had during that period acquired some acquaintance with the nature and localities of the surrounding country, and of the enemy's disposable force; and this knowledge proved highly serviceable when, previous to the arrival of the troops, Major-General Ross landed with him to reconnoitre, which they did, without any interruption, to a considerable distance on the route towards Washington. It was during that excursion, it is said that, at the suggestion of Admiral Cockburn, General Ross first contemplated an attack on the capital of the United States, as soon as Commodore Barney's flotilla should be destroyed. The circumstances of this flotilla having retired as far as possible up the Patuxent, afforded an excellent ostensible motive for marching the troops in the direction of Washington, without giving rise to my certain conclusion that it was intended to make an attempt on it.

On the evening of the 20th of August, Admiral Cockburn, with the armed boats of the fleet, moved up the river to attack the flotilla (which had retired about fifty miles above Benedict)[actually about twenty whilst the troops advanced in the same direction along its right bank, [the Prince George's County side]. To the surprise of every one, Commodore Barney's gin-boats, some of which were heavily armed, made no resistance. On this subject, the American General, [James] Wilkinson Ea native of Calvert County], has the following passage in his Memoirs:--Cockburn, with his barges, pursued Barney's flotilla, which had, by order of President Madison, been abandoned, and was, without resistance, blown up; when it will be apparent to every competent judge, that, from the narrowness of the channel, the Commodore could have defended himself, and repulsed any floating force the enemy could have brought against him; and his flanks were well secured by the extent of the marshes on both sides of the river." [Barney destroyed the flotilla himself, not the British.]

It is probable, however, that the President's object, in giving the order referred to, was to destroy a strong inducement for our army to move in a direction which would bring them within such a tempting distance of the seat of his government, on the afternoon seat of his government. On the afternoon Of the 22nd, the day the flotilla was destroyed, General Ross and the troops arrived at the town of Upper Marlborough, a small place on the western branch of the Patuxent, thirty-nine miles [closer to twenty] distant from Benedict, and within sixteen miles of Washington. Our March thither was accomplished in about two days and a half, and that in the month of August, when the weather was most oppressively sultry, which, for our men who had been nearly three months cooped up on board ship, was severe work; but it was performed with the greatest cheerfulness. Here we halted till the evening of the 23rd, when we were reinforced by Admiral Cockburn, with the ship marines, the Marine Artillery, and a proportion of the seamen which had been employed against the flotilla; and now the attempt on the capital was finally resolved upon.

That our little army had been allowed to penetrate so far into land without any opposition worth mentioning, was a matter of astonishment to us all. The country abounded with means for throwing military obstacles in our way, which it would have required no trifling exertions to surmount; but, most unaccountably, all those advantages were overlooked or neglected by the enemy, until it was too late to render them available, That they were afterwards discovered, however, appears by the following extract from General Wilkinson's work already referred to:--"Not a bridge was broken-not a causeway destroyed--not an inundation attempted--not a tree fallen--not a road of the road obstructed nor a gun

Moved forward, and, before dusk, arrived, and tool-, Up their bivouac, at a place near Centreville [near Melwood], five miles on the road towards Washington [i.e. Marlboro Pike]. The American army withdrew from their camp at the Old Long Fields about the time that our troops commenced the march from Upper Mar borough, and at nightfall Our Outposts occupied the ground they had retired from. The Americans fell back till they reached Washington, where they encamped at the Navy-yard, and were joined in the evening by 2000 men from Baltimore. This last corps was stationed at Bladensburg.

At daybreak on the morning of the 24th, General Ross moved the troops on Bladensburg, twelve miles from our bivouac, and having made two short halts by the way, we reached and occupied the heights overlooking that village [Lowndes Hill, where the junior high school is] before noon. The direct road from our camps on the night of the 23rd, to Washington, was by a road leading to the lower bridge over the eastern branch of the Potomac [now the 11th Street Bridge], and by that road the distance was only about six miles; but, as it appeared certain that the bridge in question, which was half-a-mile long, and had "a draw" at the west end, would be strongly defended, both by a large body of men, and a heavy sloop-of-war and an armed schooner, known to be in the rivers the route by Bladensburg was preferred. The river at that place is not deeps and, in case of the bridge there being destroyed, could easily be forded.

\* \* \* \*

Whatever was the actual strength of the enemy in the field on the 24th August, they certainly showed a formidable extent of front, drawn up in two lines on the heights commanding the turnpike road leading from Bladensburg to Washington [the heights at Fort Lincoln]. Between us was the river (the eastern branch of the Potomac) [Anacostia] and a long wooden bridge, within point-blank range of several pieces of artillery, placed in battery, at a fortified house in advance of the American position.

Mr. Madison, the President, was on the field, and the effect of his presence is thus described by General Wilkinson [a bitter enemy of Madison's]--"Every eye was immediately turned upon the Chief; every bosom throbbed with confidence; and every nerve was strung with valour. No doubt remained with the troops, that in their Chief Magistrate they beheld their Commander-in-Chief, who, like another Maurice, having by his irresolution in Council exposed the country to the chances and accidents of a general engagement, had now come forward to repair the error by activity in the field; determined to throw himself into the gap of danger, and not to survive the honour of his country, especially entrusted to his guardianship." How far Mr. Madison justified this confidence in him, on the one hand, and the American army displayed their "valour-strung nerve," on the other, we shall presently see.

The action at Bladensburg was commenced with so much impetuosity by the light brigades composed of the 85th, and the light companies of the other Regiments of our small army, under the command of Colonel Thornton, that the wooden bridge, already described, was soon passed, in despite of the heavy fire kept up on it by the enemy's artillery and riflemen. The spot was, however, for the moment, a very unhealthy one, as many of our brave fellows experienced to their cost. Indeed, the first volley from the American front-line was well-delivered, and did considerable execution, several of our men being wounded by the buckshot, three of which are made up, in addition to the ball, in the American musket cartridges. As soon as our skirmishers approached the fortified house, the enemy hastily abandoned it, and retreated to the high ground in his rear.

In support of the light brigade, our right wing was moved forward, under the command of Colonel (now Sir Arthur) Brooke, of the 44th, who, with that Regiment, and the 4th, attacked the enemy's left,--the 4th pressing so rapidly on as to compel him to abandon his guns. The first line, being thus completely routed, was driven in on the second, which, instead of covering their retreat, became utterly panic-struck, and fled without firing a shot! It is reported of the Duke of Wellington, that, when at the battle of Toulouse, the Spanish troops, after having, at the solicitation of their General, obtained the "Post of Honour," in advance, turned tail, and scampered off in "double-quick," at the first fire from the French, his Grace very coolly observed--"Well, d--m--e, if ever I saw ten thousand men run a race before!" But had the Duke been at Bladensburg, he most assuredly would have awarded the palm for alacrity in quitting the field to the Americans, who on this occasion completely threw the Spaniards into the shade. Whilst this was going on to the right Colonel Thornton with the left wing--about 700

the heads of those who were guilty of such frightful atrocities. He must, however, have subsequently learned that that species of warfare was not confined to the Upper Marlborough Doctor [Beanes] and his friends, but was, in several instances, practiced by the Americans in captured vessels, on the prize-masters and crews put on board to carry them into port.

After a halt of two hours, we again moved forward along the high road to Washington; and at about eight o'clock, p.m., another halt was called, and the different Regiments formed on an open space about two miles from that city. The General, the Admiral, and some other officers, accompanied by a small covering party, rode forward to reconnoitre. It was nearly dark, and on these officers passing the first houses in the straggling outskirts of the town, a volley was fired from the windows of two houses a little farther up the street, and from the Capitol, by which one soldier was killed, three wounded, and General Rose's horse shot under him. The light companies left in the rear were immediately ordered up, but before they arrived, the houses were forced and burned, after the men who had fired were taken out and made prisoners. The Capitol, which was at no great distance from those buildings, was also set on fire. That edifice contained the Senate-Chamber, the Hall of Congress, the Supreme Court, Congressional Library, and Legislative Archives; and its destruction--putting entirely out of the question that we were assailed from it was but a just, though ample, retribution for the destruction, by the Americans, of the House of Assembly, at York (now Toronto), in Upper Canada, and the plunder of the defenceless inhabitants of that and other towns in the provinces, and the wanton burning of the village of Newark.

There was also an object of paramount importance to be forwarded by destroying the public offices in Washington; but as the subject is connected with a project at that time seriously agitated (and participated in by many influential Americans), to separate the Northern and Eastern from the Southern and Western States--a project which shall be entered into at some length in a future paper --it need not be further alluded to at present- [End of article]

Their work done in Washington, the British returned to their ships, via Bladensburg and Upper Marlboro, taking Dr. Beanes with them. He was imprisoned on one of their ships in the Mouth of the Patapsco when Francis Scott Key came to arrange re his release. Because of Beanes, Key witnessed the bombardment of Fort McHenry and thus wrote the Star Spangled Banner.

A word might be said on behalf of the much-maligned American troops at Bladensburg. The "American army" there was composed chiefly of raw, untrained or slightly trained militia from the District and Maryland. They undoubtedly would have performed better in the sort of offensive guerilla-type action General Wilkinson suggested than in a pitched battle with the superior British Army.

We left at least half of the article out for this publication. What was omitted were a long account of the voyage across the Atlantic (which is interesting in itself) and detailed comments on and presentations of the strengths and composition of troops of each side. The complete article is on file with the Society.

Those interested in a more detailed account of the march and the battle should consult Walter Lord's book, The Dawn's Early Light, (Norton, 1972), about the final year of the war. Lord's account is an informal, very easy-to-read study of the battle and what led up to it. The Society has a limited number of copies available for sale. The Society also has extra copies of the map prepared by Robert Crawley and the Park and Planning Commission this Spring tracing the British Invasion route. Each member received one with News and Notes several months ago, but extras are available.

#### The Prince George's County Historical Society

Subscription to this newsletter is included in the yearly dues of \$5.00. Our address: P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20737. Frederick S. De Marr, President. Edith Bagot, Corresponding Sec. Herb Embrey, Treasurer. Alan Virta, Editor.

**NEWS AND NOTES FROM**  
**The Prince George's County**  
**Historical Society**

Vol. IX, no. 10 October 1981

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

As always, guests are more than welcome. If you cannot join us for the luncheon, then plan to come at about 2 o'clock for the meeting. And remembers reservations are required for the luncheon.

The matchbook covers prove to be a very interesting index of the business community of past- years, which should be perpetuated by present day additions. Our thanks go to Mr. W. F. Hurley of Baltimore for this contribution to our collections.

### "The Cottage" Donated to Chesapeake Bay Foundation

The trustees of the estate of the late Charles Clagett of Upper Marlboro have decided to donate his farm and the family home thereon, known as "The Cottage," to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. In addition, a generous endowment fund will be provided. The total value of the property and the endowment will almost double the assets of the foundation.

The farm, located along Marlboro Pike west of Upper Marlboro and east of Melwood, came into the Clagett family in 1832. Surveyed for John Smith Brookes in 1796, it was also previously owned by Benjamin Berry (who acquired it in 1808) and his son, Dr. John Eversfield Berry. It probably was John Eversfield Berry who built the oldest portion of "The Cottage," which is now a beautiful threepart telescopic structure. There are several outbuildings and tenant houses on the property which are also part of the gift.

Charles Clagett's will provided that the farm and endowment be used for educational purposes. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation, which will call the property the Charles Clagett Center, will continue to operate the farm and establish a school there to study the "fastlands" (as opposed to "wetlands") and their relationship to the Chesapeake Bay. The educational and research program will focus on the effects of agriculture and other rural activities on the aquatic environment. This gift enables the foundation to expand significantly its research efforts on behalf of the Bay's ecology.

### Victory at Yorktown

An observance commemorating the bicentennial of General Washington's victory over the forces of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown, Va., will be held at 1:30 p.m. on Monday, October 19, 1981, at Montpelier Mansion, Laurel, under the sponsorship of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Friends of Montpelier, and the Prince George's County Historical Society. The speaker will be Mrs. E. Donald Dietrich of College Park, Maryland State Regent, DAR. Following the program there will be light refreshments and the Montpelier docents will conduct tours of the mansion. All members of the Historical Society are cordially invited to attend.

### October Events: A Victorian Month

10th & 11th: Victorian Craft Fair at Mary Surratt House, Clinton. Noon to 4 p.m. Admission charge. Phone 868-1121.

25th: Historic Takoma annual Victorian high tea. 3 P.m. Trinity Episcopal Church Parish Hall, Piney Branch and Dahlia Rds, N.W. Speaker: Sheldon W. Odland, on interior design in 19th century. \$5.00 per person. Ph.: 589-5437

Names of new members will be published in next month's newsletter.

### Highwaymen at Large

In the second chapter of A Tale of Two Cities, Charles Dickens describes an incident on the Dover road in the year 1775. "In those days," wrote Dickens, "travelers were very shy of being confident on a short notice, for anybody on the road might be a robber or in league with robbers."

Late one Friday night in November, as the stage paused in its climb up Shooter's Hill, the passengers detected an unwelcome approaching sound. "They all looked from the coachman to the guard, and from the guard to the coachman, and listened. The coachman looked back and the guard looked back, and even the emphatic leader pricked up his ears and looked back, without contradicting.

"The stillness consequent on the cessation of the rumbling and labouring of the coach. added to the

from Prince George's County, and the second from the wilds of western Maryland. Our first traveler should have been "Shy of being confident on short notice." He tells his own story in the Virginia Gazette of September 5, 1755:

"To the Printer, Williamsburg Aug '30, 1755 it "Sir

As the following Advice may be of some use, I beg Leave to inform the Public, that being on a Journey from Philadelphia to Williamsburg in this Colony (where I live), I was on the 14th of this Instant, about Two o' Clock 'in the Afternoon, in a bye Road, about six miles from Bladensburgh, in the Province of Maryland, and nine Miles from Alexandria or Belhaven in the Colony of Virginia, robbed by a Person who was seen to join me at Bladensburgh, Town's End, and pretended to be going the same Road with me. He threatened my Life, and took from me the following things: watch, money, horsewhip, and saddle bags. Person is name Benj. Brown, last abode Arundel Co., Md., where he had 'run away' on account of some thefts--subscription in that neighborhood of L 15 or 20 for apprehending [;] ¼ value of goods to person restoring them to Daniel Fisher."

(From Virginia Magazine of History & Biography, v. 25 (1917) P. 14)

Our second story, submitted by Herb Embrey, is reprinted from the History of Cumberland, by Will H. Lowdermilk, published in 1878. The event took place in Maryland's bicentenary year, 1834, in the

and perfectly fearless. He declined to dismount, and put the whip to his horses with a will.. The team being spirited horses bounded forward, dragging the robber with them, A second highwayman appeared at the door of the stage, and to him the first robber called out, "shoot the driver, you d-d coward, why don't you fire at him?" The robber at the side of the stage called out, "How many passengers have you?" and the driver replied "a full load." The gentlemen of the road" then looked at the baggage, and seeing an unusual number of trunks on, concluded to keep clear of a shot from the door, so he took a position behind the stage. The first robber was a desperate fellow, however, and he succeeded in turning the lead horses square around and stopping the stage. He then took to unhitch the traces, but the brave driver lashed him about the face so mercilessly that the fellow was compelled to abandon his purpose, but he leveled a pistol at the drivers head and pulled the trigger. The pistol was a flint lock, and the priming having become damp from the dew and fog, it missed fire, and the horses were soon in full gallop up the hill, broke through the brush fence on the road, and never let up their pace until they went into Frostburg."

Fans of the movies will recall that the western Maryland stages are central in Mervyn LeRoy's 1939 film, Stand Up and Fight. The film stars Wallace Beery and Robert Taylor, and most of the action takes place in western Maryland. Halliwell's Film Guide summarizes the movie this way: "A Southern Aristocrat comes into conflict with a stagecoach operator used as transportation for stolen slaves. Superior star action piece with plenty of vigorous brawls." One of the screenwriters for Stand Up and Fight was James M. Cain, author of The Postman Always Rings Twice, whose post-Hollywood years were spent in University Park.

One final note: Dickens commented in A Tale of Two Cities that in England, "Daring burglaries ... took place in the capital itself every night; families were publicly cautioned not to go out of town without removing their furniture to upholsterers warehouses for security. . . ." How familiar that sounds!

--Alan Virta

**NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
The Prince George's County  
Historical Society**

The meeting will be held on Saturday, November 14, at 2 p.m., at Riversdale, the Calvert mansion in Riverdale. The mansion is located at 4811 Riverdale Road, between Route One and Kenilworth Avenue. As always, guests are welcome, and refreshments will be served.

#### The Christmas Party at Montpelier

The Society's annual Christmas Party at Montpelier will be held on the afternoon of Saturday, December 19--the third Saturday of the month. The house will be decorated for the season, and the Friends of Montpelier gift shop will be open. Details will follow in the December issue of News and Notes.

#### Public Hearing on Historic Preservation Ordinance

The County Council will hold a public hearing on the proposed Historic Preservation Ordinance on Tuesday, November 24, in the Council Chambers in Upper Marlboro. The ordinance, if passed, will enact many of the

# PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1896

Four of the county's fine old homes will be decorated and open for the Christmas seasons

Riversdale, the home of the Calverts will be open on Saturday and Sunday, December 12 and 13. This year, Riversdale will be decorated by the Touch In Glow Garden Club, which will offer its annual Christmas Greens Show for the first-time at the mansion. Tickets are \$1.00 per person, and the house will be open from 1 to 5 p.m. each day.

Belair, the home of Governors located in Bowie, will be open on Sunday, December 13. The house will be decorated, and there will be music. Hours: 1 to 5 p.m. Tickets: \$1.00 per person.

Surratt House, the home of Mary Surratt, will be open on Sunday, December 13, and on Monday and Tuesday evenings, December 14 and 15 for candlelight tours. The house will be decorated for a Victorian Christmas, and the gift shop will be open. Hours on Sunday will be from 4 to 9 p.m., and on Monday and Tuesday from 6 to 9. Tickets: \$1.00 per person. Phone 868-1121.

Montpelier, the Snowden home south of Laurel, will offer its Christmas Candlelight tours on Monday and Tuesday evenings, December 7 and 8, and on Wednesday afternoon, December 9. There will be colonial music. Hours on the 7th and 8th: 5:30 to 9:30 P.m. On the 9th: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tickets: \$1.50 for adults (no discounts) and 750 for children.

Montpelier's traditional Candlelight Buffet will be offered by the Friends of Montpelier again this year. The December 6 dinner is already sold out but tickets are still available for the December 5 dinner. Advance reservations are required. The price is \$16.00. Doors will open at 5:30 p.m., with dinner to begin at about 7 p.m. There will be a cash bar. Call 779-2011 for more information and reservations.

The Christmas seasons offers the opportunity to visit all of these fine homes and experience the Christmases of years past. The houses will be decorated to their best--don't miss them.

#### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

		<u>Sponsor</u>
Mrs. A.B. Hamilton	University Park	Ruth Bowie
Vincent C. Tompkins III	Delaplane, Va.	Eleanor Powers
Mrs. Mary Jo Rose	Hyattsville	Herb Embrey
Mrs. Dan M. Fowler	Salisbury, N.C.	Eleanor Powers
Patricia Tatspaugh	Washington, D.C.	Louise Tatspaugh
John J. McCusker	Berwyn Heights	Herb Embrey
Craig J. Poff	Upper Marlboro	Alan Virta
Judie Comeau	Lanham	Lloyd Hughes
Jane Eagen	Bowie	Fred De Marr
Muriel Matheny	Forestville	Fred De Marr
Merry Winterfeldt	College Park	Mavis McAvoy
Thomas Fitzmaurice	Lanham	Mavis McAvoy
Sandra & Rick Wilson	Annapolis	Mavis McAvoy
Carol Wessells	Lanham	Mavis McAvoy
Frederick H. Monroe	Arlington, Va.	Alan Virta
Alain C. de Vergie	Tantallon	Wayne Jackson
William K. Fronck, Sr.	Hyattsville	Mavis McAvoy
Rennie Quible	Seabrook	Mavis McAvoy

#### Nominations for Office

The annual election of Society officers will take place at the November meeting on November 14. If you have suggestions for nominations, call Ted Bissell at 277-4723. This year's Nominations Committee is composed of Mr. Bissell and Mrs. Margaret Fisher (336-8775)

Mr. & Mrs. Donald Skarda  
Ashby H. Canter  
Alan Virta  
Edward J. Blume  
Mr. & Mrs. Nevin K. Saylor  
Minnie M. Hill  
Mr. & Mrs. Willard Entwisle  
Mr. & Mrs. J. J. Smith  
Mary E. Sorrell  
Ellen B. Smith  
Virginia S. Reinhart  
Francis N. Allen  
Eunice E. Burdette  
Marion V. Smith

Contributions are still encouraged to defray the costs of these projects. Checks should be made payable to the Society and mailed to P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Md. 20737. The cost of each volume of The Archives of Maryland is \$12.00. Please type or print clearly your name and the name of the person(s) who will be honored or memorialized on the bookplate. We still need old single copies of the old Marlboro papers to fill in gaps for the microfilming project, which is now slated to begin about the first of the new year. If you know the whereabouts of any, call Fred De Marr at 277-0711 or Alan Virta at 474-7524.

#### Some Local Families: A Query

B.R. Isbell of Opelika, Alabama, has kindly offered to donate to the Society genealogies of a number of local families which he has compiled. He also submits this query:

B.R. Isbell, P.O. Drawer 3049, Opelika, Alabama, wishes to contact descendants of the Duren, Love, Mayhew, Self, and Soper families.

#### Maryland in Britain

A Prince Georgian returned from a visit to London late this summer with an unusual souvenir, a package of "Maryland Cookies." A product of Lyons Bakery, Ltd., Canby Hall, London, the cookies were coconut flavored, with chocolate chips in them.

There was a promotion on the package to encourage sales; a contest to win a trip to "Maryland, U.S.A." Ten trips are to be awarded, each to a family or group of four. Winners will receive hotel vouchers, per-diem expense money, and round trip tickets on World Airways between London and Friendship Airport (BWI).

Now a cigarette brand named "Maryland" is quite popular in Europe, and "Chicken--Maryland" Style" can be found on menus around the world, but "Maryland Cookies" is a new one to us.

#### "In Search of the Lincoln Conspiracy"

The popular television series, "In Search of..." will devote its next program to the assassination of President Lincoln and the role of Mrs. Mary Surratt, tavern-keeper of Prince George's County, in the tragedy. "In Search of the Lincoln Conspiracy" will be broadcast locally on Saturday, November 21, on Channel 20 (WDCA-TV) and Channel 45 (WBFF, Baltimore). Check the newspapers for the exact time. The program will also be aired on 62 other stations around the country up through December 6. Most of the show was filmed at the Surratt House in Clinton, and a good many locals appear in the one-half hour documentary.

#### Government Publications on American History

The Historic Preservation Ordinance (CB-142) will give teeth to the county's Master Plan for Historic Preservation, passed by the County Council this summer. (See articles in the January 1980, December 1980, and January, February, June, and September issues of News and Notes for background.) The ordinance will create a 9-member Historic Preservation Commission. It will prohibit the destruction of historic sites named in the plan without review by the Historic Preservation Commission. The commission will also have the power to review and regulate major alterations to the exteriors of historic sites. The most controversial provision of the ordinance will allow the commission to cite owners for "demolition by neglect." The existing building code now requires the elimination of unsafe conditions through either repair or destruction of unsafe buildings; for historic sites, however, the owners would have to repair rather than destroy unless they are financially unable to. Preservationists believe "demolition by neglect" clause to be an important one because Prince George's County has lost many historic sites through such neglect. Mother Nature can do what the bulldozer is not allowed to if structures are not maintained. Both the Chamber of Commerce and Board of Realtors oppose the "demolition by neglect" clause as a violation of property rights.

One major amendment was introduced and passed at the committee meeting. The ordinance as drafted made no specific requirements as to the qualifications of members of the Historic Preservation Commission save they "be selected to represent the geographical, social, economic, and cultural concerns of the residents of this county and "that the fields of history, architecture, preservation, and urban design" be represented. Councilman William Amonett, however, introduced a motion, which was approved by the committee, that would set the membership this way:

- one representative of the chamber of commerce
- one representative of the board of realtors
- one representative of the homebuilders' association
- one representative of the municipal association
- one representative of the farm bureau
- one representative of the county Historical and Cultural Trust
- one architect
- one citizen member representing the field of history, and
- one citizen member representing the field of preservation.

The Historic Preservation Ordinance now goes to the full Council for consideration. A public hearing will be held on November 24, and final action should follow shortly thereafter. Copies of the ordinance, the tax credit bill, and the two related bills, are available from the County Council. Ask for CB 142, 143, 144, & 146.

### School Days of Old

One of the items in the Society's collections is a copy of the Teachers' Hand Book, Prince George's County, Maryland for the year 1902-1903. School officers named on the title page of this 32-page document are Commissioners Charles H. Stanley of Laurel, L. Selwyn Sasscer of Upper Marlboro, and W.B.H. Blandford of Clinton ton; Examiner and Secretary Frederick Sasscer of Upper Marlboro; and Distributing Agent W.R.C. Connick of Orme.

We present below some of the more interesting "Instructions to Teachers":

"The School hours are from 9 to 12, and from 1 to 4, with an intermission of one hour at noon for recess. A recess of 15 minutes during each session of the school must be given, and the smaller children may be given recess at any time, when it becomes evident to the teacher that they are suffering from confinement."

"The teacher shall see that the school-house is swept, dusted and ventilated, and warmed when necessary, before the beginning of the morning session. The teacher is enjoined to have this work done by the children, if possible; if not a janitor must be employed."

"Drinking water shall be provided at the-opening of each session, and oftener, if necessary. No child shall be allowed to visit the bucket without the consent of the teacher. and only one child at a time."

The handbook also contains a list of duties, of principals and school trustees, rules for text-book use, instructions in regard to examinations, a description of the county's one high school at the time (in Laurel), and a detailed year-by-year and subject-by-subject curriculum for all -grades. Children were exposed early to some of the problems of life: the fourth grade science curriculum even back then included a unit on "Alcoholic drinks, stimulants and narcotics." And there were only ten grades in the school year 1902-03: the 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th were high school and that was it!

--Alan Virta

The Prince George's County Historical Society

Subscription to this newsletter is included in the annual dues of \$5.00. Write the Society at P.O.: Box 149 Riverdale, Md. 20737.

President: Frederick S. De Marr

Corr. Secretary: Edith Bagot

Treasurer: Herb Embrey

Newsletter editor: Alan Virta

**NEWS AND NOTES FROM**  
**The Prince George's County**  
**Historical Society**

Vol. IX, no. 12  
December 1981

The house is a fine brick Georgian mansion, built by the Snowden family in the late 18th century. The Friends of Montpelier gift shop will be open during the party.

The Christmas Party is a good time to see the house, meet old friends, and--if you've never come before--make new ones. It's also a good opportunity to treat your friends and family to a colonial Christmas, Maryland style. Join us on December 19.

#### Reminders Christmas Open House

Four of Prince George's County's fine old homes will be decorated and open for the Christmas season. The schedule:

Riversdale, December 12 and 13, from 1 to 5 p.m. Tickets are \$1.00 per person.

Belair, December 13, from 1 to 5 p.m. Tickets: \$1.00

Surratt House, December 13, from 4 to 9 p.m., and on December 14 and 15, from 6 to 9 p.m. Tickets: \$1.00

Montpelier, December 7 and 8, from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m., and on December 9 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tickets: \$1.50 for adults, 75¢ for children.

Further information can be obtained by calling the Historian's office of Park and Planning at 779-2011. Be sure to see these houses at their Christmas best.

# PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

placed in the front of each volume you donate. Those considering contributing to the Society might keep these words in mind: "Deductions arising from tax shelters, charitable contributions and other expenses in 1981 will return substantially greater tax benefits than the same deductions in later years"--. taken from An Analysis : 1981 Tax Legislation, by Coopers and Lybrand. That includes our \$200 life membership. Thank you!

### Election of Officers for 1982

At the November meeting the following members were elected to serve as officers of the Society for 1982:

President	Frederick S. De Marr	Hyattsville.
Vice President	John Giannetti	Berwyn Heights
Corr. Secretary	Edith Bagot	Hyattsville
Rec. Secretary	Warren W. Rhoads	Bowie
Historian	James Wilfong	Pr. Frederick
Treasurer	Herbert C. Embrey	Adelphi
Directors	Paul Lanham.	Huntingtown
	Susanna Cristofane	Bladensburg
	Alan Virta	Greenbelt
Awards Committee	Margaret Fisher	Upper Marlboro
	Sarah Walton	Clinton
	Truman Hienton	Hyattsville

The Society extends its gratitude to the retiring Recording Secretary, Harold Hutcheson, for a job well done, and, welcomes his successor, Warren W. Rhoads. Our thanks go, too, to this years Nominating Committee: Margaret Fisher and Ted Bissell.

Subscription to this newsletter is included in annual dues of \$5.00. To apply for membership, send your check to the Society at P.O. Box 14, ;Riverdale, Md. 20770. Alan Virta, Editor

### Historic Preservation Bills Passed

Years of effort by local preservationists came to fruition on November 24 when the County Council passed the package of proposed historic preservation ordinances. The bills were forwarded to the County Executive and now await only his signature before becoming law.

The provisions of the ordinances have been summarized in News and Notes before. Here is a somewhat more detailed description of the ways the laws will work:

(1) Two official lists of historic sites are now recognized by law. There is a primary list of 158 historic sites, fully researched and documented. There is a secondary list of about 360 more places--called historic resources--which appear to have or are reputed to have historic value, but have not been researched and documented yet. There are provisions for making additions to the lists. The lists are printed in the county's Historic Sites and Districts Plan, adopted in July. Copies are available from Park and Planning Commission (952-3514). The primary list was also published in the Prince George's journal of November 27, p. 8-9.

(2) The County Executive will appoint a nine-member Historic Preservation Commission. The nine members are allotted this way: two citizens representing the historical and preservation communities, one architect, and one member representing each of the following interests: chamber of commerce, homebuilders, board of realtors, municipal association, farm bureau, and county Historical and Cultural Trust.

(3) Should the owner of a property on the primary list of historic sites wish to -make major alterations to or demolish his historic property, he must first obtain an historic area work permit from the Historic Preservation Commission, in addition to the other permits normally required by the building code. The HPC will meet with the owner on an informal basis (not a formal hearing) to discuss the

financially unable to do so or unless the HPC determines the structure is unsavable. Should the owner not do the required work, the county will do it and add the cost to the next tax bill. The owner will also be fined. It should be noted that his provision of the law can only be invoked in cases of severe deterioration. Some preservationists believe it is too watered-down, and that buildings that get to this stage will probably be unsavable anyway. Whatever the case, it is still viewed as a step in the right direction.

(6) The Historic Preservation Commission may be consulted by owners of historic properties concerning their properties. The Commission will give advice, when asked, concerning restoration work, tax credits and benefits, and other questions owners might have.

(7) The law allows generous tax credits for work on historic sites. Credits may be claimed for work going on now, done in the future, or, retroactively, to work completed anytime after July 1, 1976. The credit can be for up to 10% of the owner's expenses-subtracted from the county property tax bill.

(8) The law also establishes procedures for creation of historic districts, with some degree of architectural control over the properties in those districts. Owners of properties in the districts--whether they are actually historic or not--can obtain tax credits of UP to 5% of their expense for restoration work. As in the case of paragraph 7, the HPC will establish guidelines .for acceptable work.

The bills passed by the Council on November 24 were CB 142, 143, 144, and 146. Another bill, C73 145, could not be passed that day because of technical requirements concerning the amount of time it had been advertised for public hearing. Passage is expected promptly the first of next year. Congratulations for a job well done must be given to the members of the county's Citizens Advisory Committee on the Historic Sites and Districts Plan, who began work almost two years ago; to the staff of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission which worked so hard on the plan with the committee; and to the many other interested citizens who gave a hand in this -important work. The new historic preservation ordinances will not put an absolute end to the loss of our historic buildings--nothing can do that. The new laws will, however, provide for the first time a comprehensive legal mechanism to aid the work of owners, preservationists, and concerned citizens in the preservation of our county's historical and architectural heritage.

### Local Boy Does Good

Members of the Society should take a look at the November/December 1981 issue of the magazine Historic Preservation, published by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. On pages 30 to 35 there is an excellent article on the work of the Society's vice president, John Giannetti, and his brother Bob Giannetti, ornamental plaster sculptors. There are several great color photos. Congratulations John and Bob!

### The Gun at Riversdale

When the first Maryland colonists came to St. Mary's in 1634, they brought with them several large guns. Father Andrew White, in his narrative of the early days of the new colony mentioned "our cannon," and later described how the "great gunnes...spake aloud" in honor of a visit by the Governor of Virginia. A suit filed against Lord Baltimore in England in 1634 reveals that he had purchased eight cannon from a man named Jones--four sakers and eight demiculverins, but later sources indicate that there were perhaps as many as twelve large guns in early Maryland. A careful accounting of the number of placement of these guns during the 17th century has never been discovered. Scattered references to large guns appear here and there in the historical record of that century, but those references are incidental and imprecise. How many guns there were, how and when they were used, and exactly where they were placed, may never be known.

We do know the whereabouts of seven of those early guns today, however, thanks to the efforts of a 19th century Jesuit Driest named Joseph Carberry, who lived at St. Inigoes Manor, near old St. Mary's City. During the early 1820's, he and his brother gathered up all the old cannon they could find in the vicinity--those seven guns we know today. Accounts of his work are contradictory. but at least four. if

St Inigoes Novr. 6th /45

My Dear Sir

Your kind and affectionate letter of 28 October came to hand a few days since,--I not only thank you for but feel myself very much flattered by your polite expressions of friendship and regard. --I do not consider you at all indebted to me on the score of favours, your agreeable company and good heart is a most ample compensation for any attention, I may have shown you. I an, sorry that you are about to leave us.--I indulged the pleasing hope that we should have your good company again at old St. Inigoes, but if not realized be pleased to remember me.--

I assure you, that it gives me great pleasure to present, through you, to Mr. Calvert one of our old cannon, which was brought over by Lord Baltimore 25 March 1634.

I can assure you that I hold it as a venerable relic of antiquity--And as I shall keep one of them at St. Inigoes--be pleased to say to Mr. Calvert that the carriage which he was kind enough to offer me for it will be most cordially received--

Very respectfully  
Your obedient Servant  
Joseph Carberry S.J.

Mr. [Charles] Serruy  
Belgian Minister

Mr. Calvert was, of course, Charles Benedict Calvert (1808-1864), a descendant of the Lords Baltimore and thus a fitting recipient of such a gift. His mother was Rosalie Eugenia Stier, daughter of a Belgian nobleman--which may account for his acquaintance with the Belgian minister. The gun now rests on Riversdale's south lawn, overlooking the town of Riverdale. It has been described as a saker (small cannon)--perhaps, but not certainly, of Spanish origin.

With seven guns accounted for today, we wonder about the others the first Marylanders brought with them. To quote Frank L. Howard, who has written a detailed study of the guns: "Are there some secrets yet to be wrung from the waters of St. Mary's?"

--Alan Virta

Frank L. Howard's article, "The Guns of St. Mary's," in Chronicler of St. Mary's, v. 6, no . 9 (Sept. 1958), was the basis for most of the background information in this article. It is a most comprehensive review of what is known of the history of the guns and contains a wealth of technical information that would be of interest to those who study guns.

### The Patuxent River Fisheries

The following is reprinted from the October 1981 issue of SWAP, the newsletter of the Maryland Historical Trust.

"A project to document the folklife and history of the commercial fisheries along the Patuxent River in Calvert, St. Mary's, Charles and Prince George's counties is underway at the Calvert Marine Museum in Solomons. Funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the 10 month study will focus on people of the Patuxent who harvest seafood and people who work in seafood processing plants, build and repair boats or engage in related activities. Of primary interest will be the skills taught and learned through several generations, the beliefs, stories and legends associated with life on the water and the material objects designed, constructed and used for such work. Information and reminiscences by area residents about fisheries will also be recorded for oral history....The documentary materials generated from the project will be used in future exhibitions about the area's commercial fisheries at the Calvert Marine Museum's newest facility, the J.C. Lore Packing House, a former seafood processing plant, in Solomons. Individuals who would like to share their experiences and knowledge about the fisheries of the Patuxent are encouraged to contact the Calvert Marine Museum, P.C. Box 97, Solomons, Maryland 20688; (301) 326-3719."

Then, He made the Chesapeake  
Circling through the land so fair;  
As a mother hugs her baby  
To her heart with tender care.

Yes, God went to old Virginia  
Blessed each hill and glade,  
But He came to Southern Maryland  
And sat down here and stayed.

We believe that He will tell you  
Though forever you may roam,  
That the nearest place to Heaven,  
Is a Southern Maryland Home.

It is just as sure as can be,

That God loves and freely gives  
The other States His blessings,  
But Southern Maryland is where He lives.

If you know who wrote the poem and where it was published, contact Harry at 627-8257 or any of the Society officers.

The Christmas Party--December 19--At Montpelier Mansion--2 p.m.

#### When Happy Days Were Here Again

Society member Lew Cassidy recently passed along several issues of the Enquirer-Gazette from the 1930's and 40's. One of those newspapers--dated June 23, 1933--contains this interesting advertisement:

Beer Orders  
Solicited

--I am Sole Distributor for--

GUNTHER'S BEER

and solicit orders from licensed  
places in Prince George's County  
Can furnish either in Bottles  
or Kegs

Prompt attention given all orders  
ROBERT L. HALL  
Upper Marlboro, Md.  
Phone Marl. 122-J

The Spring of 1933, of course, marked the beginning of the end of Prohibition in Maryland. In March of that year Congress amended the Volstead Act to allow the sale of beer. In the words of the 1934 Maryland Manuals "The Legislature of 1933 took prompt advantage of the liberalization of the Volstead Act, and the sale of beer was authorized..." The legalization of other alcoholic beverages soon followed. By the end of the year, the 21st Amendment was ratified by the necessary number of states, and for the first time in fourteen years, it was again legal to make, sell, transport, and possess any type of alcoholic beverage in the United States.

The firm mentioned in the advertisement above is still in business today, known now as Bob Hall, Inc.  
But don't call and try to order a keg of Gunther anymore!

--Alan Virta

# NEWS AND NOTES FROM **The Prince George's County Historical Society**

Vol. X, no.1  
January 1982

## Winter Recess

There will be no meetings of the Prince George's County Historical Society in January or February. The next regular meeting will be on the second Saturday of March.

## St. George's Day Awards

Every year at the St. George's Day Dinner, the Society presents the St. George's Day Award to several individuals and organizations who have made distinguished contributions to the preservation of our county's heritage. The Awards Committee solicits nominations for award recipients from the general membership. If you have a nomination, please write the Awards Committee at The Prince George's County Historical Society, P.C.. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20737.

## County Initiates Black History Study

The History Division of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission has begun a Black History Study of Prince George's County, funded by the county government on the recommendation of the recently-enacted Historic Sites and Districts Plan. The managers of the project, John Walton, Jr., and Susan Pearl, welcome any help or participation from persons interested in this project. Please call the History Division if you can identify any historic sites or communities significant to black history, or if you can direct researchers to longtime county residents who may be able to contribute information. Volunteers are needed also to read census records, county newspapers, court records, manumission records, etc.

The History Division is located in the Calvert Mansion in Riverdale. The telephone number is 779-2011.

Antique Valentine Display--At the Surratt House--Feb. 14 and 15

### Maryland Antiques Show and Sale

The 4th annual Maryland Antiques Show and Sale, sponsored by the Maryland Historical Society, will be held at the Baltimore Convention Center from February 11 to February 14, 1982. Admission will be \$4.50 per person, and the catalogue will cost \$4.00. A continuous buffet will be available each day of the show. Show hours will be from noon until 9 p.m. on Thursday through Saturday and from noon until 6 p.m. on Sunday, February 14. The Show will feature 33 exhibitors of formal and country American furniture, English furniture, paintings, prints, porcelain, silver, brass, glass, rugs, jewelry, books, dolls, clocks, and rare maps. Proceeds will be used to support the on-going educational programs of the Museum and Library of Maryland History of the Maryland Historical Society. For more information, call (301) 685-3750, ext. 54.

## **PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY, MARYLAND**

**ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696**

The Society gratefully acknowledges the generous contributions of the following individuals to the newspaper microfilming project and the Archives of Maryland purchase funds:

Mrs. Rebecca Masters Huffman  
Mrs. Creighton O. De Marr  
Mrs. Joyce McDonald  
Mr. & Mrs. John M. Walton, Sr.  
Mrs. Charles G. Kurz

#### New Officers of the Historical and Cultural Trust

The new officers of the Prince George's County Historical and Cultural Trust for 1982 are: Chairman, John Giannetti; Vice Chairman, Joyce McDonald; Secretary, Joyce Rumburg; and Treasurer, Ruth Lockard. A word of praise goes to retiring Chairman, Robert Crawley.

#### Williams Plains: Research and Remembering

There are at least two essential components of local historical research: thorough examination of the primary and secondary source material and tapping the memories of those with personal, first-hand information on the subject. So much of the detail of local history is never recorded that the human resources can be as important as the written ones. Memory can often recall facts that otherwise would be lost; it can also lead the researcher to written source material that might never otherwise be discovered.

A recent example of the way the human memory can complement the written historical record involves the history of Williams Plains, a recent addition to the National Register of Historic Places and the home of two members of the Prince George's County Historical Society, Mr. and Mrs. T.F. Dutko. Together they and Bill Aleshire, Jim Maher, and Robert Sellers searched the written record for the history of the house and prepared the National Register nomination forms. Another member of the Society, Mrs. Margaret Marshall of Laurel, has complemented their work with her personal knowledge of the house's history based on old family sources and family tradition.

Williams Plains, located near Bowie adjoining White Marsh Park, is a stately brick plantation house of Georgian and Federal design. It was built around 1813 by John Johnson, a leader in the legal profession in this state. Johnson was admitted to the practice of law in 1796 and served as chief judge of the Prince George's County Circuit Court, Attorney General of the State, Judge of the Maryland Court of Appeals (the state's highest court), and finally Chancellor of Maryland. John Johnson is also noted for the contributions two of his three sons made to the legal profession. John Johnson, Jr., like his father, served as Chancellor of Maryland. Reverdy Johnson twice was a member of the United States Senate.

An examination of deeds and tax records established a chain of ownership for the house and for the land on which it was built going back to 1670. The land itself was once known as "The Plaines" or "Wilson's Plaine," after its second owner, Robert Wilson. For more than one hundred years the land was owned by the Duvall family. When they finally sold it to John Johnson, it was recorded as Williams Plains--the name by which it is known today.

It was during John Johnson's ownership that the house we now call Williams Plains was built. A sharp jump in tax assessment--plus the assumption of tax burden by Johnson in 1812 and 1813--together with architectural evidence, suggest the 1813 date of construction. The owners of Williams Plains after John Johnson were the Mullikins. When exactly the Mullikins moved in is not certain.

Family tradition maintained that Basil Duckett Mullikin built the house and moved in shortly after his marriage in 1815, although the historical record shows that he did not buy the house until 1825--one year after John Johnson's death. Did the Mullikins occupy it before they bought it? Nothing yet uncovered in the written record indicates that. Whatever the case, three generations of Mullikins lived there during the mid-19th century: Basil Duckett Mullikin, his son, Thomas McElderry Mullikin, and Thomas' oldest children, who were born there before he sold the house in 1869.

that the Mullikins lived there. Great-grandfather gave his home the name of "Roscoe." Since the time of the Mullikins, the house has had other names--"Fairie Farms" and "Williams Plains," its present name.

Records from an old family prayer book state that "Basil Duckett Mullikin, born April 21, 1789, married Eliza McElderry, May 2, 1815--daughter of Thomas McElderry of Baltimore, Md." She died February 11, 1860 at her residence 'Roscoe,' in Prince George's County in the 65 years of her age." Also the prayerbook records the death of her husband Basil Duckett Mullikin, son of Lt. Belt Mullikin, November 10th, 1863 "at his residence 'Roscoe' in the 75th year of his age." Then his son Thomas McElderry Mullikin lived at Roscoe. According to the records, Thomas' first child, Basil Duckett Mullikin II was born in Baltimore, Maryland. His next two children, Samuel Seabrook Rind Mullikin, born February 20, 1864 at Roscoe--and a daughter, Virginia Maria Mullikin, born November 23rd, 1867 at Roscoe. The next child, a daughter, Elizabeth McElderry Mullikin, was recorded "born in Baltimore, Md., April 1, 1870." These records establish the time the Mullikins were at Roscoe. The house was sold by Thomas Mullikin about 1869.

The next owners after Thomas Mullikin were the Simon family. The Simons were there for many years. The next owners I think were a Mr. and Mrs. Pritchett, who changed the name from "Roscoe" to "Fairie Farms." The next owner I remember were Mr. and Mrs. Lyle Simmons. In researching they found the name "Williams Plains" for their home. In the 1960's Mr. Simmons died of a heart attack. His wife sold Williams Plains to a Charles County family, who sold it to Gardiner Edelen family. Mrs. Edelen was the former Mary Beth Bowling of Upper Marlboro, Md. She died in 1975 and her husband in 1977. In 1978 Williams Plains was sold again to Mr. and Mrs. Theodore F. Dutko. They are very interested in the old house and are doing extensive research.

My grandfather, Dr. James McElderry Mullikin, 2nd son of Basil Duckett Mullikin, built a large frame house on a part of Roscoe which he named Hillview. He married December 4, 1856, Margaret Dorsey Hammond, daughter of John and Harriet Dorsey Hammond of Anne Arundel County, and widow of Mathias Hammond, son of Dr. Mathias Hammond of Millersville, Md. Dr. Mullikin and his family lived at Hillview until about 1880. Then he sold, buying a farm very near Holy Trinity Church at Collington, and also near most of his patients. Here again, he built a large frame house on top of a hill which he named Highlands. This is where I was born--October 12, 1901.

I am,  
Sincerely yours,  
Margaret Mullikin Marshall.

Thanks to Mrs. Marshall for contributing this item, and to the Dutko's for supplying the National Register nomination form that served as the basis of the introductory article.

-- Alan Virta

### Steamin' Down Chesapeake Bay -- A Look Back to the Era of Bay Steamers

The following was adapted from a news release issued by the Maryland Historical Society:

In the 1950s, the last of [Baltimore's] antiquated steamboat wharves were demolished, removing the last remnants of a most important era in Maryland's maritime history. "Steamin' Down Chesapeake Bay," a major exhibition at the Radcliffe Maritime Museum, Museum and Library of Maryland History, Maryland Historical Society, 201 West Monument Street, Baltimore, recalls the days when the impressive white steamers departed from the Pratt and Light Street piers with goods and passengers destined for coastal towns. Mounted in the first floor lobby of the Maryland Historical Society, the show will open on December 4 and will continue through August 1982.

The exhibition examines the essential role that steamboat lines played in the economic and recreational life of Marylanders. In 1911, for example, steamboats out of Baltimore united the state's largest city with over 200 Chesapeake Bay locations. In addition, they united isolated rural towns with metropolitan centers like Washington, Annapolis, Norfolk, and Baltimore, extending the markets they could reach and connecting them to resources for medical attention, recreation and culture. For over 100 years, steamboats and their sister railroad lines bound the Chesapeake Bay region together.

NEWS AND NOTES FROM.  
**The Prince George's County  
Historical Society**

"Steamin' Down Chesapeake Bay" is the first exhibit in the Bay area to bring together the wealth of steamboat—related paintings, models, prints and photographs from private collections and other cultural institutions, notably the Mariners Museum in Newport News.

--Maryland Historical Society

Those steamboats from Baltimore stopped at Prince George's County landings on both the Patuxent and Potomac Rivers. In News and Notes of October 1980 there was published an article entitled "The Life and Death of a Steamboat," recalling the story of the Mount Vernon, one such vessel from the early 19th century. Fred Tilp's excellent book, This Was the Potomac River, also has a good deal of information on steamboats. In the October 1980 newsletter we asked for reminiscences of the steamboat days on the Patuxent River, but no one wrote in. If you have any memories of the steamboats on either the Patuxent or Potomac Rivers, please let us hear from you at the address below.

Steamboat Comin' Up the River

STEAMER PLANTER

Leaves Dugan's Wharf every Saturday at 6 A.M., for Patuxent River, Plum Point, proceeding up as far as Hill's Landing. Returning, leaves Hill's Landing every Tuesday at 6.A.M. for Benedict; leaves Benedict via Plum Point every Wednesday at 6 A.M., for Baltimore.

Theo. Weems, Master

[Hill's Landing is located not far from Upper Marlboro, very close to where Route 4 crosses the Patuxent River today. Plum Point is on the Chesapeake Bay in Calvert County.]

--Taken from Woods' Baltimore Directory for 1856-57

The Prince George's County Historical Society

Subscription to this newsletter is included in the annual dues of \$5.00. Our address: P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland, 20737.

President: Frederick S. De Marr  
Treasurer: Herb Embrey

Corr. Sec.: Edith Bagot  
Editor: Alan Virta, 474-7524

Vol. X, no. 2  
February 1982

George Washington

This year 1982 marks the 250th anniversary of the birth of George Washington. Planter, surveyor, soldier, patriot, and statesman, our first President was truly, as one biographer called him, the "indispensable man,"

without whom America's yearnings for independence and plans for national self-government could not have been realized.

George Washington is remembered throughout the nation for the qualities of his character and his remarkable accomplishments in national affairs, but Prince George's County has special, more personal memories of him as

“If you think about it for a moment, it's entirely logical that it should be George Washington, for he has been the only President to come from this immediate area. No President has come from Maryland, and the others from Virginia have come from other sections of that State.

“George Washington was a native and resident of the Potomac region. He was born in Westmoreland County, Va.--downriver, and as a young man established himself and his plantation, Mount Vernon,

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

further up the river, directly opposite Prince George's County.

“Today, in the age of the automobile, the river is a barrier. Not so in the 18th century. It was easier to travel by water than to go overland. So it was probably more convenient for Washington to visit neighbors directly across the river than ones several miles away on the Virginia side. The evidence is clear, from his letters and diaries, that he had many associations with residents of Prince George's County.

A book by Paul Wiltach entitled Tidewater Maryland—published back in the 930's—summarizes very well Washington's relationship with Southern Maryland. To quote Wiltach, "Washington's home stood within a few hundred feet of the Maryland line. Tidal Potomac, Maryland's waters, wash the foot of the heights on which Mount Vernon stands. He could not come out into his pillared piazza without looking across these waters at the rolling green panorama of Maryland stretching off to the horizon. Over there were the homes of many of his warm friends. Visits with them and their visits to his house rounded out his social life. They were planters like him, and they bought and sold grain, livestock and slaves to one another and for one another. When he selected schools for his nephews and for Mrs. Washington's son and her grandson, he preferred Maryland schools....When he left Mount Vernon on pleasure his pathway was often to the diversions of Annapolis which rivaled those of his own Williamsburg; and when his national duties as Commander-in-Chief took him away from home, they led him almost invariably across the length of upper Tidewater Maryland. In nearly every part of it we find recurrent intimate souvenirs of Washington.

Geographically, one of Washington's closest neighbors was a resident of Prince George's County, William Digges of Warburton Manor. Warburton Manor was a grand plantation on the site of what we call Fort Washington today, diagonally across the river from Mount Vernon. Washington's diaries reveal frequent visits to Warburton Manor, and vice-versa.

Dec. 19, 1772: "Mr. William Digges and his 4 dau. came." Dec. 22, 1772: "Went over to Mr. Digges....Stayed all night." May 23, 1773: "Went over to Mr. Wm. Digges to Dinner." On that visit the two men went foxhunting. In August he recorded another visit: 26th: "Went over to dinner to Mr. Digges; kept there all night by Rain."

These are just a few of the recorded contacts. We can be sure there were countless other unrecorded contacts between the two neighbors as well. Warburton Manor is gone now, but there is a home not far outside of Upper Marlboro that Washington visited on several occasions. It was the home of another friend, Ignatius Digges. This home is known as Melwood Park, on old Marlboro Pike west of town, on that portion of the road that runs right beside of Pennsylvania Avenue. There is a historical marker outside the place.

Washington's friendships and associations were not limited to the southern part of the county. He had friends in the northern and central sections, too. One of those was Samuel Ogle, who lived at Belair, the grand Georgian mansion still standing in the city of Bowie. One evidence of their association is in a letter Washington wrote to Col. Fairfax, then in England, who offered George Washington a buck and doe to start a herd at Mount Vernon. Washington replied:

"If you have not already been to this trouble, I would, my good sir, now wish to relieve you from it, as Mr. Ogle has been so obliging as to present me six fawns from his pack of English deer at Bellair. With these, and tolerable care, I shall soon have a full stock for my small paddock."

Another friend of Washington's was Major Thomas Snowden of Montpelier, a home still standing near Laurel. One of Washington's several stays at Montpelier was not so pleasant, however. In May of 1787, on his way from Mount Vernon to Philadelphia for the Constitutional Convention, he crossed the river at Mr. Digges' and proceeded north. He dined at Bladensburg. In the evening he reached Maj. Snowden's, "where feeling very severely a violent head ach, & sick stomach I went to bed early."

'Now if there is any town in this county that can claim a special relationship with George Washington it is Bladensburg. Bladensburg is one of the county's oldest towns, founded in 1742. By the time George Washington reached his maturity it was a bustling seaport, one of the busiest in Maryland. Ocean-going vessels sailed right up the Anacostia to its port. It was a busy business town. What brought George Washington to Bladensburg was not friendship or business, but travel. Bladensburg was on the main road north and south, and whenever Washington traveled north he usually passed through Bladensburg. Remember that during the Revolution and even when he

Rev. Boucher moved his school and students from Virginia to Maryland--to Annapolis. Jack Custis, then age 16, was one of the boys to come with him. In December of 1771, Boucher became rector of Queen Anne Parish in Prince George's County. The parish church, now beautifully restored, stands on Oak Grove Road not far from Watkins Park, and is called St. Barnabas Church, Leeland. So not long after coming to Maryland, Boucher moved to Prince George's County.

Boucher himself moved to a home we call Mount Lubentia today, on Landover Road less than a mile below the Community College.

Boucher took his students there, and George Washington paid at least two visits there when Jack was a student.

That is not the full story of Jack Custis, however. He caused both his teacher and his stepfather a great deal of concern because of his romantic disposition. Washington, indeed, once wrote that young Jack Custis had a "propensity to the sex." During his short time in Annapolis he became quite friendly with a young lady there--a subject of correspondence between Boucher and Washington.

When he came out to Prince George's County, Boucher had to write to Washington to tell him Jack had become involved with another girl--none other than Eleanor Calvert, daughter of Benedict Calvert, descendant of the Lords Baltimore. The Calverts then lived at Mount Airy, an ancient home in the Rosaryville vicinity. The State of Maryland now owns it, and there is a park around it.

During 1772, the young couple decided they wanted to marry. George Washington opposed the marriage, and wrote a candid letter to the young lady's father explaining why--in April 1773:

"... at this, or in any short time, his youth, inexperience, and unripened education, is, and will be insuperable obstacles in my eye, to the completion of this Marriage.... I conceive it to be my indispensable duty (to endeavour to carry him through a regular course of Education."

Washington decided to send young Jack out of the area to college, to King's College, in New York. So in May 1773 he sent him off to school. On May 8 he let him leave Mount Vernon ahead of him so he could spend two days with his girl-friend. On the 10th, Washington joined him--after visiting with Ignatius Digges at Melwood--and then they were off to school. But Washington's plans were not working. That became clear to him, and during the summer he visited the Calverts quite often, perhaps to get acquainted, perhaps to get to know Eleanor. In December, he had write this letter to the president of King's College:

"... I have yielded, contrary to my judgement, & much against my wishes, to his quitting College, in order that he may enter soon into a new scene of Life, which I think he would be much fitter for some years hence, than now; but having his own inclination, the desires of his mother & the acquiescence of almost all his relatives to encounter, I did not care, as he is the last of the family, to push my opposition too far; I therefore have submitted to a Kind of necessity."

The young couple were married in February of 1774 at Mount Airy. George and Martha Washington were there, witnessing perhaps the socially most illustrious wedding we have had here in Prince George's County.

The wedding of Jack Custis and Eleanor Calvert is proof that even the father of his country had difficulties in running his own family as he saw fit. Indeed, he once admitted that the "could govern men but not Boys."

Good evening.

Editor's : The quotations from Washington come from Paul Wiltach's book, Tidewater Maryland, and from The Writings of George Washington, a multi-volume set edited by John C. Fitzpatrick. Society Treasurer Herb Embrey has developed another interesting story on George Washington and Maryland It will appear in another issue of News and Notes in the near future.

#### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

Gail Rothrock

Alexandria VA

Sponsor  
S Pearl

and capture of Washington City during the War of 1812. Prepared by Lieutenant Robert Smith with pencil, pen, and ink, it includes five carefully drawn detailed insets showing the British positions at Nottingham, Upper Marlboro, and the Woodyard, and two positions in Charles County. The map also traces the route of the British return to the Patuxent from Washington. Accompanying the map are two colored engravings, "Capture of the City of Washington" and "The Fall of Washington or Maddy in Full Flight," documenting probably the most unfortunate event in President Madison's administration.

Lieutenant Smith's map was loaned to the Library of Congress by The Paul Mellon Collection, Upperville, Va. The exhibition, which contains almost 200 drawings, portraits, sketches, maps, manuscripts, documents, and other items tracing Madison's life and times, will remain on display through May 31.

#### Dr. Bryan P. Warren

We regret to inform the membership of the death on December 17, 1981, of Dr. Bryan Pope Warren, Sr., of Laurel, a member of this Society. A native of Beaufort County, N.C., Dr. Warren earned his medical degree at the University of Maryland and set up practice in Laurel in 1925. He was associated with several hospitals and was instrumental in the founding of the old Warren Hospital (with his brother, Dr. John M. Warren), the Laurel Medical Center, and the old Laurel General Hospital. Besides our own society he was, a member of numerous medical, social, and patriotic organizations, including the Vansville Farmers Club. He lived at Snow Hill, a Snowden home built about 1800. In 1979 Dr. and Mrs. Warren received the society's St. George's Day Award in recognition of their activities in the field of historic preservation.

Dr. Warren is survived by his wife, two sons and one daughter by his first marriage, nine grandchildren, and two brothers and two sisters.

#### Sons of the American Revolution

The John Hanson Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, located here in Prince George's County, is now receiving applications for membership. Persons interested in joining the organization should contact Mr. James A. McCafferty, Registrar, 613 Rosier Road, Fort Washington, Md. 20744. Phone 839-5812.

#### Belair Mansion to be Open; Restoration Funds Proposed

The Belair Mansion in Bowie, 18th century home of colonial governors, will be open this Spring beginning in February, on the second Sunday of each month from 2 to 4 p.m. The mansion is located on Tulip Grove Rd., several blocks east of Route 197 (Collington Rd.). In need of extensive and expensive restoration work, the mansion will receive help in the form of a one-million dollar bond issue if a bill now before the State legislature is passed. Expressions of support for the bill are needed, especially from persons outside the city of Bowie, to show the county-wide support for the essential restoration work on this important historic site. Letters should be sent to Del. Joan Pitkin, House of Delegates, Annapolis, Md. 21401.

#### Willie Mae Henson

We regret to report that Willie Mae Henson, a member of this Society for many years, died on Christmas Day. A resident of Chapel Hill in the southern part of the county, Miss Henson was a retired, teacher. She served on the county's Bicentennial Commission during the 1970's and was active in church and community affairs. She is survived by a sister.

The 9th Annual St. George's Day Dinner--Friday, April 23, 1982

**NEWS AND NOTES FROM**  
**The Prince George's County.**  
**Historical Society**

the property in 1954 when land was being acquired to build the elevated Kenilworth Avenue through Bladensburg, and it was rented as an antiques shop until recent years. In 1979 the State transferred the property to Prince George's Heritage, Inc., with the understanding that the building would be restored.

The restoration of the Magruder House is important not only for the architectural and historical heritage it will preserve, but also for the way it is being accomplished--with the active involvement of the private sector. The Millard T. Charlton accounting firm of Washington, D.C., is bearing much of the cost of the restoration and will lease the building as an office when work is completed. Mr. Charlton is a resident of College Heights Estates. In an age of austerity in government programs, the restoration of the Magruder House stands out as an example of a successful project undertaken by local historical agencies with the support of the private sector.

The meeting on March 13 will begin at 2 p.m. Guests are welcome and refreshments will be served. Riversdale is located at 4811 Riverdale Road in Riverdale, between Route one and Kenilworth Avenue. Mr. Wollon spoke to the Society in October 1977 at St. John's Church, Broad Creek, and those who attended that meeting remember him as an interesting and informative speaker. Please plan to join us on March 13 at Riversdale.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

## The Spring Calendar

Vice president John Giannetti, the Society's program chairman, has already firmed up the rest of the calendar of Spring meetings.

The St. George's Day Dinner will take the place of the April meeting, but on May 8 we will hold a joint meeting with the Columbia Historical Society at their headquarters, the Christian Heurich mansion on Dupont Circle, Washington, D.C. There will be a program, about the house plus a tour. The topic of the June meeting, back at Riversdale, will be steamboats. Fred Tilp is helping us line up a program on that subject which will prove to be quite interesting.

Members of the Society should mark Saturday, April 24 on their calendars as a special red-letter day. The Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage will return to Prince George's County on that day, and a number of historic homes will be open to the public. More details on this will follow.

### More March Events

Sunday, Mar 14...Quilting Demonstration, at the National Colonial Farm, Accokeek, 1 to 4 p.m. Mary Lehosky will be working on a colonial patch work quilt. 283-2113.

Sunday, Mar 21. . .2nd Annual Quilt Show at Belair Mansion, Bowie, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission \$2.00 to benefit restoration of the mansion.

Sunday, Mar 21..."Capital Guardians," a lecture-tracing the growth of the various defensive measures taken to protect the city of Washington since its establishment. 2 p.m. at Fort Washington Visitor Center, Fort Washington Phone 292-2112 for more details.

Sunday, Mar 21 ... Herb propagation lecture and demonstration at National Colonial Farm, 2 p.m. Reservations are necessary. Herbalist Barbara Warren will discuss growing, harvesting, preserving, and storing herbs. Phone 283-2113 to reserve a place.

### Programs on George Washington at Belair

Two programs will be presented this Spring at Belair Mansion in Bowie in commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the birth of George Washington.

On Tuesday evening, March 30, Shirley Baltz will present a talk entitled "George Washington in Annapolis," and on Tuesday, April 13, Susan Pearl will speak on "George Washington in Prince George's County." Both talks will be accompanied by slides, and refreshments will be served. There is an admission charge of \$3.00 for one lecture or \$5.00 for both. Proceeds will benefit the restoration of the mansion.

Advance reservations are necessary, because of limited seating. Call the Bowie city offices at 262-6200 to reserve a place. Belair mansion is located on Tulip Grove Road, several blocks east of, Collington Road (Route 197), south of Annapolis Road (Route 450).

### John Cooper and Augustus Ross

One of the goals of Prince George's County's Black History Study is to identify important figures in the history of Prince George's County's black community. Susan Pearl, one of the managers of the study, has kindly provided News and Notes with an article on two such black Prince Georgians of the past.

Approximately a month before his death in March 1815, John Cooper devised in his will that two acres of his land be laid out for the use of the African Methodist Church already erected on his plantation, giving the church access to the main road and allowing space for a burial ground. Cooper owned 138 acres of a tract called "Magruder's Plains Enlarged" (in the present Forestville/ District Heights area of Prince George's County). He left his dwelling house and 35 acres to his wife, Nancy, with all of his land to be divided after her death between three of his sons.

and a fair amount of luck will, it is hoped, shed more light on his life and work, and the location, history, and fate of his church.

Cooper's story differs, in many ways, from that of Augustus Ross, born in 1855 as a slave of Prince Georgian Benjamin Beall. Ross' freedom came with the Emancipation of 1864; when he was old enough, he went to work at the Muirkirk Iron Furnace (on the Old Baltimore Pike between Beltsville and Laurel). Ross married the daughter of former slaves at Montpelier, and in 1886 became the first of eleven black heads-of-family to buy lots in a brand new subdivision which would carry his name.

For nearly twenty years before this time, a log chapel and burial ground had stood a short distance to the northeast of Muirkirk Iron Furnace, serving the considerable number of black families who worked at the Furnace. In 1868, William Minnix, who lived just to the north of the Furnace and who had sold some of the land upon which it was established, granted to six black men land upon which to build "a place of public worship and school house for the colored people," adjoining the already established burial ground. A log chapel which came to be known as Queen Chapel (Methodist) was soon built, and served also as a school for the children of the black ironworkers. Then, in 1886, following the death of Mark Duvall, one of Minnix' landowning neighbors, 25 acres of Duvall's land were surveyed, subdivided into 12 lots, and sold individually to eleven black families. The twelfth lot was sold to the "Benevolent Sons and Daughters of Abraham" and on it was constructed the frame building which served as a lodge, social hall, and at some times as a school. This establishment, known as Rebecca Lodge # 6, acted as an insurance company for the community, paying illness and death benefits to its members.

Within a short time of the subdividing in 1886, Augustus Ross and his fellow landowners began helping each other to build their houses, some of traditional log construction well known to black laborers, others of the new, lighter weight balloon-frame construction. Thus was created a new community of working blacks with steady incomes from the Iron Furnace, who had their own chapel, school, social and beneficial hall, and their own burial ground. This new community, which stretched one-half mile eastward along Old Muirkirk Road from Queen Chapel, came to be known, after its first citizen, as Rossville.

The Prince George's County Black History Study promises to uncover many other stories such as the two brief sketches above. Undertaken by the History Division of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission at the end of 1981, the study has attracted the attention of several county organizations, churches, and individuals, some of whom are already hard at work sifting through census records, wills, manumission records, and 18th and 19th century newspapers, etc., for information about the black residents of Prince George's County. We have scarcely scratched the surface, but it is already apparent that there are countless fascinating stories waiting to be discovered. We will hope to report some of them periodically in future issues of News and Notes. In the meantime, suggestions (and volunteers!) are most welcome. Phone 779-2011 (the History Division) daytimes during the week.

--Susan Pearl

### All Aboard!

January's short article on steamboats prompted this response from Paul Lanham, a past president of the Society, who remembers the steamer Emma Giles which was mentioned in the article:

"I remember my Dad insisting they held down her safety valve to get enough steam pressure to start her out of the slip. As a mechanical engineer working in a steam power plant, he would have noticed such operating trivia. Certain of those boats had a massive polished wooden "axle" connecting the paddle wheels. To go from one end of the boat to the other, you had to duck under this shaft. No such thrill on the QE II!"

The exhibit at the Maryland Historical Society continues through August.

### Tax Incentives and Preservation

All who are interested in historic preservation--and especially those who may be considering investing in historic properties--should be aware of the many new tax incentives for historic preservation that became law as part of the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981. Michael L. Ainslie, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, summarized the importance of the new incentives in this way:

"We are confident that the new and greater incentives will induce developers, landlords, main street merchants and investors who have not previously been involved with preservation to see historic buildings as major investment opportunities. With these incentives, preservation is truly coming of age."

The National Trust has published an 8-page guide to the new preservation tax incentives entitled "Tax Incentives: New Investment Opportunities." The guide was originally published as a supplement to the Trust's newspaper, Preservation News, in November 1981. The supplement contains a summary of the law, detailed case studies of the application of incentives, questions and answers, and a wealth of information that should interest preservationists, tax advisors, and accountants. For more information, contact the Trust at 1785 Massachusetts Ave, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Phone 673-4000.

#### A Belated Valentine's Day Message

We had been saving the following for almost a year to run in February's newsletter, but forgot to. Here it is a little late, taken from the Maryland Gazette of October 14, 1747:

Dick join'd in nuptial Conjugation  
With Susan, whom he long had sought:  
But four Months after Cultivation,  
The Fruit of Nine, Sue kindly brought.  
Dick scolded: She was in a Swoon:  
About their Case the Neighbours varied:  
Some urg'd that Susan came too soon;  
Others--that Dick too late was married.

#### History of Maryland Slide Collection at the University

The following is reprinted from University of Maryland Update, "a quarterly recap of items of special interest to the Maryland General Assembly."

"In the past, Maryland's rich historical record has sometimes been as inaccessible as it is fascinating because it was dispersed, filed, shelved, and scattered across the state in many libraries and historical collections. Now the newly-completed History of Maryland Slide Collection is available for the first time in the non-print media room of the Hornbake Library [undergraduate library] on the College Park campus--and it is solving logistical problems for many scholars of state history. The 600 slides, developed by Dr. Ray Smock (History) and edited by Constance Schulz, are a fascinating visual review of Maryland state history--from explorers' sketches of early Indian inhabitants to satellite pictures of a frozen Chesapeake Bay.

"Mary Boccaccio, acting associate director of special collections at UMCP, points out that schoolchildren as well as state scholars are already benefiting from the slides....For information, call 454-3218."

#### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society.

		<u>Sponsor</u>
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Fekete	New Carrollton	H. Embrey
Charles B. Calvert	Baltimore	E. Powers
Mr. & Mrs. W. Winton Warren	University Park	F. De Marr
Mr. & Mrs. John C. Pyles, Jr.	Washington, D. C.	F. De Marr
Mr. & Mrs. Frederick C. Warther.	Lanham	M. Warther
Mr. & Mrs. Alexander Fleury	Bowie	F. De Marr

#### St. George's Day Dinner: One Day Early

The Society will depart from tradition slightly this year in that the 1982 St. George's Day Dinner will actually be a St. George's Eve Dinner. Because of scheduling conflicts, the dinner, which will celebrate the 286th anniversary of our county's founding, will be held on Thursday, April 22, one day earlier than usual. The place

"A County by the Name of Prince Georges..."

**NEWS AND NOTES FROM**  
**The Prince George's County**  
**Historical Society**

To the Worshipfull the Justices of Charles County--

Whereas an Act of Assembly made at the Port Annapolis the Eighth day of May last past Intituled an Act for the Division and Regulating severall Countyes within this Province and Constituting a County by the name of Prince Georges County within the same Province;-- And whereas the sd. Act of Assembly for the division of the sd. Countyes did nominate & appoint Mr. Robert Mason & Mr. James Keech for St. Maryes County Mr. John Bayne & Mr. James Bigger for Charles County Mr. William Hutchison & Mr., Thomas Greenfeild for Prince Georges County:--

In Obedience thereunto wee John Bayne William Hutchison & Thomas Greenfeild having mett this day for the dividing Prince Georges County from Charles County did call before us Edward Batson Surveyor of Calvert County and Joseph Manning Surveyor of Charles County and did Cause them to begin the sd. division at two bounded red oakes & one Spanish oake standing on a stony knowle being markt with thirty two notches each and standing neare the head of Mattawoman maine branch and from thence running with a line of double markt trees South fifty nine degrees Easterly to three bounded white Oakes Each markt with thirty two notches standing at the head

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

of the Northermost maine branch of Swanstones Creeke being neare the Coach Road; Which wee doe Esteeme & declare to bee the divisionall line afsd. of the sd. Countyes. In testimony whereof wee have hereunto subscribed our names this fourteenth day of Aprill 1696

Jon. Bayne  
Will. Hutchison  
Thos. Greenfeild

The new county lay between the Patuxent and Potomac Rivers and stretched northward and westward as far as Maryland did. It was not until 1748--when Frederick County was erected--that Western Maryland was taken from Prince George's County. With the founding of Frederick County, our northern boundary became basically what it is today, save for the cession of land in 1790 to form part of the District of Columbia. Montgomery County, now our northern neighbor, was not carved out of southern Frederick County until 1776.

Editor's note: Thanks to Ashby Canter for sending along a copy of this surveyor's report...

### The St. George's Day Dinner

Members and friends of the Prince George's County Historical Society will celebrate the 286th anniversary of our county's founding at the 9th annual St. George's Day Dinner, to be held this year on St. George's Eve, April 22, at the University of Maryland's Center for Adult Education. A pre-dinner reception will begin at 6:30, with dinner at 7:30. After the dinner, the Society will honor several individuals and organizations for their work toward the preservation of the county's heritage with the presentation of the St. George's Day Awards. The evening will conclude with the induction of Charles Benedict Calvert--Congressman agriculturalist, and educator--into the Hall of Fame of Prince George's County. The Hall of Fame will cosponsor the dinner with the Society.

Invitations to the St. George's Day Dinner were mailed to Society members several weeks ago and reservations should be made by April 13. No tickets will be sold at the door. For further information, contact Corresponding Secretary Edith Bagot at 927-3632.

### The May Meeting

The Christian Heurich mansion, headquarters of the Columbia Historical Society on Dupont Circle, N.W. will be the site of the May meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society. Treasurer Herb Embrey has arranged round trip bus transportation from Riversdale for those who would like to travel together. Cost is only \$5.00, and checks should be made out to the Society and mailed to Herb by May 1 at 10414 Tullymore Dr., Adelphi, Md. 20783. Please let us know before that date, however, if you plan to ride the bus. Call Herb at 434-2958 or Edith Bagot at 927-3632 by St. George's Day (April 23) if you plan to take the bus. The bus will leave at 1 p.m. and the meeting will begin at 2 o'clock.

### The Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage

Maryland's eagerly-awaited annual house and garden tour will return to Prince George's County this year on Saturday, April 24. Fourteen sites, including old favorites and first-timers, will be featured. Hours of the tour will be from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. A \$10.00 ticket (which may be purchased at any site) will serve as admission to all. Individual house tickets, if preferred, may be purchased for \$3.00.

Ten homes are on the tour in Prince George's County this year, representing architectural styles which range from the 18th century to contemporary. Three fine old homes in Hyattsville are included, presenting elements of 19th century styles and craftsmanship that are disappearing all too quickly. This year's sites include:

Montpelier in Laurel  
Montpelier Cultural Arts Center  
Seidenspinner House in College Heights Estates  
Rossborough Inn at the University of Maryland  
Magruder House in Bladensburg  
Woodlawn in Largo  
St. Barnabas Church, Leeland  
Belair Stables in Bowie (a museum of racing)

Holy Trinity Church, Collington  
Marietta in Glenn Dale  
Prospect Hill at the Glenn Dale Country Club,  
and the three Hyattsville homes at 4106 and 4110 Gallatin Street and 4200 Decatur Street.

Lunch will be served at a price of \$4.50 at the Rossborough Inn. A map directing tour-goers to each site will be available at the first site you visit.

The Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage does not come to any one county very often. Prince George's County is fortunate to be on the tour so soon after its last visit, which featured homes and sites in the southern part of the county. Be sure to take advantage of this fine opportunity to explore Prince George's County's historical and architectural heritage.

### Springtime Open House

As if the Maryland House and Garden Tour were not enough, there will be even more to see and do that very same weekend and the weekend after.

The Magruder House in Bladensburg (also on the tour Saturday) will be open again from 1 to 5 P.m. on Sunday, April 25. Newly restored, this 1740's structure was the subject of last month's lecture and slide show. There will be no admission charge on Sunday. The house is located on Annapolis Road (Route 450) at Kenilworth Avenue.

Riversdale, the Calvert mansion in Riverdale, will be open on Saturday and Sunday, May 1 and 2, from 1 to 5 each day. Inside the house will be a display of antique dolls and quilts, and outside will be a display of antique agricultural tools and even animals for the children, provided by the University of Maryland College of Agriculture. The house tour will cost \$1.00 for children and 50¢ for children, while admission to the grounds is free. Riversdale is located at 4811 Riverdale Road in Riverdale.

On Saturday and Sunday April 24 and 25 the Surratt House in Clinton will be open from noon to 4 p.m. A Victorian Housecleaning Display will be featured in this open house. For further information call 868-1121.

April 24 will also be National Colonial Farm Day at the farm on Bryan Point Road in Accokeek. There will be numerous demonstrations and exhibits of 18th century agricultural and domestic life, from 1 to 4:30 in the afternoon. There will be no admission charge, and food and refreshments will be on sale. Call 301-283-2113 for more information.

And returning to the far northwestern corner of the county, the tour-goer will find the 10th annual Takoma Park House and Garden on the afternoon of Sunday, May 2. Tickets and information may be had by calling 270-4048.

### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

		<u>Sponsor</u>
Mr. & Mrs. Frank S. Shaffer, Jr.	University Park	F. De Marr
Virginia L. Thomas	Lanham	F. De Marr
Roger Montcalm	Bowie	J. Lautz, H. Embrey
William K. Cooper	Hyattsville	J. Lautz, H. Embrey
Eugenia Calvert Holland	Baltimore	P. Clagett
Mr. & Mrs. Clark Naylor	University Park	L. Tatspaugh
Bettie G. Denson	Greenbelt	G. Myers
Frank J. Guzy	Oxon Hill	F. De Marr

We are also very happy to announce another Life Member,  
Eunice E. Burdette, of Boonsboro

### Falling Prices

My good Customers, and all Others, inclined to be such, may, if they please, take Notice that as our Paper Currency is now of greater Value, and much scarcer, than when this Gazette was first published, (altho' I hope the Gazette has mended in Proportion), that after Numb. 390, which will compleat seven Years and an Half from its first Publication, and finish with the Month of October, They shall not be charged any more than Twelve Shillings and Six Pence a Year, instead of Fourteen, as it has been heretofore Seal'd and Directed.--Jonas Green.

--from the Maryland Gazette, September 21, 1752

The subscription price to News and Notes will remain the same.

### On the Run in Prince George's County

The Maryland Gazette of Thursday, September 14, 1752, brings us two very different advertisements that might both be titled "On the Run":

"RAN away from the Subscriber, on the 28th of August last, a Servant Man, named John Cooke, about 18 Years of Age, and came in last Spring with Capt. Coolidge, indented as a Gardener: He had on when he went away a blue Fearnathing Pea Jacket, a green, Ditto without Sleeves, an old Hat daub'd on the Crown with Red Paint, OsnabrigsTrowsers, and a Pair of Shoes, but no Stockings.

Whoever takes up and brings the Said Servant to his Master at Upper Marlborough, shall have Twenty Shillings Reward, besides what the Law allows.

--James Wardrop

James Wardrop, the subscriber whose gardener ran away, was one of the leading merchants of the county and the first known owner of the Buck House in Upper Marlboro, the dilapidated but once grand old home that sits next to the Schoolhouse Pond hidden from the rest of town by the new County Administration Building. John Cooke was not a slave, but an indentured servant. Because they could not afford the price of the passage across the Atlantic, many who wished to come to the New World had to agree to work as servants for a number of years upon their arrival. Single men came over like this; so too did single women; and even families with children. A common term of service was seven years, while children usually had to work until they were twenty-one. Passage across the ocean was quite expensive in colonial times--and the costs and difficulties of establishing a new life in Maryland were not inconsiderable either--so indentured servitude developed as a practical means to get people here and to provide them a livelihood and shelter in their first years in the New World.

In the February 1980 issue of News and Notes we published an advertisement from the Maryland Gazette of October 29, 1772, announcing the arrival of a ship at Bladensburg with "orderly and well-behaved" Scots who were to become indentured servants. In return for the passage to America, these Scots entered into a contract for their labor with the shipper, who sold those contracts to any who needed laborers. Certainly not a nice way to travel by modern standards, but the dream of freedom and land--even deferred--was a powerful lure. It appears that the deferring got to be a little too much for John Cooke.

While John Cooke was running, so were the horses. Organized horse racing has been a part of the Prince George's County scene, as this advertisement will attest, for many years:

"To be **Run for**,  
At Upper Marlborough, in Prince George's County,

On Tuesday the 17th of October next, the sum of Thirty Pounds Currency, by any Horse, Mare, or Gelding, carrying 126 lb. Weight; and to pay Thirty Shillings Entrance Money. And on Wednesday, the 18th of October, will be run for, at the same place, Twenty Pounds Currency, to carry 126 lb. Weight, and pay Twenty Shillings Entrance: The winning Horse the Day before to be excepted. The Horses, &c. to be Entered each Day of Running, by 10 o' clock in the Forenoon, either with Benjamin Brooks or Benjamin Barry.

All Disputes, if any should arise, to be determined by Messieurs Clement Hill and Basil Waring."

--Alan Virta

### Charles Benedict Calvert.

The contributions of Charles Benedict Calvert (1808-1864), Congressman, patron of agriculture, and college founder, will be recognized by the Hall of Fame, Prince George's County, Maryland, Inc., at the annual St. George's Day Dinner on April 22.

Calvert, born at the family estate, Riversdale, was educated at the University of Virginia. A planter and experimental farmer, he was the prime mover behind the creation of the Maryland Agricultural College, now the University of Maryland, College Park. He was an officer in both national and local agricultural societies and served briefly in the Maryland legislature.

A Unionist during the Civil War, Charles Benedict Calvert was elected to represent Southern Maryland in Congress in 1861 and served one term. While a member of the House, he was assigned to the Committee on Agriculture, where he pushed hard for the creation of a cabinet-level department specifically for agriculture, now the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

A formal portrait of Calvert will be unveiled following the dinner by Edgar Merkle, Chairman of the Hall of Fame. Calvert's portrait will join the other individuals previously honored by the Hall of Fame over the past four years: Pierre L'Enfant, creator of the plan for the Capital City of Washington and for many years a resident of this county; Thomas John Claggett, the first Episcopal Bishop consecrated in America; John Carroll, the first Bishop of the Roman Catholic Church in America; John Rogers, lawyer and patriot of Upper Marlboro who sat in the Continental Congress; Dr. William Beanes, whose safe release Francis Scott Key was seeking when he penned the Star Spangled Banner aboard a British warship in Baltimore harbor in 1814; and Gabriel Duvall, U.S. Supreme Court Justice and Comptroller of the U.S. Treasury.

For more information concerning the Hall of Fame, contact Edgar Merkle at 927-2548.

### The Prince George's County Historical Society

Subscription to this newsletter is included in the annual dues of \$5.00. Contact the Society at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Md. 20737.

President: Frederick S. De Marr

Treasurer: Herb Embrey

Corr. Sec.: Edith Bagot

Editor: Alan Virta (474-7524)

**NEWS AND NOTES FROM**  
**The Prince George's County**  
**Historical Society**

## The May Meetings The Christian Heurich Mansion

The Christian Heurich mansion, a National Register Landmark in Washington, D.C., will be the scene of the next meeting of the Prince George s County Historical Society on Saturday, May 8, at 2 p.m. The mansion has been the home of the Columbia Historical Society since 1955, when Mrs. Christian Heurich donated the mansion to the society, and is largely unchanged from its original late Victorian condition.

Christian Heurich was a businessman and a brewer, and many remember his brewery which stood about where the Kennedy Center is today. He built his 30-room house on Dupont Circle between 1892 and 1894 using poured concrete. There is, according to the Columbia Historical Society, virtually no structural use of wood in the building. The architectural features of the home--the ornamental woodworking, carved and cast plaster ornamentation, painted ceilings, stenciled wall surfaces, and stone carvings-are breathtaking, and the garden is one of the loveliest spots in the city of Washington. Most of the home's original furniture is in place.

Officers of the Columbia Historical Society will present a program about Mr. Heurich and his house and will lead a tour of the mansion. Refreshments will be served. The program begins at 2 p.m. A bus will leave from Riversdale, the Calvert mansion on Riverdale Road, at 1 p.m. and return after the meeting. Cost for round trip transportation is only \$5.00. There is still room for more passengers. Call Society Treasurer Herb Embrey at 434-2958 or Corresponding Secretary Edith Bagot at 927-3632 to make your reservations. Those planning to provide their own transportation should be aware that the Christian Heurich mansion is very close to the Dupont Circle station of METRO's Red Line.

Plan to join us in our visit to one of Washington's grandest mansions. The home is located at 1307 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W. As always, guests are welcome.

The June Meeting--June 12 at Riversdale--Fred Tilp and Harry Jones On Steamboats

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

## The St. George's Day Awards

The Prince George's County Historical Society presented the St. George's Day Awards for 1982 to three individuals and five organizations at the St. George's Day Dinner on April 22. The largest crowd ever to attend a St. George's Day Dinner witnessed the presentation of the awards to:

Darlie Fay Norton of Suitland, for her history of Suitland, 1867-1976, published during the Bicentennial year/

Raleigh Donley, Jr. of College Park, for his history of one of Washington's oldest suburbs, his home town of Cottage City, also published during the Bicentennial year.

Dr. Phyllis Sparks of University Park, for her history of the growth and development of University Park.

Town of Riverdale, Maryland, for the printed history commemorating its 50th anniversary and the activities surrounding its golden year.

Vestry of King George's Parish, for the restoration they have undertaken over a period of many years in their church, St. John's at Broad Creek (Episcopal), one of the county's colonial treasures.

Historic Sites and Districts Plan Citizens Advisory Committee which drafted the recently adopted master plan for historic preservation in Prince George's County, landmark legislation in the effort to save our county's architectural heritage.

Prince George's Heritage, Inc., the corporate identity of the Prince George's County Committee of the Maryland Historical Trust, which under the leadership of Sarah Walton successfully undertook to save the Magruder House in Bladensburg.

Millard T. Charlton and Associates of Washington, D.C., an accounting firm, which made the restoration of the Magruder House possible by providing most of the funding required to match a State restoration grant and entering into a long-term lease of the structure as an office.

Like last year, the St. George's Day Dinner was cosponsored by the Hall of Fame, Prince George's County, Inc., which inducted Charles Benedict Calvert (1808-1864) into the Hall. Numerous Calvert descendants from Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and Connecticut were present at the dinner. A fine portrait of Mr. Calvert, agriculturalist, educator, and statesman, is now part of the Hall of Fame collection and will be placed in the county courthouse. Susan Pearl of the History Division, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, presented the story of Mr. Calvert's life.

## The Sanborn Maps of Prince George's County

Two local tragedies within the past two months provide vivid examples of how powerful and destructive uncontrolled fire can be. A million-dollar blaze gutted the University of Maryland's Grand Ballroom in early March, while on April 4 fire completely destroyed the Filene Center for the Performing Arts at Wolf Trap Farm Park in Virginia. The cost to rebuild the latter facility is estimated to be 17 million dollars. Despite the dramatic nature of these incidents--as well as the terrible series of fatal hotel fires which plagued the nation last year—it must be conceded that fire protection is better than it ever has been in the United States. Probably never again will any city experience the widespread fire destruction such as that suffered by Chicago in 1871 and Baltimore in 1904. Forests will always be vulnerable, and the Los Angeles area, with its unique topography and vegetation, will continue to be plagued by wide ranging brush fires--but by and large, Americans are safer in their homes from fire than they ever have been.

The reasons for the safer situation today are many. Improved technology of firefighting, quicker response time by fire departments, safer building practices, and stricter fire codes come to mind immediately. The insurance industry, as one might expect, has been one of the principal forces working for greater fire safety. In an unexpected way, that industry's work now provides historians and preservationists with an important tool in the documentation of urban history.

For approximately 100 years--from the 1850's through the 1950's--one of the principal tools of the insurance trade was the fire insurance map. These maps were prepared for fire insurance companies and underwriters to provide detailed information on the buildings in urban areas--buildings which the companies insured or might be asked to insure. Fire insurance maps were not simply street maps like the maps most of us are familiar with; they were much more detailed. Typically they were drawn on sheets 21 x 25 inches in size at a scale of 50 feet to an inch. The outlines of buildings were represented, with building dimensions, building materials, building uses, street widths, hydrant and utility line locations, and a wealth of other information provided. Various symbols and abbreviations could tell the insurance agent that the building his client wished to have insured was, for example, two stories high, built of concrete block faced with brick, and occupied by a store on the first floor (with large storefront windows) and two residential units on the second, reached by an exterior set of stairs. Other symbols could tell the agent that the building had a wood shingle roof, a brick chimney, and a sprinkler system on the first floor. The more expensive the map, the more information it would provide. "Our maps are made for the purpose of showing at a glance the character of the fire insurance risks of all buildings," stated the surveyor's manual for one map-making company. "Our customers [the insurance agents] depend on the accuracy of our publications, and rely upon the information supplied, incurring large financial risks without making personal examinations of the properties." Today, historians and preservationists are finding them to be a gold mine of information about the buildings in our urban past.

Quite a few such fire insurance maps covering the urban and suburban areas of Prince George's County have been preserved. A recent publication of the Library of Congress--a hefty 700-page volume entitled Fire Insurance Maps in the Library of Congress (1981)--lists the Prince George's County maps held by that institution. Many of our towns are represented by at least one set of maps, and two--Hyattsville and Laurel--are represented by several sets spanning a long range of years, inviting fascinating comparisons and facilitating the study of the growth of those towns. The maps listed in this volume were published by the Sanborn Map Company of Pelham, N.Y., far and away the largest of America's fire insurance map makers. Walter W. Ristow, in an introduction to the volume, provides a fascinating history of the development and decline of the fire insurance map business. Fire insurance maps were being made for British insurers of American properties as early as the eighteenth century, although the maps did not really come into common usage in the industry in America until the middle years of the nineteenth. The production and use of fire insurance maps declined after World War II, however. Ristow quotes an INA librarian to explain why: "As the nation grew in all areas, keeping the maps up to date became cumbersome, time consuming, and expensive... [Furthermore] there is no need to maintain the wealth of detail about the small risk to forestall the possibility of catastrophe from fire. Inspection services maintained by fire insurance rating organizations and our own inspection services have proved adequate in the light of modern building construction, better fire codes, and improved fire protection methods."

The fire insurance map business, while diminished significantly from its heyday before World War II, is by no means dead. Corrections to old maps are sometimes ordered, and local governments and architectural and engineering firms often call for maps with the same information--not for insurance purposes, but for other reasons. The use of the old maps is increasing every day, however--not by the insurance industry, for whom they now have little value, but to those who are studying the history of our towns and cities.

--Alan Virta

#### Fire Insurance Maps of Prince George's County in the Library of Congress

Berwin [sic]	May 1930	4 sheets
Brentwood	July 1922	4 sheets
Capitol Heights	April 1927	4 sheets
Hyattsville	July 1906	5 sheets
	June 1911	6 sheets
	Aug. 1922	10 sheets
	May 1933	11 sheets
	July 1897	5 sheets
Laurel	Feb. 1903	7 sheets
	Sept. 1908	7 sheets
	Jan. 1974	12 sheets
	April 1923	Includes Savage 14 sheets
	April 1931 to April 1960	Includes Savage 14 sheets'
Mount Ranier	Jan. 1921	6 sheets

Riverdale  
Upper Marlboro  
Washington, D. C.

Jan. 1924  
July 1949

7 sheets  
4 sheets

1927-1928. v. 6. Suburban volume of Prince George's County. Bound.

1939. v. 2. Includes Mount Ranier, Brentwood, North Brentwood, Cottage City, Colmar Manor, Hyattsville, Riverdale, Berwyn Heights, Edmonston, University Park Greenbelt, College Heights Estates, College Park, Lakeland, Berwyn, Branchville, Daniel Park, Bladensburg, Edmonston, Cheverly, Fairmount Heights, Seat Pleasant, Capitol Heights, Carmody Hills, Maryland Park, Greater Capitol Heights, Bradbury Heights and Boulevard Heights. Washington Surban, Prince George's County. Bound.

1927-April 1959. Vol 1 E. "Small parts of Prince George's County."

1939-May 1959. Vol. 4, Includes incorporated towns of Bladensburg, Capitol Heights, Cheverly Heights [sic], Edmonston, Fairmount Heights, Landover Hills, Riverdale, Seat Pleasant and District Heights. Unincorporated towns of Beaver Heights, Bradbury Heights, Carmody Hills, East Pines, East Riverdale, Greater Capitol Heights, Maryland Park, Radiant Valley, Riverdale Heights, Villa Heights, Boulevard Heights, Landover, Suitland, Green Valley, Marlow Heights and Hillcrest Heights.

The last two listed sets of maps and the last map listed for Laurel--all indicating a span of several years--are corrected maps. The Sanborn company regularly would issue stick-on or paste-on corrections which could be applied to the earlier base maps. These three map sets are corrected sets.

A number of years ago the Library of Congress gave its duplicate fire insurance maps of Maryland to the University of Maryland's Geography Department. Researchers who would find College Park more convenient than the Library of Congress should check with the University to see how many of these maps are held there on campus.

Are there any old, unused fire insurance maps of Prince George's County in any of our insurance agencies today? If so, the Society would like to hear from you. Contact President Fred De Marr at 277-0711 or newsletter editor Alan Virta at 474-7524.

#### Events in May to Note

Saturday, May 8 Marlborough Day in Upper Marlboro, all afternoon. Exhibits, games, food, crafts, music, an historical walking tour, and fun for children and adults

Sunday, May 9, Hyattsville House Tour from 1 to 5 p.m. More of old Hyattsville's fine old 19th century and early 20th century homes will be open. Tickets and maps may be purchased at the old Pinkney Memorial Church, now the Church of the Open Bible, at 42nd, and Gallatin Streets.

#### A Call for Public Works.

In the Prince Georgian of January 14, 1870, there appeared this letter from a correspondent signed "Sam":

"...The county should own horses, carts, and all other necessary implements to 'keep up' the roads and bridges, and place them in competent hands, to be ready in a moment's notice to repair the damage of a flood, or bear off any obstructions to the health of the road..."

This message in a county newspaper of more than a hundred years ago seems strange today, especially when we contemplate the huge budget the county's public works department now commands. Such was not the case one hundred years ago, however. Property owners were expected to assist in the maintenance of roads running through or along their properties, major projects were contracted out. We are not sure who "Sam" was, but suspect he was Col. Samuel Taylor Suit of Suitland. In his announcement of candidacy for the State Senate three years later, he called upon other "Internal Improvements men" to join him in office. Col. Suit was elected to the State Senate in 1873. The advertisement announcing his candidacy can be found in the Prince Georgian of March 21, 1873.



## NEWS AND NOTES FROM **The Prince George's County Historical Society**

The county's public works expenditures did increase during the last part of the 19th century, if we can believe the complaint of county politicians in 1909. In the Baltimore Sun of October 15, 1909, the Democrats charged that under Republican rule in Upper Marlboro, "the hands employed on the public roads were legion. . ."

### The Prince George's County-Historical Society

The annual membership dues of \$5.00 include a subscription to this monthly newsletter. For membership information, contact the Society at P.O. Box 149 Riverdale, Maryland 20737.

President: Frederick S. De Marr

Treasurer: Herb Embrey

Corr. Sec.: Edith Bagot

Editor: Alan Virta (474-7524)

Vol. X, no, 6 June 1982

### The June Meeting: Tidewater History, on June 12

On Saturday, June 12, Fred Tilp and Harry Jones will combine forces to present a slide-show entitled "The Tidewater History of Prince George's County and parts of Charles; from Bladensburg to Bull Town Cove and from Laurel to Chalk Point" at the June meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society.

Fred Tilp needs no introduction to members of our Society, as he attends meetings regularly and spoke to us once before. A native of Bladensburg, he is an architect in Alexandria, Va., who long has been interested in the history of our rivers and everything that goes on near, on, or under the water. Harry Jones will be speaking to us for the first time. A resident of Waldorf, in our southern neighbor, Charles County, he is a member of the Steamship Historical Society and an expert on Chesapeake Bay steamboats. Together they will look at Prince George's County's rivers--the Patuxent, Potomac, Anacostia, and their tributaries--and present an interesting, informative, and sometimes light-hearted look at 300 years of life on these rivers. Those who have seen a slideshow that Fred Tilp has had a hand in know to expect some surprises.

The meeting will begin at 2 p.m. Guests are welcome. Riversdale, the Calvert mansion in Riverdale, is located at 4811 Riverdale Road, between Route One and Kenilworth Avenue. Refreshments will be served after the meeting.

The June meeting will be the last meeting until September. plan to join us on June 12.

### More Events in June

June 6, 11, 20 & 27: Tours of Belair Stables Museum, 12207, Tulip Grove Dr., Bowie. 1 to 4 p.m. Free.  
Phone: 262-6200

June 19: A talk on 18th century medicine by Dr, John Victor, at the National Colonial Farm, Accokeek. 1 to 4 p.m. (301) 283-2113

June 25: Summer Concert at Montpelier. Free 7:30. 779-2011.

June 25-27 Upper Marlboro Antique Show, Marlboro Tobacco Market. 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.  
except Sundays when closes at 5. Admission fee Phone: 294-6630  
June 27: \_\_\_\_\_ Victorian Wedding Reception, Surratt House. 868-1121.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

## Memories of Steamboats

Margaret Mullikin Marshall of Laurel kindly responded to the request for recollections of travel by steamboat published in News and Notes a few months ago with this interesting account of a trip home from school:

"In the fall of 1916, I reluctantly entered St. Mary's Female Seminary, St. Mary's City, Md., where the only public transportation was by steamboat. However, to enter me my parents drove me there in the family 1914 Ford--but my trunk traveled by boat.

"There were two steamboats which came to Brome's Wharf at St. Mary's City. The Northumberland and The Three Rivers, which took its name from the rivers it served--the Potomac, St. Mary's, and Patuxent.

"My first trip home for the Christmas vacation was by boat to Baltimore. There would be about a dozen St. Mary's girls on board for the trip to Baltimore. We thoroughly enjoyed the overnight trip. The meals were very good and the cabins comfortable, but we were too excited to do much sleeping.

"Arriving Baltimore, I went to Union Station the Pennsylvania Rail Road, buying a ticket to Bowie, even tho' my home was Collington and on the Pope's Creek Line, which ran trains only in the early morning and late afternoon. At Bowie, a member of the family met me and so for the last few miles of my trip home, was by horse and buggy. My father, Robert Lee Mullikin, drove his Ford to work. So for a trip that now takes about 2 hours by car (the boats don't operate any more) in 1916 took almost 2 days."

--Margaret Mullikin Marshall

## Deaths of Two Members

We regret to inform the membership of the deaths of two members of the Prince George's County Historical Society.

Dr. Charles Proffer Saylor, of Adelphi, died at Holy Cross Hospital, Silver Spring, on April 27 after a stroke. A native of Camden, N.J., he earned both undergraduate and doctoral degrees in chemistry at Cornell University. In 1931 he joined the staff of the National Bureau of Standards and moved to this county. He retired in 1968. Dr. Saylor was a member of several scientific societies and of the Cosmos Club, besides our own organization. He is survived by his wife, Zella Saylor, a son, Dr. Dwight Saylor, and three grandchildren.

Levi F. ("Buck") Fleshman, Jr. died on April 28. Longtime residents of the Hyattsville area, he and Mrs. Fleshman recently moved to Middleburg, Md. In recent years the Fleshmans were engaged in the antiques business. Funeral services were held at St. Barnabas Leeland. Survivors include his wife, Barbara Nairn Fleshman, two sons Richard and Bruce Fleshman, and three brothers.

New Members: Their names will be published next month.

## The Boys in Blue in Prince George's County

Memorial Day was celebrated on May 31 this year, the nation's day to remember the departed veterans of America's wars. The President spoke at Arlington Cemetery, and parades were held in every state of the Union. Wreaths were laid at all the war memorials, and our veterans' graves were decorated with flowers. While Memorial Day has become for some just the third day of a three-day weekend, an extra day for recreation and travel, there still are many across the country who gather at the cemeteries and monuments for the traditional commemorations. Under the leadership of local chapters of the national veterans' organizations, Memorial Day still is celebrated with the ceremonies of old.

Decoration Day, as the holiday was once known, was first celebrated in 1868 by Union veterans as a tribute to their fallen comrades-in-arms. The Grand Army of the Republic--the national organization of Union veterans--organized the first commemoration, and at their behest May 30 gradually became a legal holiday in all of the Northern states. As the years went by, and particularly after America lost more sons in later wars, the scope of the holiday was broadened to honor the dead of all wars, and the name was changed to Memorial Day. Ironically, the

inspiration for floral tributes, which gave Decoration Day its name, came from the South. Tradition holds that the wife of General John A. Logan national commander of The G.A.R., was so moved by the sight of Southern children placing flowers on the graves of Confederate dead that she suggested to her husband that Union veterans be honored in a like manner.

The Grand Army of the Republic did not limit its activities to Decoration Day ceremonies, however. Nor was it primarily a social club. Rather, the G.A.R. became one of the most influential private organizations in the country. It lobbied the government aggressively on behalf of Union veterans and there is not a lobby in the country today that can claim more success: Veterans' pensions, aid to widows and orphans, assistance to disabled veterans, and veteran preference in federal hiring were all sought and attained by the G.A.R. Technically the organization was non-partisan, but the leadership and membership were overwhelmingly Republican. The Grand Army of the Republic possessed great influence and power within the Grand Old Party.

In Maryland, Union veterans formed local G.A.R. posts just like their counterparts in the Northern states, and by the late 1870's they had established a state organization. Federal records indicate that between 45 and 50 thousand Marylanders served in the Union forces during the war, but those numbers were not distributed evenly across the state. The Southern Maryland counties, including Prince George's, contributed few men to the Union cause. It is fair to say that the local population in Prince George's was divided on the question of Maryland's secession or continued loyalty to the Union, it must be conceded that there was little enthusiasm here for prosecuting a war against the Confederacy, even among the county's Unionists. Some Prince Georgians did take up arms for the Union, but the author knows of no accounting of them to this date. Needless to say, most wealthy slaveholding families, the leaders in county government and society, were either openly or covertly pro-Southern, and local lore is full of stories of the heroics of their sons who went South to fight for the Confederacy.

Nevertheless, the published records of the encampments (i.e. conventions) of the Maryland Department of the Grand Army of the Republic reveal that at least two local Grand Army posts were established in this county. One was short-lived; the other flourished for many years. The short-lived post was founded in 1889 in Laurel and was known as Ayres Post No. 47, named presumably for Gen. Romeyn B. Ayres who died in December of 1888. Ayres Post reported a membership of twenty in its first year, but disappeared from the G.A.R. rolls after that. James A. Clark, editor and proprietor of the newspaper the Free Quill, was post commander and James N. Knowles was listed as post delegate to the state encampment.

The other, long-lived post was founded the year before, in 1888, and was known as G.K. Warren Post No. 45, named for the Union officer who saved the Round Top for the Union at Gettysburg. Located in Hyattsville, the G.K. Warren Post stayed on the books until 1914. Compared to many of the posts in Baltimore and Western Maryland, G.K. Warren was a small post--its membership peaked at thirty in 1893--but it did provide the Maryland department with a state commander, Wallace A. Bartlett, in 1892.

Who were the men of G.K. Warren Post No. 45, G.A.R. the "boys in blue" of Prince George's County? The names of many of them appear in the published records of the state encampments. It will be the job of some researcher in the future to compare these names with the 1860 census (to see who were locals at the outbreak of the war), with the special 1890 census of Union veterans and widows (which names the regiment in which the soldiers served), and the 1900 regular census (which gives place of birth).

A preliminary educated guess can be made about their origins, however. A scan of the 1890 special census reveals that very few of the Union veterans then in the county served in Maryland regiments. This probably indicates that they were post-war immigrants to Prince George's County. Indeed, the county enjoyed a modest population boom in the decades after the Civil War. While our 1870 population of 21,000 was the same as it had been in 1790, by 1900 it had jumped to almost 30,000--or 40%. Much of this growth was due to immigration from the North--the "tolerant Northern farmers" of George Alfred Townsend's poem, "Upper Marlboro'." The distribution of the Union veterans, too, would indicate that many of them came here because of the county's proximity to Washington, D.C. Schedules in that special 1890 census do not appear for the Marlboro and Piscataway Districts, but 240 Union veterans (or widows) are listed on the schedules for the other election districts. Of those 240, half are found in Laurel, Hyattsville, and the Bladensburg and Vansville Districts, i.e. along the B & O rail line or adjacent to the District. Another sixty are found in Spaldings and Oxon Hill Districts, which border the District of Columbia on the south. The Union veterans, then, seem to have been heavily concentrated in the northern part of the county or along the District line, in a way the general population was

not—at least then. But the definitive word of the Union veterans' origins will come only after a veteran-by-veteran survey.

Printed below are the names of those members of Post No. 45 found in the published records of state encampments, 1889-1914. Those with Asterisks (\*) served as post commander, and those with death dates appeared in necrologies. A few local names (i.e. local at the time of the outbreak of the war) do appear. It should be noted that James A. Clark, the commander of the short-lived Laurel post, appears later as the Hyattsville post commander. The list below may be as complete as it ever will be, because Maryland G.A.R. headquarters burned in the great Baltimore fire of 1904 and all its records were destroyed.

Fred E. Bankhages  
Wallace A. Bartlett (d 1908)\*  
E.A. Barnard (d. 1890)  
Wilkerson Brashears  
Wallace Brewer\*  
Alonzo M. Buck\*  
Philip P. Castle  
James Albert Clark\*  
----- Dailey  
W.E. Dummer  
W.O. Eversfield (d. 1908)  
Edwin Frey  
William H. Fuller (d. 1892)  
Adam Geib\*  
C.G. Gordon (d. 1898.)  
F.J. Gramlich (d. 1896)\*  
William Giusta (sometimes Ginsta)\*  
C.T. Johnson\*  
William F. Johnson (d. 1902-03)  
R.W. Kerr\*  
Frank, A. Lancaster (d.1892)  
A. Lilley  
J.B. Littlewood\*  
J.L. McGee  
J.S. McFarland\*  
Oscar V. Mitchell\*  
David M. Nesbit\*  
W. H. Pride  
Thomas Rathbone\*  
Isaac B. Ruff (d. 1903)  
H. B., Summer  
George Tise\*

The following notice was published in the record of the 1909 state encampment:

"In Memoriam,

"It becomes the painful duty of the Department to announce the passing away by death of Past Department Commander Wallace A. Bartlett, at his home, Brentwood, Md., May 25, 1908.

"Comrade Bartlett was born in Warsaw, N Y., November 5, 1844. He enlisted in the Berdan Sharpshooters at Buffalo, and was wounded in the battle of the Wilderness and was taken prisoner. He was commissioned as Lieutenant while he was in prison; he was imprisoned at both Salisbury and Libby, and when exchanged was ordered to Texas as an officer of the 19th U.S. (Colored) Regiment and later was brevetted Captain. He served until the close of the war.

"Comrade Bartlett was elected Commander of the Department February 22, 1892, and served

one year. His administration of the affairs of the Department was very successful, the increase of the membership being large; high water mark being reached during his term of office.

"Comrade Bartlett was personally popular, and after retiring from his position always took an active interest in the welfare of the organization, and his passing away is regarded as a personal loss to his many friends and comrades."

Prince George's County's G.A.R. was small, compared to the organizations in Maryland's northern counties and even to the Eastern Shore. But given the Southern heritage of the county--not to mention the proximity of large and active posts in the District which very likely attracted members from this county--it is remarkable that the G.K. Warren Post flourished at all.

The story of a generation is found in the collected reports of the Maryland G.A.R. encampments. In the early years, the words and photos are of young men, active and vigorous, in the prime of life. As the years go by, the men in the photos age, and so do their words. The department commander made these comments in 1921:

"Out of the 50,000 Maryland boys who left their quiet homes watched by mothers, sisters, sweethearts, with tearful faces and throbbing hearts to the terrible experience of war--boys from the countryside, the village towns and cities--from the Alleghenies to the shores of the Atlantic--they went forth to fight the Nation's battles and brought back, crowned with victory, Old Glory, unstained and unsullied. We were nearly all of us, in our teens. Our faces were fair and smooth, our cheeks rosy with the fresh blood of youth. Now Comrades, over 46,000 of those boys of Maryland who fought bravely and well by our side, touching elbows, have passed over the River we must all ford in the very near future."

He paid further tribute to his comrades of old: "The boys who laid their all upon our country's altar to keep our beloved State--our Maryland--from being torn from the Union as a tiger might tear out the vitals of its victim; not only did they assist in saving Maryland, but also our country.

The men who made the nation Free,  
Who bore the Flag of Glory,  
Through battle blast to Victory,  
The uncrowned Kings of Storys."

The G.K. Warren Post No. 45, Hyattsville, helped preserve the memories of those "uncrowned Kings of Storys." The Maryland Department commander in 1903 was prophetic: "It is gratifying for us to know that neither we or our fallen comrades shall be forgotten by the people of the land.

--Alan Virta

Annual dues of \$5.00 include a subscription to this monthly newsletter. Write the Society at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Md. 20737

# News and Notes from The Prince George's County Historical Society

Vol. X, no. 7&8 July-August 1982

## Some Notes on Oxon Hill

An event of great importance in the community of Oxon Hill took place on May 1, 1982: the opening, for public use, of Oxon Hill Manor. Completed in 1929, this brick, neo-Georgian mansion contains 49 rooms and was designed by Jules-Henri de Sibour. Oxon Hill Manor was built for Sumner Welles, Assistant and Under Secretary of State in the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt, and it remained in the Welles family until 1952. The house and 55 acres were purchased by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission in 1976 and are now leased to Oxon Hill Manor Foundation, Inc., a citizens' group which is operating and restoring the mansion. The first floor is available for receptions, recitals, and the like, and a more elegant setting for such events cannot be found in Prince George's County. A spacious foyer, with a black and white marble floor and an elaborately carved mantle welcomes the visitor. Double oak doors open into a large, wood-paneled library. On the south side of the house is a grand ballroom. French doors overlook a terrace and gardens. Two other rooms on the first floor are open: a drawing room and a dining room containing eight large panels papered with hand painted Chinese watercolors. Oxon Hill Manor overlooks the Potomac River, and the view of the river from the west side of the house is spectacular. Oxon Hill Manor was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978.

Although the Present house known as Oxon Hill Manor was not built until the 1920's, the-land upon which it stands has been known as Oxon Hill Manor for more than two hundred years. Colonel John Addison came to Maryland about 1675 and acquired several plantations along the Potomac River. In 1767 his great-grandson, Thomas Addison, had much of the family land resurveyed and formally designated as Oxon Hill Manor. Thomas Addison lived in a brick house built about 1710 by his grandfather, Colonel Thomas Addison (the son of Colonel John Addison). That house, which stood not far from the present mansion, burned down in 1895. John Hanson of Maryland, first president of the United States under the Articles of Confederation, died at Oxon Hill Manor in 1783 and probably rests in the old cemetery not far from the Addison house.

Today the name Oxon Hill is applied not only to the manor which is the pride of the local community, but to a large surrounding area as well. Thousands of people claim Oxon Hill as their home and indeed, Oxon Hill is one of the most populous sections of Prince George's County. Curiously, though, little has been published of its history, save for the stories of some of the local churches and accounts of the Addisons, their homes and its 20th century successor.

How is Oxon Hill defined? Not easily, since there are no formal boundaries. Oxon Hill is not a municipality. It is a large area of land, of about 15 square miles, in that corner of Prince George's County defined by the Potomac River and the District line. There is an election district—the Twelfth--named Oxon Hill, but it includes areas not considered part of Oxon Hill, and leaves out others which long have been considered part of that locality. There is also a postal delivery zone--zip code 20745--served by a post office named Oxon Hill, but it too fails to encompass all that land known as Oxon Hill. The postal authorities learned how attached the local citizenry is to the name Oxon Hill when they announced last year that all parts of zip code 20744 should be addressed as Fort Washington, since the mail for that zip code comes through the Fort Washington post office. The outraged inhabitants of the northern part of zip code 20744 convinced the post office that they lived in Oxon Hill, whatever their zip code, and Oxon Hill their address remains.

To describe the area of Oxon Hill it is best to start with the easily defined boundaries. The easiest is its western limits the Potomac River. On the north, most would agree that the District of Columbia's southern boundary is the line, although some of the proud citizens of the incorporated municipality of Forest Heights might insist that they

## **PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

are no longer part of

**ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY. APRIL 23,1696**

Oxon Hill. Historically,

though, they are certainly part of greater Oxon Hill.

On the east, the marking of boundaries becomes more difficult. The communities of Hillcrest Heights, Marlow Heights, Temple Hills, Camp Springs and Clinton (proceeding from north to south) all lie to the east of Oxon Hill, but where are the precise lines? There are none. Wheeler Road is the eastern boundary of zip code 20745, but some places on the other side of that road consider themselves part of Oxon Hill, too. Roughly speaking, though, the eastern boundary of Oxon Hill runs from the District line southeast with Wheeler Road to the Beltway and then follows an imaginary, zig-zagging north-south line that begins somewhere not far to the east of Rosecroft Raceway.

The southern boundary of Oxon Hill presents the most difficulties, for there are small, but stubborn communities that steadfastly refuse to surrender their identities even though they are told that they are part of greater Oxon Hill. Broad Creek is one of these. So is Silesia, so is Friendly, and so is Chapel Hill. New residential communities in these areas may willingly accept the address Oxon Hill, but the older places resist. It certainly is not our intention to decide the issue. But somewhere down around a line drawn east and west from the mouth of Broad Creek the motorist speeding south on Indian Head Highway passes from greater Oxon Hill into greater Fort Washington.

This description of Oxon Hill should not be concluded without explaining the source of the name. "Oxon" has been part of place names of the vicinity since the 17th century. The stream which runs along the District line was known as Oxon Run before either the District or Prince George's County were erected, and it bears that name in the 17th century land records. Most believe that the Addisons, who came to the area in the 17th century, were the source of the name. They were a well-placed family in England, and some of them attended Oxford University whose students were called Oxonians: hence the name Oxon, given in honor of their university. Sometime in the 18th century--even before the formal designation in 1767--the Addison home became known as Oxon Hill Manor, named for the high hill on which it sat, above Oxon Run.

As the years went by, Oxon became a part of more place names. The ferry to Alexandria was sometimes called the Oxon Ferry. In 1775, when the "hundred" was still the unit of government under the county, a new hundred, called Oxon Hundred, was established, lying below the Anacostia River. But the combination of Oxon and Hill became the most used. After the Civil War a post office named Oxon Hill was established near the crossing of St. Barnabas Road and Brinkley-Oxon Hill Roads. The Oxon Hill election district, extending from the District line South to Allentown and Tucker Roads, was created and named a few years later, in the 1870s. Schools, churches, businesses, and other institutions began to include Oxon Hill in their names as the 19th century drew to a close and the 20th advanced. Thus did that large area--parts of it miles away from the Oxon Hill Manor of the Addisons--become, over the years, "Oxon Hill."

Printed below is an edited transcript of an informal after-dinner talk on the history of Oxon Hill given to the Oxon Hill Kiwanis Club by Alan Virta in October 1981. It does not pretend to be a formal history of Oxon Hill, but merely a few words about certain aspects of Oxon Hill's history, chronologically arranged. Oxon Hill today is a large, bustling suburban area of residential communities, businesses churches, schools, associations, and many other activities. If it has a center, or a "downtown," it is probably that area around the triangle formed by Bock, St. Barnabas and Oxon Hill Roads. Indian Head Highway is its major north-south artery; and the Beltway carries commuters across its top on the way toward Virginia or the more easterly sections of this county. Oxon Hill has changed greatly in the 300 years that the name Oxon has been associated with the vicinity. This talk describes some of the differences between then and now.

--Alan Virta

### Some Words About Oxon Hill

Let's begin long before the name Oxon Hill ever came onto-the scene.

We have to go back about 10,000 years--that's when archeologists say the first Indians arrived in Maryland. We don't know too much about those first inhabitants, for only a few artifacts have been dug up here and there around the state. It is not until the 1500s when, Europeans, started poking around these parts, that we know much about the Indians at all.

Columbus, of course, discovered America, the New World. John Cabot, a few years later, sailed far enough north to discover the North American continent. Verrazano might have been the first to see the Chesapeake Bay. We do know that the Spanish--from Florida and the Caribbean---explored the Maryland area. Their name for the Potomac River was Rio de Espiritu Santo. The first European, however, to leave documentary evidence of having actually sailed up the Potomac River as far as Oxon Hill is Captain John Smith of Virginia. John Smith came here in 1608 and sailed up the river as far as Great Falls. He wrote a good deal about the Indians.

The Indians who occupied Oxon Hill in Smith's time were part of the Piscataway Confederacy. That confederacy covered most of Southern Maryland below the Anacostia River, particularly on the western side of the peninsula. These Indians lived in settled villages along streams and creeks. They grew a variety of crops, hunted and fished. They were not the nomadic type of Indians you associate with the Western states. Their homes were not tipis, but were similar to wigwams: oval-shaped, built of light poles, bent over, and covered with bark or rush mats. There were numerous small settlements around, and certainly must have been some at some time on Oxon Run and Henson Branch. The two closest major Indian towns were Moyaone, on Piscataway Creek south of here, and Nacostin, on the Anacostia River,

The Nacostin Indians began trading with the Virginians after Smith's first voyage up here in 1608, 26 years before the colony of Maryland was established. Sometimes relations with the Virginians were peaceful, sometimes unfriendly. In 1622, after the terrible massacre of the settlers down there, the surviving Virginians needed corn, so they sent an expedition up to Nacostin, burnt the town, and took what they needed. The Nacostins retaliated in April 1623. They captured trader Henry Spelman when he visited them, murdered him and 19 of his party. One of his traders, named Henry Fleet, was not murdered but held captive 5 years. Fleet wrote a particularly gruesome account of the incident after his release, in which he claimed that Henry Spelman's head was seen to roll down the river bank.

In the year 1634 the situation changed, for in that year the first settlers came from England to found the Maryland colony. The Marylanders, in contrast to their Virginia neighbors, established peaceful relations with the Indians. By the 1660's we start seeing plantations reaching up the Potomac as far as Oxon Hill, and even up the Anacostia a ways. These plantations, in those early years, were not the Gone-With-The-Wind, moonlight and magnolia type of plantations. They were often crude and isolated homesteads. In another 20 years, however---by the 1680s and 90s--settlers began to move inland along Oxon Run and Henson Creeks. I should add that roads were practically non-existent in those early colonial days. Waterways were the principal means of transportation. By the way, some of the names that the English settlers brought to this area are still with us today. Two examples: in 1673 Nicholas Proddy patented a plantation called Barnaby, and George Thompson patented Blue Plains in 1662.

Those early Marylanders of the 17th century signed many treaties with the Indians. It is interesting to read some of the provisions:

“If an Indian kill an Englishman he shall dye for it.

“For as much as the English cannot easily distinguish one Indian from another that noe Indian shall come into any English plantacon painted and that all the Indians shall be bound to call a loude before they come within three hundred paces of any English mans cleare ground and lay down their armes whether gun Bowe or arrows.

“The priviledge of hunting Crabbing fishing and fowling shall be preserved to the Indians inviolably.

“That every Indian that killeth or stealeth A Hogge calfe or other beaste, or other goods shall undergoe the same punishment that an Englishman does for the same offences.

“In case any servants or Slaves run away from their Masters and come to any of the Indian townes--that the said Indians shall apprehend them and bring them to the next English plantacon.”

In the latter part of the 1600s when Englishmen first began settling in Oxon Hill, there still were a good number of Indians around. By 1700, however, most of them had moved away.

Life was not easy in 17th century Oxon Hill. Neighbors were often separated by miles of woods. Let me read to you an excerpt from a jury report in 1664. The jury was instructed to investigate the death of a servant named

Thomas Greenhill. Now this was a Charles County jury. In 1664, Prince George's County had not been established yet, and Oxon Hill was still part of Charles County. I don't know if this particular case happened up here in Oxon Hill or down in what is still Charles County today--although I suspect it took place down there. Nevertheless, it gives you a good picture of what life--and death--was like back then.

“Thomas Abbot Sworne and Examined in the face of the Jury sayeth as Concerning the death of a saruant of Mr. Francis Popes that upon the seventeenth day of this-present mounth Jan. 1664 that Thomas Greenhill was faling a tree, and the Neger of Mr. Popes and this deponent a-falling of another. And Thomas Greenhill tree fell part of the way and lodged upon an other oake. Then sayd Tho. Abbot to the-Negro, let us go looke sum more trees and fall them out of the ground and let Thomas Greenhill Lope them. And Thomas Abbot went further with his Axe upon his shoulder. So the negro standing by the stompe of the other tree that Thomas Abbot fell sayd hearing of the tree crake, Lord bless us what ayleth the boy. So Thomas Abbot Ran and seeing the boy lying on the ground lifted him up thinking that the blood might strangle hime and say, for Christ sake Thomas Greenhill speake, but he could not.

“The Verdict of the Jurie ... having searched out to the utmost of our powers and knowledges to know how Tho Greenhill Came to his death wee find that hee came accidentallie and, for want of Care the tree fell on him and killed him.”

At this point I should interject a word about servants and slaves. Their contribution to the building of Prince George's County cannot be overstated. Africans and their descendants were slaves for life unless freed by their masters, which was rare in this county. Servants worked for a fixed term of several years after which they were freed. Those in Great Britain and Ireland who wanted to come to Maryland but could not afford the passage could contract their labor for a few years in return for the trip and food and shelter while in servitude. Whole families often came over this way. The ancestors of many prominent families came over here not as wealthy gentry but as servants, instead.

As the 18th century came and the years went by, more and more of this area was settled. The family that brought the name Oxon Hill to this area came in the late 1600s--that was the Addison family. The Addisons were granted land along the Potomac River. One of their plantations was at the mouth of a stream called Oxon Run, the site of the present Oxon Hill Manor. The Addisons were a well-to-do family in England, and several of them attended Oxford University. Students at Oxford were called Oxonians, so the story goes that the Addisons named the stream and later their home in honor of their university, Oxon Run and Oxon Hill. By the way, the first Addison here, Col. John Addison, was the uncle of the famous essayist Joseph Addison. If you can remember as far back as your last English literature course, you will remember that Joseph Addison wrote for the Tatler and Spectator magazines. In 1710 Thomas Addison built a fine brick plantation house over-looking the Potomac River and Oxon Run, a house which later became known as Oxon Hill Manor. It was destroyed by fire in 1895. In the late 1920's Sumner Welles, a government official in the FDR administrations, bought the property and built the present house known as Oxon Hill Manor.

There were a good many other plantations in this vicinity, but I won't recite their names this evening. Suffice it to say that this Oxon Hill area became an agricultural area during the 1700s. There were really no towns. There was one small village, called Aire, which was located on Broad Creek not far from old St. John's Church. Not much was there besides a tavern, tobacco warehouse, stocks, and whipping post, and a shipbuilding business at one time. Of course, Alexandria was right across the river, and local people probably did a good deal of their business there. Alexandria was settled in 1730.

It was not until the 1800's that we begin to see an Oxon Hill that some of us might recognize. Many of the major roads of today began to take shape then: Oxon Hill Road, Livingston Road, Brinkley Road for example. The Historical Society has two maps from the middle to late 19th century that show Oxon Hill in some detail. It is fascinating to compare them to modern maps. One of those maps is from 1862, the other from 1878. The triangle formed by Oxon Hill Road, Bock Road and St. Barnabas Road is there on those maps. We can see churches, stores, a Grange Hall, and a post office--known as Oxon Hill. That post office, with the name this entire vicinity would gradually adopt, was established shortly after the Civil War. The first St. Ignatius Church is on the map. It was built in 1849, the predecessor to the present building. St. Barnabas Church is also on the maps. That building dates from 1851, although earlier buildings preceded it.

At the time of the Civil War, the citizens of Maryland were bitterly divided over the question of Union or secession. This area of Prince George's County, though, was mainly Southern-sympathizing --after all there were more slaves in Oxon Hill at the outbreak of the war than white citizens. Nevertheless, there were still a few Unionists around. One of them was one of Oxon Hill's most prominent citizens, Dr. John H. Bayne. Dr. Bayne lived at Salubria, a house on Oxon Hill Road right across from Oxon Hill Manor. The house is still owned by his descendants. Dr. Bayne was a State Senator at the time of the Civil War. Sometime during the war he got this alarming letter from a constituent in Surrattsville:

"Some ten days ago our neighbourhood was relieved of one of the vilest rebbels & one of the most reckless villains that ever disgraced any neighbourhood or society, in the person of John Z. Jenkins. While he was away, sir, all was peace and quietness. But on Thursday last he returns like a roaring lion, saying that Dr. John H. Bayne & Charles B. Calvert did make oath that he was a loyal man & they were determined to defend him. Now Dr. I want to know if this is true. This man is backed by all of the rebbels in this neighbourhood, namely B.F. Gwynn, Jarboe, Burch, Barry. He is the pet of Belt, the States Attorney. There is but three loyal voters in this district namely Enoch Ridgeway & 2 Robeys. At the Election last fall Dr, Hoxton & 2 sons voted the rebbel ticket. Dr. H staid at the polls all day assisting the rebbel party. Jenkins was the leader, threatened to cut the heart out of my son and twenty soldiers. . . I look upon this man as dangerous. . . I know the kindness of your heart but we must have something done. . . ."

I don't know how this problem was resolved, but I doubt if any of our current officeholders from Oxon Hill get letters like this any more.

One other aspect of the Civil War in Oxon Hill should be mentioned. Early in the war the Federal Government decided to build Fort Foote to defend Washington from the possibility of attack coming up the river. One New York soldier who helped build the fort and was stationed there a while wrote quite a detailed description of it and this local area. We published that account in the Historical Society newsletter not too long ago.

In the post Civil War period, the Oxon Hill region turned away from tobacco to a great extent and vegetable and truck farming began to become more common. The area remained one of small farms and scattered homes and businesses well into the 20th century. Gradually the whole area became known as Oxon Hill. Many of the older names of crossroads and small localities were forgotten. The naming of the post office Oxon Hill and the naming of the new 12th Election District Oxon Hill in the 1870's helped establish the name as the one by which the entire area was known.

Most of Oxon Hill's population growth has come after World War II. Let me quote some population figures. These numbers are for the Oxon Hill Election District--which isn't quite the same as the area known as Oxon Hill--but it will give you a good idea anyway of the growth taking place. In 1930 the Oxon Hill Election District's population was 1800. In 1940 it was 2800. In 1950 it was 6400. In 1960 it was 23,000. And in 1980, about 65,000 people. Oxon Hill grew just like the rest of Prince George's County as the Washington area grew. A number of factors helped spur the suburban growth. The opening of the South Capitol Street Bridge in 1949 made access into Washington easier. Indian Head Highway, built during the wart made north-south travel easier, too. We cannot forget the importance of sewer lines, for they are essential for suburban growth. The Carey Branch line in the 1950's really opened much of the area for development, and the completion of the Piscataway Wastewater Treatment Plant in the 1960's enabled Oxon Hill to continue to grow while much of the county was under a sewer moratorium. And last but not least, there is the Beltway. Its influence in the development of the entire metropolitan region has been immense. The Woodrow Wilson Bridge, despite its many faults, transformed Oxon Hill from the "end of the line" to a major station on one of the state's busiest highways. If the Green Line of the Metro finally stops at Rosecroft, who knows how much more Oxon Hill will grow?

Thank you very much. It's been a pleasure speaking to you this evening."

Postscripts Reservations for the use of Oxon Hill Manor, which is located on Oxon Hill Road not far from the Beltway interchange, must be made well in advance. The house is now booked up almost completely on the weekends through September. The office at the mansion is open from 10 until 3 from Tuesdays to Fridays and may be reached by calling 839-7783. More information can be obtained by calling the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission at 952-3514.

Note on sources: The provisions from the Indian Treaty and the jury report on the death of Thomas Greenhill come from the Archives of Maryland. The treaty was published in several volumes; the jury report in volume 53. The entire Civil War letter to Dr. John H. Bayne was first published in News and Notes in April 1973. Much of the information about the Indians comes from the booklet The Piscataway Indians of Southern Maryland by Alice and Henry Ferguson (1960). Information on Oxon Hill Manor comes from the booklet Oxon Hill Manor published by the Oxon Hill Manor Foundation (1979). And thanks to Margaret Cook and to George Price for answering some specific questions.

--Alan Virta

By any other name. . .

When we turned to the Oxford English Dictionary (where else?) for the definition of Oxonian, we learned a new word: Oxonolatriy, "worship of or devotion to Oxford." Like any other community, Oxon Hill has its civic boosters, but now we have a two-dollar word to describe their passion: the local version of "Oxonolatriy."

### Black History in Prince George's County

The following is reprinted from the January 1982 newsletter SWAP published by the Maryland Historical Trust.

"The Trust takes special pleasure in the recent publication of the book Hearth & Home: Preserving a People's Culture by George W, McDaniel. Published by Temple University Press in January, Dr. McDaniel's book is based largely on research undertaken by Dr. McDaniel while employed as a surveyor by the Trust, the Commission on Afro-American History and Culture, Sugarloaf Regional Trails and Montgomery County.

"McDaniel's book explores black rural tenant housing in Southern Maryland and Montgomery County dating from the mid-19th century. The comprehensive study technique for this research relied heavily on oral history provided by the occupants of these structures and their families, whenever possible documented by records. The book is a unique effort to study a relatively unknown part of our heritage through the combination of architectural, material culture, and social history. The Trust has nominated Dr. McDaniel, now Director of Research and Special Projects at the Center for Southern Folklore in Memphis, Tennessee, for a 1982 Honor Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation in the area of education.

"Copies of the 375 page hardbound thoroughly illustrated book are available for \$25.00 from Temple University Press, Broad and Oxford Streets, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19122."

Dr. McDaniel devotes several pages to the tenant house from Mitchellville now reconstructed in the Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution. The story of that house contained in his book was recently published in History News, the magazine of the American Association for State and Local History.

### Congratulations to Hyattsville

Prince-George's County's first National Register Historic District is the Hyattsville Historic District. The district contains approximately 600 structures exhibiting the prominent architectural styles of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Congratulations to all of those who worked so hard to bring about this national recognition.

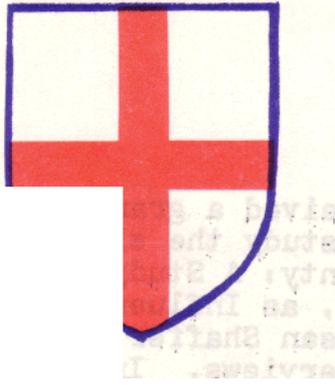
### The Meeting Schedule for the Fall

The next meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society will be on Saturday, September 11, the traditional second Saturday of the month. The popular luncheon meeting will be in October this year, on Saturday, October 9. Details will follow in future issues of News and Notes.

### Smallpox is Very Rife

From the Maryland Gazette of May 17, 1759:

"Whereas the smallpox is now very rife in Bladensburg and in all probability will be a great detriment to trade in that town on account of the danger that people would be under in coming there to dispose of their tobacco or to



## NEWS AND NOTES FROM

deal with the factors for goods. In order to prevent any danger from that distemper and to make it more satisfactory for those that have tobacco to lay out, the subscriber hereby gives public notice that the store belonging to Edward Trassford, Esq., and Sons of Liverpool and at present under the management of Richard Whittle is now moved from Bladensburg to Mr. Magness's house opposite the widow Camphins at the Eastern Branch Ferry; at which all persons that are pleased to favor Mr. Whittle with their custom may assure themselves of having the best market price allowed them for their tobaccos and have goods up on the most reasonable terms for cash. Those persons that are obliged to cross the ferry and deal in said store shall be at no expense in paying ferriage. A very valuable assortment of goods is daily expected; after the arrival of which he makes no doubt but Mr. Whittle will have it in his power to render all his customers grand satisfaction. Signed George Bowdon."

--As reprinted in Judge R. Lee Van Horn's book, Out of the Past: Prince George's and Their Land published by the Prince George's County Historical Society in 1976.

### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

Aileen Marlow  
Catherine & Leland Scott  
W. Dickerson Charlton  
Mr. & Mrs. D. Bruce Kerr  
Dr. & Mrs. Wolcott L. Etienne  
Virginia De Marr Straight  
Mildred E. Lewis

Laurel  
Hyattsville  
Bladensburg  
Greenbelt  
College Hgts.  
Bradenton, Fla.  
Washington

#### Sponsor

E. Earl  
V. Reinhart  
S. Walton, M. Couser  
P. Seidenspinner  
R. Chaney  
L. Tatspaugh  
F. Powers

### The Prince George's County Historical Society

Subscription to this newsletter is included in the annual dues of \$5.00. For membership information writes P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20737.

President: Frederick S. De Marr, 277-0711

Treasurer: Herb Embrey, 434-2958

Corresponding Secretary: Edith Bagot, 927-3632

Newsletter Editor: Alan Virta, 474-7524

## The Prince George's County Historical Society

Vol. X, no, 9  
September 1982

### The September Meeting: "Others Besides-the English"

Maryland was founded as an English colony. Her language, her law, and her church were English, as were most of her people. Yet from the earliest years of the colony, men and women of other nationalities also came to Maryland. With the English came other British subjects: Irish, Scottish, and Welsh. French Huguenots found refuge in Maryland, and thousands of Germans came in the 18th century. Africans were brought here to work as slaves, and small numbers of other ethnic groups--and sometimes just solitary individuals--found their way to Lord Baltimore's province throughout the colonial era. "Others Besides the English" will be the topic of the September meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society. The guest speaker will not really be a guest: he is Alan Virta, a director of the Society and editor of the newsletter. He will discuss some of the colonial

Marylanders who were not English--from the more populous groups named above, to the smaller ones--the Bohemians, Dutch, Swedes, Finns, Italians, Portugese, Swiss, and others who found their way to Maryland, and sometimes to Prince George's County, during the colonial era.

This first meeting of the Fall season will be held on Saturday, September 11, at Riversdale and will begin at 2 p.m. As always, guests are welcome, and refreshments will be served. Riversdale is located at 4811 Riverdale Road, between Kenilworth Avenue and Route One. For directions call Fred De Marr at 277-0711 or Alan Virta at 474-7524.

Plan to be with us on September 11. Be prepared to try to answer this question: the family names of which Maryland signers of the Declaration of Independence are not English?

#### The Luncheon Meeting October 9 at Rossborough

The Society's annual Fall luncheon meeting will be held this year on Saturday, October 9, at Rossborough Inn, University of Maryland. Reservation forms will accompany next month's issue of News and Notes.

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23,1696

**PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY, MARYLAND**

## Slot Machines in Southern Maryland

Charles County Community College has received a grant from the Maryland Committee for the Humanities to study the slot machine era in Charles County. Entitled "Charles County: A Study of the Cultural Life and Economics from 1934 to 1968, as Influenced by Slot Machines," the project is directed by Susan Shaffer and will be conducted chiefly through oral history interviews. Interviewed will be gamblers, distributors, businessmen, politicians, ministers, and those who took part, on both sides, in the campaign to outlaw, the machines.

Slot machines were once ubiquitous in Southern Maryland, including Prince George's County. They could be found in restaurants, bars, motels, gas stations, stores, and businesses of all types. The local elections of 1950 in this county were won by anti-slot machine forces and the 'one-armed bandits' soon disappeared from Prince George's. A state-wide referendum in 1966 decreed the phase-out of the machines in the other Southern Maryland counties, and they disappeared in a few years.

The college will hold an open forum on the slot machine era in Charles County on Friday, September 24. There will be a variety of speakers, and the public is invited. If you would like to attend, call Susan Shaffer at the college in Laplata at 870-3008, ext. 331, or 301-934-2251 for details.

## New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society.

Mr. & Mrs. James W. Titus	Fort Washington	<u>Sponsor</u>
W. Joe Lanham	Arlington, Va.	F. De Marr
		F. De Marr

## Official Notice

Notice is hereby given that a motion will be made at the October meeting to amend the Society's constitution to increase the membership of the Board of Directors to 15 (fifteen) members.

## Mrs. Clifford Ransom

We regret to inform the membership of the death on April 30 of Inez Ransom, of Forest Heights. Mrs. Ransom was a member of our Society for several years. Our sympathies go to the family.

## Torchlight Tours. . .

begin again at Fort Washington on Saturday, September 25, at 8, 9 and 10 p.m. Free, but reservations required. Phone 292-2112.

## That Short September

Thirty days hath September," begins that well-known English verse which, for hundreds of years has helped Englishmen and other English speakers all over the world remember the number of days in each month. The rhyme dates back at least to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations records its appearance in a document known as the Stevins Manuscript, believed to have been written about 1555, so the verse is at least that old, if not older. For more than 400 years, then, this simple rhyme has been an infallible guide to the lengths of the months. Or has it?

The answer to that question is no. There, has been one exception to the rule, "thirty days hath September. That exception occurred in the year 1752, when the English speaking world celebrated a September of just 19 days. The reasons behind that short September of 1752 lie in the history of mankind's attempts to design a fool-proof calendar--a way to record the progress of Earth's rotation around the sun, predict the coming of the seasons, determine the occurrence of holy days, and make references to precise times in the future possible.

In 46 B.C. Julius Caesar reformed the Roman calendar by creating a year of 365, days with an extra day (in February) every fourth year. The Romans (and the Egyptians before them) had calculated that it took the Earth 365 days and 6 hours to circle the sun; the extra day every fourth year made up for the 6 hours (¼ day) missing from the previous three.

The Roman Catholic countries of the world were quick to adopt the Pope's calendar reform, but the Protestant nations, Britain in particular, resisted. Britain clung to the old style calendar for another 170 years--and by then was 11 days off. By 1750 Parliament realized that calendar reform had to come--if not for astronomical and scientific reasons, then for practical reasons. It became difficult for the British to use a calendar that the rest of Europe, even other Protestant countries, had abandoned, and to number their days differently than their neighbors.

Parliament decided that calendar reform would come in September 1752. Eleven days were to be skipped. People were to go to bed the evening of September 2nd and when they woke up it would be September 14<sup>th</sup>. Naturally the announcement that this was to take place provoked much comment. Quite a few protested against the action. Many of the unschooled felt they were being robbed of 11 days in their lives. And of course there were practical problems. Would His Majesty's subjects with bills due on the 1st of October have 11 days fewer to accumulate the payment? Would borrowers have to pay 30 days interest for only 19 days use of money? Parliament addressed these questions and others in the law which enacted calendar reform.

That act also settled another question: on what day does the year begin? The Julian calendar recognized March 25 (usually) as New Year's Day, while the Gregorian calendar recognized January 1. After the Gregorian calendar was adopted on the continent, the 'British calendar, then, differed from the rest of Europe in two respects: not only was it 10, and later 11, days behind, but it also designated, the days between January 1 and March 25 as part of the old year, not the new year. By the middle of the 18th, century many Britons on their own began to recognize January 1 as New Year's Day and date their papers accordingly. Others began labeling the days in that questionable period with two year numbers: e.g. February 17, 1739/40, meaning the day occurred in 1739 on the old calendar and 1740 on the Gregorian. Still others clung to the old style, and did not change the year number until March 25. Researchers using colonial documents dated between January 1 and March 25 in years before 1753, therefore should be careful to determine if the Old Style (Julian) or New Style (Gregorian) system was used in designating the year.

Printed below is the announcement published in the Maryland Gazette of September 14, 1752 (New Style) reminding readers of the change of calendar. We know how difficult it is for some to remember to change their clocks one hour when Daylight Savings 'Time begins and ends. What would those same people do if they were told to set their calendars ahead 11 days?

"THIS DAY, by the late Act of Parliament for altering and regulating the Stile (which was published at Length in our Gazette No. 349), is to be reckoned throughout all his Majesty's dominions as the Fourteenth Day of September, (although Yesterday was the Second), and a succeeding Time is to be reckoned in the same order as formerly; only that the Year is ever hereafter to begin absolutely on the First day of January yearly, and the absurd method of beginning it on the Twenty fifth Day of a Month exploded and that Month, January, is for ever to be called the first Month, February the Second, and the rest in their Order. All the fixed Feasts of the Church are to be observed on their proper nominal Days, which will make them fall Eleven Days earlier than heretofore. But all Birth Days, Apprentices and Servants Times, Periods for Payments of Money either Principal or Interest, or Expiration of Letters, &c., &c., are to have the natural Days, which Seemingly will move them 11 Days forward. And, there is this further Alteration by the said Act, relating to Leap Year, every Fourth year, that is the Year of our Lord 1756, 1760, 1764, 1768, and so on, every fourth year, is to be a Leap Year, as usual, and counting 366 Days except the even Hundreth Year (whereof the Year 2000 is to be the first) is to be a Leap Year; the other Hundreth Years Are to be common Years and count of 365 Days; that is' the Year 1800, 1900, 2100, 2200, 2300, 2500, and so on, are to be common Years of 365 Days each; but the Year 2000, 2400, 2800, and so on, every Fourth Hundreth Year (from the Year 2000 . . . ) are to be Leap Years, and contain 366 Days each. (Readers, If the Distance of Time here mentioned (when you and I shall certainly have returned to the Mother Earth and be forgotten here, As tho we had never been)" to you, seem Long, consider the Contrast, and you will find, 'tis far less than a Moment, when compared to that ETERNITY to which we are hastening.)"

Christmas shoppers in 1752 had to be aware that there were 11 fewer shopping days between Christmas 1751 and Christmas 1752 than usual, since church holidays retained their usual calendar dates ("nominal days"). The law declared, however that birthday celebrations be held 11 calendar days later than usual, so no year of a person's life would be shorter than any other. That is why we today say that George Washington was born on February 22, even though the calendar read February 11 on the day he was born. Parliament's law aside, however, many people were attached to their "birthdays." There is evidence that the great man himself did not wholeheartedly accept his "new" birthdate. Washington's birthday party in 1799, the last year of his life, took place on February 11, not the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

The year 1826 was the fiftieth anniversary of the signing, of the Declaration of Independence: the national "Semi-Centennial," if you will. Both John Adams

**NEWS AND NOTES**  
**FROM**  
**The Prince George's County**  
**Historical Society**

and Thomas Jefferson died on the Fourth of July of that year leaving the Maryland patriot, Charles Carroll of Carrollton the sole surviving Signer.

The government of the city of New York sent a delegation to visit Mr. Carroll in Maryland to obtain his signature on a copy of the Declaration of Independence for the New York city hall. Mr. Carroll yielded to their request, and also inscribed the following message to future generations of Americans:

Grateful to Almighty God for the blessings which, through Jesus Christ our Lord, he has conferred on my I beloved country in her emancipation, and, on myself, in permitting me; under circumstances of mercy, to live to the age of 89 years, and to survive the fiftieth year of American Independence, and certify by my present signature my approbation of the Declaration of Independence adopted by Congress on the 4th Of July, 1776, which I originally subscribed on the 2d day of August of the same year, and of which I am, now the last surviving signer, I do hereby recommend to the present --and future-- generations the principles of that important document as the best earthly inheritance their ancestors could bequeath to them, and pray that the civil and religious liberties they have secured to my country may be perpetuated to remotest posterity and extended to the whole family of man.

Charles Carroll of Carrollton

August 2nd, 1826."

John C. Brennan of Laurel searched for this document for two years, and found it at the New York Historical Society in New York City.

Ironically, Charles Carroll of Carrollton was not a member of Congress on the Fourth of July when the Declaration of Independence was adopted. He was elected by the Maryland Convention in July and took the place of John Rogers of Upper Marlboro. Unlike many of the other delegates who were present to vote for the Declaration on July 4, John Rogers did not return to Philadelphia later to sign the document which he had approved. Thus Prince George's County cannot claim to be the home of a Signer of the Declaration of Independence!

The Prince George's County Historical Society

A subscription to this monthly newsletter is included in the annual \$5.00 membership dues. Membership applications are welcomed. Write to the Society at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, 20737.

President: Frederick S. De Marr

Treasurer: Herb Embrey

Corr. Sec: Edith Bagot

Editor: Alan Virta (474-7524)

Vol. X , no. 10 October 1982

October at Rossborough

October 9 is the date of the Society's annual luncheon meeting, to be held again this year at the University of Maryland's Rossborough Inn. Full details, with a reservation form, are on a separate sheet accompanying this issue of News and Notes.

Lecture Series at  
Riversdale

The Riversdale

Historical Society will  
sponsor a lecture series

at Riversdale, the Calvert mansion, this Fall on three successive evenings in October. The title of the series will be "The Residents of Riversdale." Each lecture will begin at 8 p.m..

Buck Washington, Mid-Atlantic Area collector for the Archives of American Art at the Smithsonian Institution, will be guest speaker at Historic Takoma's annual Victorian high tea on Sunday, November 7, at 3 p.m. The illustrated lecture, "The Great Victoria" will be held at the Parish Hall of Trinity Episcopal Church, Piney Branch Road and Dahlia Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

Following the talk, a lavish, old-fashioned tea including sandwiches, muffins, Scotch shortbreads and beverages, will be served. Tickets are \$5.00 per person. Information: 431-1098.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

**ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23,1696**

## Historic Preservation Commission Nominated and Confirmed

Over the course of the summer, County Executive Larry Hogan nominated the members of the county's Historic Preservation Commission, and all of those nominations were confirmed by the County Council. Members of the new commission are:

Alan Virta, Chairman  
Dennis Dolan, Vice Chairman  
Florence Adell  
Michael J. Casey  
Spencer Hines  
Francis J. Loevi  
James F. Maher  
Joyce, W. McDonald  
Doris Pardee

The principal duty of the commission is to review any proposed exterior alterations to the buildings of the county's official list of historic sites, and either grant or deny the application to do the work. The commission also will have the power to approve tax credits for restoration work performed on those structures. Staff planner assigned to the commission is Gail Rothrock, whose office can be reached in Upper Marlboro at 952-3520.

## Edward Willett of Prince George's County

There appears to be some interest further West in an early resident of Prince George's County named Edward Willett. The following two items appeared in print within the last few months:

"Our family history has been traced back to Edward Willett of Prince George's County, Md. He was Maryland's first pewterer, and in 1692 was listed as clerk of the vestry in St. Paul's Parish, Charles Town. In 1696, he signed a letter to the King as one of the military and civil officers of the colony... " The writer then asks about a book identifying early immigrants to Maryland is told by the author of the genealogical column, which appears in an Arkansas newspaper, to consult Gust Skordas' Early Settlers of Maryland. The inquirer was W.O. Willett, 1112 West Cherry. Jonesboro, Arkansas 72401.

The following query appeared in the Spring 1982, edition of the Maryland Magazine of Genealogy, published by the Maryland Historical Society:

"Willett-Beall-Griffith: Edward Willett (d. 1743 Prince George's County, Md.) m. Tabitha Beall (?). Son William, (d 1772 Prince George's County) m. Mary Griffith. Children: Ann, Edward, Elizabeth, George, Griffith, James, Jemina, John, Mary Rachel, Samuel, Tabitha, Verlinda and William. Contact with descendants for book. Leo Willett, 425 S. Lindbergh Blvd., St. Louis, Mo. 63131.

## The Raising of a Ghost

One of the colorful residents of early Bladensburg was one Col. Tattison, a French dancing master, described by William Wirt as "a most symmetrical, elegant, and graceful person," who "introduced the new-fashioned minuet into Bladensburg." The Memoirs of the Life of William Wirt, by John Pendleton Kennedy (1849), contains the following story by Wirt of an other-worldly incident in that ancient town. Wirt, who was born in Bladensburg in 1772 and served more years as Attorney General of the United States than any of his predecessors or successors, tells of the raising of a ghost:

"...A dance was given...at our house. When the company had danced themselves weary, Tattison proposed to close the evening by raising a ghost. The matrons objected to it, as a light and impious trifling with solemn subjects; but Tattison assured them with equal gravity, that he had the power of raising any ghost they would call for, and that he could give them conclusive proof of it: that if any one would go up stairs and consent to be locked up in the room farthest removed from the company below, the stair door should also be locked, so that no possible communication could be held between the person above and those below. After this the

company might fix on a ghost whom he, the operator, would cause to appear to the person up stairs. The graver part of the company still discouraged the experiment; but the curiosity of the younger and more numerous prevailed, and nothing was wanting but a sitter up stairs to enable the Frenchman to give proof of his skill in the black art. After some hesitation amongst all, a Mr. Brice of Alexandria agreed to be closeted. He was accordingly taken up stairs. The door of the room into which he was introduced was locked, and after that the door of the stair below, which opened from the stairs upon the dancing-room. Tattison then asked for a shovel of live coals, some salt, brimstone, and a case-knife. Whilst these things were getting, he proposed that the women should in a whispering consultation agree upon the ghost to be raised, and report it secretly to him. This was done; and the ghost agreed upon was to be that of John Francis, a little, superannuated shoemaker, who had died some few years before--in his latter days a ludicrous person, whose few remaining locks were snowy white, with a nose as red as Bardolph's, and eyes of rheum--and who was accustomed to sing with a paralytic-shake of the head and tremulous voice,--

"What did we come here for? what did we come here for?  
We came here to prittle prattle,  
And to make the glasses rattle;  
And that's what we came here for."

"The habit of drinking was so inveterate upon him that he had not been able to walk for some years before his death, except with the help of another, and then with but a tottering step. The annunciation of his name was answered by a half-suppressed laugh around the room. The difficulty of the Frenchman's task was supposed to be not little increased by attempting to make John Francis's ghost walk alone. He, however, nothing daunted, began his incantations, which consisted of sprinkling salt and brimstone on the coals, muttering over them a charm in some sort of gibberish, and knocking solemnly on the stair door with the butt of his case-knife. These strokes on the door were as regular as the tolling of a bell, each series closing with a double knock then came a pause, another series of knocks closed by another double stroke, and so on to the end of the ceremony.

"The process was long and solemn, and there was something in the business itself and in the sympathy with the imagined terrors of the witness above, which soon hushed the whole assembly into a nervous stillness akin to that of young children listening to a ghost story at midnight. In about half an hour the ceremony was closed, in a shower of blows and the agitated cries of the Frenchman. Brice was heard to fall on the floor above. The Frenchman rushed up stairs at the head of several of the company; there our sitter was found on the floor in a swoon. He was brought to with the aid of cold water, and on reviving said he had seen a man enter the room with a coal of fire on his nose, and on his forehead written in fire the name of John Francis.--It was agreed, on all hands, to be very strange; and many shook their heads significantly at Tattison, intimating that he knew more than he ought, and that it was not very clear he was fit company for Christian people. No one was disposed to renew the dance, and the party broke up. The Frenchman, with his characteristic politeness, flew to the door to help the ladies down the steps, when he saw, standing outside of the door, close at hand, a gigantic phantom arrayed in white and arms stretched wide, as if to receive him. He shrieked, leaped from the steps and disappeared."

Another ghost story from Wirt's childhood days in Bladensburg was published in the November 1980 issue of News and Notes.

#### An Opening for a Teacher

"Prince George's County school being now vacant; any person qualified as the Law directs, to serve as Master therein, may apply to the Visitors, who have appointed the first Tuesday in October next, to meet at the said School.

Signed per Order,

James Beck, Reg.

--from the Maryland Gazette, August 27, 1752

#### The Prince George's County Historical Society

The annual dues of \$5.00 include a subscription to this monthly newsletter. To apply, write the Society at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20737.

President: Frederick S. De Marr

# NEWS AND NOTES FROM The Prince George's County Historical Society

Treasurer: Herb Embrey

Corr. Secretary: Edith Bagot

Editor: Alan Virta, 474-7524

Vol. X, no. 11 November 1982

## The November Meetings Abraham Lincoln's Washington

"Washington as Abraham Lincoln Knew it" will be the subject of a slide show and discussion at the next meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society, to be held on Saturday, November 13, at Riversdale. Joan Chaconas, past president of the Surratt Society, will be our speaker. Joan is an expert on Civil War Washington, and her slide show will recreate for us the city of that tumultuous era.,  
The meeting will begin at 2 p.m. Riversdale, the Calvert mansion, is located at 4811 Riverdale Road in Riverdale. Guests are welcome and refreshments will be served.

## The Christmas Party at Montpelier

The Society's Christmas Party at Montpelier will be on December 18, the third Saturday of the month this year. Our punchmasters are already hard at work concocting a festive blend of holiday spirits. Be sure to join us on December 18 and bring some friends. More details will follow in next month's newsletter.

## Open House at Christmas Time

Christmas is the time for open house at many of our county's historic homes. Since next month's newsletter will be out a little later than usual, we present the schedule in this issue. All of the houses will be decorated for the season--a wonderful time to see them. Take your friends along!

Montpelier, the Snowden mansion south of Laurel, will be open for Christmas candlelight tours on December 8, 9, and 10. On Wednesday and Thursday, December 8 and 9, the house will be open from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m., and on Friday, December 10 it will be open from 11 to 3 p.m. For the third year in a row, local garden clubs will decorate the various rooms of the mansion, competing for a silver bowl. Admission: \$1.50 for all adults; 75¢ for children ages 6 to 16; children under 6 free. The newly opened

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

Carriage House Gift Shop will be open, offering both Christmas and other gifts and handicrafts. (The Gift Shop will also be open on Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays from 10 to 4 through Christmas). Phones 779-2011 (Gift Shop: 776-0752).

Riversdale, the Calvert mansion, will be open on Saturday and Sunday, December 11 and 12, from 1 to 5 p.m. The house will again be beautifully decorated by the Touch and Glow Garden Club. The gift shop will be open, and the Touch and Glow Garden Club will operate a Christmas greens shop. Admissions \$1.00 for adults, 75¢ for senior citizens and students, and 50¢ for children under Phones 779-2011.

Belair, the home of colonial Governors, will be open on Sunday, December 12, from 1 to 5 p.m. There will be Christmas music, and gifts and holiday greens will be on sale, Belair is located at 12207 Tulip Grove Road in Bowie. Admission fee: \$1.00. Phone: 262-0695.

The Mary Surratt House, at 9110 Brandywine Road, in Clinton, will offer the 7th annual Christmas candlelight tours from, December 12 to 14. The house will be decorated for a Victorian Christmas. The hours will be from 5 to 9 p.m. on Sunday, December 12, and from 6 to 9 p.m. on Monday and Tuesday, December 13 and 14. Admission: \$1.00 for adults, 75¢ for senior citizens, and 50¢ for students. Phone 868-1121.

The Antique Dealers of Old Bowie invite all to join them for their Christmas Open House on December 4 and 5, from 11 a.m. to 5 P.m. Old Bowie--also known as Huntington--is located at the junction of Laurel-Bowie Road (Route 197) and Lanham-Severn Road (Route 564), east of Glenn Dale and north of the newer sections of Bowie. There are quite a few antiques shops in that old town, so if you've never seen them, this would be a good time to do so.

#### Business Affairs

The Society will elect officers of 1983 at the meeting on November 13. This year's nominating committee is composed of Ted Bissell and Margaret Fisher. If you have any suggestions, call Mr. Bissell at- 977-4723 or Mrs. Fisher at 336-8775.

Also at the November meeting, the amendment to the Society's constitution expanding the board of directors (announced in the September issue of News and Notes) will be considered and voted on.

#### New Members of the, Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince, George's County Historical Society

		<u>Sponsor</u>
Virginia W. Beauchamp	Greenbelt	Mr. F. De Marr
J. Lawrence Hall	College Park	Mr. F. De Marr
Marcy and Herb Davis	College Park	Mr. H. Embrey
Michelle and Timothy Uber	Greenbelt	Mr. & Mrs. W. Uber

#### The Western Branch Club

"A long-standing observation about the American peoples", writes William Lloyd Fox in Maryland: A History--1632 to 1974, "has been that they are a nation of joiners—of this or that association, club, lodge, or society." Certainly the most historic club in Maryland is the South River Club, founded in Anne Arundel County, probably sometime before 1739. Still active, it is one of the oldest social organizations in the nation. Its present clubhouse and minute book date from 1742.

Perhaps even older than the South River Club was a similar organization in Prince George's County, the Western Branch Club, named presumably for the Western Branch of the Patuxent River which flows through Upper Marlboro. Little is known of the history of the club, but the deed by which it acquired some property was recorded in the Prince George's County land records in 1730. How and when that property was disposed of may tell the fate of the Western Branch Club. A careful search of the land records the courthouse might reveal the end

of the story. But we go too far to presume that the club is extinct. Those who know the Upper Marlboro folk of the native variety would not be surprised to find that they have indeed carried the club forward for two hundred and fifty more years, very privately, without fanfare, and in accordance with the old traditions of that ancient place.

Printed below is the deed for the Western Branch Club, from Liber Q of the county land records. It was published in the Maryland Historical Magazine in 1924 (Vol. 19, p. 198-199) as reported by Mrs. Margaret Roberts Hodges.

--Alan Virta

"At the request of Jeremiah Belt, the following Deed was entered rolled September the Twenty-fifth Day A. D. 1730.

"To all people to whom these presents shall come, Greeting Know that I, John Child of Prince George's County, in the province of Maryland Gentleman for and in consideration of the sum of five shillings to me in hand paid at or before the ensealing and delivery of these presents by Coll Joseph Belt, Capt. Jeremiah Belt, Mr. Thos. Williams, Mr. John Magruder and Mr. O.S. Sprigg, managers or trustees for the Gentlemen of the Western Branch Club or Society as aforesaid and to their successors forever all that tract or parcel of land called the western branch club house being part of a tract of land called Spight full lying and being in Pri. Geo. Co. and running aforesaid beginning at a bounded Black walnut; and running thence East twenty feet thence north one hundred feet thence west one hundred feet thence South one hundred feet then with a strait line to the Beginning Tree Containing and laid out for ten thousand square feet of land more or less together wth all and singular the houses and other improvements there unto belonging or appertaining To have and to hold all the aforesaid Tract or parcel of land to them the aforesaid Coll Joseph Belt, Jeremiah Belt, Thos. Williams, Jho. Magruder and O.S. Sprigg and to their successors as managers or trustees for the Gentlemen of the western branch Club or Society forever and I the aforesaid John Child the aforesaid tract or parcel of land to them the aforesaid Coll Thos. Williams, John Magruder, and O.S. Sprigg and to their successors as managers or trustees for the Gent. of the western branch that Club or Society so long as they shall appropriate it to that use against all persons claiming from by or under me Will Warrant and forever defend In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal the thirtieth day of April in the year of our Lord God, one thousand seven hundred and thirty.

John Child (Seal)

"Sealed and delivered:  
in the presence of,  
Ralph Crabb  
Edw. Sprigg

'Prince George's County 30th day of April 1730--Received of Coll Joseph Belt, Capt. Jeremiah Belt, Mr. Thos. Williams, Mr. John Magruder and Mr. O.S. Sprigg, the sum of five shillings current money being the consideration money within mentioned.

John Child

“Testes  
Ralph Crabb  
Edw. Sprigg”

### Prince George's in the Nine Nations

An interesting book was published by Houghton Mifflin last year entitled The Nine Nations of North America, by Joel Garreau. The thesis of the book is that the political boundaries of North America obscure the more important economic and social boundaries that define the real working units of the continent.

“Consider the way North America really works,” writes Garreau. “It is Nine Nations. Each has its capital and its distinctive web of power and influence. . . . Each a peculiar economy; each commands certain emotional allegiance from its citizens. These nations look different, feel different, and sound different from each other, and few of their boundaries match the political lines drawn on current maps.”

Garreau sees these as North America’s Nine Nations:

New England: which includes the Canadian Maritimes

The Foundry: the mid-Atlantic region, the industrial Midwest as far as Chicago, and southern Ontario.

Quebec: The French-speaking province

Dixie: The American South

MexAmerica: southern California, New Mexico, Arizona, parts of Texas, and Mexico—areas with strong Mexican and Spanish influences

Ectopia: the Pacific Coast from mid-California to the Alaska panhandle

Breadbasket: The Great Plains and the agricultural region from Texas at the South north through the southern Canadian plains

Empty Quarter: the vast underpopulated region, rich in natural resources, between the Pacific coast and the Breadbasket. Includes the Rockies, and expands at its northern end to include most of Canada and Alaska.

The Islands: South Florida and the Caribbean

The author also describes a few aberrations, including Manhattan Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C., which he describes as an " imperial capital."

In describing the boundary between Dixie and the Foundry, Garreau makes these comments of interest in Prince George's County:

"Dixie cuts across the chicken farms of southern Delaware to include the Eastern Shore of Maryland. . . .The gracious capital, Annapolis, is a border town between Dixie and the Foundry. The boundary carefully skirts Washington's wealthier suburbs and drives up through rural Virginia. . . ."

". . .Dixie starts on the midcontinental Atlantic at about Ocean City, Maryland. Ocean City, socially is to Washington, D.C., as Prince Georges [sic] county, Maryland is to the capital suburbanly. Prince Georges and Ocean City are those places which, unfavored by the high and mighty, tend to attract first generation money--both black and white--to whom the very idea of living in a place called a 'condo'--or for that matter, a 'suburb'--is rightfully perceived as a miracle of upward mobility."

Anyway, according to the maps, Garreau's scheme seems to divide Prince George's County in three ways: part in the aberration of Washington, D.C., part in the nation of Dixie, and part in the Foundry. Few states were so carved up, let alone other counties!

--Alan Virta

### The Calvert Mansion Gift Shop,

The new gift shop at Riversdale, the Calvert mansion, will be open on Saturdays and Sundays from 12 to 4 p.m., offering arts, crafts, dolls, antiques, and collectibles. Phone 277-6452 or 779-2011. Profits benefit the mansion restoration fund.

### In the News

A local group of citizens is working to convince the Postal Service to issue a commemorative stamp in 1984 to mark Peter Carnes' 1784 balloon ascensions in Bladensburg and Baltimore. Details next month.

### Some News from China

On, March, 22, 1836, Sarah J. Sparrow, at Pig Point on the Patuxent River a letter to Miss Ann Hall Clarke of Melwood, Prince George's County, near Upper Marlboro. Miss Clarke was about twenty years old at the time, and we may presume that Sarah was about the same age.

Miss Sparrow wrote: "I have no news of sufficient importance to relate. Our neighborhood [Pig Point] is at all times dull but more so now, as I have just returned from a remarkably gay one [South River, Anne Arundel County], where I spent the last three weeks dancing, Visiting, and performing every species of gambling."

Ann Hall Clarke, the recipient of Miss Sparrow's letter, was the daughter of Benjamin Hall Clarke and his wife Eleanor Clagett. Their land, Melwood, had been passed down through Mrs. Clarke's family for several generations. The next owner would be Ann Hall Clarke herself and her husband, William Benjamin Bowie (1813-1888) whom she married in 1837. The house known as Melwood (or Melwood Farm) which stood until recently, probably dated from the 1830's, so it might have been built by Benjamin Hall Clarke. Substantial additions were made at several times during the 19th century. It deteriorated badly during the past decade and was destroyed not long ago. The remarkable thing about the land that the house stood on was that it was held by nine generations of one family but was passed down each time through a female (usually a daughter), so no one family name has been continuously associated with it. Because Ann Hill Clarke Bowie and her husband, and then their daughter Ann E. Bowie, lived in the house for so long (about 70 years), it is usually identified as a Bowie house.

Although Sarah J. Sparrow complained of boredom at home, she did relate some interesting news she had learned to her friend. Miss Sparrow had received a letter from Miss Mary Clagett, and she transcribed a portion of that letter for Ann. Miss Clagett wrote:

"We received a letter from Maurice, a few days ago, dated Canton [China]. He sailed from Baltimore last May, in the brig, Lady Adams, Capt. Magill, of Prince George's, whom your father probably knows, and expects to return home May next. It will be well if he fills an empty purse, with the golden sands of the East."

News from China must have been exciting for a restless young lady at Pig Point!

Can anyone identify any of the principals of these letters: Sarah J. Sparrow, Capt. Magill, Maurice, and Miss Mary Clagett? If so, please write the editor (address below). Thanks to Margaret Yewell for making this available for News and Notes.

#### The Prince George's County Historical Society

Annual dues of \$5.00 include a subscription to this monthly newsletter. To join, write the Society at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20737.

President: Frederick S. De Marr  
Corr. Sec.: Edith Bagot

Treasurer: Herb Embrey  
Editor: Alan Virta. 474-7524

## NEWS AND NOTES FROM

# The Prince George's County Historical Society

Vol. X no. 12  
December 1982

### The Christmas Party: December 18 at Montpelier

All members of the Society are cordially invited to our annual Christmas Party at Montpelier, to be held this year on December 18. The house will be decorated for Christmas in the colonial style, and good food, good drink, and good company, will be in abundance. The party will begin at 2 p.m.

Montpelier is one of Maryland's finest examples of Georgian architecture, and one of only two National Historic Landmarks in Prince George's County. Long the home of the Snowden family, the mansion has seen more than two hundred Christmases. The Society's Christmas Party is always well attended and a delightful time. Why not bring your family, or perhaps some friends or neighbors, to see Montpelier at its Christmas best. There is no admission charge. Members who have a Christmas food speciality they would like to share are invited to bring samples along. But whether you bring friends or not, or food or not, bring yourself and join us to celebrate Christmas at Montpelier.

Montpelier is located on Route 197 (the Laurel-Bowie Road) south of Laurel. Take the Baltimore-Washington Parkway north from the Beltway and exit at Route 197. Turn left (north) at the foot of the ramp onto Route 197 and follow the road less than a mile to the second traffic light. Turn left at that Light (opposite the Montpelier Shopping Center) and follow the signs into the mansion grounds.

Plan to be with us on Saturday, December 18. A special invitation goes out to those who cannot join us for our regular lecture meetings. We hope to see you on December 18. The new Carriage House Gift Shop, operated by the Friends of Montpelier, will be open that afternoon for last-minute Christmas purchases.

### The Meeting Schedule

There will be no regular meetings of the Society in January or Feb. The meeting schedule will resume in March. The officers and directors of the Prince George's County Historical Society wish a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you and yours.

## General Washington in Annapolis

The Revolutionary War began in April of 1775, with Paul Revere's ride and the battles of Lexington and Concord. When did the war end? With the surrender of Cornwallis' army at Yorktown? With the removal of British troops from American soil? With the signing of the Treaty of Paris?

Many would say the war truly came to an end in Annapolis, Md., on the 23rd of December, 1783. No battle was fought at Annapolis that day, nor was any treaty signed. What occurred was a symbolic, but important act. General Washington came before Congress, then meeting in the Maryland State House, and returned the military commission Congress had given him so many years before. The man who led the Continental Army laid down his arms and returned to private life. Many in the hall wept, and Washington himself struggled to control his voice throughout his brief address. At the conclusion of his talk, he took the commission from his breast pocket and handed it to Thomas Mifflin, then presiding. It was a simple act, but full of meaning. The fighting was over. Peace had come.

The Maryland Gazette, the state's newspaper of the day, reported the festive and the solemn events associated with General Washington's retirement in Annapolis, and the late historian R. Lee Van Horn wove those reports into a stirring narrative in his book, Out of the Past. Herb Embrey has taken Judge Van Horn's narrative and skillfully condensed and arranged it, with his own conclusion, into a story of special interest to those of us in Prince George's County. Paragraphs inside quotation marks are from the Maryland Gazette.

### A Local Accolade to Washington

Washington's address in what is now known as the Old Senate Chamber of the State House, on Tuesday 23rd December 1783, was the culmination of three days of ecstatic celebration.

The events of these days were recorded in detail in the Maryland Gazette and reprinted for us in R. Lee Van Horn's Out of the Past. As we shall see, many Prince Georgians were participants in these great events.

On Friday December 19, 1783, "his Excellency General Washington arrived in Annapolis on his way to Mount Vernon. His Excellency was met a few miles from Annapolis by the Honorable Generals Gates and Smallwood and several of the principal inhabitants who attended him to Mr. Mann's where apartments were prepared for his reception. His Excellency's arrival was announced by the discharge of cannon. After receiving the heartfelt welcome of all who had the honor of knowing him his Excellency waited on the President of Congress with whom he and the members of that body together with the principal civil and military officers of the State dined on Saturday."

On Sunday morning after attending religious service at St. Ann's Church in the ancient city, he returned the visits of the citizens and others who had waited on him, after which he dined with a number of other gentlemen.

On Monday, December 22, 1783, Congress gave General Washington a public dinner, at the ballroom where upwards of two hundred persons of distinction were present. Everything was provided by Mr. Mann in the most elegant and profuse style. After dinner the following toasts were drunk under the discharge of the artillery:

1. The United States
2. The Army
3. His Most Christian Majesty [of France]
4. The United Netherlands
5. The King of Sweden
6. Our Commissioners abroad
7. The Minister of France
8. The Minister of the Netherlands
9. Harmony and a flourishing commerce throughout the Union
10. May virtue and wisdom and influence the Councils of the United States and their conduct merit the blessings of peace and Independence
11. The virtuous daughters of America
12. The Governor [ William Paca ] and the State of Maryland

13. Long health and happiness to our illustrious General."

The thirteen toasts and the firing of thirteen cannon were in honor of the thirteen states that formed the Union at that time.

For this Monday banquet Mr. Mann furnished the food, and spirits: 98 bottles of wine, 2½ gallons of spirits, 9 pounds of sugar, a lot of limes, music, waiters, and a dozen packs of cards. No mention is made of the bread and meat for this occasion. The Governor instructed Colonel Mills of the Annapolis Coffee House to furnish the people with punch and grog to the value of ten pounds and ten shillings.

Now as this memorable day progresses toward evening, we prepare ourselves for the icing on the cake; the grand ball that closed the day.

The State House (or Stadt House--as it was known at that time) was beautifully illuminated and a very numerous appearance of beautiful ladies were present.

A few days before the great ball the ladies of Annapolis met to choose the dancing partner for General Washington. Their choice was Mrs. James Mackubin, a famous beauty. (Who was Mrs. James Mackubin, and who was James Mackubin? We are told that James Mackubin was born in the year 1755, in Anne Arundel County, and became a successful merchant in Annapolis. He married Martha Rolle, a daughter of Dr. Francis Rolle of London who had settled near Easton, Maryland)

So on that frosty December night it was Martha Rolle Mackubin who danced with General Washington down the long corridor of history and wrote her name on the imperishable tablets that were to rest in the mists of the years.

A couple of days prior to the twenty-second of December, the countryside became covered with three inches of glittering snow, and the entire Southern Maryland peninsula was resplendent with the cover of scintillating white. On that memorable Monday morning of December 22, 1783, the roads from Upper Marlboro and Bladensburg to Annapolis were lined with carriages, coaches, and four chaises and broughams occupied by the Addisons, Bowies, Brookes, Craufurds, Clagetts, Contees, Ducketts, Duvalls, Eversfields, Gantts, Lowndes, Spriggs, Sims, Magruders, Marburys, Morsells, Parkers, Tylers and Wootons on their various ways through dazzling scenery to a yet more shining hour that was to come to Annapolis with the falling shades of night.

And what a grand occasion it must have been, and oh, what a test of strength it must have for the weaker brothers as the Maryland Gazette tells us that on that night there was not a public bed within a radius of five miles that did not have a drunk in it!

But this was a celebration by a generation who had given their substance, treasure and blood; that the liberty of movement, freedom of choice, and the right to make laws under which they were to live, might be the way of life in the new nation that they were building and which their fathers had created out of a primitive wilderness with gun, ox and mattock.

For the ball that closed the day, we have a more detailed account of the supplies furnished by Mr. Mann. For that great gathering of sturdy men and beautiful women that December night: eight gallons of wine, four gallons spirits, beef, tongues, chickens, turkeys, tarts, custards, cheese cakes, 502 loaves of bread, twenty-four shillings worth of cards and a box of candles. . . .

Who, was this Mr. Mann? Mr. Van Horn gives us no clue but whatever else he may have been, he was indeed a caterer of no mean repute.

The State had to pay Mr. Mann for thirty-five knives and twenty-nine forks lost. He was also repaid for twenty-eight plates, forty-three wine glasses, one dish, and sixty-one broken bottles.

Incidentally, if by chance, any of our members descending from the old gentry have in their possession any of those long misplaced articles now is the time to bring them out of the closet for a show-and-tell meeting. After all it's been 199 years and all is forgiven.

Tuesday, December 23rd, 1783, Washington resigned his commission and began the last leg of his journey to his beloved Mount Vernon.

Too late to cross the river on the evening of this day, he spent a pleasant night playing cards with his good friend and neighbor Mr. Benedict Calvert of Mount Airy, Prince George's County.

This enjoyable interlude with Mr. Calvert was to provide the only sour note on his otherwise triumphant journey from Fraunces Tavern in New York to his home in Virginia.

Washington received some bitter criticism for his nocturnal stop at Mt. Airy from some of his detractors and a few super-patriots. But this is another story.

--Herb Embrey

### Trust Elects New Officers

New officers of the Prince George's County Historical and Cultural Trust are: Joyce McDonald, Chairman; Joyce Rumburg, Vice chairman; James F. Maher, Treasurer; and Jean Speicher, Secretary.

### Christmas Open House

Complete information on Christmas open house at the various historic sites in the county was printed in last month's issue of News and Notes. We print a last-minute reminder in this issue. Christmas music will fill the air, and the homes will be beautifully, decorated. This is the best time of year to see them.

Montpelier: Candelight tours. December 8 and 9 (evenings) and December 10 (afternoon). Adults \$1.50 – children 75¢ under 6 free Phone : 779-2011

Riversdale: December 11 and 12, 1 to 5 p.m. Adults \$1.00. and students 75¢, children,50¢ Phone 779-2011.

Belair: December 1, 2, 1 to 5 p.m. Admission', \$1.00. phone 262-0695.

Mary Surratt House: December 12, 13, and 14 in the evenings. Adults \$1.00, seniors 75¢, students 50¢. Phone 868-1121.

We have also learned that Fort Washington on the Potomac River in the southern part of the county will celebrate Christmas on Sunday, December 12. Volunteers and park officials will decorate the old fort for a traditional Christmas. Talks and discussions will feature Victorian holiday menus and 19th century ornaments. Games, group singing, and decorating will take place between noon and 5 P.M. More information: 292-2112.

### Society Officers for the New Year

At the November meeting at Riversdale the current slate of officers was reelected to serve another year. The officers are: President Frederick S. De Marr; Vice president John Giannetti; Corresponding Secretary Edith Bagot Recording Secretary Warren Rhoads; Treasurer Herb Embrey Historian James Wilfong, Jr.; Directors Susanna Cristofane, Paul Lanham, and Alan Virta; and additional Awards Committee members Margaret Fisher, Truman Heinton, and Sara Walton. Thanks are extended to the Nominating Committee of Professor Ted Bissell and Mrs. Margaret Fisher.

### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

Charlotte J. Vaught  
R. A. Adamson, Jr.  
Paul R. Shelby  
R.S. Bayne Robertson

Suitland  
Bowie  
Bowie  
Fort Washington

Mrs. M. Fisher  
Mr. F. De Marr  
Mr. A. Virta  
Ms. G. Rothrock

Our new member Mr. Shelby was elected to the school board in November to represent District 5. To him our congratulations.

### The Chesapeake Bay of Yore

Fred Tilp, a long-time member of our Society and a native of Bladensburg, won high praise and many compliments for his first book, This Was Potomac River, published in 1978. Now he has written another, The Chesapeake Bay of Yore. The foreword to the book has been written by Maryland's Comptroller Louis Goldstein, who describes The Chesapeake Bay of Yore as "a charming collection of lore gathered over a half century, the result of expeditions through various nooks and crannies of the Bay, its tributaries, and archives and museums throughout the region." The book is described by its author as "mainly about the rowing and sailing craft but there is much more within its covers: the people, history, traditions, folklore, and folk life that make the Chesapeake Bay such an interesting place. As Mr. Goldstein describes it, "for the reader who loves the Chesapeake Bay it is pure enjoyment". The Chesapeake Bay of Yore is hard bound, with 160 pages, drawings, bibliography, maps, a glossary, and extensive index. The price is \$24.95 postpaid. The book is available from: Mr. Frederick Tilp, USPO Box 630, Alexandria, Virginia, 22313.

What a Christmas gift for anyone interested in the Chesapeake Bay!

### Mr. Carnes' Balloon Experiments

The year 1984 will not only be the 350th anniversary of the founding of Maryland, but the 200th anniversary of the first documented balloon ascension to take place in the United States as well. It was in June of 1784 that the Bladensburg lawyer and inn keeper Peter Carnes sent a balloon aloft from Bladensburg, the first known such balloon ascension in America. The documented Bladensburg ascensions were unmanned; the honor of hosting the first manned ascension goes to Baltimore. There Carnes sent a thirteen-year old boy named Edward Warren aloft before a large crowd a week after his Bladensburg experiments.

In honor of the 200th anniversary of Carnes ascensions, a local group has proposed that the United States Postal Service issue a commemorative postage stamp in 1984 depicting Carnes' experiments. The project has been endorsed by Congressman Steny Hoyer. Evidence of public support for such a stamp is necessary, however, before the Postal Service will endorse it. Letters of support should be sent to: United States Postal-Service, Stamp Advisory Committee, 475 L'Enfant Plaza West, S.W., Washington, D. C. 20260.

### The Prince George's County Historical Society

Annual dues of \$5.00 include a subscription to this monthly newsletter. To apply for membership, write the Society at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20737. For more information contact Frederick S. De Marr at 277-0711. Alan Virta, Editor.

# NEWS AND NOTES FROM The Prince George's County Historical Society

## Baltimore Tour on March 5

Advance notice: Our tour directors have worked up another tour for members and friends of the Society. The bus will leave Riversdale on Saturday morning, March 5, and head to Baltimore, visiting Mount Clare (a Carroll home), the Peale Museum, and the home of Charles Carroll of Carrollton. Lunch will be on your own at the Inner Harbor. Details and reservation form will follow next month.

Vol. XI, no. 1

## The Winter Schedule

There will be no meetings of the Society in January or February. The regular meeting schedule will resume in March.

## Maryland Antiques Show and Sale

The Maryland Antiques Show and Sale, sponsored by the Maryland Historical Society, will be held this year, from February 10 to 13 at the Baltimore Convention Center. Hours will be from, noon until 9 p.m. except on Sunday, February 13, when the show will close at 6 p.m. A continuous buffet will be offered during the show. For more information call the Maryland Historical Society at 301-685-3750.

## Rowing and Sailing on the Bay

The National Colonial Farm in Accokeek will sponsor a slide show by Fred Tilp on Sunday, January 23, entitled "Rowing and Sailing Craft of the Chesapeake Bay." The show will be based on Mr. Tilp's new book, The Chesapeake Bay of Yore. Copies of the book will be available for sale and autographs. The program will begin at 2 p.m. Reservations are required, and admission is \$1.00. Phone the National Colonial Farm at 283-2113 for more information. The farm is located at 3400 Bryan Point Road, Accokeek.

## New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

Dr. & Mrs. J. Paul Anderson	College Park	F. De Marr
Mrs. Stephen M. Conger	Lovittsville, Va.	F. De Marr
Howard Dunn	Hyattsville	V. Nichols
Mrs. Marie Ridgely	Upper Marlboro	R. Montcalm
Frank Thomas	Hyattsville	R.A. Adamson, Jr.
Margaret C. Herberger	Hyattsville	M. Cuff
Mr. & Mrs. Irvin T. Alsop, Jr.	Riverdale	H. Sherrill
Helen R. Sherrill	Hyattsville	V. Nichols
Carolyn McCart	Landover	F. Warther
Robert Schnabel	College Park	F. De Marr
Irene C. Addicks	Laurel	H. Wyatt
Julia V. Babcock	Riverdale	F. De Marr

## The Maryland Heritage Committee

The year 1984 will be a special year in this State, as it is the 350th anniversary of the founding of Maryland in 1634. There will be numerous celebrations, commemorations, and historical projects to mark the anniversary, and committees have been appointed in the counties to plan commemorations at the county level.

Prince George's County's committee was appointed by the County Executive in November. The chairman is Joyce Rumburg of Greenbelt. Other committee members are: James G. Boss (Laurel), Ruth Brown (Mitchellville), Susanna B Cristofane (Bladensburg), Dorothy Drinkard-Hawkshawe (Bowie State College), Charles A. Dukes, Jr. (Hyattsville), Herbert C. Embrey (Adelphi), Emory Evans (University of Maryland), Dana G. Kurfman (Upper Marlboro), Marjorie M. Miller (Bowie), M. Jean Speicher (Laurel), Robert E. Turner (Bowie), Alan Virta (Greenbelt), and John M. Walton, Jr. (Clinton).

## Another Anniversary

We note with pride that this issue of News and Notes marks the beginning of the 11th year of publication. The first feature article ten years ago was entitled "On Leisure Time in Prince George's County," and the officers and directors of the Society hope that News and Notes has provided you some pleasure in your leisure time during these past ten years.

Credit should be given those instrumental in producing this newsletter. Fred De Marr edited News and Notes for the first two years. He and our Corresponding Secretary, Edith Bagot, have worked with each issue in the mailing and publishing departments. There have been numerous contributors over the years; Paul Lanham and the late Frank White, Jr., have been the most frequent.

Had we no deadlines to meet, the articles would be more thoroughly researched and the writing style would be improved. But our goal is to send you some interesting notes on county history twelve times a year, so sometimes we must run with what we have. We hope you are not disappointed with the results. Your suggestions are always welcome. -- Alan Virta, Editor. (474-7524)

"Payable Before July 1": The County Levy and Levyers"

Taxes are much in the news these days; specifically county taxes, and the desire (or need, depending on one's point of view) of the county government to spend about thirty million more dollars than it will collect next year. Our county officials, state legislators, and even a blue-ribbon commission are investigating ways of handling this "revenue shortfall," ranging from budget cuts to the imposition of new taxes. Since the voters said emphatically last November that the shortfall will not be met with higher property taxes, other taxing alternatives have been suggested: an extra penny on the sales tax is one possibility; raising the county's piggyback income tax rate from fifty to sixty percent is another. The County Executive welcomes all suggestions.

Among the Society's papers are some old tax bills and it is interesting to compare them to today's. In 1917, for example, there were just two components of the property tax bill, the County tax and the state tax. The county tax, rate in 1917 was \$1.35 per \$100 of assessed value, and the state rate was 36 and 5/12, cents. In this tax year of 1982-1983, there are four parts of the tax bill: the county tax (at a rate of \$2.63), state tax (21 cents), park and planning (42 cents); and sanitary (12 and 1/2 cents), for a total rate of \$3.38 and 1/2 cents per \$100 of assessed value. Back in 1917, a five acre tract of land in the Bowie area was assessed at \$490 for the land and \$100 for the improvements. The county tax was \$7.97 and the state tax was \$2.15, for a total tax bill of \$10.12. We wonder how that property is assessed today.

On the back of the 1917 tax bill was a recapitulation of the 1917 levy--in modern terms, the 1917 county budget. We print that budget in this issue of *News and Notes*. All sorts of interesting analyses can be made of these figures but one fact stands out. Then, as now, public education consumed the largest part of the county revenues.

#### RECAPITULATION Levy, 1917

County Commissioners	\$ 1,500.00
Clerk to circuit court	2,395.00
Messenger to circuit court	50.00
Clerk to county commissioners	1,500.00
County treasurer	2,000.00
Clerk to County Treasurer	1,200.00
Counsel to County commissioners	500.00
Transfer clerk and auditor	900.00
Physician to jail	100.00
Warden to jail	1,821.75
Fuel court house and jail	400.00
Keeper of court house and grounds	590.00
Guard to jail	730.00
Interest	3,900.00
Sinking fund	4,000.00
Orphans' court	900.00
Messenger to orphans' court	50.00
Register of wills	461.16
Supervisor of assessment	1,000.00
Clerk to supervisor of assessment	600.00
Jurors and bailiffs	7,419.30
Lunatic paupers	6,500.00
Public schools (51 cents on \$100)	91,267.80

Roads	35,800.00
Bridges	6,456.35
States attorney	1,500.00
Sheriff	3,554.97
Alms house	3,606.85
Health officer	350.00
Constables accounts	1,729.05
Magistrates accounts	1,700.60
Fox scalps	6.00
Defense of criminals	465.00
Expert witnesses, post mortems	247.00
Registration of vital statistics	979.36
Jurors of inquest	300.00
States witnesses before J P	17.24
Hawk Heads	110.70
Public printing	423.00
Publishing Local Laws	450.00
Store accounts	222.83
Stationery	506.50
Taxes refunded	76.25
Burying paupers	78.00
Vaccinating paupers	259.00
Out pensioners	669.00
Miscellaneous	974.86
Collecting state taxes	2,000.00
Assessors	337.00
Assessors Act of Assembly 1916	7,087.50
Macadam roads	13,371.28
Repair of Macadam Roads	7,000.00
Primary election	4,378.57
Registration and election	9,011.75
New Public Schools (1 and 9/10¢ on \$100)	3,400.00
Surplus	<u>5,340.00</u>
	\$242,284.64

Harry St. J.L. Briscoe  
Clerk to County Commissioners  
Prince George's County, Md.

Only the very young and newcomers to the county will not remember the old Board of County Commissioners, for which Henry St. J.L Briscoe was clerk in 1917. Until 1971, when charter government was instituted in Prince George's County, the five commissioners directed the operations of county government, collected the taxes, and made the zoning decisions. They had little legislative power; most local laws were made by the General Assembly in Annapolis. Citizens' groups began campaigning for "home-rule" charter government not long after World War II, but were repeatedly turned down by the voters at referendum until November 3, 1970, when the current charter government, headed by a County Executive and a County Council, was approved. The county's last Board of County Commissioners was elected on the same day the voters decided to abolish their jobs, but those last five commissioners served for two months (until the new government was installed) automatically became members of the new County Council. Special elections were held on January 26, 1971, to elect six more council

members and a County Executive. Charter government was inaugurated on Monday, February 8, 1971, at a ceremony on the court house grounds.

The Board of County Commissioners was an institution that dated back to the mid-19th century. It replaced an institution known as the Levy Court, whose main function, as its name implied, was to collect and spend county taxes. The Levy Court was not the first of our local government bodies, however. In colonial times, the justices of the County Court--besides exercising the judicial function--served as the central local government agency. They set the county tax rate, supervised the collection of taxes, and decided how to spend the money. Besides hearing civil and criminal cases, they dispensed relief, contracted for the construction of roads and bridges, contributed monies toward schools and performed other--albeit limited by today's standards--functions of county government. The sheriff was their chief executive officer and his was a position of great power, prestige, and profit.

After the Revolution, there was a major reorganization in the judicial system in Maryland. Before, the County Court was composed of all of the county's justices of the peace, with a fixed quorum necessary to conduct business. By 1790, however, the number of justices of the peace had grown too large and unwieldy to constitute an effective court. Furthermore, legal training was not required to be a justice of the peace. Consequently, in 1790, the General Assembly reduced the membership of the County Court to just three members, required that all of them have a sound knowledge of the law, and relieved the court of its taxing and administrative duties. Those duties were retained by the justices of the peace, meeting together in a body known as the Levy Court. The membership of the Levy Court was quite large in Prince George's County (as there were quite a few justices of the peace), and somewhat fluid, as not all of them participated in the business of the Levy Court regularly. In 1798, the General Assembly empowered the Governor to name certain specific justices of the peace as the members of the Levy Court, to the exclusion of the others, thus making the Levy Court an institution with a distinct Fixed membership.

The Levy Court as established in 1798 then served as the central agency of county government until replaced by the Board of County Commissioners. Prince George's County's Levy Court was replaced by an eight-member Board of County Commissioners in 1850. The State Constitution of 1851 mandated the commissioner form of government for all counties, and at that time our board was reduced in membership to five. The county's first five-member board was elected in 1853. At one time, during the late 19th- and early 20th centuries, the commissioners were elected at different times and had overlapping terms, but basically the board as established by the Constitution of 1851 was the one that survived until charter government came in 1971.

To summarize then, the central agencies of county government in Prince George's County have been in this order: the County Court, the Levy Court, the Board of County Commissioners, and now, jointly the County Executive and County Council. Some personnel lists of interest are printed, below:

The first County Court, installed at Charles Town, (Mount Calvert) on St. George's Day, April 23, 1696 (according to Mrs. Heinton): Thomas Hollyday, William Hutchison, William Barton, John Wight, Robert Bradley, William Tannehill, David Small, and Robert Tyler.

Justices of the County Court serving in the first years of the Revolution, 1775-1776 (according to Judge Van Horn), Joshua Beall, Christopher Lowndes, Willam Lock Weems, David

Crauford, Alexander Symmer, John Harrison, James Crow, John Baynes, John Read Magruder, Richard Henderson, Thomas Gantt, Jr., Thomas Clagett, Truman Skinner, Jeremiah Magruder, Luke Marbury, and Alexander Howard Magruder.

The Levy Court in 1814, the year the British invaded this county (according to Judge Van Horn): Basil Duckett, Thomas Mundell, William B. Beanes, William Hebb, Thomas Brooke, Edward H. Calvert, and Henry Waring.

The first five-member Board of County Commissioners, elected 1853: Richard B. Walker, Nathaniel W. Marden, R.W.G. Baden, Charles C. Hill, and Octavius C. Harris (all Whigs).

The last five-member Board of County Commissioners, elected 1970: John B. Burcham- (Republican) and Winfield Kelly, Jr., John J. Garrity, Francis B. Francois, and Samuel W. Bogley (Democrats).

The six additional council members elected in 1971, to serve with the above named on the first County Council: Charles Callow, Royal Hart, Gladys Spellman, and Francis White (Democrats), and Lucille Potts and Ronald Reeder (Republicans).

County Executives to date: William W. Gullett, 1971-1974 (Republican), Winfield Kelly, Jr. 1974-1978 (Democrat), Lawrence J. Hogan, 1978-1982 (Republican) and Parris N. Glendening, elected 1982 (Democrat).

In 1982, 'the County Council was reduced in size to nine members, each elected from separate districts.

--Alan Virta

Sources: R. Lee Van Horn, Out of the Past (1976); Morris L. Radoff, ed., The Old Line State (1971) chapters on Maryland Government; and Louise J. Hienton, Prince George's Heritage. (1972).

## NEWS AND NOTES FROM

# The Prince County Historical Society

George's

Vol. XI, no. 2-3  
Feb.--Mar. 1983

### The March Meeting: Two Historic Towns

There are a number of historic towns in Prince George's County, but only two of them are officially recognized by the National Register of Historic Places: Hyattsville and Greenbelt. These two very different towns will be the subject of the March meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society', to be held on Saturday, March 12, at Riversdale.

Paul Schopf, active in the preservation movement in Hyattsville, will introduce a slide show about the history of Hyattsville focusing on the restoration efforts in the National Register Historic District. Hyattsville's grand old Victorian homes are coming to life again, as this professionally produced slide show (with music and narration) will amply demonstrate.

We will then leave Victorian Hyattsville for New Deal Greenbelt. Betty Allen of the Greenbelt Library will introduce "The City," a film about Greenbelt produced during the 1930's to explain the New Deal concept of federally planned communities and new towns--of which Greenbelt was one. The building of Greenbelt was one of the most controversial projects of the U.S. Resettlement Administration during the Depression, and this film presents the Roosevelt administration's point of view, plus fascinating glimpses of Prince George's County and old Greenbelt more than four decades ago. The New Deal section of Greenbelt is on the National Register.

Join us on March 12 for a fascinating look at the suburban development of Prince George's County as exemplified by two very different towns. The meeting will begin at 2 p m. Refreshments will be served afterward, and guests are welcome. Riversdale, the Calvert mansion, is located at 4811 Riverdale Road in Riverdale, between Kenilworth Avenue and Route One. For directions or other information, call Fred De Marr at 277-0711 or Alan Virta at 474-7524.

### An April Meeting this year

Contrary to practice in past years, there will be an April meeting this year. It will be on the second Saturday, April 9. The topic will be Commodore Joshua Barney (the one American hero coming out of the Battle of Bladensburg) and his many connections with this area.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

### The Bus Tour to Baltimore: March 5

A separate sheet with details of the bus tour to Baltimore is enclosed. Please note the deadline for reserving a place.

### James Henry Shreve

We regret to inform the membership of the recent death of James H. Shreve, a former vice president and long-time member of the Prince George's County Historical Society. A native of this county, Mr. Shreve was a tobacco farmer in Upper Marlboro. He lived at Sasscer's Green, a plantation that has been in his wife's family for many years. Mrs. Shreve, the former Lucille Van Ness Duvall died in 1961.

In 1975 Mr. Shreve was a recipient of the Society's St. George's Day Award. Among his many contributions to county history was the book on Upper Marlboro he wrote in 1971 for the celebration of the town's 250<sup>th</sup> year as the county seat. He was asked to undertake that project very late, and he completed the job in just a few weeks.

James H. Shreve was a veteran of World War II and a retired Army Reserve officer. He was 71 when he died. There are no immediate survivors.

### St. George's Day Awards

The Society will again present St. George's Day Awards to individuals who have made important contributions to the preservation of our county's heritage at the St. George's Day Dinner this year, on April 23. If you have any nomination to make please send it to the St. George's Day Award Committee, in care of the Prince George's County Historical Society, Inc., P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, MD 20737. Deadline: March 10.

### Events at Belair Mansion

Sunday, March 20: 3rd Annual Quilt Show, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission charge of \$2.00 to benefit the restoration fund.

Wednesday, April 20. Architect James Wollon will lecture on "Great Mansions of Maryland" at 7:30p.m. Admission fee of \$5.00 to benefit the restoration fund.

### Colonial Tobacco at the Colonial Farm

National Colonial Farm staff will demonstrate the preparation and planting technique of a colonial tobacco seed bed, on Sunday, March 13, from 1 to 4 p.m. Admission fee of \$1.00; children under 12 are free. The farm is located at 3400 Bryan Point Road, Accokeek. Phone 301-283-2113.

### An Unfortunate Accident on a Steamboat

"An unfortunate accident occurred on Thursday last to Miss Eliza Thorn, of this County. She had stepped on board the Alexandria ferryboat on the Maryland side and entered the engine-room for the purpose of warming herself, when her dress caught in the machinery. She was twice carried over the shaft, when her shrieks reached the ears of the Captain, who instantly stopped the engine. Immediately on her arrival in Alexandria, Dr. Lewis was summoned, and every attention has been paid to the unfortunate lady. "Her condition is considered extremely critical."

--Planters' Advocate, October 26, 1859

"Miss Thorn, of this county, who, noticed at the time in this papers, was so seriously injured by being caught in the machinery of the Alice Fox, some time since, has since died from the effects of the injuries then received."

--Planters' Advocate, January 4, 1860

Editor's Note: The Alexandria ferry left the Maryland side at about the point where the District line meets the Potomac shoreline, i.e. just a little north of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge. On both the Martenet map of 1862 and

the Hopkins map of 1878 a hotel is shown, known on both as the Ferry Hotel, right at the ferry landing. Does anyone know anything more about the Ferry Hotel?

### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

		Sponsor
Mr. & Mrs. Charles A. Dukes, Jr.	Hyattsville	A. Virta
Marjorie M. & William E. Miller,	Bowie	A. Virta
Susan & John De Keaney	Bladensburg,	S. Cristofane
Frances S. Davies	Washington, D.C.	G. Davies.
Mr. & Mrs. James Bucher	Upper Marlboro	G. Davies
Dr. G., M. Sidwell	College Park	G. Wells
Dr. & Mrs. Sherrod Cooper, Jr.	Lewisdale	J. McDonald
Mr. & Mrs. C. N. Bacon	Lewisdale.	J. McDonald

### Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage

The 1983 Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage, will be from April 23 to May 8. On the tour this year are: Anne Arundel County, Guilford (Baltimore City), Charles County, Frederick County, Ruxton (Baltimore County), My Lady's Manor (Baltimore County), Kent County, and Oxford (Talbot County). For specific dates and more information, contact the Pilgrimage at 1105 Providence Road, Towson, Maryland 21204. Phone 301-821-6933.

### St. Simon's Church and Croome Industrial and Agricultural Institute

In honor of Black History month, there follows a history of St. Simon's Church, Croome, and, the Croome Industrial and Agricultural Institute.

Most members of the Prince George's County Historical Society familiar with St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Croome, and have probably visited this quiet and lovely colonial church on many occasions. Few, however, may be aware of two important black historic sites which were closely associated with St. Thomas, Croome. By the 1890's, St. Thomas, constructed as a chapel-of-ease for St. Paul's, Baden, was already 150 years old. It was in this decade that Frank P. Willes came as Rector to St. Thomas, and it was during his tenure there (1892-1903) that a mission chapel, St. Simon's, was built for black communicants. Although St. Thomas had for generations been ministering to members of the local black community, the construction (ca. 1894) of St. Simon's provided for separate educational and social events among the black communicants, and attracted a larger black congregation.

St. Simon's was a simple frame gable-roofed structure, typical of the chapels built for black congregations in the late 19th century. It was constructed on the grounds of St. Thomas' Rectory building, just north of St. Thomas Church. Religious instruction was offered by Reverend Willes' two sisters, Suzanne and Katharine Willes, and by 1896 St. Simon's Sunday School was flourishing. Suzanne Willes in particular, took up the cause of Negro education as her life's work, and by 1899 she had begun to solicit funds not only locally, but from New York, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts, to establish an institute for the education of black boys and girls. With funds she collected, she purchased, in 1902, 60 acres of land on the south side of St. Thomas Church Road, to be used for the establishment of her school.

In this same year, 1902, the congregation of St. Simon's petitioned the Episcopal Bishop of Washington for a full-time black priest to serve St. Simon's, and Reverend August E. Jensen was installed in June of that year. Immediately after his arrival, the chapel was moved from St. Thomas' Rectory grounds, south across the road to the 60-acre tract just purchased by Suzanne Willes. The small frame building was lifted onto rolling logs, and slowly transported by this means to its new location. Services were actually held in the building during the moving process, which took many days. After the chapel was stabilized in its new location, a two-story vicarage was built immediately adjoining it for Rev. Jensen, and a few years later St. Simon's cemetery was laid out one-quarter mile to the south.

In the meantime, Miss Susie Willes (as she was always known) was proceeding with the establishment of her school. By 1903 she had built a large hall, which was to serve as the center of the school activities, as well as other smaller school buildings. The Croome Industrial and Agricultural Institute of Prince George's County, Maryland, was incorporated in 1903, and had as its chief object the "extension and improvement of industrial education as a means of opening better and wider avenues of employment to young colored men and women...." The Institute gave instruction in cooking, household economics, sewing and dressmaking, as well as scientific agriculture, and was managed by a Board of Trustees, which included the: two Misses Willes.

By 1918, however, the Institute was in severe financial difficulty, and the trustees, then headed by the Right Reverend Alfred Harding, filed a Petition for Dissolution. Miss Susie Willes contested the petition; she admitted the insufficiency of funds, but insisted that it was possible to continue the Institute. The Court of Equity however, approved the dissolution, but ordered the property of the Institute (by then reduced to 45 acres) reconveyed to Susie Willes on the condition that she form a new corporation with purpose similar to the original; it was, however, to be "organized and managed, severed and disconnected in every way from the Protestant Episcopal Church."

The new corporation was called the Croome Settlement School of Prince George's County, and its charter of 1919 stated that its purpose was the "industrial and educational betterment of the colored boys and girls of Southern Maryland, said work to be on absolutely a nonsectarian foundation but broadly religious, the aim of the school being the Christian character of every pupil. . ." In 1921, Susie Willes conveyed the 45-acre property to the Croome Settlement School, of which she was one of the trustees. Several new frame school buildings were constructed during the 1920's which still stand today. Again, scientific agriculture and household skills were the principal courses offered by the school. Students came from various parts of Southern Maryland; the school also served for many years as a home for District of Columbia Child Welfare wards. For more than 20 years the Croome Settlement School successfully prepared black youth for the Working world, until it was again beset with financial difficulties in the 1940's. The school was closed finally in 1952, and the 45-acre property on which it stood was sold in 1964 to the Prince George's County Board of Education.

During these years, a series of twelve black priests had served St. Simon's Church until it was closed in 1964. At that time, the congregation of St. Simon's merged with St. Thomas and the chapel stood vacant until it was razed in 1972. A year later the vicarage was also demolished. The 45-acre tract on which both buildings and the cemetery were located had by then been deeded to the Board of Education.

Today St. Simon's cemetery, quiet and secluded in its wooded setting, is still in use and is cared for by the Vestry of St. Thomas Church. Nothing remains of the original buildings of the Croome Industrial and Agricultural Institute except for the decaying ruins of the "hall" beside the lane leading to the cemetery. A grassy expanse with two tall cedars marks the site of the chapel and vicarage. And immediately east of this grassy lot stand a few frame buildings, remnants of the second institution, the Croome Settlement School. But, although very little physical evidence remains of St. Simon's Church or of the two phases of the school their site, is very important, for it represents a unique effort in the Negro education movement. For the first half of the 20th century, up to the eve of school desegregation, the Croome establishment offered practical instruction to young people, at first under the aegis of the Episcopal Church, and later as a nonsectarian venture, in an effort to provide them More entry into the work force.

--Susan Pearl

The above history was compiled from land records, court records, incorporation papers, a few school records, church records from both St. Thomas and St. Simon's, and an historical sketch written by Rev. F.P. Willes; also from interviews with parishioners, ministers, and people associated with both schools. Still, the information is scanty, and the History Division of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission will welcome any additions. Contact Susan Pearl at the History Division, phone 779-2011.

Editor's note: We may speculate as to the influence of Booker T. Washington on the life and work of Miss Susie Willes. Washington organized the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama in the 1880s, and by the 1890's he was a nationally known figure. The Tuskegee Institute like the Croome schools, "emphasized industrial education as a means to self respect and economic independence for black people" (Columbia Encyclopedia). Whatever direct influence Washington may or may not have had, the Croome establishment certainly was a local representative of that industrial education movement he led.

A photo of the two Misses Willes can be found in Jim Shreve's Upper Marlboro book, which was republished in 1976.

### The First High Schools in Prince George's County

Public secondary education came late to Prince George's County. While the high school developed in the North and Midwest in the second and third quarters of the 19th century, public secondary education in Maryland and the states of the South is largely a twentieth century phenomenon

Prince George's County's first high school was established in 1899 in Laurel. The driving force behind the creation of the school was Edward Phelps, who led the campaign for the school in Laurel and lobbied the county commissioners to issue bonds to build the school after such bonds were authorized by the legislature. After much political wrangling, the commissioners agreed to an \$8,000 bond issue, providing the citizens of Laurel raised \$2,000 themselves. Phelps led the successful fundraising effort, and when the original contractor withdrew from the project, he bid on the job himself. His bid of \$8,365 was accepted, but he admitted later that he actually lost about a thousand dollars on the job. Work began in July of 1898 and was completed by the next summer. Classes were first held in the building in the fall of 1899. The first principal was Roger I. Manning.

Other high schools followed quickly: Surrattsville (1906) was the second to open. In 1908 the old Marlboro Academy was converted into a public high school, the third. Within a decade there were three more: Baden, Hyattsville, and Brandywine. The first high school classes for blacks were not offered until later. The first black high school was in Upper Marlboro; the second at Lakeland, near College Park. These two schools, established in the 1920s, were not followed by a third until 1950, when Fairmont Heights was opened.

Printed below is a description of Prince George's first high school, Laurel found in The Teachers' Hand Book, Prince George's County, Maryland for 1902-1903. At the time of printing, it was still the only high school in the county.

#### LAUREL HIGH SCHOOL.

##### Location

Laurel is situated in the northeast corner of Prince George's county, about half way between Baltimore and Washington. The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad passes through its eastern end.

It is both a manufacturing and a resident town, is lighted by electricity and has brick pavements.

Contractors are now working to supply the town with water.

There are many pretty homes, with large lawns attached. The people are refined and hospitable.

The following denominations have churches there: Episcopal, Presbyterian, Northern Methodist, Southern Methodist, Baptist and Catholic.

##### Description

The High School, situated near the centre of a large lot, fronting on Montgomery street, between Seventh and Eighth streets, is a substantial brick building, with stone foundations.

It has a large assembly hall, six class rooms, four cloak rooms, two teachers' rooms, a janitor's room, and in the basement a play room for each sex. The interior is finished with gulf cypress.

The building is heated by furnaces and ventilated according to the latest and most improved plan. The rooms are well lighted, and are fitted with individual desks.

##### Course of Study

There are two courses of study, Academic and Business. The Academic covers four years.

#### Curriculum.

First Year--Arithmetic, Algebra, English, United States History, Maryland History, Physiology, Geography, Latin, Constitution of the United States, Constitution of Maryland.

Second Year--Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, English, English History, Physiology and Latin.

Third Year--Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Rhetoric, Modern History, Latin, German or French and Physics.

Fourth Year—Geometry, Rhetoric, Literature, Ancient History, Latin, German or French, Physics, and Trigonometry.

The Business Course covers three years.

#### Curriculum

First Year--Arithmetic, Algebra, English, Geography, United States History, Maryland History, Physiology and Shorthand.

Second Year--Book-keeping and Business Practice, English, Business Arithmetic, English History, Physiology, Shorthand, Algebra and Geometry.

Third Year--Book-keeping and Business Practice, Commercial Law, Commercial Geography, Typewriting, Shorthand, English, Outlines of General History, Algebra and Geometry.

#### Manual Training

The Sloyd System of Manual Training is taught throughout both courses.

First Year--Paper Work: Plain Geometric Drawing of Polygons, from the triangular to the octangular, and Development of Pyramids and Prisms from the triangular to the octangular.

Second Year--Development of the Cylinder, Cones, Frustum of Pyramids and Cones, and all the Hedrons.

Third and Fourth years--Woodworking and Mechanical Drawing.

Declamation and Composition throughout each course.

Instruction in Military Tactics will be given, and neat dark blue uniforms, with light stripes, will be furnished the boys at a cost of \$6 each.

#### Terms of Admission

Pupils from public schools who have certificates from their former teachers stating that they have satisfactorily completed the work of the sixth grade and are of good moral character, may be admitted.

Pupils from private schools are required to pass an examination in the sixth grade studies.

Tuition and books are free to pupils of this county.

Pupils not residing in the county are subject to the above rules and are required to pay \$15 per year for tuition.

Board can be obtained for from \$10 to \$12 per month.

Graduates of the Academic will be given a First Grade Teacher's Certificate, of the Business Course a Second Grade Teacher's Certificate.

Editor's note: As the terms of admission imply, high school then was grades 7 to 10; the 11th and 12th grades were not added until later. The old building, with additions, still stands. It is now the Edward Phelps Community Center.

Prince George's County Historical Society: This newsletter is published monthly. Subscription is included in the annual dues of \$5.00. President, Frederick S. De Marr, Corresponding Secretary, Edith Bagot, Treasurer, Herb Embrey, Editor, Alan Virta (474-7524).

The April Meeting:  
Commodore Joshua  
Barney and Savage,  
Maryland

The St. George's Day  
Dinner-Saturday, April  
23--University of Md.

**NEWS AND NOTES**  
**FROM**  
**The Prince George's County**  
**Historical Society**

Vol. no 4

For the American side, the Battle of Bladensburg during the War of 1812 was a disaster. Not only were the American defenders routed, but the victorious British then marched unimpeded into the city of Washington and burned the Capitol, White House, and other buildings. There was one American, however, who participated in that debacle and emerged with an enhanced reputation: Commodore Joshua Barney. A naval officer of note during the American Revolution Barney divided the years between the Revolution and the War of 1812 between naval service (for the U.S. and France) and commercial pursuits. In 1814 he was recalled to active service. Placed in command of a flotilla defending the Patuxent, he was ordered to leave his ships and retire with his men to Washington to participate in the defense of the city. He and his men fought gallantly at Bladensburg, but the local militia which made up the rest of the defending force was ill-trained and unprepared, and fled under attack. Barney was wounded and captured by the British but was treated with honor and dignity by his captors on account of his valiant fighting. He was later presented a sword of honor by the city of Washington.

Not only was Joshua Barney a hero of the War of 1812, but he was also our neighbor. A native of Baltimore County, he lived for many years on a plantation near Savage, Md., not far beyond the Patuxent River and the Prince George's County line in Howard County. He came into the property as the result of his marriage to his second wife, Harriet Coale. His house still stands, and Robert G. Skaggs, who now lives in that house, will present the interesting story of Joshua Barney and the development of the town of Savage at the April meeting of the Society, on April 9, at 2 p.m. at Riversdale, the Calvert mansion in Riverdale. As always, guests are welcome and refreshments will be served. The gift shop in the mansion will be open before and

**PRINCE GEORGE S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

**ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696**

## The St. George's Day Dinner

St. George's Day, April 23, will be the 287th anniversary of the erection of Prince George's County in 1696. In keeping with tradition, the Society will gather for the St. George's Day Dinner in the evening of that anniversary day to commemorate our county's founding. This year's dinner will mark a modest milestone for the Society; it will be the tenth such commemoration since the inaugural dinner in 1974. The St. George's Day awards will be presented for meritorious contributions to the preservation of our county's heritage, and for the third successive year, the Hall of Fame, Prince George's County, Maryland, will make an induction. This year's honoree will be Governor Oden Bowie.

The St. George's Day Dinner will be held at the University of Maryland Center for Adult Education. Invitations with full details have been mailed and should reach all members soon, if they have not already. If you do not receive an invitation, please call Society president Frederick S. De Marr at 277-0711.

Members should note that this year St. George's Day--April 23--falls on a Saturday, so the dinner will begin somewhat earlier in the evening than on a weeknight.

## Events of Note in April

Saturday April 16: National Colonial Farm Day, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the farm in Accokeek. Demonstrations of 18th century crafts, children's events, and performances by the Maryland Militia are included. Raindate: April 17. Free. Phone 301-283-2113.

Wednesday April 20: James Wollon will lecture on "The Great Mansions of Maryland" at Belair Mansion in Bowie. Donation \$5.00, Time: 7:30 p.m. Reservations must be made by April 15 by calling Dorothy Rainwater at 262-2854.

Sunday April 24: Hyattsville House Tour. Begin at the Church of the Open Bible (the old Pinkney Memorial Church), 5201 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue.

Sunday May 1: Takoma Park Centennial House and Garden Tour. Phone 270-5798 or 270-6737.

## Business Affairs

In November 1982 the members voted to increase the size of the Board of Directors of the Society. At the April meeting, three nominations will be placed before the membership to fill three newly created board positions. Nominees for the three positions are Ann Ferguson of Riverdale, W. C. Dutton of Mount Calvert, and John Mitchell of Upper Marlboro. Elections will be held during the business portion of the meeting.

## Historic Home on the Market

For sale: Ash Hill, also known as Hitching Post Hill, a 19th century residence in Hyattsville. Contact Jane Burch at 422-8891.

## 'An Experiment in Social Values. . .'

One of the many federal programs of the New Deal era was the Federal Writers' Project, administered by the Works Progress Administration and created to provide employment for writers and researchers during the Depression. One of the most important products of the project was the American Guide series, a series of guide-books to the states and cities of the country. "In plan and scope, this series goes beyond the general concept of the conventional guidebook," stated the editors. "Its objectives is to present as complete a picture as possible of American communities, their political, economic, industrial, and cultural history, their contemporary scene, as well as the specific points of interest ordinarily sought out by the tourist." That these guides, now almost fifty years old, are still much-used by historians and other scholars, as well as tourists, is testimony to the success of the series and the quality of the work.

The guidebook for Washington, D.C. (from whose preface the objectives of the series, above, were reprinted), is a hefty volume of more than 1100 pages published in 1957 and entitled Washington: City and Capital. Its chapter on the history of this mid-Potomac region before the creation of Washington City serves as a very good summary of the Indian and colonial history of Prince George's County, as well as of the District. In addition, the guide takes the reader out to two Prince George's County locations for tours: historic Bladensburg, "settled into suburban insignificance," and the brand-new town of Greenbelt, "an experiment in social values as well as in economic planning."

Greenbelt, like the guidebook describing it, was a New Deal project. In building Greenbelt, the federal government, had several goals in mind: to provide employment (through the construction) for unemployed workers; to provide housing for low and moderate income persons; and to put into practice a number of urban planning theories revolving around the concept of the park-like, planned, suburban "new town." The government built Greenbelt on a portion of that huge tract of land in the northern part of the county that had been acquired for the Dept. of Agriculture. A belt of forest was left to encircle the new city, and even today that original section of Greenbelt is buffered from other suburban development by that "green belt." After World War II, the federal government sold Greenbelt to its residents, or more specifically, to a cooperative formed by the residents. Private post-World War II development within the city boundaries and the extension of those boundaries have brought changes to Greenbelt; most of the city outside the original core was developed not much differently than the adjacent areas of the county. That original, New Deal "green belt" core remains today, however, and is recognized by the National Register of Historic Places. No Through roads traverse it; those who have never made it a point to turn off of Greenbelt Road or Kenilworth Avenue and wind their way into that insulated community have never seen it.

Greenbelt was not built without controversy. Opposition came from those concerned with the role of the federal government and propriety of such social experiments, from persons who believed the project was too expensive, and from many locals who feared the impact--political, social, and otherwise--that the new city would have on the county. The city was completed, however, and the sympathetic description from the Federal Writers Project guidebook to Washington, D.C., is printed below.

## GREENBELT

The entrance to Greenbelt on the right is marked by signboards. The side road leads a mile farther to the new Government development in housing for the low-income group. The construction work is being done by men taken from relief rolls. Units for housing a thousand such low-income families are already under construction, and some of them are completed, on the great horseshoe plateau. The outer rim of the plateau is utilized for home units, and the concave central section is for stores, shops, movie, school, and recreation centers. To the northwest of the new community a lake has been formed by damming a creek. This will be a swimming and boating center, free to members of the community, with a section open to the public for an admission fee.

The residential section of the community is divided into super-blocks. The relatively few motor roads (6 miles as compared with 66 customary in a community of this size) skirt the outer edges of each block, so that the homes will be easily accessible. Within the center of each super-block will be park-like play areas for children. Life is further safeguarded from motor accidents by underpasses which link the super-blocks one with the other and in turn with the central community area.

The whole community is placed with a "green belt"--that is a large area of land which belongs to the community and which will be left in a natural state, or landscaped as picnic and recreation grounds. This is designed to insulate the community from encroachment of industrial or commercial activities which have, in the past, so often destroyed the value of privately constructed subdivisions. Within this area will also be garden plots available to residents on request, as well as about 50 small part-time subsistence farms.

Greenbelt, which derives its name from this isolated area, and two other developments, Greenhills, near Cincinnati, Ohio and Greendale, near Milwaukee, Wis., are being built under the direction of the Suburban Resettlement Division of the Resettlement Administration. The expressed purpose of this land-utilization project is "to create a community protected by an encircling green belt; the community to be designed for families of predominantly modest income, and arranged and administered so as to encourage that kind of family and community life which will be better than they now enjoy." In creating these communities the Resettlement Administration has been concerned with the social aspects of arbitrary selection of the inhabitants, so that it becomes an experiment in social values as well as in economic planning. These villages have been projected also as a practical demonstration in low-cost housing which can be liquidated within a reasonable time with the hope that other such communities will be developed by private, municipal, or State enterprise.

The construction costs, including the purchase of land, at Greenbelt will be \$7,400,000 by the time the first 1,000 housing units are completed. However, part of this sum will have been used for the community center, roads, municipal facilities of electricity water supply and heating plants, and for idle land within the "Greenbelt" on which the proposed additional 2,000 units will be erected, so that for the cost of the first 1,000 (less prorated cost of these facilities and land for the second 2,000); \$4,100,000 or \$4,100 per unit is estimated. Each unit will consist of living room, dining room, kitchen, bath, and from one to three bedrooms. The units will rent for from \$20 to \$45, including light, heat, and water, to families in the income group of \$1,200 to \$2,000. More than 5,000 applications have already been received. Not only is this an experiment in low-rental housing, but also is a

regenerative social factor for more than 3,000 men who have been taken from relief rolls and given employment in the construction work.

Each unit is of sound construction, durable, and fire-resistant, and is soundproofed (in the case of row houses) from its neighbor. All the units are well equipped with modern plumbing and ventilation, and each block of units is centrally heated. The design and conveniences of the dwellings as well as the furnishings of a few model units are modern in treatment and conception. It is hoped that these will set the mode for other homes which will be future settlers. Artistic landscaping is a feature of both blocks and individual units.

For the sake of economy of construction surface materials have been limited to brick and cinder block with either pitched or flat roofs. By alternating the use of these materials, and the roof types, considerable variety has been attained. Some of the houses are further differentiated by novel color schemes. Finally, pitched and flat-roof structures have been planned not only to afford variety within a section, but also to transform the sections into interesting patterns.

The community will have a regular municipal government comparable to other Maryland towns of the same size. It will pay regular State and county taxes out of the general fund collected in rents once the project is in operation. The assessable value of the property for the State of Maryland is \$4,000,000. When the construction of the first 1,000 units is complete the tenant selection and maintenance of the rental town will be turned over to the Management Division of the Resettlement Administration, until such time as the community can be turned over to a local non-profit corporation. It is estimated that the rents will pay the taxes, maintenance and replacements, the interest on the investment, and amortize the Government subsidy within 60 years, so that the community will be self-supporting. It is not charity, but a sound investment for surplus Government funds. In addition, it serves three distinct social needs; the construction relieves unemployment due to the depression, the town furnishes quality housing at small rental for low-income families, and relieves housing congestion in the National Capital.

The Greenbelt Library contains an excellent collection of material relating to the history of the city.--Editor.

#### The Case of the Late Cashier

Niles' Weekly Register for March 20, 1830, makes this report concerning certain banking affairs in Prince George's County.

'An exhibit has been made of the affairs of the Planters bank of Prince George's County, Maryland. There appears to be a deficiency of about \$16,000, the whole of which is chargeable to the late cashier! It is supposed that the stock is worth 80 per cent--all allowances being made. The notes out for less than 15,000. They have been selling 30 or 40 percent discount, but seem may all be pretty speedily paid.'

The same issue of the Register, a national news magazine published in Baltimore, contains another piece of startling news:

'A letter written in Baltimore has been replied to from Norfolk in forty-one hours--distance about 400 miles--by steam.'

#### New Members of the Society

		Sponsor
Esther Hottel	Forestville	C. Vaught
Dennis & Catherine Dolan	Upper Marlboro	A. Virta
Stanley A Pauline Prusch	Mount Ranier	A. Virta
Mary G. Daniels	Hyattsville	R. Cecil
L. Ahniwake Fleming	Adelphi	N. Ritchie

#### A Pictorial History of the County

Alan Virta is seeking old photos and other graphic material for a pictorial history of Prince George's County he is preparing. The book will be part of the series of similar pictorial histories of towns and counties published by the Donning Company of Norfolk. Other Maryland localities already represented in the series include Frederick, Towson, Ocean City, and Salisbury and Wicomico County. Contact Alan Virta at 474-7524, or by mail at 8244 Canning Terrace, Greenbelt, Md. 20770.

#### The Prince George's County Historical Society

Subscription to this monthly newsletter is included in the annual dues of \$5.00. The Society's address: P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20737. Membership applications are welcomed.

President: Frederick S. De Marr	Treasurer: Herb Embrey
Vice President: John Giannetti	Historian: James Wilfong
Corresponding Sec: Edith Bagot	Directors: Alan Virta
Recording Secretary: Warren Rhoads	Paul Lanham
Newsletter editor: Alan Virta	Susanna Cristofane

NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince George's County  
Historical Society**

Vol. XI no. 5 May  
1983

A Walking Tour of Upper Marlboro: May 14

Upper Marlboro is a very old town: founded in 1706, it has been our county seat since 1721. Few places in Prince George's County can claim such a concentration of historic sites; indeed, few places have a history to rival Upper Marlboro's. Marlboro was the social center of the colonial tobacco gentry. Here they gathered for the theater, opera, gay balls, and horse racing. Prince Georgians through the years have come to Marlboro for business and pleasure, for both public and private purposes. George Washington played the horses here; Reverdy Johnson argued the law. Archbishop John Carroll first saw the light of day in this town, and Bishop Thomas John Claggett worked here to save souls. Here the British Army paused to rest on its way to Bladensburg, and here, in later years, Ghiselin Sasscer held court. No longer the social or business center of Prince George's County--for the times do change--Upper Marlboro will always retain a special place in county life, both because of its role as county seat and its distinctive history.

\*Still from Washington some traveller, tempted by the easy grade  
Through the Long Old Fields continues, cantering in the evening shade  
Till he hears the frogs and crickets serenading something lost  
In the augey mists of Marlboro banked before him like a frost."

Members of the Society will have an opportunity to discover these things lost, and the many things preserved, in Upper Marlboro, firsthand, on Saturday, May 14, when the Society will sponsor a walking tour through the town. There will be no formal meeting that day, but guides will take you down Main Street and all around town to see many of old Marlboro's historic sites. This walking tour is part of the larger "Marlboro Day" festivities on May 14, which include a parade at noon, crafts demonstrations, entertainments, food and drink, and exhibitions of all sorts. The festivities begin at 9 a.m. and continue until 4 p.m., while our walking tour will begin at 2 p.m. Meet right in front of the courthouse.

Parking in the center of town will be difficult particularly in the afternoon, but a free shuttle bus will transport visitors

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

**ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696**

to and from the fair grounds. There will also be equestrian events at the race track. Join us for a walking tour of Upper Marlboro on Saturday, May 14 at 2 p.m., at the courthouse. (Poetry by George A. Townsend)

### Tea to Honor Society Officers

Mrs. A.H. Seidenspinner cordially invites the members of the Society to her home for a tea to honor the officers of the Prince George's County Historical Society on Sunday, May 22 from 3

to 5 p.m. Mrs. Seidenspinner lives in College Heights Estates, at 3917 Calverton Drive, which is two blocks east of Adelphi Road via Wells Parkway. Directions and more information is contained on a sheet accompanying this newsletter.

### Riversdale Open House

Spring Open House will be held at Riversdale on Saturday and Sunday, May 21 and 22, between noon and 4 p.m. Civil War units will be encamped on the grounds, and the Patuxent Martial Music Band will perform. Tours of the house, whose rooms are newly repainted in the original shades, will be offered. Quilts and dolls will be on display, and the gift shop will be open. Admission for tours of the house will be \$1.00 for adults and 50¢ for children.

On Sunday afternoon, while the open house is in progress, the Prince George's County Historical and Cultural Trust will offer an appraisal clinic for small antiques from 1 to 4 p.m. Experts in porcelain, china, pottery, glass, dolls, advertising, quilts, country pieces, and other categories will be on hand. Appraisals will be verbal, and a fee of \$3.00 for one item and \$2.00 for each additional item will be charged. Watch the local newspapers for details.

Come out and see Riversdale so beautifully decorated for 'Spring. The mansion is located at 4811 Riverdale Road, Riverdale.

### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

Mrs. Evelyn Hirrell	Lanham	Sponsor
L. Courtland Lee	Glenn Dale	Mr. A. Virta
Jean A. Sergent	Laurel	Mr. A. Virta
		Mr. F. De Marr

### The Friends of Preservation

A new organization, the Friends of Preservation, is forming to promote historic preservation in this county. It will offer a newsletter on preservation techniques, news, and issues, and other services. Contact Joyce McDonald at 422-4632.

## The St. George's Day Dinner and St. George's Day Awards

One of the largest crowds to attend a St. George's Day Dinner witnessed the presentation of seven St. George's Day Awards at the Society's 10th annual dinner on Saturday, April 23. Receiving the St. George's Day Award in 1983 for their contributions to the preservation of our county's heritage were:

Mr. and Mrs. Jess Joseph Smith, of Upper Marlboro, for their restoration of one of Upper Marlboro's important 18th century landmarks, their home, Content

Joyce W. McDonald, of Hyattsville, chairman of the Prince George's County Historical and Cultural Trust, in recognition of her participation and leadership in many historic preservation projects in this county in the course of the past several years, and in particular for her successful efforts earlier this year to save the Grigsby Station log cabin.

Susan Pearl, of Bowie, in recognition of her work as a researcher, writer, and lecturer of Prince George's County history, performed both in a volunteer capacity and as a member of the staff of the History Division, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

Society of Maren Duvall Descendants, one of the earliest family associations active in this county, organized more than fifty years ago, in recognition of its important work in perpetuating the memory and preserving the heritage of one of our oldest county families, and in particular for its recent work in restoring Marietta, the home of Supreme Court Justice Gabriel Duvall, and his law office on the grounds.

Hyattsville Preservation Association, a group which has stimulated much of the historic preservation and restoration work now going on in old Hyattsville and which led the efforts to establish the National Register Historic District in that city.

Mildred Ridgely Gray, who with persistence and determination led the successful opposition to the commercialization of the land around old Ridgely Church on Central Avenue, founded as a Methodist Church for the local black community in the years immediately following the Civil War. Through her efforts the tranquility of the churchyard has been preserved and the church, which was founded by her family, remains a peaceful oasis on busy Central Avenue. And

Ann Ferguson, of Riverdale, in recognition of her work as the prime mover in the activity of the Riversdale Historical Society, a group which has made important contributions to the restoration and interpretation of Riversdale, the Calvert mansion.

Inducted into the Prince George's County Hall of Fame was Governor Oden Bowie of Fairview, elected in 1867, the last Governor to come from this county. Numerous Bowie descendants were in attendance, and Shirley Baltz presented a sketch of the Governor's life. A fine portrait, commissioned by the Hall of Fame, will be placed in the courthouse in Upper Marlboro.

## The Medal of Honor

A group of Vietnam veterans is undertaking to erect a memorial, in Upper Marlboro to honor Captain James A. Graham, a Marine Corps officer from Prince George's County who was killed in action in that war and posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for gallantry beyond the call of duty. The veterans plan to place a stone and plaque by the side of Schoolhouse Pond, over near the Buck House. The area surrounding the monument will be kept as a park and

named for Captain Graham. This simple, yet dignified, memorial will honor not only Captain Graham but also the other men from Prince George's County who gave their lives in the Vietnam War.

The Medal of Honor, sometimes called the Congressional Medal of Honor, is this country's highest award for military valor. Only the most supreme acts of heroism and bravery are recognized by the medal, which is awarded by the President in the name of Congress. It was first presented in 1863.

A native of Allegheny County, Pa., Captain James A. Graham lived in Forestville. He graduated from Gwynn Park High School in Brandywine before going on to college, and was an officer with the 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division when he was killed in 1967. His widow resides in Upper Marlboro.

An essential work for those interested in the history of the Medal of Honor is an official publication of the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs entitled Medal of Honor Recipients, 1863-1978. Published in 1979 and containing more than 1000 pages of citations of all Medal of Honor winners, it also includes a geographic index, listing recipients by state, and usually by town or county after that. This index reveals that Captain Graham was not the first from Prince George's County to receive the Medal of Honor. The first to be so honored were Thomas Boyne and Clinton Greaves, both cavalymen cited for heroism in the Indian campaigns of the 1870's. Sergeant Boyne was a native of this county, while Corporal Greaves is recorded as entering the service here. We know nothing more about them, but more information should be on hand at the National Archives. Perhaps undeservedly Prince George's County is accredited with one other Medal of Honor in that geographic index. Because his widow was a resident of Hyattsville at the time of the award, Pfc. Phill G. McDonald of West Virginia, killed in action in Vietnam, also appears in the Maryland lists. A native of Avondale, W.Va., Pfc. McDonald entered the service at Beckley, W.Va. We can be sure that the residents of that area of southern West Virginia justly and proudly claim him as their own.

Printed in this issue of News and Notes are the Medal of Honor Corporal Greaves, and Captain Graham. Unfortunately, the geographic index in the Medal of Honor book does not allow for identification of other county natives or residents whose awards might be accredited to other states. Nor can it be determined from the index if any Medal of Honor winners came here to live after receiving their awards. So it cannot be said with certainty that these three are the only Prince Georgians to have won the medal. In truth, too, we cannot even say for sure that Corporal Greaves, whose birthplace was in Virginia but who entered the service here, was really a county resident. Until more extensive research is conducted then, this roll of honor must be a tentative one.

#### BOYNE, THOMAS

Rank and organization: Sergeant, Company C, 9th U.S. Cavalry.

Place and date: At Mimbres Mountains, Mex., 29 May 1879; at Cuchillo Negro River near Ojo Caliente, N. Mex., 27 September. 1879. Entered service at: ----- Birth: Prince Georges County, Md. Date of issue 6 January 1882. Citation: Bravery in action.

#### GREAVES, CLINTON

Rank and organizations Corporal, Company C, 9th U.S. Cavalry. Place and date: At Florida Mountains, IN. Mex., 24 January 1877. Entered service at: Prince Georges County, Md. Birth: Madison County, Va. Date of issue: 26 June 1879. Citation: While part of a small detachment to persuade a band of renegade Apache Indians to surrender, his group was surrounded. Cpl.

Greaves in the center of the savage hand-to-hand fighting, managed to shoot and bash a gap through the swarming Apaches, permitting his companions to break free.

GRAHAM, JAMES A.

Rank and organization: Captain, U.S. Marine Corps, Company F, 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division. Place and date: Republic of Vietnam, 2 Jne 1967. Entered service at: Prince Georges, Md. Born: 25 August 1940, Wilksburg, Allegheny County, Pa. Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. During Operation Union II, the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, consisting of Companies A and D, with Capt., Graham's company attached launched an attack against an enemy occupied position with 2 companies assaulting and 1 in reserve. Company F, a leading company, was proceeding across a clear paddy area 1,000 meters wide, attacking toward the assigned objective, when it came under fire from mortars and small arms which immediately inflicted a large number of casualties. Hardest hit by the enemy fire was the 2d platoon of Company F, which was pinned down in the open paddy area by intense fire from 2 concealed machine guns. Forming an assault unit from members of his small company headquarters, Capt. Graham boldly led a fierce assault through the second platoon's position, forcing the enemy to abandon the first machinegun position, thereby relieving some of the pressure on his second platoon, and enabling evacuation of the wounded to a more secure area. Resolute to silence the second machinegun, which continued its devastating fire, Capt. Graham's small force stood steadfast in its hard won enclave. Subsequently, during the afternoon's fierce fighting, he suffered 2 minor wounds while personally accounting for an estimated 15 enemy killed. With the enemy position remaining invincible upon each attempt to withdraw to friendly lines, and although knowing that he had no chance of survival, he chose to remain with 1 man who could not be moved due to the seriousness of his wounds. The last radio transmission from Capt. Graham, reported that he was being assaulted by a force of 25 enemy soldiers; he died while protecting himself and the wounded man he chose not to abandon. Capt. Graham's actions throughout the day were a series of heroic achievements. His outstanding courage, superb leadership and indomitable fighting spirit undoubtedly saved the second platoon from annihilation and reflected great credit upon himself, the Marine Corps, and the U.S. Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country.

#### Calendar of More Events

May 14 and 15: Maryland Wildlife Artists Show at St. Barnabas Church, Leeland (Oak Grove Road). Painters-Carvers-Stamp winners. Saturday 10-7; Sunday noon to 5. \$2.00 for adults, \$1.00 for children. Phone 249-9671.

May 15: Bowie Heritage Day, Belair Mansion and Stables. 2 to 5 p.m. Free. Phone 262-6200.

May 22: Slide program and lecture on "Seacoast Fortifications of the United States" by Dr. Emanuel Lewis at Fort Washington. 2 p.m. Phone 292-2112.

June 4: Maryland Methodist Quilt Show at Corkran Memorial United Methodist Church, 5200 Temple Hills Road, Temple Hills. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Antique and contemporary quilts on display, and lectures by Orva Heissenbuttel at 11:30 and 2 p.m. \$3.00 donation. Phone 449-6356.

May 29: Colonial Hearth Cooking Techniques, a demonstration. National Colonial Farm, Accokeek. 1 to 4 p.m. \$1.00 for adults. Phone 301-283-2113

The June Meeting--Saturday, June 11, at Riversdale--2 p.m.

The Prince George's County Historical Society





**NEWS AND  
NOTES FROM  
The Prince George's County  
Historical Society**

The June Meeting: Early Maryland Architecture

Orlando Ridout V will speak on the architecture of Maryland in the pre-Industrial age, the 17th, 18th, and early 19th centuries, at the June meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society. Mr. Ridout will concentrate on the vernacular architecture of the time,

Vol. XI, no. 6 June  
1983

the distinctive local types found here in Maryland, often exemplified in the more modest homes and farm and outbuildings. His talk will be accompanied by slides, and he will offer a stimulating program of both architectural and social history.

Mr. Ridout is well qualified to speak on this subject. He works as Maryland Historic Sites Survey coordinator for the Maryland Historical Trust. He is a member of the board of directors of the Vernacular Architecture Forum and is active with other architectural groups. His family has been active in public affairs in Maryland since the colonial era.

The meeting will be held on Saturday, June 11, at 2 p.m., at Riversdale, the Calvert mansion. Guests are welcome, and refreshments will be served. Riversdale is located at 4811 Riverdale Road in the town of Riverdale. The program promises to be an interesting and informative one. Please join us for this last meeting of the Spring season.

Potomac River Heritage Days

The National Colonial Farm will hold the first annual Potomac River Heritage Days on Saturday and Sunday, June 25 and 26, from noon until 5 p.m. This festival will celebrate the historical importance of the-Potomac River and its environmental impact on the area. There will be demonstrations of crafts, lectures, and displays. There will be no admission charge. The National Colonial Farm is located at 3400 Bryan Point Road in Accokeek. Follow Indian Head Highway (Route 210) south beyond Oxon Hill, Fort Washington, and Piscataway. Bryan Point Road intersects with Indian Head Highway; turn right and follow the road to the farm. The phone number is 301-283-2113.

### In Appreciation

On June 15 our good friend and longtime Society member Helen W. Brown will be moving to a new home in the Midwest. We would be remiss if we did not recant some of Helen's activities during her long residence in Prince George's County.

An organizing member of the Toaping Castle Chapter, DAR, Helen and her longtime associate, the late Louise Hinton, began many years ago to tap the rich storehouse of Prince George's County records. The first product of these long hours of work was the index of tombstone inscriptions of both the private and public burial grounds in the county. Following this she indexed the vital records of three of the colonial parishes of Prince George's County: Queen Anne's, St. Paul's, and Prince George's parishes (Louise Hinton did the voluminous records of King George's Parish). Several years later, because these church indexes were only in typescript form and located in a limited number of libraries, Helen prepared a new manuscript which was published-by the Society. This research aid is now located in principal libraries across the nation.

Another research aid prepared by Mrs. Brown was the Index to Marriages, Prince George's County, Maryland, 1777-1873. Perhaps her greatest achievement, accomplished in collaboration with Louise Hinton, was the index to naturalizations in the state of Maryland. This massive file in the Hall of Records in Annapolis, containing thousands of card entries, was completed over a period of many months spent in the Hall of Records and through week-long "vacation trips" to the courthouses of Western Maryland and the Eastern Shore. It is perhaps the only one of its kind in any state. Just recently Mrs. Brown organized a group in her DAR chapter and the index of the records of St. Mathew's Parish was the result.

What is the sum total of these efforts? It means that the vital statistics of Prince George's County for the early period are more accessible to researchers than those of the other counties. It also means that future generations of researchers need only to consult an index rather than spend endless hours trying to read undecipherable handwriting of early records, which will be spared the wear-and-tear of constant handling. While she spent countless hours on these labors of love, Mrs. Brown always had time to join in other community projects involving the preservation of our county's heritage. These were the many reasons why she was designated as one of the inaugural recipients of the Historical Society's St. George's Day Award.

And now, Helen, as you travel to your new home in Bloomington, Ind., home of Indiana University, with your daughter and son-in-law, Betty and Neil Yoder, and two lovely

## **PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

granddaughters, we want to express our sincere appreciation for your many good works on behalf of our county. Please keep in touch.

--F.S.D.

### The Summer Schedule

After the June meeting, the Society will not meet until September. There will be plenty of interest going on, however, including a summer concert series by the Friends of Montpelier. Watch the newspapers and this newsletter.

### These New Invented Aerostatic Balloons

Next year, in 1784, America will celebrate the two hundredth anniversary of balloon flight on this continent. A national commission has been established to plan the celebration, and it appears that the focus of attention will be in Baltimore, where the first manned ascent took place. There will be local celebrations here in Prince George's County a week earlier, however, for if Baltimore was the site of the first manned ascent, Prince George's County was the site of the first documented unmanned ascents, the place where the tests for the Baltimore flight took place.

Peter Carnes, lawyer and innkeeper of Bladensburg, was the promoter of the first manned flight in Baltimore, and it was he who sent a tethered, unmanned balloon aloft near Bladensburg to the delight and astonishment of a large local crowd. The event was reported in the Virginia Journal and Alexandria Advertiser of June 24, 1784, and we thank William Aleshire for transcribing this article for us:

"On Thursday last [June 17th], Mr. Peter Carnes, a gentleman of Maryland, distinguished in the law, made an experiment, in the vicinity of Bladensburg, of one of these new invented aerostatic balloons, which have for so long a time past engrossed the conversation of every part of Europe and this Continent.--It is with infinite pleasure that we say, the philosophic Mind had as rich a repast as the intellectual faculties are capable of receiving, when in the researches of new systems; for the balloon sufficiently demonstrated its powers, and we may venture to affirm, that few out of many hundred spectators, that had any ideas of the different properties of air, but will ever think themselves obliged to this eccentric enterprising Gentleman, for the great labor and attention he bestowed in the formation of this machine.--The expence in the construction must have been considerable, the diameter of this aerial elipsis being 35 feet, made of beautiful, costly and richly varigated silks; but the generous public will no doubt discharge their pecuniary obligations to Mr. Carnes, though at the same time, the philosopher must ever hold himself his debtor.

"We are informed Mr. Carnes proposes, in the course of a few days, to make a second exhibition, in Baltimore. He is particularly cautioned relative to his fire, and to let no temptation, no love of fame transport him to such enthusiastic ideas, as to venture himself in this chariot of the Sun, lest the fate of the ambitious Phaeton should be his portion--the rivers Po and Potomack in this case might be synonymous--'But if thou wilt go, my boy, observe the milky way, in Medio iutissimus ibis.'

"Mr. Carnes' Balloon, the day previous to his grand exhibition at Bladensburg, broke away when several hundred feet high in the air, but happily for the lovers of the arts was overtaken and restored, without much essential damage to it. Could the great, Sir Isaac but burst his searments, and peep from under his monumental alabaster, at an exhibition of any of these

great, new and wonderful discoveries, what would his exclamation be, or what hints might it inspire! The true anecdote of his being caught with a bason of water, soap and a tabacco pipe, blowing bladders in the air, would doubtless immediately rush into his mind, and he would with his wonted greatness of soul, for the moment, blush at the degree of comparison between his balloon of the day.

"Mr. Carnes is likewise cautioned by another correspondent not to be too rash in this Baltimore Exhibition. The ingenious philosophic mind can be as well ascertained of the powers of his balloon, by a simple experiment, as if it carried up a dozen men, women, and children.--This gentleman thinks the public cannot be too much obligated to this rich genius, who, regardless of labors or expence, has prepared so grand a spectacle to Feast the eye of the scholar and philosopher. He is requested further by this gentleman, to study as early exhibition in the day as possible at Baltimore, as the power of his balloon materially suffered on Thursday last, from excessive external heat. It will be worth his observation to notice that every European experiment of any consequence, has been made in the cool seasons."

While this ascent in Bladensburg of June 17, 1784, seems to have been the first ceremonial ascent, there appear to have been earlier tests in Bladensburg, so the date of Peter Carnes' very first balloon-raising of any sort may never be known. The correspondent's reference to the public's obligation and debt to Carnes refers to the admission fee Carnes charged to witness the balloon-raising. And the correspondent's warning not to attempt a manned ascent in Baltimore went unheeded. Carnes himself did not ascend in the chariot, but a thirteen-year old boy named Edward Warren did.

Peter Carnes was an interesting character. Stepfather of William Wirt (later Attorney General of the United States), Carnes seems to have skipped town after his debts to the rest of the Wirt family mounted up. He resurfaced in South Carolina, where by 1790 he was a figure of some political importance, the leading spokesman of the up-country representatives in the state constitutional convention of that year. His legal career in that state earned him a place in the biographical work, *The Bench and Bar of South Carolina*. Carnes did not rest in South Carolina, however, for he moved at least one more time, to Georgia. It was only a few years ago that we in Prince George's County learned of Carnes' career in South Carolina. When contacted about Carnes, the local historical groups in that State were amazed to hear of his activities here.

Today balloon ascents are viewed as interesting, delightful, and colorful spectacles. The idea of defying gravity and venturing aloft is so old-hat that a balloon ascent is hardly today considered a scientific wonder. To use lighter-than-air gases to fly seems absolutely primitive, despite its charm. This article is a good reminder that so much of what we take for granted today came only after the expense of much thought, labor, and experimentation. Balloon flight was as wonderful to a past age as a trip to the moon is to ours. That the first documented U.S. tests took place in Prince George's County is a distinction worthy of celebration.

--Alan Virta

### Population Predictions-

The population of Prince George's County has grown tremendously in the twentieth century, from 29,898 at the turn of the century (only 8,000 more than it was one hundred years before) to 665,071 in 1980. To state the obvious: the great expansion of federal government programs in Washington was the direct and major cause of this population growth, bringing more and more people to this area, with their families, to work for Uncle Sam. The greatest population growth came in the 1960's, a decade which saw 300,000 more people living here at its end

than at its beginning. The increase during the 1970's was miniscule, only about 5,000, as local conditions (among others, a sewer moratorium covering much of the county) diverted further suburban growth elsewhere. This low figure of increase- does not mean that there were not changes in our population in the last decade, however, for there was quite a change in its composition, namely a decline in the white population and a marked increase in the black. What changes will occur in the 1980's and beyond with the end, or at least a hiatus, in rapid governmental growth, remain to be seen.

It is interesting to look back at old population predictions and see how they have turned out. One such prediction is found in a report prepared in 1951 for the Board of County Commissioners by Public Administration Service, a private research and consulting firm with headquarters in Chicago, Ill. Entitled Local Government in Prince George's County, Maryland: A Survey Report, this work examined all the activities of county government and suggested a number of reforms. There had been a major turnover in county government of revolutionary proportions in the elections of 1950, and the new group was quick to contract for this survey of governmental operations. Among other changes, the survey recommended a charter government for the County, headed by a five-member County Council and an appointed County Manager. This was, of course, not implemented, and the old commissioner form of government remained until 1971.

To turn specifically to that portion of the report which deals with projected population growth in the thirty years leading to 1980:

"The National Capital Park and Planning Commission recently estimated that the population of Prince George's County in 1980 would be 310,000. As this estimate was based upon a 1948 population estimate which was proved by the 1950 census to be far too low, it is probable that the 1980 forecast is also much too low. To date, it appears that the county's rate of growth has not started to level off. Estimates based on building permits issued indicate that the population of the county in the one year after the 1950 census increased 21,948, or 11 percent. On this basis the present population of the county is probably over 215,000. It is unlikely, however, that such a high rate of growth will be continued indefinitely. If, for the sake of arriving at some estimate of population, it is assumed that the average rate of increase will be only 33 percent every ten years, the population of the county would be 257,753 in 1960, 342,811 in 1970, and 455,939 in 1980. Such a growth would more than double the population of the county in the next thirty years."

The Public Administration Service estimate was thus about 200,000 too short. We would venture to say, however, that no one could have accurately predicted the explosive growth of the 1950's and 1960's. Anyone who would have offered those numbers would have been called crazy.

For the record, these are the census figures for the post-war era:

1950: 193,799  
1960: 357,395  
1970: 660,567  
1980: 665,071

--Alan Virta

The Sage Speaks

Anyone caught in the beach traffic of Memorial Day weekend may want to reflect on the words of H.L. Mencken in 1933 concerning the building of a bridge across the Chesapeake Bay:

"The current bridge scheme is fantastic. There is not the slightest reason to believe that any such structure could ever earn enough to pay the interest and amortization. There is simply not enough traffic between the Eastern and Western Shores and there is no evidence that there will ever be enough thereafter."

--As reported in Maryland magazine,  
Summer 1983

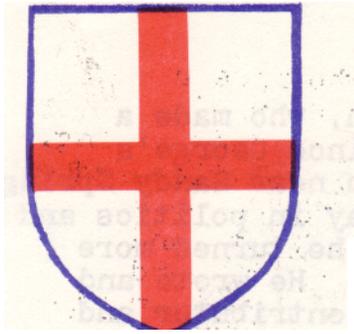
The bridge was opened in 1952, and the parallel span in 1973.

#### Michael J. Cuff

We regret to inform the membership of the death on April 30 of Michael J. Cuff, a member of this Society for several years. Mike was an attorney and lived in College Park. He attended Society functions from time to time, and sponsored several new members. Our sympathies are extended to the family.

#### The Prince George's County Historical Society

Subscription to this newsletter is included in the annual dues of \$5.00. To join, write the Society at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20737. President: Frederick S. De Marr; Treasurer: Herb Embrey; Corresponding Secretary: Edith Bagot; Editor: Alan Virta, 474-7524.



## NEWS AND NOTES FROM

# The Prince

## George's County Historical Society

Vol. XI, no. 7-8 July-Aug. 1983

### This Spirit-for Improvement

In 1852, W.W.W. Bowie of Prince George's County visited Charleston, Va., where he spoke before the Valley Agricultural Society. His topic was broad--agriculture in general--but within his talk was a theme: the progress of agriculture "Men no longer look with contempt upon the occupation of the farmer as one of mere physical employment, and the farmer himself as a drone, a poor ignorant clod hopper," stated Bowie, "but as a rational, intelligent, scientific gentleman, pursuing a noble, dignified, independent profession, and commanding a position in society, ranking with any of the 'learned professions.'"

W.W.W. Bowie was one of those men from Prince George's County in the 1840s and '50s who gained national recognition for their work advancing the cause of scientific agriculture. In response to worn-out soil, declining farm productivity, and the migration of their sons to the West, these men promoted crop rotation and variation, agricultural experimentation, farm fairs and festivals, professional journals, agricultural education, and the formation of agricultural societies. Farmers and planters, they believed, had allowed farming to become merely physical labor, following without thought the practices of their fathers and grandfathers. These advocates of scientific agriculture sought to improve the state of American agriculture and raise the status of farming to that of one of the professions. Of the Prince Georgians active in this effort, none is better known than Charles B. Calvert, founder of the Maryland Agricultural College. Dr. John H. Bayne and Horace Capron were also nationally-recognized leaders of the movement, as was W.W.W. Bowie. The role of Prince Georgians in "this great cause," as Bowie termed it, was significant.

Walter William Weems Bowie was born in 1814 at Locust Grove, near Collington, the eldest son of Walter Bowie, Jr., and Amelia Margaret Weems. He studied the law, and several times before the Civil War was an unsuccessful Democratic candidate for public office, the Whigs then being the dominant party in this county. He established a farm of his own near the Patuxent at Governors Bridge, where he lived with his wife, Adaline Snowden, and their children. The home he built stands not far off the Crain Highway (Route 301) between the Belair and Pointer Ridge sections of the city of Bowie. One of Bowie's sons is a local folk-hero.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
**ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23,1696**

He was the legendary Wat Bowie, one of Mosby's men, who made a daring escape from near-capture in southern Prince George's County, only to meet his fate in a Union ambush near Sandy Spring.

W.W.W. Bowie's interests as a young man lay in politics and the law, but as he moved into his middle years he turned more toward the promotion of scientific agriculture. He wrote and spoke extensively on the subject and became a contributor and associate editor of the national agricultural journal, *The American Farmer*. A paper he wrote on the cultivation of tobacco won a national competition sponsored by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture in 1867. With his relative Oden Bowie, he championed the building of a railroad for Southern Maryland, the Baltimore and Potomac. He died in 1891 and was buried at his birthplace, Locust Grove.

Printed below is an excerpt from Bowie's address before the Valley Agricultural Society of Virginia, delivered on October 22, 1852, which describes the state of agriculture in Prince George's County. It illustrates well Bowie's faith and belief in "this great cause," the cause of scientific agriculture.

"... Of the practical benefits of Associations like yours, innumerable instances might be given. I shall content myself with but one. In my own county an Agricultural Society has been successfully continued for twelve years. In that time the cattle, hogs and sheep have improved at least one hundred per cent in value, on an average for the whole county. Hundreds of the lordly Durham, beautiful Devon, and noble Hereford cattle have been brought into and reared in the county. The breeds of hogs and sheep have also been greatly improved.--Our stock generally brings one-third more in the shambles than it did before the Society was formed. Our barren hills have become rich, and teem with heavy crops; unproductive marshes have been drained, and no longer load the air with noxious vapors, that dealt death around, but the passing breeze is perfumed with the sweet breath of well-kept meadows. Horticulture and gardening have received a due share of attention, and the garden and pleasure grounds, once a waste, now 'blossom as the rose.' For fruits, flowers, and vegetables, the county has a reputation excelled by none in the Union. One of our intelligent young planters, Col. Oden Bowie, received at the exhibition in Baltimore, last year, the first premium for the best lot of vegetables, which for variety, size, beauty and excellence, were by every body admitted as never to have been equalled by any one exhibition in the Union. It is also our pride to claim as a citizen, Dr. John H. Bayne, one of the most distinguished horticulturists in the country, besides others who have made poverty-stricken fields yield, by science and practical skill, large sums per acre from fruits and vegetables, grain and grasses. How was all this done? By the formation and encouragement of an Agricultural Association. Men of intelligence were yearly brought together, and made to compare their crops, their stock, their fruits, flowers and vegetables. A rivalry was excited--inquiries were made--'how did you do this or that?'--'where did you get your stock?'--'how did you feed and keep them?'--'how came you by such knowledge on this or the other subject?' A frank interchange of opinion, and a general diffusion of useful knowledge was the result. These meetings caused a generous rivalry, and a determination on the part of each one to excel in something the next year, and consequently a wonderful improvement was speedily manifested in the whole system of husbandry. Men who spurned book-farming began to read and reflect, became enlightened, and felt it to be their interest to band together, and by concert of action--by expanding their views, and no longer closing their eyes to the lights of science, to advance as far as possible the cause of Agriculture. I have dwelt perhaps too long upon the benefits which have resulted to the people of one county in my own State, from an Agricultural Society, but I wished to show you, sir, how

important it is to keep alive this spirit for improvement, by all farmers taking a lively interest in these annual farming festivals...."

A copy of this address is kept by the Library of Congress.

--Alan Virta

### Helen W. Brown

Helen W. Brown, for many years a member of this Society, died on June 7 at the age of 84, several days before she was to move with her daughter and son-in-law to a new home in Indiana. Helen's many contributions to the preservation of our county's heritage were described in an article of appreciation in the June issue of News and Notes. Her presence will be greatly missed, and the Society has lost a great friend.

Mrs. Brown was a native of Attleboro, Mass. and a member of the Roger Williams Family Association. She was active in the Daughters of the American Revolution, locally and nationally and served as their national genealogical records chairman, 1965-1968. A resident of College Park, she was an inaugural recipient of the Society's St. George's Day Award. Her husband, Irvin C. Brown, died in 1961.

Helen's contributions to the study of Prince George's County' history were important ones. Our appreciation and sympathies are extended to the family.

### Lewis C. Cassidy

We regret to inform the membership of the death on July 5 of Lewis C. Cassidy IV. Lew was an attorney in Upper Marlboro and a resident of Greenbelt. A past president of the Prince George's Civic Opera, he had been a member of our Society for several years. He was a native of Boston and a veteran of the Korean War.

Lew died at home from cancer. On behalf of the Society, the officers and directors extend our sympathies to the family.

The next meeting--Saturday, Sept. 10--2 p.m.--at Riversdale, the Calvert mansion

### Perrywood to be Open this Fall

Perrywood, an old Brooke home on Largo Road, will be open on Sunday afternoon, September 25, for a limited showing to benefit the Prince George's County Historical and Cultural Trust and the Friends of Preservation. Now the home of William Chesley, until recently it was the home of Mr. and Mrs. William Hallam Tuck.

Tickets are limited and cost \$25.00 a piece. For information, contact Mrs. Joyce McDonald, chairman of the trust, at 779-5825.

### The Greenbelt School

The Board of Education will conduct a public hearing on Monday evening, August 15, to hear testimony regarding its staff's recent proposals for the destruction of three old elementary schools and their replacement with new structures. The inclusion of one of those schools in the

plan--Greenbelt Center School--has raised the ire of historic preservationists in this county and admirers of the Art-Deco style of architecture across the country. Built in the late 1930s as part of the Greenbelt new-town project, the school is recognized as one of the most important Art Deco structures in the nation. The Art Deco Society of Washington classifies it as one of the two most impressive Art Deco buildings in the Washington area.

The Art Deco Society and local preservationists seek support for the preservation of Greenbelt Center School. Letters should be addressed to the school board chairman, Mrs. Susan B. Bieniasz, at Upper Marlboro, Md., 20772. Those wishing to testify at the hearing should register in advance with the board at 952-4324.

### Montpelier Restoration

The restoration work at Montpelier, which will cause the closing of the house for almost a year, has been delayed until January. A benefit for the restoration fund will be held on Saturday, September 10. For information, contact Jean Speicher, at 776-3086.

### The County Fair

The County Fair returns to Upper Marlboro this year, at the fairgrounds, of course, now known as the Equestrian Center. The dates are September 8 to 11. Watch the newspapers for details, and watch for the exhibits by several of our historical organizations.

### Fall Tour to Frederick

Our tour directors have arranged a tour to Frederick on October 22. Details will follow; mark your calendars.

The Prince George's County Historical Society, P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Md. 20737

## NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY AND COLLECTION

July/August 83

Almost two years ago we made an appeal to the membership for financial support of the projects to purchase a complete set of the Archives of Maryland and to microfilm the Upper Marlboro newspapers. Also, last January we announced that the Society's library, located in the servants' quarters at Riversdale, would be open each Saturday from Noon to 5 PM. Other than to acknowledge donors to the Archives and microfilm projects, little or nothing has appeared in News and Notes to bring the membership up to date on our progress in the areas of the library and collection of the Society. We hope that the following information will help to correct this oversight. In the future a report such as this will be a regular feature of our monthly mailings to the membership.

### UPPER MARLBORO NEWSPAPERS

We are pleased to announce that the first phase of this project has been completed. Delivery was received from the Hall of Records in Annapolis last May of 34 reels of microfilm of the Prince George's Enquirer and Southern Maryland Advertiser. The period covered is as follows: Jan-Nov 1887; Dec 21, 1888-May 3, 1889 and Jan 1893-Jan 30, 1925. (After this last date, it became the Enquirer-Gazette.)

This month the Hall of Records will get the back files of the Planters' Advocate (1851-1861) and the Enquirer-Gazette (1925-present) from the Enoch Pratt Library in Baltimore for filming. We should have this microfilm in hand by January 1st.

Earlier we asked that any members having copies of the Marlboro papers contact us so that they could be borrowed to fill in some of the missing issues. We are interested in receiving copies of the Enquirer (other than the dates listed above), the Prince Georgian (any date--all are late 1800's), the Marlboro Gazette (any date) and the Planters' Advocate (any date).

The Prince Georgian mentioned here is not to be confused with the Prince Georgian published in the Mt. Rainier-Hyattsville area during the first half of the 20th century. The Marlboro paper was the 19th century successor to the Planters' Advocate and the forerunner to the Prince George's Enquirer. This paper and the Marlboro Gazette are extremely scarce. Very few copies are in the Pratt Library. Therefore any single copies you may have will be most helpful to our project. They will be returned to you after filming.

Finally, we wish to acknowledge the interest and cooperation of Andrew Wyvill, Editor of the Enquirer-Gazette. He has provided us with many copies of the current newspaper to help fill in the gaps. Likewise the interest and hard work of Chris Allen of the Hall of Records have made this entire project a reality.

### ARCHIVES OF MARYLAND

We have the 72 volume set in the library. To date, 50 of these volumes have been underwritten by our members. These bear the Society's bookplate with the donor's name and requested inscription. Since there have been some recent inquiries about this project, a form is enclosed for the benefit of others who may wish to participate.

### GIFTS TO THE LIBRARY AND COLLECTION

Gifts are always welcome. Books, pamphlets, programs, memorabilia, papers, business records, artifacts of all kinds, etc. are necessary to build our research and exhibit collection. Many times people will discard material which they feel is of no value or interest. Our request is that you call us at 277-0711 before you throw out anything!

### CURRENT ACTIVITIES/VOLUNTEERS

Margo Ritchie is working on an index for the first 5 years of News and Notes. When completed, it will be published and will be available for members who have saved complete sets of the publication.

Alan Virta has been rummaging through the picture files for items to appear in his illustrated history of Prince George's County. He would still like to hear from you if there are some good early photos of the local scene in your personal collection.

Some photos from the Society's files will appear in a calendar bearing pictures of early days in the metropolitan area. Publishing date will be about October.

Volunteers are needed to keep the Library open on Saturday afternoons, Noon-5 PM. There are also a number of volunteer opportunities available to work on projects both in the library and at home in your spare time. More details will be given next month, however call Fred De Marr at 277-0711 in the meantime for information.

### LIBRARY ACCESSIONS

<u>Author</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Donor</u>
Rice/Brown Army. 1780-1783. 2 vols. Records Comm. DAR Parish, Hyattsville. 1834-1926	Amer. Campaigns of Rochambeau's Index to Registers/St. Matthew's	Edith Bagot Toaping Castle
Andrews Lanham Footner Loudermilk Winebrenner Pleasants/Sill Purchase	Tercentenary History of Md. 4 vols. Maryland Main & the Eastern Shore History of Cumberland Maryland Manual for 1934 Maryland Silversmiths. 1715-1830	Paul Ben Miles Mary Sorrell Grace Watkins
Douxchamps Witte Scharf Smith Scarborough Dooly A Hist. of the Sub. Trust Co, Ketzenberg Elder	Rubens & His Descendants. v.1 & 3 History of Md. 3 vol. Richard Snowden Andrews. A Memoir Homes of the Cavaliers Fifty Years of Suburban Banking. Baltimore Album Quilts Baltimore Painted Furniture	Henry de Minnie Hill Minnie Hill Louise Bowen Edith Bagot Purchase Purchase



## NEWS AND NOTES FROM

# The Prince George's County Historical Society

Vol. XI, no. 9 September 1983

The September Meeting: Art Deco in Greater Washington: Sept.  
10

Those who study Prince George's County architecture rarely venture into the 20th century. Our 18th and 19th century heritage is so rich, that it affords endless opportunities for research and appreciation. But just as Victorian architecture was rediscovered some years back, so now is an even later style, a 20th century style known as Art Deco. Greater Washington has many examples of Art Deco architecture, and in Prince George's County are some of the finest.

Art Deco derives its name from an exposition of arts and crafts in Paris in 1925 entitled "L'Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Moderne." What is Art Deco, ask those more familiar with tidewater styling and Georgian symmetry? "It is a look," wrote Michael Kernan in the Washington Post in January of this year. "It combines smooth, fat curves with the straight lines of the machine age. Its shapes are simple and unsubtle. Its colors are strong and definite." Art Deco, wrote Theodore Merten in *The Art Deco Style* (1972) is an attempt to unite arts with industry, embracing the machine age and repudiating the old antithesis of fine versus industrial arts. Anyone who has seen the Hecht Company Warehouse on New York Avenue lit up, from the inside, at night, or Greenbelt Center School gleaming white in the sun, will recognize Art Deco.

"Art Deco in Greater Washington and Prince George's County" will be the subject of the September meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society, to be held on September 10 at Riversdale, the Calvert mansion. Our guest speaker will be Mr. Richard Striner, president of the Art Deco Society of Washington, who will present a slide-talk on Art Deco in the Washington area. Mr. Striner is a resident of College Park and a national expert on Art Deco. He is currently writing a book on local architecture of that style. His slides are striking and his talk will be most interesting and enlightening.

Among the county buildings of the Art Deco style Mr. Striner will touch on are the buildings of Greenbelt, particularly the Center School, which has attracted a good deal of national attention

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

recently. A few other county buildings (besides many in Washington) which are of the Art Deco style, or incorporate significant Art Deco features, are the Magruder Flat Iron Building in Hyattsville, George's Confectionery, Birk's Bakery, the old Cheverly and Hyattsville theaters, the Prince George's Apartments, and even Lustine Olds. They are not the grand mansions of ages past; they represent the bold, sleek, and streamlined look of the late 1920s and the 1930s. Anyone who knew the urban Prince George's County in that era will find Mr. Striner's talk particularly fascinating.

The meeting will begin at 2 p.m. The Calvert mansion (not an Art Deco structure) is located at 4811 Riverdale Road in Riverdale. As always, guests are welcome, and refreshments will be served.

### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

		Sponsor
Dino & Deborah Bakeris	Glenn Dale	A. Ferguson
Mrs. Margaret G. Lewis	Seattle, Wash.	De Marr
Mr. & Mrs. Stanley R. Edwards	Greenbelt	E. Harmon
Phyllis A. Marron	Beltsville	W.Aleshire
Emory G. Evans	Beltsville	A. Virta
Rev. & Mrs. Thomas D. Andrews	Bowie	P. Clagett
David & Caralee Bixler	College Park	S.& D. Bourne
Dawn M. Viands	Upper Marlboro	F. De Marr
William & Claire J. Long	South Bowie	F. De Marr
Mrs. Thomas-B. Douglas	Washington	P. Clagett
Lois C. McDonnell	Whittier, Calif.	F. De Marr
Madeline Green	Greenbelt	V. Chapman
Mr. & Mrs. Gary Shapiro	District Hgts.	A. Virta
Mrs. Charles W. Fake, Jr.	San Antonio, Tex.	F. Drane
Mrs. Lester Daniels	Tulsa, Okla.	F. Drane

### A Stray Taken Up

"Taken up as a stray by Thomas Drane, living in Prince., George's county, near Queen-Anne, a black mare, about thirteen hands high, four years old, branded near the buttock supposed to be an R. The owner may have her again on proving property and paying sharges.

--Maryland Gazette, December 19, 1782

### Events to Note

Montpelier Candlelight Cocktails, Sept. 10: 776-3086

Perrywood Reception, Historical Trust, Sept. 25: 779-5825

The County Fair at Upper Marlboro, Sept. 8-11

St. Thomas Antiques Show, Upper Marlboro, Sept. 9-11.

### "The Best People. To Settle the Wilderness"

This Fall marks the 300th anniversary of the coming of Germans to America. On October 6, 1683, the ship Concord arrived in Philadelphia with the first organized party of Germans to reach

these shores. This was but the beginning of one of the great migrations in American history; no group save the English has come in greater numbers to this country than they. In recognition of the 300th anniversary of German immigration to America, we present these notes regarding the early history of Germans in Maryland and Prince George's County.

### Lord Baltimore's Entreaty to the Germans

"From the time that Moses led the hosts of Israel out of Egypt toward the Promised Land history records no such exodus of a people as that which took place from the Rhenish provinces of Germany in the early eighteenth century," wrote Daniel W. Nead in 1914 in The Pennsylvania-German in the Settlement of Maryland. Indeed, Germans in great numbers did not come to America until the first years of the 18th century, although the first organized party (of German-speaking, Swiss) came in 1683 and scattered individuals and families came even earlier. Continual warfare, religious persecution, and economic hardship prompted these Germans to leave their homeland, and the horrendous winter of 1708-09 provided the immediate impetus for the first great wave. Nead reports that Germans began arriving in London in May and June of 1709, and by the Fall 13,000 had come; by order of Queen Anne 1000 tents were taken from the Tower of London and set up in the country outside the city to accommodate them. The English were anxious to be rid of these Germans, however, and those who did not leave for America were settled in Ireland or sent home.

The Germans settled chiefly in the middle colonies, with number going to Pennsylvania. The Quaker colony was by the Germans. The success of the earlier German the greatest much favored settlements there, the suitability of the land for German-style agriculture, and the proprietor's guarantee of religious liberty, made Pennsylvania particularly attractive to them. They proved to be hardy pioneers, gladly pushing beyond the settled lands into the frontier and wilderness, building farms and towns, and serving as a buffer between the Indians and the English Pennsylvanians. Their contribution to the building of Pennsylvania did not go unnoticed, even very early, by officials in other colonies.

By the 1720s and 1730s, the Virginians began seriously promoting the settlement of the great Shenandoah Valley. Formal missions were dispatched to the Germans of Pennsylvania entreating them to settle in their valley, and many undertook the long trek from southeastern Pennsylvania to the Old Dominion. Their journey took them through Maryland along an old Indian trail now immortalized as the Monocacy Road, down the valley of the Monocacy River. This was wild and largely unsettled land, still attached to Prince George's County, and the Maryland officials wished to see it settled. They encouraged the Germans to go no further than the "back parts of Prince George's County" (as the whole of Western Maryland was so often called in legal documents of the day),, and many of them, seeing how fertile the Monocacy Valley was, decided indeed to settle there. So did Western Maryland receive its first substantial settlement. Wrote Daniel Dulany in 1745: "You would 'be surprised to see how much the country is improved beyond the mountains, especially by the Germans, who are the best people that can be to settle the wilderness."

The new Prince Georgeans of the West were not happy as Prince Georgeans, however. As early as the 1730s they began petitioning for separation from the mother county; the great distance from Upper Marlboro most often expressed as their principal complaint. Finally, in 1748 their petitions were answered affirmatively, and Frederick County was created from our "back parts," reducing Prince George's County to about the size it is today.

Printed below is a proclamation from Lord Baltimore encouraging the settlement of Western Maryland, found in the Archives of Maryland, xxviii p. 25.

"By the Right Honourable Charles Absolute Lord and Proprietary of the Provinces of Maryland and Avalon Lord Baron of Baltimore etc.

"Wee being Desireous to Increase the Number of Honest people within our Province of Maryland and willing to give Suitable Encouragement to such to come and Reside therein Do offer the following Terms:

"1st That any person haveing a family who shall within three Years come and Actually Settle with his or her Family on any of the back Lands on the Northern or Western Boundaries of our said province not already taken up between the Rivers Potomack and Susquehanna (where wee are Informed there are Several large Bodies of Fertile Lands fit for Tillage, Which may be Seen without any Expençe) Two hundred Acres of the said Lands in fee Simple Without paying any part of the forty Shillings Sterling for every hundred Acres payable to Us by the Conditions of Plantations, And without paying any Quit Rents in three Years after the first Settlement, and then paying four Shillings Sterling for Every hundred of Acres to us or our Heirs for every Year after the expiration of the said three Years.

"2d To allow to Each Single person Male or Female above the Age of Thirty & not under Fifteen One hundred Acres of the said Lands upon the same Terms as mentioned in the preceding Article.

"3d That We will Concur in any reasonable Method that shall be proposed for the Ease of such New Comers in the payment of their Taxes for some Years And tie doe Assure all such that they shall be as well Secured in their Liberty & property in Maryland as any of his Majesty's Subjects in any part of the British Plantations in America without Exception And to the End all persons Desireous to come into and Reside in Maryland may be Assured that these Terms will be Justly & Punctually performed on our part Wee have hereunto sett our hand and Seal at Arms, at Annapolis this Second day of March Annoq Domine 1732."

#### Direct Migration to Maryland

Not all German immigrants to Maryland came through Pennsylvania. Some came directly here, although Daniel W. Nead (in The Pennsylvania-German in the Settlement of Maryland) believes the direct immigrants were decidedly in the minority in the colonial era. A letter from Cecilius Calvert (uncle and principal secretary for Frederick, sixth Lord Baltimore) to Benjamin Tasker, President of the Governor's Council, confirms that there was direct migration and that the proprietor wanted to encourage it.

"London, July the 9th 1752.

"Sir: By the ship "Patience," Captain Steel, a number of Palatines [Germans] are embarked for Maryland to settle there, which being notified to me, and a Recommendation to you desired of me, in favour of Messieurs F. & R. Snowdens & D. Wolstenholme, to whose care they are consigned and recommended.

"I therefore desire you will give such necessary Assistance to the People on their Arrival, to forward them to Manockesy (which I understand is in Frederick County) or where else they shall want to go to settle within the Province, as in your power, and that they may be accomodated in a proper manner; But the charges attending any such service to them must be done in the most moderate manner in respect to the Proprietor and to answer their requisites necessary to their service. The increase of People being always welcome, your prudence would have supplied this Letter in a kind Reception of them; nevertheless as particular occasions may require your Favour

I conclude my recommendation of them in giving them all possible satisfaction relating to the manner and Place they shall choose to settle in Maryland. I am, Sir,  
Your most obedient servant,  
Caecilius Calvert."

--Reprinted from Nead, P. 53-54.

### A Provincial Reaction to the German Immigrants

"Why should the Palatine boors be suffered to swarm into our settlements, and, by herding together, establish their language and manners, to the exclusion of ours? Why should Pennsylvania, founded by the English, become a colony of aliens, who will shortly be so numerous as to Germanize us, instead of us Anglicizing them, and will never adopt our language or customs any more than they can acquire our complexion?"

--Benjamin Franklin, 1751, as quoted in Nead

### Old Clements in Peril

The last pre-Revolutionary frame structure left in Bladensburg, Old Clements, faces an uncertain future. Also known as the Butler-Davis House, it stands one block north of Annapolis Road (Route 450) on 46th Street. It is a residence, and the interior has been divided into two separate units since the late 19th century. The northern part of the house has been unoccupied for years and is in terrible shape. The roof has separated from the rear wall, leaving a wide gap which allows the weather to get in. There is visible insect damage. The county's building inspector has decided to condemn the building and condemnation procedures may begin this Fall.

Old Clements has an interesting history. It was built about 1760 and in the 19th century was the home of several notable residents, including magistrate Thomas Clements and Harrison Wallis, a county sheriff. In the 1890s it was deeded, in two separate parts, to two black men, William Giles Butler and Thomas Davis, whose descendants still own the respective sections of the house. Around 1900 an addition was built onto the southern end of the house and served for many years as a barber shop. This might be the earliest black-owned business in the town.

Since Old Clements is privately owned, by two different families at that, the county cannot just come in and fix it up, even if it were so disposed. The land the house sits on is valuable commercial property-- probably more valuable than the house itself. Furthermore, Old Clements is the last residential structure in an industrial area. All of these conditions, along with the house's physical condition, combine to make its future uncertain, at best.

A number of local groups, including the Prince George's County Historical and Cultural Trust, Prince George's Heritage, the Historic Preservation Commission, and the Prince George's Jaycees (who saved the George Washington House a decade ago) are beginning to work together to try to find a way to save Old Clements. An in-depth, professional architectural review may soon be made of the house by a restoration architect who will provide a detailed analysis of its condition and estimates of the work necessary and the cost of restoring it.

Of the five colonial buildings in Bladensburg, Old Clements is probably the least known. It is a modest frame house that has stood a block off the main road for more than 220 years. Its ancient roofline and huge chimney have graced the streetscape in Bladensburg almost since the town's beginnings. Old Clements has been neglected in our generation and it may pay the ultimate price if something is not done soon.

Oct. Meeting: October S. Subject: Black History in this county

Bus tour to Frederick: October 22: Reserve space now

The Prince George's County Historical Society, P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, 20737. President: Frederick S. De Marr. Corresponding Secretary: Edith Bagot. Treasurer: Herb Embrey. Program Chairman: John Giannetti. Newsletter Editor: Alan Virta. Dues of \$5.00 a year include a subscription to this newsletter.



# NEWS AND NOTES FROM The Prince George's County Historical Society

Vol. XI, no. 10  
October 1983

## The October Meeting: Black History in Prince George's County

The history of Prince George's County's black community will be the topic of the October meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society, to be held on Saturday, October 8, at Montpelier, near Laurel. Our guest speaker will be Bianca Floyd, who is conducting the Park and Planning Commission's survey of black history in this county. Her research has uncovered much of great interest which she will share with us.

Africans were first brought to Maryland to work as slaves soon after the founding of the colony, but their number remained small until the 1700s, when the need for labor in the rapidly developing province could no longer be satisfactorily met by fixed-term indentured servants from Britain and Ireland. The institution of slavery flourished in the plantation economy of Prince George's County, and by the time of the Civil War there were more slaves here than white citizens.

Ms. Floyd will discuss the black experience in this county from the slave days to the present day. She will tell the stories of black communities, their leaders, prominent personalities, and present vignettes of black life in slavery and freedom. At least one black church in this county traces its history back to a congregation formed in the late 18th century. Even before Emancipation, there were a few free blacks here, some of whom owned slaves themselves. The history of blacks in this county is not well known. Plan to be with us on October 8 to hear this most interesting story. The meeting will begin at 2 p.m. Please note that the meeting will be at Montpelier, the Snowden mansion just south of Laurel. From the Baltimore-Washington Parkway, take Route 197 north toward Laurel and turn left at the signs to the mansion opposite the Montpelier Shopping Center. As always, guests are welcome and refreshments will be served.

## The Tour to Frederick:-October 22: Deadline of October 12

The deadline for reservations for the Frederick tour was incorrectly given in the last newsletter. The correct date is October 12. For information, call Warren Rhoads at 464-0819.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

**ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696**

## Maryland's German Heritage

A number of events will be held in October to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the first coming of Germans to America and the 250th anniversary of the coming of Germans to Maryland. Among the events are these:

German-American Conference. Saturday, October 15, at the Architecture Building, University of Maryland. All papers will be addressed to the educated layman. Speakers: Don Yoder, Richard Beam, Klaus Wust, Hoses Aberbach, Carl Bode, Hubertus Scheibe, and J. William Fulbright. There will be genealogical booths, wine tasting, slide lecture on Maryland Germans, and a-concert. 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.,. Donation of \$2.00, Reservations suggested.

German Landmarks of Baltimore Tour. Sunday,, October 16. Headquarters at Zion Luthern Church on City Hall Plaza. Words by Mayor Schaefer at 12:15 will open the tour.

German Landmarks of Washington Tour. Sunday, October 23. Headquarters at Reformation Lutheran Church, East Capitol Street.

For more information on these events, con tact Maryland's German Heritage, care of Dr George Jones at the Dept. of German, University of Maryland, at 454-4301.

## Ballooning Commemoration Next June

The Prince George's County committee planning the celebration of Maryland's 350th year in 1984 is also planning the commemoration of America's First documented balloon ascension, which took place in Bladensburg in June of 1784. The event will take place in late June of 1984, 200 years after the ascension. The committee is looking for ideas and willing workers to help in the project.

Call or write William Aleshire, 12302 Chalford Lane, Bowie 20715 (262-5505) who will be coordinating the event.

## Events at the Colonial Farm

The Gatehouse (Visitors' Center) and reconstructed 18th-century tobacco barn at the National Colonial Farm, Accokeek, will be dedicated on Sunday, October 2, at 2:00 p.m. On Sunday, October 16, the farm staff and volunteers will re-enact a colonial-style wedding, at 2 p.m. For more information, call the Farm at 283-2113.

## The November Meeting

Our guest speaker in November will be the Rev. Dr. A. Pierce Middleton, author of the classic Tobacco Coast: A Maritime History of the Chesapeake Bay in the Colonial Era. Date: Nov. 12.

## Travels in the Confederation

In 1783 and 1784, a young German physician named Johann David Schoepf traveled through the newly independent United States recording his impressions of life in the new nation. Though his observations on American ways were often uncharitable and undeserved, his descriptions of the land, agriculture, politics, and economic live were quite perceptive. We are fortunate he came to this county.

Johann David Schoepf was born in 1752 in the German principality of Bayreuth. His father was a wealthy merchant who provided his son with an excellent education. Despite a keen interest in botany and mineralogy (quite evident in his journals), he took a degree in medicine from the

University of Erlangen in 1776. On June 4, 1777, he arrived in America as chief surgeon to the German troops from Ansbach, a city not far from Nuremberg. His service with these troops --fighting for the British--did not allow him much opportunity for travel in America, so when peace came, he left his troops as quickly as he could to see the country.

Johann David Schoepf came to Prince George's County in October of 1783, two hundred years ago. We republish below portions of Dr. Schoepf's journals of his travels. They were first published in Germany in 1788. An English translation (by Alfred J. Morrison) was published under the title *Travels in the Confederation* in 1911, and reprinted in 1968 by Burt Franklin, Publisher, of New York.

"Tranquillity was now in some sort re-established in America. Ratification of the Peace had not yet come over from Europe, but under the guarantees of the provisional truce, there was already certain intercourse opened between New York [still in British hands] and the United States. Business and curiosity tempted a number of travellers from the one side and from the other. For near seven years I had been confined to the narrow compass of sundry British garrisons along the coast, unable until now to carry out my desire of seeing somewhat of the interior of the country. The German troops were embarking gradually for the return voyage; and having received permission, July 22 [1783] I took leave of my countrymen at New York, in order to visit the united American states, now beginning to be of consequence ....

"...The flora of this region [Baltimore], judging by what was still to be seen towards the middle of October, appeared to be very little different from that about Philadelphia.

"Several circumstances obliged us to spend a few days longer in this neighborhood, and gave opportunity for a little journey to Annapolis, the capital of Maryland, to Alexandria, Georgetown, and Bladensburgh. The first six miles from Baltimore was altogether through forest, mostly young wood. A forge near the Patapsco had for many miles around eaten up all the wood, which was just now beginning to grow again. Forges and other wood-consuming works will be at length impossible of maintenance here, the wood being taken off without any order or principle of selection, and the second growth in this poor and sandy country starting up slowly. The land would have a still balder look, did not the forests consist largely in sprout-shooting leaf-wood. Eight miles from Baltimore we passed the Patapsco at a ferry and beyond the river kept on through monotonous woods, very little cultivated land to be seen along the road. The maize appeared everywhere in bad condition, small, and thin like the soil; and besides, late frosts and the general dry weather had very much held it back. The roads are, or are intended to be, kept up at the public cost, but are nowhere well cared for. The tendance is left to heaven. Bridges and ferries we passed today were almost all of them impracticable. So long as anything will do in a measure, people in America give themselves no further trouble. The country through which we came was hilly, showing the same species of rock as that around Baltimore. We arrived late at Bladensburgh whither it is counted 35 miles from Baltimore.

"In two or three public houses at which we stopped on the way we found much company. It was about the time for the election of the new members of the Maryland Assembly, and the curiosity and interest of all the inhabitants were aroused. Already in private companies the debate was over the business the new Assembly would have to be concerned with....

"Bladensburgh,--a small place on the eastern branch of the Potowmack (here navigable only for boats and shalops) has a tobacco-warehouse and inspection-office. These tobacco-Warehouses are, equally for the planter and the merchant, convenient and safe public institutions. They are distributed at suitable distances on all the rivers and little bays in Maryland and Virginia. Thither must the planters bring and deposit all their tobacco before they can offer it for sale. Responsible superintendents carefully examine the tobacco which is brought in, and determine its quality.

The damaged or bad is condemned and burnt; but that which is good and fit for sale is taken in and stored, and the owner is given a certificate or note showing the weight and the quality of the tobacco delivered. The planter sells this tobacco-note to anybody he pleases, without showing samples of his tobacco, and the purchaser, even if many miles distant, pays the stipulated price without having seen the tobacco, the inspectors being answerable for the quantity and quality by them stated. The merchants take these notes in cash payment for the goods which the planters get from them; they are counted as hard money throughout the province, and for that reason are often tampered with, of which there have been recently 3-4 instances: however, the management is such that the cheat cannot stand or go long undiscovered. By this excellent and convenient regulation it was the case even under the British rule that in Maryland and Virginia no paper-money was necessary, without which, as early as that, the other provinces could carry on no internal trade. The Acts of Assembly contain many long-drawn laws touching this branch of trade, the ordering of the warehouses, oversight, inspection, and export of tobacco.

"The tobacco, before it is brought to the warehouse, is packed by the planters in hogsheads; and these, for the more convenient storage on shipboard, must all be of a prescribed breadth and height; the weight of the tobacco contained must be not less than 950 pounds, but more than this as much as they please; and really as much as 1500 to 1800 pounds are often forced into the hogsheads. The heavier they are so much the better for the merchants, four of these hogsheads, of whatever weight, being reckoned a ship's ton and paying a fixed freight, since the freight on vessels is counted by the space the goods take up and not by their weight....

"The planting of tobacco is a special branch of agriculture, requiring much trouble and attention, and in many ways exposed to failure. There are but few planters hereabouts who make more than 15 hogsheads in a year; most of them not over 5-10. An acre of land, if it is right good, produces not much over a hogshead. In Maryland there is far less tobacco raised than formerly; particularly because of the disquiets of the war and the more profitable traffic in flour, many planters have been led to give up the culture of tobacco and to sow grain instead. [This was true more for the Eastern Shore and northern Bay areas than for Southern Maryland.]

"Hard by Bladensburgh there is a spring which has a strong content and taste of iron, and upon which the inhabitants have imposed the splendid name of Spa. Similar iron-waters are nothing rare in America; but neither in these nor in others observed by me, have I been able to remark any fixed air [i.e. carbon dioxide, which would have made the water carbonated]. Nor have I learned of any curative springs supplied with any sort of salt, if I except those yielding kitchen-salt, found in and beyond the mountains.

"The situation of Bladensburgh is unhealthy, among swamps which surround it on all sides, and every fall obstinate fevers spread among the inhabitants of the region, which on the other hand is rich in manifold beautiful plants. Negroes are beginning to be more numerously kept here, and the people show already a strong tincture of southern ease and behavior. Also several plants are grown here which farther to the north are scarcely seen. Cottonwool, (*Gossypium herbaceum*) and sweet potatoes (*Convolvulus Battatas*) are raised by each family sufficiently for its needs. The blacks raise 'Been-nuts' (*Arachis hypogaea*) [benne]; this is a pretty hardy growth, which at all events stands a few cold nights without hurt. The thin shells of the nuts or more properly the husks are broken, and the kernels planted towards the end of April in good, light soil, perhaps a span apart. They must then be diligently weeded, and when they begin to make a growth of stems all the filaments or joints are covered with earth. After the blooming-time, the pistils and young seed-cases bury themselves in the ground and mature under the earth which is continually heaped upon them. The kernels have an oily taste, and roasted are like cacao. With this view the culture of them for general use has been long recommended in the Philosophical Transactions, and the advantages of making this domestic oil plainly enough pointed out, but without the desired result. [The benne was widely cultivated in the Carolinas and Georgia.] The wild

chesnuts growing so generally in all the forests might yield a fruit quite as useful for the whole of America. It is known that in certain parts of Europe the chesnut is of almost as important a use as the jaka, or breadfruit-tree. The native chesnut-tree is found everywhere in America but is not regarded except as furnishing good timber for fence-rails. Its fruit is indeed small, dry, and inferior in taste to the European great-chesnuts, but in Italy these are had only from inoculated trees, the fruit of-the wild cheshut there, as in America, being neither large nor agreeable in taste. By inoculation, then, there could be had quite as fine great-chesnuts here. But without that, on account of its great usefulness this fruit has received some attention from the Americans who eat it boiled and roasted, convert it into meal and bread, and fresh-shelled and ground use it as a kind of soap with plenty of water.

"Unfavorable weather and the hope of finding in the swamps along the several branches of the Potowmack certain other particular seeds or plants made our stay here also a few days longer. But we found very little we had not seen. However we were fortunate enough here to obtain a stock of acorns and nuts which elsewhere had failed. These with some other seeds we shipped on board a brigantine bound from Georgetown to London, but which never came to port.

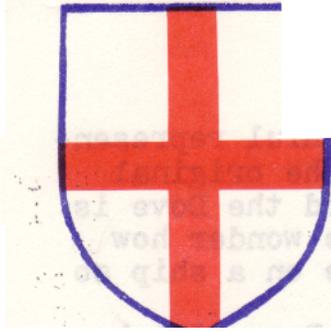
"The family with which we put up at Bladensburgh was quite American in its system, according to which everything is managed regardless. When it was dark they began to bring in lights; when it was time for breakfast or dinner the blacks were chased about for wood, and bread was baked. In no item is there any concern except for the next and momentary wants. Whoever travels in America will observe this daily. For the rest, we lived in cheerful harmony, with two tailors, a saddler, a shoemaker, a Colonel, and other casual guests. A lady with a high head-dress did the honors at table, and three blacks of the most untoward look and odor were in attendance. Our European ladies would be horrified to see about them negroes and negresses in a costume which starts no blush here; and besides, the disagreeable atmosphere would inevitably cause them vapeurs. . . ."

To be continued next month

#### The Prince George's County Historical Society

Dues of \$5.00 per year include a subscription to this monthly newsletter. For membership information, contact the Society at, P.O. Box.14, Riverdale, Md. 20737.

President: Frederick S. De Marr	Directors: Susanna Cristofane
Vice president: John Giannetti	Anne Ferguson
Corr. Secretary: Edith Bagot	W.C. Dutton
Rec. Secretary: Warren Rhoads	Paul Lanham
Treasurer: Herb Embrey.	John Mitchell
Historian: James Wilfong	Alan Virta
Newsletter editor: Alan Virta (474-7524)	



## NEWS AND NOTES FROM

# The Prince George's County Historical Society

Vol. XI. no. 11 November 1983

### The November Meeting: Tobacco Coast

The Rev. Dr. A. Pierce Middleton, author of Tobacco Coast: A Maritime History of the Chesapeake Bay in the Colonial Era, will be the guest speaker at the November meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society, to be held on Saturday, November 12, at Riversdale. Published three decades ago, Tobacco Coast is still recognized as one of the definitive works on the history of colonial Maryland. We are indeed fortunate to have Dr. Middleton with us on November 12 to speak on the colonial Chesapeake region, the "tobacco coast."

Dr. Middleton is a native of Berwyn in this county. He earned a doctorate in early American history at Harvard University and worked as director of research at Colonial Williamsburg from 1948 to 1954. He studied for holy orders and was ordained priest in the Episcopal Church at Bruton Parish Church in Williamsburg in 1951. Now on the staff of St. Anne's Church in Annapolis, he has spent most of his pastoral career in Massachusetts, where he was rector of Great Barrington Parish for twenty years and canon of the Cathedral of Springfield.

The meeting will begin at 2 p.m. Riversdale, the Calvert mansion, is located at 4811 Riverdale Road in Riverdale. Guests are welcome, and refreshments will be served. The gift shop will be open for Christmas shopping. Plan to be with us for this most interesting exploration of the tobacco coast.

### The Dove Comes to the Navy Yard: November 19 and 20

Prince George's County's celebration of Maryland's 350th year will begin a bit early with the visit of the Dove to the Washington Navy Yard this month. The ship will be open to the public on Saturday and Sunday, November 19 and 20, under the joint sponsorship of the Heritage Committees (350th anniversary committees) of Prince George's and Montgomery Counties.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
**ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696**

In 1634, the first Maryland colonists arrived from England aboard the Ark and the Dove. Both original ships are long lost; but the new Dove, built several years ago, is a faithful representation of the ships of that period, and replicates the original Dove in as many details as are known. To step aboard the Dove is to step onto a 17th century vessel, and it makes one wonder how those first settlers endured a trans-Atlantic voyage on a ship so small by today's standards.

Watch the newspapers for the precise hours the Dove will be taking on visitors, or call the Prince George's Travel Promotion Council (during the week) at 927-0700. The Washington Navy Yard is located on the Anacostia River and can be reached via M Street, Southeast.

### Candlelight Christmas Dinners

Tickets to the Montpelier Candlelight Christmas dinner are now on sale. The dinner will be on December 11, and tickets cost \$25.00. Reservations are absolutely necessary, and places are filled quite early. For more information call Caroline Cline at 490-2226 or Jean Speicher at 776-3086.

### Maryland's 350 Years

November 22 is an important date in Maryland history, for on that date in 1683 the Ark and the Dove left Cowes, on the Isle of Wight, for the New World. A ceremony will mark the anniversary of the departure there, and an official delegation as well as many private citizens from Maryland will be there.

### John Hanson Commemoration

John Hanson, a delegate from Maryland to the Continental Congress, was president of that body when it adopted the Articles of Confederation, uniting the former British colonies into one nation. He died in 1783 with relatives at Oxon Hill Manor, and is believed to have been buried there. A public ceremony to commemorate the 200th anniversary of John Hanson's death will be held on Sunday November 6 at 2 p.m., at the Hanson gravesite. Parking is available at the commuter lot on Oxon Hill Road near the Beltway (exit at Indian Head Highway). Signs will direct visitors from the commuter lot to the gravesite.

### Poster to Commemorate the 350th

A poster celebrating Maryland's 350 years is available free from the Maryland Humanities Council, 516 N. Charles St., Baltimore, Md. Phone: 301-837-1938.

New members will be announced in next month's issue of News and Notes.

### Travels in the Confederations Part 2

In last month's issue of News and Notes we published extracts from the journals of Johann David Schoepf chronicling his visit to Bladensburg in the Fall of 1783. In this issue, we follow Dr. Schoepf to Georgetown, and Alexandria, back to Bladensburg, and then on to Queen Anne and Annapolis. Dr. Schoepf was a physician, a native of the principality of Bayreuth, who came to America with the German troops fighting with the British during our Revolution. After the war he travelled through much of the U.S. (then united under the Articles of Confederation), recording his impressions of American life and ways. His journals were published in Germany in 1788 and in an English translation by Alfred J. Morrison in 1911. The English edition was reprinted in 1968 by Burt Franklin, Publisher, of New York.

"Eight miles from Bladensburg lies George-town, a small town by the Potowmack. As far as this the river is navigable, and this gave occasion for the establishment of the place from which at one time much was hoped. There is a tobacco-warehouse here; and at one time the place had a good deal of trade, but this was wholly in the hands of English merchants, who had warehouses here and took out tobacco. On the outbreak of the war they deserted the place, and poverty has since been its lot; for nobody among the inhabitants had capital or credit enough to set up trading. This autumn there came in a few English and French ships to take out tobacco. The banks of the river, on which the town stands, are high. Three miles from here, up the river, are the lower, little falls, and 10 miles above them, the great falls of the Potowmack. The fall of the river is some 130-150 ft. across; at one place only is there a plunge of 15 ft. perpendicular height. The noise of the fall is with still weather heard for a good distance. Just at this time means are devising to make this fall navigable, either by weirs or by blasting, or at least to establish convenient portages; which would be vastly advantageous for the country along the river towards the mountains and for this place itself. But to all appearance the carrying-out of these fine but costly plans will not be so soon accomplished.... [The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal finally accomplished these ends in the 1830s.]

"We crossed the river, going to Alexandria, whither along the opposite bank it is reckoned eight miles; the road is level and proceeds through long woods, among which only a few tobacco-fields are to be seen. All the fences were hung with the freshly pulled tobacco-leaves, so as to let them wilt a little before taking them to the drying-houses proper.

"It is known throughout America that the common sort of people in Virginia speak markedly through the nose; and it is not imagination that we could already observe this on the way to Alexandria. But a great part of the New Englanders are also given to this habit, which is at bottom nothing but custom and imitation.

"Returning from Alexandria, by Georgetown to Bladensburgh, we found the road vastly more lively, since a crowd of horsemen and their attendants were hastening from all sides to Alexandria for the races which were shortly to be held. At Georgetown we saw en passant a case at law being decided on the tavern-porch. Judges, spectators, plaintiffs, defendants and witnesses sat on-the bench before the door, disputing and drinking. The matter appeared to be of no particular consequence, and was being adjusted more in a friendly way than by legal process; the costs, to the satisfaction of everybody, were placed with the host for punch.

"A man at Bladensburgh made proposals of marriage to a woman, then changed his mind of a sudden, and married another. Not long afterwards he repented at having jilted the first, took her to himself along with his first-married, and has lived with both for several years; both have children by him, and, what is more important still, they behave themselves in a very sisterly manner. None of the neighbors is offended with him, and no civil officer makes inquiries.

"With sorrow I observed at Bladensburgh two striking instances of the sad custom, indulged in without thought or conscience almost throughout America, I mean the evil habit of giving the tenderest children and sucklings spirituous, and distilled drinks. This happens partly with a view to relieving them of windiness and colicks, regarded as the sole causes of their importunate crying, partly (and this is absolutely without excuse) to make them quiet and put them to sleep. Spirituous drinks being so universally in use, nobody thinks it harm to give them to children as well, and no attention is paid the bitter injury done their health, and how frequently there is occasion given in this way for internal disorders and consuming diseases. I had many opportunities to convince myself of this, and saw many of our German women killing their children by this practice, who following the advice and the custom of the American women would on all occasions be giving their children, quantities of rum, spirits, anise or kummelwasser, and only to stop their crying. Besides the injury immediately done, the worst feature of the practice is the taste acquired in this way for brandy and rum. Our host's five-year old child seeks to eat

hold of rum or grog wherever he can, and steals furtively to the flask; we saw him almost every day staggering and drunken; he was besides weak and thin as a skeleton, just as another very young child of a neighbor, addicted to the same vice. The parents observed this but were at no pains to prevent it; and the servants and other people appeared even to be amused at the drunken children and to egg them on. In general, children are badly brought up among the Americans, living sporadically as they do, and the servants here being only negroes, ignorant, careless, and immoral, many evils are the consequence.

"We returned by Annapolis, whither it is 30 miles-from Bladensburgh. The road lay at first over thin, sandy hills, and then we came into a flatter country where the sand is mixed with a large proportion of good, black earth, producing excellent corn, wheat and tobacco. This is a most vexatious road for travellers, from the endless number of cross-bars and gates encountered, every landowner not only fencing in his fields, meadows, and woods, but closing the public highways with bars, to keep in the cattle pasturing on the road. Thus it was that in the short space of a mile we often had to open 3-4 such gates, and with a horse unaccustomed to the practice this must always mean a delay.

"We passed-through Queen-Anne, on the Patuxent (a narrow stream) where there is a tobacco-warehouse and two or three insignificant houses, and 9 miles beyond came to New London on the South river, which is more than a mile wide; the remainder of the road to Annapolis was quite flat, sandy, and without stones.

"Annapolis has not always had the honor of being the capital of Maryland; the capital was formerly St. Mary, on the river of that name, and scarcely more than in name does the town exist; the site was found inconvenient and the seat of government was removed hither. Annapolis stands between the South-west and Severn rivers, more properly on the latter river, on a sandy height whence there is an open prospect towards the Bay. The number of the houses is about 400, of which some are fine and well-looking. The Statehouse indeed is not the splendid building of which the fame has been sounded, although certainly one of the handsomest in America; but no less insubstantial than most of the other publick and private buildings of America. That it pleases the eye is due to its elevated situation, its small cupola, its four wooden columns before the entrance, and because no other considerable building stands near it. It has only seven windows in front, and is built of brick two storeys high. The large hall on the ground-floor is tasteful, although not spacious. At the other end, facing the entrance, as is customary in State and Court-houses, there are raised seats in the form of an amphitheatre designed for meetings of the high courts. For the rest, the building has space enough for the rooms of the Provincial Assembly, the Senate, Executive Council, General Court for the Eastern-Shore, Intendant for the Revenue &c. Next the State-house is a little building of one storey meant for the publick treasury. It is said to be a very strong and fast building; doors and windows I saw well-barred and fixed--but with all this the house is empty. The real Treasuries of this province, throughout the war, were the tobacco-warehouses; the taxes for the most part being assessed and paid in tobacco and other produce, because the people had no hard money and unfortunately have none still. At one end of the town stands the house in which the Governor lives, but another building, of an extensive plan and designed for the Governor's residence, was before the war begun by Governor Blagden [sic], but not finished, the Assembly judging the plan too costly; the bare walls remain, known as the Governor's Folly in memory of him. The streets of the town run almost all of them radially towards a common central point which is the State-house. They are not yet paved, and with the sandy soil this occasions great inconvenience in summer. Annapolis boasts of a play-house but of no church, as indeed in everything regarding luxury the town is inferior to no other and surpasses the most. Shortly before the war money was collected for building a very handsome church, but the amount was later applied to bloody purposes, and worship since has been held partly in the State-house, partly in the play-house. The situation of the town has been determined, as 39 degrees 25 minutes latitude and 78 degrees longitude west of London. There is little or no trade, which is to be explained both by the site and the character of the harbor. The

roads leading into the interior are crossed *by* divers streams, and the inconvenience arising from so many passages by ferry has brought it about that the people prefer to bring their produce to Baltimore and fetch thence what they need, which they can do by unbroken land-carriage. The harbor, into which fall no fresh streams of any significance, is full of worms, which live only in salt water, and these in a few months eat through the ships' bottoms and render them useless. At this time there was not one ship of consequence here, but merely small craft; and the merchants of the place themselves get the most of their stocks from Baltimore. However, the harbor is spacious, and its mouth, (not over 4-500 yards wide), easy of defence.

"Maryland is behind none of the other states in excellence' of climate, in variety and fertility of soil, or in diversity of products. Its situation, almost at the middle of the continent of North America, causes its inhabitants seldom to languish from immoderate heat or to suffer from disagreeable cold, and most of the products of the rest of America thrive here under good management. With Virginia it shares the advantages of a spacious bay, which in regard to its size, safety, and the number of its navigable streams, can hardly be excelled. It is convenient at all seasons of the year and is seldom disturbed *by* the hurricanes of the south or closed by the impassable ice of the north Maryland produces good maize and excellent wheat, hemp, and flax. The more profitable culture of tobacco has indeed kept these articles somewhat under; but the inconvenience of wanting the most necessary things and the uncertainty of getting them from other parts having been variously felt, more attention is now directed to agriculture. Swine and horned cattle do well with the most careless handling, and increase prodigiously. The lands are more divided, and more uniformly, than in Virginia, are therefore somewhat better cultivated and are generally worth more, especially on the western side of the Bay where the soil is less sandy and barren than on the Eastern Shore...."

#### A Final Call for Old Photos

Alan Virta is completing his work collecting old photos of Prince George's County scenes to be included in a book which will be a pictorial history of the county. Still lacking are very many scenes of old Upper Marlboro. If any members of the Society own or know of old photos of county scenes which might be of interest for the book, they are invited to call Alan Virta at 474-7524 (evenings) or write at 8244 Canning Terrace, Greenbelt, Md. 20770.

The Prince George's County Historical Society: This newsletter is published monthly and included in the annual dues of \$5.00. To join, contact the Society at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Md. 20737. Presidents Frederick S. De Marr. Corr. Secretary I Edith Bagot. Treasurer: Herb Embrey. Newsletter editor: Alan Virta (474-7524)

November 83  
NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY AND COLLECTION

The response to our report in the July/August 83 issue was positive therefore we will continue to share this information with our membership.

ARCHIVES/MICROFILM

T

he response was good on our follow-up appeal for assistance in financing the Archives of Maryland and Upper Marlboro newspaper projects. For support on the newspaper microfilming project we wish to thank Doris Brown of Laurel and Eunice Burdette of Boonesboro. Contributors to the Archives were: Reba Turner of College Park, Alan Virta of Greenbelt, Hen A. Naylor, Jr. of Baltimore, Senator Mike Miller of Clinton, Irene Addic of Laurel, Don and Alice Skarda of Berwyn Heights, and Margaret G. Lewis of Seattle, Washington State. We appreciate their interest.

In the near future we will publish a full listing of the Archives donors and inscriptions.

OBITUARY/BIOGRAPHICAL FILE

This file is an integral part of our library collection which will serve a major information source for genealogists and historians dealing with the social, political and economic history of the county. A card file contains all obituary notices on deceased residents and former residents. Interfiled with these are the names of all family members listed in the obituary notice, with a cross-reference to the deceased. The biographical file contains current biography clippings from all locations papers as well as biographical articles on deceased citizens. - - Does this sound like a monumental task? Well, it is! However, it is something which volunteers can work on at home, in their spare time and at their convenience.

The history of Prince George's County is the story of its citizens. If you can help us record this history, please call Fred De Marr at 277-0711.

LOCAL PUBLICATIONS

At present the Society receives the regular monthly or quarterly publications from 14 of the Maryland county historical societies as well as 21 different publications from other state and local groups in Maryland and the nearby metropolitan area. These are a major source for both current events and local history. Back files of all of these publications are available for use in the Society's library at Riversdale.

ANTIQUES MAGAZINE

In addition to the decorative arts, this magazine is a major source for local history and biographical information. The library has available complete runs for 20 years. Our needs are for pre-1954 and post1975 issues. If you can help fill this vacuum, please give us a call.

UPDATE

In our last report we indicated that some photos from the Society's files had been borrowed for use in a calendar of the metropolitan area. It is now off the press and is available in the Gift Shop at Riversdale

### LIBRARY ACCESSIONS

<u>Author</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Donor</u>
Geiger Hutcheson	Daniel Carroll II/One Man and His Descendants	C. Harold
- - -	Celebrating the Opening of the Robert Crain Highway	Ellen S. Rogers
LeMay	Men of Letters in Colonial Maryland	Edith M. Bagot
McSherry	A History of Maryland	Ninnie M. Hill
Otis	Calvert of Maryland	Paul Lanham
Stein	Toward New Towns for America (Greenbelt)	Ben Miles
- - -	Maryland/Its Resources, Industries and Institutions	Warren Rhoads
Jacob Mathias	Guide to Research Collections of Former U.S. Senators. 1789-1982	Sen. Charles
- - -	COURANNUAL (Hyattsville H.S. Yearbook)	Emily Fuller
Nees	for 1930,31,32 &33.	
Franklin Mason	Survey Plat Book of Pr. Geo's Co. (1940) v.1 The Journals of Charles Mason & Jeremiah Dixon. 1763-68.	Robert Truax Herbert C. Embrey
Greene Marshall	A Brief History of Pr. Geo's County	Margaret M.
Richardson	Standards & Colors of the Amer. Rev.	Purchase
Bode	Maryland/A History	Purchase
Richardson	Side-Lights on Md. History 2 vols.	Minnie M. Hill
Hanley, ed.	The John Carroll Papers 1755-1815 3 vols.	Purchase
Geary	Fire Call/A Hist. of the Hyatts- ville Vol. Fire Dept.	Francis X. Geary
Van Horn	Out of the Past/Prince Georges and Their Land.	Van Horn Family
WSSC	Report on the Advisability of Cre- ating a Sanitary Dist. in Sub. Md. (1918)	Helen-Louise Duckett Waller
Riley	Annapolis . ."Ye Antient Capital of Maryland"	Minnie M. Hill
Steuart	A Hist. of the Md. Line in the Revolutionary War. 1775-1783	Fred De Marr
Pettengill Wilcox, ed.	My Story (has Clagett genealogy) 1850 Census. Pr. Geo's Co., Md.	Fred Clagett Pr. Geo's Co. Genealogical Soc.

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY LIBRARY AT "RIVERSDALE".  
THE CALVERT MANSION, IS OPEN EACH SATURDAY, NOON - 5 PM. VISIT US!



## NEWS AND NOTES FROM **The Prince George's County Historical Society**

Vol. XI, no. 12 December 1983

### The Christmas Party at Montpelier

The Society's annual Christmas Party at Montpelier will be held this year on Saturday, December 17, the third Saturday of the month. The house will be decorated for Christmas in the colonial style, and there will be plenty of good food, good drink, and good cheer to go around. If you have some tasty Christmas goodies, bring some along to share, but by all means, please plan to be with us on December 17.

The party will begin at 2 p.m. Montpelier is located on Route 197 (the Laurel-Bowie Road) just north of the Baltimore/Washington Parkway. From the Parkway, turn left (north) at the end of the exit ramp onto Route 197. Follow 197 to the sign to Montpelier. It is a left turn opposite the Montpelier Shopping Center.

Montpelier is one of Maryland's finest Georgian mansion homes. It is always beautiful at Christmas. Bring friends and family to see this beautiful home in its most beautiful season.

### Open House at Christmas: The County's Finest

Christmas-time is the best time to see our historic sites!

Belair, the home of colonial governors. Sunday, Dec. 11. Noon to 4 p.m. Free 12207 Tulip Grove Dr., Bowie. 464-8619.

Marietta, the home of Gabriel Duvall. Sunday, December 11. Noon to 4 p.m. Quilting demonstrations. 5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale. 779-2011

Montpelier, the Snowden mansion. Dec. 7-9, 5:30 to 9 p.m. Dec. 10, 11 a.m. to 3 P.M. Route 197, Laurel. 779-2011

Riversdale, the Calvert mansion. Dec. 10 & 11, Noon to 4 p.m, 4811 Riverdale Road, Riverdale. 779-2011

Oxon Hill Manor, Jules de Sibour's masterpiece. Dec. 11, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. 6901 Oxon Hill Road, Oxon Hill. 839-7783. Free.

Surratt House, Victorian home. Dec. 11, 4 to 9 p.m. Dec. 12 & 13, 4 To- 9 p.m. 9110 Brandywine Road, Clinton. 868-1121.

Chesapeake Beach Railroad Museum, the old rail station in Calvert County. December 11, 2 to 4 p.m. Chesapeake Beach. Free.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Eugene Bowie Roberts

We regret to announce the passing of Eugene Bowie Roberts of Fairwood, Collington, on October 30. He was a founding member of the Prince George's County Historical Society and served as its second president, 1956-58.

Mr. Roberts was a farmer and real estate developer. He raised beef cattle and in later years operated a turf farm at Fairview. As a developer he built the first garden apartments in the county, the Prince George s Apartments in Hyattsville in the late 1930s. He was the descendant of two Prince Georgians who served as Governor of Maryland, Dr. Joseph Kent of Rose Mount and Oden Bowie of Fairview.

Mr. Roberts' first wife, Cornelia Szechenyi, died in 1958. He is survived by his wife, the former. Marie Bonne de Viel Castel, two children, and five grandchildren.

Along the Potomac Shore

The Tanta-Cove Garden Club has just published a new history of Prince George's County's Potomac shore, from Oxon Hill to Bryan Point. Co-authored by Gloria Meder, Anne Aber Pauline Collins, Cynthia Heerwagen, and Charlotte Temerario, Along the Potomac Shore tells the story of the people, their homes, and way of life through Maryland's 350 years. The story begins with the Indians and early settlers and comes right down to the suburban developments of recent years

Along the Potomac Shore (100 pages, illustrated, softcover) is available from the Tanta-Cove Garden Club, Box 55526, Fort Washington, Md. 20744. Price is \$6.00 and includes postage.

New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society

		Sponsor
Mr & Mrs Berry F. Brown	Bowie	F. De Marr
Elizabeth A. Higgins	College Park	F. De Marr
Peggy E. Beall	Croom	F. De Marr
Patricia Osti Hanyok	Laurel	J. Speicher
Francis J. Loevi	Laurel	J. Speicher
Mr & Mrs. Richard F. Virgin	Upper Marlboro	A. Virta
Mr & Mrs. Covington Stanwick	Aquasco	R. Turner
Mr & Mrs. H. Ivan Rainwater	Bowie	S. Baltz
Evelyn M. McKim	Hyattsville	M. Lee
Helen B. Myers	Hyattsville	M. Lee
Elsie W. Allen	Hyattsville	M. Phillips
Anthony Zito	College Park	A. Virta

Christmas Gift Ideas: This Was Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay of Yore, by Fred Tilp.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23,1696

Available for \$35.00 and \$18.00 respectively, plus postage, from Mr. Tilp at Box 630, Alexandria, Va. 22313. Both are hardcover. This Was Potomac River is almost out of print! A classic--368 pages, many photos.

### Christmas at Riversdale

A letter from Rosalie Calvert to her sister in Belgium dated December 1815:

“. . . I cannot understand how, without even knowing the age and personalities of my children, you were able to guess what would please them most. My little Julia had for more than a week been chattering about a dog, and played all the time at hiding under the tables and behind the chairs, laughing and shouting that a wild dog was chasing her. When I opened the largest package, the first object which appeared was the little dog. I gave it to Julia, pretending to make it bark at her. She was in ecstasy! and the three other children danced all around her, in delight at a present which suited her so well. She never wants it away from her, and we have to let her sleep with it!

"The next things we found were the two toy rifles, which Charles and Henry seized immediately, jumping for joy and admiring their looks. They fired them 20 times in one minute, until they had used up the flints that make them fire, and we had to get more. Right now they are marching in formation with their muskets on their shoulders!

"Upon finding in the second box the little pocket-book, it was unanimously decided that it should be for George, who, being in Philadelphia, couldn't share the pleasure which his brothers and sisters had in seeing all these pretty things.

"The two little painted inkpots were too delicate and pretty for the boys, so I gave one to Caroline and the other to Eugenia. How beautifully the little scenes are painted on them! As for the little toilette-sets with looking-glasses, I have given one to Eugenia and the other to Julia, to be kept for her until she is old enough to take care of it herself. The little boxes (chests) we assigned to Caroline and George, as well as the, little prayer books.

"You must have had quite a job of packing the cases--I have never seen anything so well packed! They would have survived ten trips from China without a scratch! Everything was in perfect condition--not a bit of damage!

"Please accept all of our thanks for your wonderful presents..."

The children's ages, in December 1815, were as follows: Julia, nearly 2; Henry, 5; Charles Benedict, 7; Eugenia, 9; George, 12; and Caroline, 15. Like George, Caroline was attending school in Philadelphia.

Rosalie Calvert was the daughter of a Belgian nobleman who fled to America in the late 18th century to escape persecution during the French Revolution. He and his family later returned to Belgium, but Rosalie stayed with the man she married in this country, George Calvert. Quite a few letters from Rosalie to her family have been preserved in Belgium. Susan Pearl, a member of this Society and an historian with the History Division of Park and Planning Commission, recently obtained copies of many of those letters. Our thanks to Susan for making this letter available--and for translating it for us. Rosalie wrote home in French!

### Bicentennial Celebrations in Annapolis

There will be a number of exciting events in Annapolis in December and January to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the ending of the Revolutionary War. Congress was meeting in Annapolis at that time, so the crucial decisions and actions which heralded the end of the war took place in that ancient city.

Friday, December 23 will be the 200th anniversary of George Washington's appearance before Congress to resign his commission as leader of the Continental Army. An article devoted to this momentous occasion--symbolizing the successful conclusion of the war--appeared in the December 1982 issue of News and Notes. On December 23, between 10:30 and 11 a.m., "George Washington" will again walk the route from the site of Mann's Tavern on Conduit Street to the State House, where he will be greeted by the Mayor of Annapolis and a gun salute. The public is invited to join the Father of Our Country in his walk to the State House. At 11 o'clock an early American flag, known as the John Shaw flag for its Annapolis designer, will be raised above the State House. Then at noon, George Washington will again appear before Congress to resign his commission, an event to be televised live by the Maryland Center for Public Broadcasting (Channel 22). In the afternoon the State House will be open to the public for the viewing of a number of special exhibits, including one from this county.

The ratification by Congress of the Treaty of Paris--formalizing the end of the war--will be celebrated on Saturday, January 14. The ratification ceremony itself in the Old Senate Chamber will be televised live at 1:30 P.m. on public television. Also beginning at 1:30 P.m. will be an 18th century parade through town of 1200 American and French troops led-by the U.S. Army's ceremonial Commander-in-Chief's Guard Fife and Drum Corps. The parade will end with a spectacular 18th century military celebration with music, artillery fire, continuous volleys of muskets, and the ringing of church bells. In the evening, at 8:30, there will be fireworks over the harbor.

Members of the Society may also be interested in the Christmas candlelight receptions at many of Annapolis' historic houses on Thursday evening, December 22. A \$3.00 charge will admit to all. Some of these houses are not generally open to the public.

America's Revolution ended in Annapolis two hundred years ago. Join in on the celebrations!

#### "A Merrie Maryland Christmas"

The music and drama students of Queen Anne's School will present "A Merrie Maryland Christmas" on Sunday evening, December 11, in historic St. Barnabas Church, at 7:30 and, 9 p.m. The program will feature sacred and secular music (both choral and instrumental) and colorful vignettes of figures associated with local history. No tickets are required, and seating will be on a first-come first-served basis for both performances. St. Barnabas Church (built 1774) is on Oak Grove Road at Church Road, near Largo. Phone 249-5000.

Reminder: No Society meetings in Jan. & Feb. We meet again in March

December 83

## NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY AND COLLECTION

### RIVERSDALE OPEN HOUSE/MANSION AND LIBRARY

As noted elsewhere in News & Notes, the annual Christmas Open House at the Calvert Mansion in Riverdale will be held on Saturday, December 10 and Sunday December 11, .12 Noon - 4 PM. Something new has been added this year. We're having open house at the Society's library as well! So, come on over to the mansion and see what your Society is doing in its effort to preserve and collect the records and artifacts of Prince George's proud past and present history. The library is located in the Servants' Quarters near the parking lot at the east end of the building'. And, while you are there, do visit the Mansion in all of its Christmas finery. The admission fee is for a great cause - the Restoration Fund. P.S.: We will see you at Montpelier on the 17th at 2 PM also!

### OUR THANKS

--To Dino Bakekis of Glenn Dale, for a Bill of Sale from Walter D. Addison to Resin Magruder for a slave girl, Louisa Sampson, dated November 27, 1836. Also for copy negatives of four early views of his residence, Maple Shade.

--To Phyllis Luskey Cox of Oxon Hill for a generous contribution to both the Archives and the Microfilm projects.

--To Fred Warther of Lanham for an almost complete set of Maryland magazine.

--To the Maryland Humanities Council for a very fine display on the Treaty of Paris 1783. This document, when ratified by Congress in Annapolis on January 14, 1784, brought the American Revolution to a close and recognized the United State's of America. This display can be seen at the library open house December 10-11.

### THE PHOTO FILE

This is one of the most valuable resources in our collection. Although we will accept photographs from donors, we are interested primarily in making copy negatives of old photos which are loaned by the owner for this purpose.

As in the case of any other research material, an adequate file must be developed. Our file is divided into four parts. 1) Numerical, in which each photo is listed in order of accession and its complete identification and source is listed. 2) Category, such as schools, churches, roads, taverns, railroads, etc. 3) Geographical, by area such as Aquasco, Beltsville, Upper Marlboro, etc. and 4) Title, or subject of the individual photo.

Although large numbers of photos have been catalogued, we still have a large backlog of material to be identified and filed. During the past year we have furnished material from the collection to several writers and researchers.

If you like old photographs, we would be-happy to welcome you as a volunteer on this project. We also need people to seek out sources for further additions to this collection. Please give us a call!

A VERY HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON TO ALL!

### LIBRARY ACCESSIONS

Author

Title

Date

---	Boundary Markers of the Nation's Capital	Paul T. Lanham
Toogood, A. C.	Digges Family of Maryland & Warburton Manor	Purchase
Traudt, R.	The Story of the Carmelites in Md, 1866-75	Robert Traudt
Toomey, D.C.	A Hist. of Relay, Md. & the Thomas Viaduct	Fred De Marr
---	Auction Catalogue/Montpelier Manor	Pr. Geos. Hist. Prog.
Poudrier, G. et al	Hist. of St. Mary's R.C. Ch., Landover Hills	Frank Allen
Shomette, D.	Shipwrecks on the Chesapeake	Purchase
Cromwell, J.H.	The C&P Story/Service in Action/Md.	Joseph H. Cromwell
Cromwell, J.H.	The C&P Story/Service in Action/D.C.	Joseph Cromwell
Corddry, G.H.	Wicomico, County History	Purchase
Newman, H.W.	Maryland and the Confederacy	Purchase
Ackerson, C.P.	Holy Trinity, Collington. Her People & Their Church	Constance P. Ackerson
Ecker, G. D.	A Portrait of Old Georgetown	Purchase
McKeldin, T. R.	No Mean City (Balto)	Ben Miles
Ferguson, A. L. L.	Adventures in So. Md. 1922-40	Louise Lerch William,

NEWS AND NOTES FROM

# The Prince George's County Historical Society

Vol. XII, no. 1 January 1984

## Maryland Anniversary Concert

The Prince George's Symphony will present a concert in honor of Maryland's 350th anniversary on Saturday evening, February 25, at Eleanor Roosevelt High School, Greenbelt, Md. This concert is being co-sponsored by the Maryland Heritage Committee of Prince George's County (the "350 committee") and tickets will be offered at the special price of \$3.50. The concert will begin at 8 p.m. Tickets are available by calling Stella Ishee at 345-8763, or may be purchased at the door. Eleanor Roosevelt High School is located at Hanover Parkway and Greenbelt Road, near the Greenbriar condominiums, less than a mile east of the Baltimore-Washington Parkway. A reception will follow the concert.

Other official "350 events" to follow in Prince George's County will be the annual St. George's Day Dinner sponsored by this Society on April 23, a 10,000 kilometer run through Watkins Park in Largo on April 28, and a grand Festival of Flight in Bladensburg on June 16, celebrating not only Maryland's 350th year but the 200th anniversary of Peter Carnes' balloon experiments in Bladensburg, the first documented balloon ascensions in America. Details will follow. Mark your calendars!

## Prince George's County Commemorative Calendar

The Maryland Heritage Committee of Prince George's County has published a handsome commemorative calendar for the 350th year. Each month features a drawing of an historic site in Prince George's County, and the days are highlighted with a note of some historic or interesting event from Prince George's County's past, from the birth of Archbishop John Carroll (January 8) to the establishment of Upper Marlboro (March 19) to the arrival of the first troops at Camp Springs Army Airfield (December 14) to the opening of the county hospital (March 21). The first printing is almost exhausted, but reserve a copy from the next by writing to Calendar, Box 596, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20772.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696**

## The Winter Break

There will be no meetings of the Society in January or February. The regular meeting schedule will resume on the second Saturday of March, March 10.

## Maryland Antiques Show and Sale

The 6th annual Maryland Antiques Show and Sale, sponsored by the Maryland Historical Society to benefit the Museum and Library of Maryland History, will be held in Baltimore February 9 to 12, at the Convention Center. For more information, call the Maryland Historical Society at 301-685-3750.

## New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

		Sponsor
Maurice E. May	Riverdale	F. De Marr
Mary Stevenson	Hyattsville	P. Tatspaugh
Canon A. Pierce Middleton	Annapolis	F. De Marr
Gloria Wyvill Garner	Upper Marlboro	A. Virta
Chester & Vera Thorne	Friendly	P. Cox

## No Light of the Silvery Moon: Happy Valentine's Day!

Young couples (and old couples, for that matter) were on warning what sort of activities were improper by the light of the silvery moon in the very proper town of Cheverly:

"Be it further enacted, that for the purpose of interpreting this ordinance, the parking of automobiles or other vehicles or conveyances ... for the purpose of necking, spooning, or other forms of love-making, shall be deemed disorderly conduct."

----Cheverly town ordinance no. 6  
September 11, 1931

## Skipjack Postage Stamp Sought

Fred Tilp of Alexandria is leading a national effort to see the Chesapeake Bay sailing skipjack commemorated on an official U.S. postage stamp. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation and Chesapeake Bay Magazine have joined the effort. These dredge boats are the last remaining commercial fishing vessels to work under sail in North American waters. Once the fleet number 1500, there are now no more than two dozen. Express support by writing Mr. William F. Bolger, Postmaster General, Washington, D.C. 20260.

Two metal detectors are being raffled off on Feb. 13 by the Prince George's County Historical Research and Recovery Club (the treasure hunters). Tickets \$1.00. Call Bill or Claire Long, 249-5123

## The Story of Ayuba Suleiman Ibrahima

One of the more curious episodes in the history of Maryland unfolded in the 1730s: the story of the African Ayuba Suleiman Ibrahima, known to his Maryland contemporaries as Job ben Solomon. The son of a powerful Muslim African chieftan, he was sent by his father to sell slaves to an English slaver. Instead, he himself was enslaved and brought to Maryland. It gradually became clear that Ayuba was no common slave, but a person of education and refinement. He was brought to Annapolis, where he became



make his slavery as easy as possible. Yet slavery and confinement was by no means agreeable to Job, who had never been used to it; he therefore wrote a letter in Arabick to his father, acquainting him with his misfortunes, hoping he might yet find means to redeem him. This letter he sent to Mr. Vachell Denton, desiring it might be sent to Africa by Captain Pike; but he being gone to England, Mr. Denton sent the letter inclosed to Mr. Hunt, in order to be sent to Africa by Captain Pike from England; but Captain Pike had sailed for Africa before the letter came to Mr. Hunts who therefore kept it in his own hands, till he should have a proper opportunity of sending it. It happened that his letter was seen by James Ogelthorpe, Esq. [later the founder of Georgia], who, according to his usual goodness and generosity, took compassion on Job, and gave his bond to Mr. Hunt for the payment of a certain sum, upon the delivery of Job here in England. Mr. Hunt upon this sent to Mr. Denton who purchased him again of his master for the same money which Mr. Denton had formerly received for him; his master being very willing to part with him, as finding him no ways fit for his business.

"He lived some time with Mr. Denton at Annapolis, before any ship could stir out, upon account of the ice that lay in all the rivers of Maryland at that time. In this interval he became acquainted with the Reverend Mr. [Jacob] Henderson, a gentleman of great learning, minister of Annapolis, and commissary to the Bishop of London, who gave Job the character of a person of great piety and learning; and indeed his good nature and affability gained him many friends besides in that place.

"In March, 1733, he set sail in the William, Captain George Uriel Commander; in which ship I was also a passenger. The character which the Captain and I had of him at Annapolis, induced us to teach him as much of the English language as we could, he being then able to speak but few words of it, and those hardly intelligible. This we set about as soon as we were out at sea, and in about a fortnight's time taught him all his letters, and to spell almost any single syllable, when distinctly pronounced to him; but Job and myself falling sick, we were hindered from making any greater progress at that time. However, by the time that we arrived in England, which was the latter end of April 1733, he had learned so much of our language, that he was able to understand most of what we said in common conversation; and we that were used to his manner of speaking, could make shift to understand him tolerably well.

"On our arrival in England, we heard that Mr. Ogelthorpe was gone to Georgia, and that Mr. Hunt had provided a lodging for Job at Limehouse. After I had visited my friends in the country, I went up on purpose to see Job. He was very sorrowful, and told me that Mr. Hunt had been applied to by some persons to sell him, who pretended they would send him home; but he feared they would either sell him again as a slave, or if they sent him home would expect an unreasonable ransom for him. I took him to London with me, and waited on Mr. Hunt, to desire leave to carry him to Cheshunt in Hartfordshire; which Mr. Hunt complied with. He told me he had been applied to, as Job had suggested, but did not intend to part with him without his own consent; but as Mr. Ogelthorpe was out of England, if any of Job's friends would pay the money, he would accept of it, provided they would undertake to sent him home safely to his own country, I also obtained his promise that he would not dispose of him till he heard farther from me.

"Job, while he was at Cheshunt, had the honour to be sent for by most of the gentry of that place, who were mightily pleased with his company, and concerned for his misfortunes. They made him several handsome presents, and proposed that a subscription should be made for the payment of the money to Mr. Hunts... [With the financial assistance of Mr. Ogelthorpe and a subscription, Job's freedom and passage home were assured.]

". . . One day being at Sir Hans Sloan's, he expressed his great desire to see the Royal Family. Sir Hans promised to get him introduced, when he had clothes proper to go in. Job knew how kind a friend he had to apply to upon occasion; and he was soon cloathed in rich silk dress, made up after his own country fashion, and introduced to their Majesties, and the rest of the Royal Family. Her Majesty was pleased to present him with a rich gold watch; and the same day he had the honour to dine with his Grace the Duke of Montague, and some others of the nobility, who were pleased to make him, a handsome present after



NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince George's County Historical  
Society**

Vol. XII, no. 2-3  
Feb.-March 1984

Celebrating the 350th: Courses on County History

In honor of Maryland's 350th anniversary this year, Prince George's Community College will offer several courses on the history of Prince George's County this Spring. These are noncredit enrichment courses--no tests, no term papers, just the enjoyment of learning more about historic Prince George's County. The courses are:

History of Maryland (Prince George's County): This course is designed to acquaint the student with the general history of Maryland from the 17th through the 19th centuries, with special emphasis on Prince George's County. Through on-site lectures by resident historians, students will gain a better perspective of the people, places, and events that have contributed to the present character of the county. The first session will be held on campus. Ref. No. 0678, 5 sessions. Tues, Apr. 3, 7-9 p.m. Largo campus. April 10-May 1, 7-9 p.m. Calvert Mansion, Marietta, Surratt House, and Oxon Hill Manor. Tuition: \$20.00 Ref. No. 0679, 5 sessions. Tues..., May 15, 7-9 p.m. Largo campus. May 22-June 12, 7-9 p.m., Slave Quarters at Riversdale, College Park Airport, Belair, and St. Thomas Church, Croom. Tuitions \$20.00

The Establishment of Churches: Through a study of the early churches in this county, you will gain an understanding of the early settlers' lives and their cultural ties to England, the full implications of religious toleration and the separation of Church and State. Examples of 18th century architecture and the uniqueness of each early church will be explained in detail through slides. Ref. No. 0685: 3 sessions. Thurs, Apr. 5-19, 7-9 P.m. Montpelier Mansion, Carriage House. Tuitions \$25.00.

Black History of Prince George's County: Designed to give a basic understanding of black history and community development through the periods of slavery and Reconstruction and the late 19th century. Identification of black historic sites, events, and notable persons through slide presentations, field trips, and lectures. Ref. No. 0910: 6 sessions. Thurs., May 31-June 21, 7-8:30; and Sat., June 30 & July 7, 10 a.m. to noon. Calvert Mansion. \$30.00.

To register: call 322-0998 two weeks in advance. More info: 322-0875.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND'  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696**

## Maryland's Beginning, 350 Years Ago

Three hundred and fifty years ago the colonial experiment called Maryland had its beginning. In March of 1634 two small ships entered the Potomac River, carrying 140 settlers to a new life in a new land. We present below the story of the first weeks of Maryland, the history of our state in March 1634. This account was published in England in 1635 and it was one of the first descriptions of the new colony offered to the British public.

### A Relation of the Lord Baltimore's Plantation in Maryland

His most Excellent Majestie Having by His Letters Patents, under the Great Seale of England, granted a certaine Countrey in America (now called Maryland, in honour of our gracious Queene) unto the Lord Baltimore, with divers Priviledges, and encouragements to all those that should adventure With his Lordship in the planting of that Contrey: the benefit and honour of such an action was readily apprehended by divers Gentlemen, of good birth and qualitie, who thereupon resolved to adventure their persons, and a good part of their fortunes with his Lordship, in the pursuite of so noble and (in all likelihood) so advantagious an enterprize. His Lordship was at first resolved to goe in person but the more important reasons perswading his stay at home, hee appointed his brother, Mr. Leonard Calvert to goe Governour in his stead, with whom he joined in Commission, Mr. Jerome Hawley, and Mr. Thomas Cornwallis (two worthy and able Gentlemen.) These with the other Gentlemen adventurers, I and their servants, to the number of neere 200 people, imbarked themselves for the voyage in the good ship called the Arke, of 300 tunne & upward, which was attended by his Lordships Pinnace, called the Dove, of about 50 tunne. And so on Friday, the 22 of November 1633, a small gale of winde coming gently from the Northwest, they weighed from the Cowes in the Isle of Wight, about ten in the morning; And having stayed by the way Twenty dayes at the Barbadas, and Fourteene dayes at Saint Christophers (upon some necessary occasions) they arrived at Point Comfort in Virginia, on the foure & twentyeth of February following. They had Letters from his Majesty, in favor of them, to the Governour of Virginia, in obedience whereunto, he used them with much courtesie and humanitie. At this time, one Captaine Cleyborne (one of the Councel of Virginia) coming from the parts whether they intended to goe, told them that all the Natives were in preparation of defence by reason of a rumor some had raised amongst them, that 6 shippes were to come with many people, who would drive all the inhabitants out of the Countrey.

On the 3 of March, they left Point Comfort, & 2 dayes after, they came to Patowmeck river, which is about 24 leagues distant, there they began to give names to places, and called the Southerne part of that River, Saint Gregories; and the Northerne point, Saint Michaels.

They sayled up the River, till they came to Heron Iland, which is about 14 leagues, and there came to an Anchor under an Island neere unto it, which they called S. Clements. Where they set up a Crosse, and tooke possession of this Countrey for our Saviour, and for our Sovereigne Lord the King of England.

Heere the Governor thought fit for the ship to stay, untill hee had discovered more of the Countrey; and so hee tooke two Pinnaces, and went up the River some 4 leagues, and landed on the South side, where he found the Indians fled for feare, from thence hee sayled some 9 leagues higher to Patowmeck Towne, where the Werowance being a child, Archibau his unckle (who governed him and his Countrey for him) gave all the company good wellcome, and one of the company having entered into a little discourse with him, touching the errours of their religions hee seemed well pleased therewith; and at his going away, desired him to returne thither againe, saying he should live with him, his men should hunt for him, and hee would divide all with him.

From hence the Governor went to Paschatoway, about 20 leagues higher, where he found many Indians assembled, and heere he met with one Captaine Henry Fleete an English-man, who had lived many yeeres among the Indians, and by that meanes spake the Countrey language very well, and was much esteemed

Whilist the Governour was abroad, the neighbouring Indians, where the ship lay, began to cast off feare, and to come to their Court of guard, which they kept night and day upon Saint Clements Ile, partly to defend their barge, which was brought in pieces out of England, and there made up; and partly to defend their men which were imployed in felling of trees, and cleaving pales for a Palizado, and at last they ventured to come aboard the ship.

The Governour finding it not fit, for many reasons, to seate himselfe as yet so high in the River, resolved to returne backe againe, and to take a more exact view of the lower parts, and so leaving the Ship & Pinnaces there, he tooke this Barge (as most fit to search the Creekes, and small rivers) and was conducted by Captaine Fleete (who knew well the Countrey) to a River on the North-side of Patomeck river, within 4 or 5 leagues from the mouth thereof, which they called Saint Georges River. They went up this river about 4 Leagues, and anchored at the Towne of Yoacomaco: from whence the Indians of that part of the Countrey, are called the Yoacomacoes.

At their comming to this place, the Governour went on shoare, and treated friendly with the Werowance there, and acquainted him with the intent of his comming thither, to which hee made little answere (as it is their manner, to any new or suddaine question) but entertained him, and his company that night in his house, and gave him his owne bed to lie on (which is a matt layd on boords) and they next day, went to shew him the country; and that day being spent in viewing the places about that towne, and the fresh waters, which there are very plentifull, and excellent good (but the main rivers are salt) the Governor determined to make the first Colony there, and so gave order for the Ship and Pinnaces to come thither.

This place he found to be a very commodious situation for a Towne, in regard the land is good, the ayre wholesome and pleasant, the River affords a safe harbour for ships of any burthen, and a very bould shoare; fresh water, and wood there is in great plenty, and the place so naturally fortified, as with little difficultie, it will be defended from any enimie.

To make his entry peaceable and safe, hee thought fit to present the Werowance and the Wisoes of the Towne with some English Cloth, (such as is used in trade with the Indians) Axes. Howes, and Knives, which they accepted very kindly, and freely gave consent that hee and his company should dwell in one part of their Towne, and reserved for themselves: and those Indians that dwelt in that part of the Towne, which was allotted for the English, freely left them their houses, and some corne that they had begun to plant: It was also agreed between them, that at the end of the harvest they should leave the whole towne, which they did accordingly, And they made mutuall promises to each other, to live friendly and peaceably together, and if any injury should happen to be done on any part, that satisfaction should be made for the same, and thus upon the 27 day of March, Anno Domini, 1634, the Governour tooke possession of the place, and named the Towne Saint Maries.

There was an occasion that much facilitated their treaty with these Indians, which was this: The Sasquehanocks (a warlike people that inhabite between Chesopeack bay, and Delaware bay) did usually make warres, and incursions upon the neighbouring Indians, partly for superiority, partly for to get their Women, and what other purchase they could meet with, which these Indians of Yacomaco fearing, had the yeere before our arrivall there, made a resolution, for their safety, to remove themselves higher into the Countrey where it was more populous, and many of them were gone thither before the English arrived.

Three dayes after their comming to Yoacomaco the Arke with the two Pinaces arrived there. The Indians much wondred to see such ships, and at the thundering of the Ordnance when they came to an Anchor.

The next day they began to prepare for their houses, and first of all a Court of Guard, and a Store-house; in the meane time they lay aboard the ship: They had not beene there many dayes before Sir John Harvie the governor of Virginia came thither to visit them; Also some Indian Werowancest and many other Indians from severall parts came to see them, amongst others the Warowance of Patuxent came to visit the Governour, and being brought into the great Cabin of the ship, was placed betweene the Governour of

they should goe about to kill me, if I had but so much breath as to speake; I would command the people, not to revenge my death, for I know they would not doe such a thing, except it were through mine owne default."

They brought thither with them some store of Indian Corne, from the Barbados, which at their first arrivall they began to use (thinking fit to reserve their English provision of Meale and Oatemeale) and the Indian women seeing their servants to bee unacquainted with the manner of dressing it, would make bread thereof for them, and teach them how to doe the like: They found also the countrey well stored with Corne (which they bought with truck, such as there is desired, the Natives having no knowledge of the use of money) whereof they sold them such plenty, as that they sent 1000 bushells of it to New England, to provide them some salt fish, and other commodities which they wanted.

During the time that the Indians staid by the English at Yoacomaco, they went dayly to hunt with them for Deere and Turkies, wherof some they gave them for Presents, and the meaner sort would sell them to them, for knives, beades and the like: Also of Fish, the natives brought them great store, and in all things dealt very friendly with them; their women and children came very frequently amongst them, which was a certaine signe of their confidence of them, it being found by experience, that they never attempt any ill, where the women are, or may be in danger.

Their comming thus to seate upon an Indian Towne, where they found ground cleered to their hands, gave them opportunity (although they came late in the yeere) to plant some Corne, and to make them gardens, which they sowed with English seeds of all sorts, and they prospered exceeding well. They also made what haste they could to finish their houses; but before they could accomplish all these things, one Captaine Cleyborne (who had a desire to appropriate the trade of those partes to himselfe) began to cast out words amongst the Indians, saying, That those of Yoacomaco were Spaniards and his enemies; and by this meanes endeavoured to alienate the mindes of the Natives from them, so that they did not receive them so friendly as formerly they had done. This caused them to lay aside all other workes, and to finish their Fort, which they did within the space of one moneth; where they mounted some Ordnance, and furnished it with some murtherers, and such other meanes of defence as they thought fit for their safeties: which being done, they proceeded with their Houses and finished them, with convenient accommodations belonging thereto: And although they had thus put themselves in safety, yet they ceased not to procure to put these jealousies out of the Natives minds, by treating and using them in the most courteous manner they could, and at last prevailed therin, and settled a very firme peace and friendship with them. They procured from Virginia, Hogges, Poultry, and some Cowes, and some male cattell, which hath given them a foundation for breed and increase; and whoso desires it, may furnish himselfe with store of Cattell from thence, but the hogges and Poultry are already increased in Maryland, to a great stocke, sufficient to serve the Colonie very plentifully. They have also set up a Water-mill for the grinding of Corne, adjoining to the Towne.

Thus within the space of sixe moneths, was laid the foundation of the Colonie in Maryland; and whosoever intends now to goe thither, shall finde the way so troden, that hee may proceed with much more ease and confidence then these first adventurers could, who were ignorant both of Place, People, and all things else, and could expect to find nothing but what nature produced: besides, they could not reason but thinke, the Natives would oppose them; whereas now the Countrey is discovered, and friendship with the Natives is assured, houses built, and many other accommodation, as Cattell, Hogges, Poultry, Fruits and the like brought thither from England, Virginea, and other places, which are usefull, both for profit and Pleasure: and without boasting it may be said, that this Colony hath arrived to more in sixe moneths, then Virginia did in as many yeeres. If any man say, they are beholding to Virginea for so speedy a supply of many of those things which they of Virginia were forced to fetch from England and other remote places, they will confesse it, and acknowledge themselves glad that Virginea is so neere a neighbour, and that it is so well stored of all necessaries for to make those parts happy, and the people to live as plentifully as in any other part of the world, only they with that they would be content their neighbours might live in peace by them, and then no doubt they should find a great comfort each in other.

**NEWS AND NOTES FROM**  
**The Prince George's County Historical Society**

Vol. XII, no. 4 April 1984

The St. George's Day Dinner

The Prince George's County Historical Society will celebrate Maryland's 350th year--and the 288th anniversary of our county's founding--at the annual St. George's Day Dinner on Monday, April 23. This year's dinner will be held in the Grand Ballroom of the University of Maryland Student Union and will be cosponsored by the Maryland Heritage Committee of Prince George's County and the Hall of Fame. A most impressive program has been arranged.

In keeping with the theme throughout the state of saving the Chesapeake Bay, our after-dinner speaker will be Capt. Alex Kellam, a retired skipjack captain, who will entertain with stories, songs, and folklore of the Bay. The Society will also present the annual St. George's Day Awards, honoring individuals and organizations for noteworthy accomplishments in the preservation of our county's heritage. The Hall of Fame of Prince George's County will induct Governor Robert Bowie, of Mattaponi and Nottingham, with the unveiling of a portrait which will be placed in the courthouse in Upper Marlboro.

A pre-dinner reception will begin at 6:30 p.m. and the dinner at 7:30 p.m. Invitations, with complete details and a reservation card, will be mailed to all members very soon. Please plan to be with us for this most important and historic occasion, honoring our state's 350th anniversary. Family and friends are most welcome. For further information call the Society offices at 779-2313 or President Frederick S. De Marr at 277-0711.

Toleration Day Tours: Prince George's Churches: April 28

In 1649 the Maryland General Assembly became the first in America to guarantee its citizens freedom of religion. In honor of this important event, the Prince George's Historical and Cultural Trust will sponsor open-house at a number of the county's churches on Saturday, April 28. There will be no charge, and docents will be present at each church to inform visitors of the church's history and architecture. The hours will be from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Brochures and maps will be available at the first church you visit.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
**ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696**

A complete list of churches on the tour will appear in the newspapers. Among the churches already confirmed as participating are: Addison Chapel, Seat Pleasant; Christ Church, Accokeek; Holy Family, Mitchellville; Holy Rosary, Rosaryville; Hyattsville Presbyterian; St. Barnabas, Leeland; St. Ignatius Oxon Hill; St. John's, Beltsville; St. John's, Broad Creek; St. Mark's United Methodist, Laurel; St. Mary's, Piscataway; St. Mary's of the Assumption, Upper Marlboro; St. Paul's, Baden; St. Thomas, Croom; Trinity, Upper Marlboro; and St. Barnabas, Oxon Hill.

Please note: the actual anniversary of Toleration Day is April 21, and will be celebrated with bell-ringing across the county. The tour and open house will be on April 28.

#### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

		Sponsor
Carolyn K. Headlee	College Park	F. De Marr
James D. Munson	Arlington, Va.	F. De Marr
Gertrude M. Falcone	Hyattsville	L. Tatspaugh
Mr & Mrs: Emanuel Brancato	Clarksville	F. De Marr
Mr & Mrs Walter J. Flynn	Riverdale	C. Flynn
Jack & Maureen Weaver	Accokeek	F. De Marr
Dr & Mrs. Daniel K. Haapala	Silver Spring	F. De Marr
John D. Biggs	Chevy Chase	F. De Marr

We are most proud to announce new life members: Anath and Margaret Bright, College Park

#### Rhoda Christmas Bowling, 1901-1984

We regret to inform the membership of the death in February of Rhoda Christmas Bowling a charter member of this society. Mrs. Bowling raised, broke, and trained race horses, and is the last of a famous racing family of four brothers and one sister. She lived at the historic home Bellefields, near Croom. She is survived by nieces and nephews and was buried at St. Thomas Church, Croom, next to her husband, John D. Bowling. The officers of the Society extend their sympathies to the family.

#### Events of Note in April

April 8: Dr. Emanuel Raymond Lewis speaks on "Seacost Fortifications" at Fort Washington, 2 p.m. Slides. 292-2112.

April 28: Hyattsville 98th anniversary celebration, Magruder Park.

April 28: Farm Day at National Colonial Farm, Accokeek. Rain date is April 29. 301-283-2113. No admission fee.

April 28-29: Civil War encampment at Mary Surratt House, noon to 4 p.m. Phone 868-1121

No monthly meeting in April. Next meeting: Saturday, May 12.

#### Upper Marlboro: A Great Town

Cambridge, Maryland--the seat of Dorchester County, on the Eastern Shore--is a lovely town. It has been the home of many distinguished Marylanders, and has a rich and interesting history. In the 1850s, however, the press in Cambridge began making a most extravagant claim: that no other town in Maryland could boast as many illustrious citizens as she. Now those of us in Prince George's County know that that honor truly belongs to Upper Marlboro. On January 27, 1858, the editor of the Planters'

Advocate, one of Upper Marlboro's newspapers, took it upon himself to put the press of Cambridge in its place and set the record straight. His rebuttal was entitled "A Great Town."

"... Upper Marlboro furnished, within a few years past, Governor PRATT, a resident of this village--member of the House of Delegates, State Senator, Governor and U.S. Senator successively. REVERDY JOHNSON [U.S. Senator] began his career in this village, as did likewise the Hon. JOHN M.S. CAUSIN. The late Chancellor [John] JOHNSON first started as a lawyer and member of the Upper Marlboro bar, where he practiced many years, and resided in our village. At this time--the hon. WILLIAM H. TUCK (who was also a Major of the Militia at the period of his election) is one of the Judges of the Court of Appeals— temporarily since his election living in Annapolis, but claiming his residence and voting here. Hon. THOMAS F. BOWIE is in the U.S. Congress--also a General of our State Militia. JOHN B. BROOKE in the State Senate is from this village, and a full Colonel of the 17th. Col. BROOKE succeeded Major. S.H. BERRY, of the 17th, our late worthy State Senator, EDWARD W. BELT--Major in the 35th--in the House of Delegates.

We have less than 80 voters in our village, all told, so don't brag quite so fast, Mr. Herold, even if you are not disposed to haul down your flag. The above are a pretty sharp team, and we have several more of the same sort left in our Little Town, who would adorn any situation to which they might be called--modest men, quietly pursuing the various avocations of life--several of whom have already 'done the State some service'--Col. DIGGES, HORATIO C. SCOTT, Esq., WILLIAM PINKNEY BROOKE, Esq., each of our town, and Col. THOMAS W. CLAGETT, formerly residing here, but now of Keokuk, Iowa, have each served creditably in the House of Delegates, and the last named is now upon the bench as Circuit Judge in Iowa...."

#### Tobacco Auctions in Upper Marlboro

The 1983 crop of Southern Maryland tobacco is now being auctioned at the warehouses in Upper Marlboro. Those members of the society who have never witnessed the tobacco auctions are encouraged to pay a visit in this, the 350th year of the old tobacco colony of Maryland. There is no charge. The auctions at the Edelen Brothers Warehouse will go on through the end of April. Call 627-3550 for details. Hours: 9 a.m. to noon, certain weekdays.

#### A Letter to the Membership from the President

It has been my privilege to serve as President of the Prince George's County Historical Society since October 1972. My tenure is just three years less than the total service of my eight distinguished predecessors in this office.

At this point in time, for personal reasons and for the future development of our organization, I feel that a change in administration is long overdue. Therefore, I have submitted my resignation to the Board of Directors, to be effective on April 1, 1984.

I wish to express to my colleagues on the Board of Directors and to the general membership deep appreciation for their encouragement, interest, and support over the years. May the Society continue to grow in its efforts to serve the people of Prince George's County through the preservation and dissemination of their precious heritage.

Sincerely yours,  
Frederick S. De Marr

#### A Word of Appreciation from the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors, meeting on March 17 at Riversdale, voted to express most grateful appreciation to Frederick S. De Marr for his twelve years of devoted service as President of the Prince George's County Historical Society. Under his leadership, many new programs were instituted: the St. George's Day Dinner, the St. George's Day Awards, the monthly newsletter, the library and the collections, the tour schedule, and the series of publications which have included the Hopkins atlas, Van Horn's history of the county, and the Index to the registers of historic churches. He has spoken to numerous groups on our county's history, answered hundreds--perhaps thousands--of questions on county history from newspaper reporters, school children, businessmen, and curious citizens. He represented the Society on the Prince George's Historic and Cultural Trust and on the Citizens Advisory Committee formulating the Historic Sites and Districts Plan. The development of the Society in the past twelve years has been most impressive, and it is due largely to the inspiration and leadership and hard work of President Frederick S. De Marr.

The Society's vice president, John Giannetti, will assume the presidency on April 1. John is no stranger to members of this society: he has worked as program chairman for several years and has been active in numerous civic and historical causes. He led the fight to save the George Washington House in Bladensburg and has served as chairman of the county's Historical and Cultural Trust.

The Society is most fortunate that Fred De Marr will continue to work with the library and collections at Riversdale. He has promised to do more writing on county history, something his schedule as president would not permit. On behalf of the entire Society, we express our thanks to Fred for all of his efforts, and look forward to his continued service in new capacities.

The Prince George's County Historical Society, P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20737. Dues \$5.00 per year. Alan Virta, Editor.

## **NEWS AND NOTES FROM The Prince George's County, Historical Society**

Vol XII, no- 5 May 1984

### The Spring Schedule: Bus Tour in June; No Meeting in May

Because there is already so much going on of a historical nature in May, the Prince George's County Historical Society will not hold a regular meeting this month. We encourage you to get outdoors, enjoy the Spring weather, and take part in some of the historical activities already on the calendar.

On the second Saturday in June--June 9--the Society will conduct a bus tour to St. Mary's City, the 17th-century capital of Maryland and the focus of the state's 350th anniversary celebrations. If you have not yet seen the new visitors' center or the many new historical and archeological exhibits, this will be a grand opportunity to do so. A separate sheet with full details and a reservation form accompanies this newsletter.

Be sure not to forget the Festival of Flight on June 16 in Bladensburg. This will be Prince George's County's big public celebration of Maryland's 350th year, as well as the commemoration of the 200th anniversary of America's first balloon flight there. Details follow in this issue of News and Notes.

### The Society Honors Frederick S. De Marr

The Society's library and collections--so ably assembled over the past several years by retiring president Frederick S. De Marr, will be named in his honor as the Frederick S. De Marr Library of County History. This was one of the many tributes paid to our retiring president at the Society's St. George's Day Dinner on April 23. A plaster casting of the bronze plaque that will be placed at the entrance to the library was presented to Fred by Paul Lanham, who has been the Society's immediate past president during Fred's twelve years of service. Fred was also presented an engraved desk set as a personal memento of his presidency.

Although Fred has retired from the presidency of this organization, his service to it has by no means come to an end. He will continue to work in the library and continue the task of assembling our superb collection on county history.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23,1696**

## The Historical Calendar: Much to do!

May 6 Takoma Park House Tour, 1-5:30 p.m. Price of \$4.00 includes a bus. Phone: 270-8247. Begin at Municipal Bldg.

May 12-13 Wildlife 84: 30 painters and carvers of wildlife art at St. Barnabas Church, Leeland, on Oak Grove Road. Hours: 10 to 7 Sat.; noon to 5 Sun. Admissions \$2 adults, \$1 for children. Phone: 249-9671 or 249-5305. Great show!

May 12 Laurel Main Street Festival, noon to 5 P.m. Includes free train rides from the B&O station, now 100 years old.

May 12 Marlboro Day in Upper Marlboro. Parade, exhibits, food, entertainment.

May 20 Bowie Heritage Day at the Belair mansion, 2 to 5 p.m. Civil War battle, historical exhibits, and there will be horses at the stables.

Elsewhere: Historic Montgomery County House Tour May 5-6 (call 762-1492): Capitol Hill House Tour May 13, (call 543-8565); Frederick House Tour May 20 (call 301-663-0011).

## The St. George's Day Dinner and Awards, 1984

The largest crowd ever to attend a St. George's Day dinner gathered on April 23 to witness the presentation of this year's St. George's Day Awards. The winners were:

The Tanta-Cove Garden Club of Fort Washington, represented by their president, Pauline Collins, for the publication of their history of Southern Prince George's County, entitled Along the Potomac Shore-in Prince George's County, and for their efforts toward the creation of a Broad Creek historic district.

The National Quilting Association: represented by former president Alice Skarda, for their efforts in the renaissance of the art of quilting manifested by many displays and demonstrations at our historic sites, and for their efforts in the restoration and interpretation of Marietta, which serves as their national headquarters.

Prince George's Magazine, represented by editor Dennis Reilly, for its emphasis on our historical and cultural heritage and promotion of the positive image of Prince George's County.

Oxon Hill-Manor Foundation, represented by president Ingrid Britt, which, as a volunteer organization, has exerted herculean efforts in the preservation and interpretation of Oxon Hill Manor, whose history has been a part of the fabric of this county for almost three hundred years.

President John Giannetti presented the awards on behalf of the Society. The Hall of Fame of Prince George's County also made an induction: Governor Robert Bowie (1750-1818), of Mattaponi. Among our guests at the dinner were County Executive Parris Glendening and Comptroller Louis Goldstein. The dinner also celebrated Maryland's 350th anniversary and was co-hosted by the Maryland Heritage Committee of Prince George's County.

## A Frontier Parish...

In 1878 the religious historian William Stevens Perry, D.D., published a multi-volume work entitled Historical Collections Relating to the American Colonial Church. Volume 4 of that work was devoted to the Anglican Church in Maryland and Delaware, and within its covers are published dozens of contemporary documents--chiefly letters and reports--describing the state of the church in those colonies. Perry offers little if any commentary to accompany the text, but lets the documents speak for

themselves. Unfortunately, he did not publish the source of each document reproduced, so we cannot say where the originals are today. Nevertheless, the work is quite a valuable one, offering as it does a glimpse at the Anglican Church in colonial Maryland as its Contemporaries saw it.

Among the documents reproduced are several relating to colonial Prince George's County and the Anglican Church here. Perhaps the most interesting among these are questionnaires completed in 1724 by the rectors of Prince George's County's parishes describing their parishes. The county was not quite thirty years old then and still the frontier and these reports certainly reflect that. We publish below the report of John Fraser, rector of King George's Parish, Prince George's County. King George's was the county's Potomac River parish. It began at the county line (dividing Charles from Prince George's) and extended up the Potomac River to the limits of settlement.

King George Parish, in Prince George's County,  
On Potomack River, Maryland

How long is it since you went over to the Plantations as a Missionary?

23 years last Novr. I arrived in Virginia.

Have you had 'any other Church, before you came to that, which you now possess; and if you had, what Church was it, and how long have you been removed?

I served Dr. Geo. Chalmers, rector of Hood, in the diocess of Durham & County of Northumb., in the capacity of a curate, annis 1697, 1698, 1699; the 1st four years after my arrival into Virginia, I was hired by the Parishioners, as the custom then was; obtained a permit from Govr. Nicholson, removed into Maryland, and was inducted into Durham & Portobacco Parishes, in Charles county.

Have you been duly Licensed by the Bishop of London to officiate as a Missionary, in the Government where you now are?

Upon recommendation of the clergy of the Deanery of Banborough and the peculiars of the Dean & chapter of Durham, dated June 4th, 1700, to the then Bishop of London, & had License as a Missionary, dated at Fulham House, Augt. 29, anno 1700, for Virginia.

How long have you been Inducted into your Living?

I was inducted into this parish March 15th, 1709-10. The only motive of my removal was my-wife's real Estate being in this Parish, & am the first that ever was inducted into this parish.

Are you ordinarily resident in the Parish to which you have been Inducted?

I am ordinarily resident.

Of what extent is your Parish, and how many Families are there in it?

A frontier parish about 70 miles inhabited, the breadth about 4 miles for the lower 15 miles, 10 miles in breadth for the next 24 miles, and about 20 miles in breadth for the residue, about 1200 taxables & near 400 families.

Are there any Infidels, bond or free, within your Parish; and what means are used for their conversion?

The Bond slaves are negroes & mullatos, of wch. sort I have baptized a great many, both infants, but particularly of adults. They frequent my churches ordinarily, & say their Catechism. The free are native Indians, who are aversed to Christianity.

How oft is Divine Service performed in your Church? And what proportion of the Parishioners attend it?

Sundays & some holidays; more were & still are attempted, but to no great effect; frequently a large auditory in both churches.

How oft is the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper administered? And what is the usual number of Communicants?

8 times a year; sometimes about 50, sometimes about 70 Communicants in each place.

At what times do you Catechise the Youth of your Parish?

From Easter to Michaelmas.

Are all things duly disposed and provided in the Church, for the decent and orderly performance of Divine Service?

My Parish church in its infancy was twice built with timber of all (word illegible) the half of a poll to a reader; the other half was not sufficient to pay the workmen & keep the wooden churches in repair, & lately built a new church with brick from the ground to the great expences of the Parishioners; not yet able to purchase Glass for window plate, &c.

Of what value is your Living in sterling money, and how does it arise?

The Trade is so uncertain that it is impossible to give a Just account of the true value of it in sterling money.

Have you a House and Glebe? Is your Glebe in Lease, or Let by the Year? Or is it occupied by yourself?

I have a Glebe, not possessed by myself but let by the year, and no house.

Is due care taken to preserve your House in good repair? And at whose expense is it done?

Ut supra.

Have you more Cures than one? If you have, what are they? And in what manner served?

One cure only; served thus, 3 Sundays I preach at my Parish church the 4th at a chapel, and one week day every month I preach and catechise in the new settlements, and on another week day from Easter to Michaelmas as I preach, in a 4th place in another corner of my Parish, both which places are inconvenient to either church or chapel.

Have you in your Parish any public School for the instruction of Youth? If you have, is it endowed? And who is the Master?

Private schools only.

Have, you a Parochial Library? If you have, are the Books preserved and kept in good condition? Have you any particular rules and orders for the preserving of them: Are those rules and orders duly observed?

No, not one Book. This parish was but newly seated when Dr. Bray was in this Governmt.

Annapolis., May 28, 1724. J. FRASER

A few words of explanation and commentary are in order.

John Fraser's parish church was St. John's at Broad Creek, "lately built." It stood on the site of the present-day St. John's, on Livingston Road in the heart of the proposed Broad Creek historic district. "Present-day" is hardly the correct adjective to describe St. John's church, however, for it was built to replace Mr. Fraser's church in 1766.

The chapel Fraser refers to was probably Christ Church at Accokeek; the "new settlements" probably referred to the Anacostia River settlements; and the other "corner of my parish" .was very likely Rock Creek. The people of the new settlements. (if we have correctly identified them) worshipped in a log

chapel built on land donated by Col. John Addison. This was known as Addison's Chapel. The beautiful little brick church on Addison Road, Seat Pleasant, is a successor to that much older chapel, and stands on the same site. We must admit, however, that this identification of Mr. Fraser's vague references is guesswork. The chapel could very well be Addison's Chapel; the new settlements the settlements on Rock Creek; and the comer of the parish, Accokeek.

Mr. Fraser's wife was Anne Blizzard, who had inherited two estates, St. James on Piscataway Creek and Blue Plains or the Potomac River. Mr. Fraser was thus well situated and thus had no need of a parish house. And although King George's Parish had not a book, the other two parishes of Prince George's County did. St. Paul's Parish, along the Patuxent River in the southern section of the county, had a fine parochial library, and Queen Anne Parish, north of that, relied on its rector's personal collection.

The Rev. John Fraser died on October 1, 1742. He had served King George's Parish for thirty-two years. His place is filled today by the Rev. John Baldwin.

### Stones and Bones: Cemetery Records of Prince George's County

The Prince George's County Genealogical Society has just published a most important reference tool, a listing of the cemetery records of this county. Stones and Bones is published in hardcover, with 674 pages, and thousands of entries. Special pre-publication price until June 1 is \$22.00 (Maryland residents add \$1.10 tax). Order from the Genealogical Society at P.O. Box 819-A, Bowie, Md. 20715. No historian or genealogist of this county should be without this book! After June 1, price is \$28.00.

### The Festival of Flight June 16

Brightly colored hot-air balloons will fill the skies at a "Festival of Flight," to be sponsored by the Maryland Heritage Committee of Prince George's County on Saturday, June 16, 1984, at the flood plain area in Bladensburg. The festival will commemorate Maryland's 350th anniversary and celebrate America's first balloon flight, which occurred near Bladensburg on June 17, 1784. The day will begin with a large parade down Route 450. Following the parade, an astronaut, dignitaries, and Peter Carnes, who is a descendant of the first balloonist of the same name, will take part in a dedication ceremony. The master of ceremonies will be Walt Starling, a local air traffic reporter who flies out of the historic College Park Airport. Thomas Crouch, one of the curators at the Air and Space Museum in Washington, will serve as the guest speaker. The festival will feature thirteen hot air balloons tethered for rides, at a fee of five dollars per person per ride; living encampments of the Piscataway Indian tribe; Colonial militia and Union and Confederate army encampments; Fort Washington uniform display; a NASA exhibit featuring the model of the space shuttle and a 200-million year old moon rock; the Air and Space Museum "200 Years of Flight" exhibit; a flyover by the U.S. Air Force; a display of paintings of historic sites in Maryland; mini-balloons fashioned after the Maryland 350 Balloon; an exhibit of old coins representing the history of Prince George's County; an art program for children of all ages; a dramatization and exhibit representing contributions of black citizens to Maryland and Prince George's County; musical programs, crafts, a commemorative quilt, and historic house tours. Another feature at the ceremony site will be a postal pictorial cancellation station, which will issue the first such cancellation in the history of the Bladensburg post office. In addition, the Prince George's Post, which is in its fifty-second year of operations will hold an open house at the historic George Washington House (the newspaper's new home), where the Prince George's Artists' Association will sponsor a painting show. The U.S. Air Force orientation van, a forty-five seat theater featuring a fifteen minute film on the history of aviation, will also be located at the tavern, while a forty minute film, "To Fly," will be shown at the Prince George's Publick Playhouse (the Cheverly theater). In addition to the activities at the main ceremony site, the Bladensburg Marina, and the George Washington House, a shuttle bus will provide transportation to festivities at the historic College Park Airport where antique planes, films, a museum, and aviation contests will be featured. The Prince George's Jaycees, who are

sponsoring a commemorative hot-air balloon lapel pin, are joined by over forty-three other organizations and agencies which are supporting this event. This festival will be one of the largest 350th celebrations in the state.

--From a release by the committee

Sounds like a grand time for both children and adults!

A contemporary description of Peter Carnes' first balloon ascent near Bladensburg was printed in the June 1983 issue of News and Notes.



NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince George's County Historical  
Society**

Vol. XII, no. 6 June 1984

The Beggar's Opera: June 8 and 10

The first opera to be performed with orchestra in the United States was presented in Upper Marlboro, Maryland, in 1752. On June 8 and 10, 1984, the Prince George's Civic Opera will celebrate Maryland's 350th anniversary by recreating that event--with a presentation of *The Beggar's Opera*, by John Gay. Originally performed by the Murray Kean Company of Comedians in Upper Marlboro's Assembly Room, the 1984 production will be offered at the Queen Anne Theater on the campus of Prince George's Community College, Largo. The performance on Friday evening, June 6, will begin at 8 p.m.; the performance on Sunday, June 10, will be at 5:00 in the afternoon.

For more information call 699-2459 or 337-1817.

Living History Day Camp

The Living History Day Camp will be offered again this year by the Park and Planning Commission at Riversdale, the Calvert Mansion in Riverdale. Designed for boys and girls entering the 4th through 6th grades, the camp focuses on everyday living of the colonial period. Activities include candlemaking, quilting, cooking, marbled paper, fieldtrips, roleplaying, and more, with a special emphasis on Maryland lifestyles. The enrollment cost is \$38.00 per session; four sessions will be offered. The dates: July 9-13, July 16-20, July 23-27, and July 30-August 3. For more information call 445-4500

Festival of Flight; and Other Activities

A reminder: the Festival of Flight--celebrating the 200th anniversary of Peter Carnes' pioneer balloon ascension at Bladensburg (as well as Maryland's 350th anniversary) will be held at Bladensburg on Saturday, June 16. There will be no meeting of the Society in June; the regular meeting schedule resumes on September 8. The Fall luncheon at Rosborough Inn will be October 6, There are quite few new members of the Society--their names will be published next month. Enjoy the summer!

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE 'S DAY, APR I L 23, 1696**

## The Business Climate of Prince George's County

This Year the Prince George's Chamber of Commerce celebrates its 60th anniversary. Founded in 1924, the chamber represents hundreds of businesses throughout the county, from the smallest shops to the largest concerns. The Historical Society salutes the Chamber in this anniversary-year by presenting below a review of the business climate in Prince George's County many years ago-- before the Chamber was founded. The following synopsis of business in Prince George's County is taken from the Seventeenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics and Information of Maryland for the Year 1908.

### Prince George County

Prince George, like Montgomery County, adjoins the District of Columbia, and also receives vast advantage from that proximity. Washington furnishes a market for its food products, and a large number of people doing business in the city or holding government positions have built houses and made their homes in the county. Its area is 480 square miles, and its population in 1900 Was 29,898. Along the Washington branch of the Baltimore and Ohio road there is a succession of suburban towns.

The county is bounded on the west by the Potomac River, on the east by the Patuxent. Montgomery, Howard, Anne Arundel, Charles and Calvert Counties and the District of Columbia surround it.

There are 73 white and 39 colored schools in the county. At Upper Marlboro, the county seat, there is an academy.

There are 2,374 farms in the county, producing tobacco, corn, wheat and vegetables, the estimated value of the crops for 1905 being \$1,500,000, and giving employment to (including owners and tenants) at least 5,000 persons. Farm lands sell from \$4 to \$30 per acre.

The county tax rate in 1908 was \$1.08 per hundred. In some of the towns and election districts of the county the sale of liquor is prohibited.

Underlying the region near Marlboro, there are vast marl beds, which may become valuable. The Patuxent marshes are famous for wild fowl.

There are a number of railroads in Prince George. The Washington branch of the Baltimore and Ohio crosses the upper section. Across the centre of the county is the Pennsylvania, with a branch from Bowie to the southern boundary [the Pope's Creek line]. The Washington, Potomac and Chesapeake leads from Brandywine, down through Charles and St. Mary's. The Chesapeake Beach road runs across the county from Washington through Marlboro, to Patuxent and on to the bay. From Laurel to Washington there is an electric road [the streetcar].

The Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis electric road passes across the northern part of the county. Steamboats plying along the Patuxent River give communication to the eastern part of the county with Baltimore.

The incorporated towns in the county are Laurel, Hyattsville, Bladensburg, Upper Marlboro and Tacoma Park. Those that are not incorporated are Bowie, Berwyn, Clinton, Brandywine, Forestville, and Woodville [Aquasco].

The surface of the county is diversified and is traversed by numerous streams. The soil is particularly favorable to the cultivation of tobacco, corn, wheat, vegetables and fruit.

Iron and cotton goods are the principal manufactured products of the county.

### Manufactures

The total number of manufacturing establishments in the county is estimated at 60, the greater number of them being small, employing 1 or 2 men, though it is estimated that the manufacturing products of the county are worth about \$573,000, including custom and repairs, but the United States census for 1905 places the figures for the larger manufactures as follows, excluding all producing less than \$500 worth of products:

Number of establishments, 42.

Capital invested, \$783,022.

Proprietors and firm members, 45.

Salaried officials, 21; salaries \$15,397.

Average number of wage-earners and wages--men, 16 years and over, 186--wages, \$69,536; women, 16 years and over, 111--wages, \$23,050.

Miscellaneous expenses, 25,385

Cost of materials used, \$173,138.

Value of products, \$359,747.

In 1830 or thereabouts, the Patuxent Manufacturing Company was incorporated, and started the present cotton mills at Laurel, known as the Laurel Factory. This industry has continued ever since and is the principal manufacturing establishment of the county, Laurel cotton goods being known all over the world.

The only iron works now in operation in rural Maryland is the Muirkirk Furnace, on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, at Muirkirk, in this county. It was erected in 1847, and was modeled after a famous furnace at Muirkirk, Scotland. [This was near Beltsville.]

The following brief list includes other manufactures in Prince George's County:

Printing and Publishing -The "Laurel Democrat," Laurel; the "Hyattsville Independent," Hyattsville. Number of employes, 7; value of total product, \$7,000; capital invested, \$6,00. Also the "Marlboro Gazette," "Marlboro Times [Sydney Mudd's paper]," "Prince George Enquirer," Upper Marlboro.

Iron--Muirkirk Furnace, Muirkirk; Montrose Iron Works, Laurel. Number of employes, 601 value of total product, \$95,000; capital invested, \$60,000; amount paid annually in wages, \$16,000.

Flour and Grist Mill Products--Gibbons & Duvaughn. Croom; Avondale-Mills, Laurel.- Number of employes, 4; value of total product, \$10,400; capital invested, \$12,500; amount paid annually in wages, \$1,200. Also H. Morton Bowen, Aquasco; Mrs. Georgia Boswell, Brandwine; John Charles, Charleston; Mrs. Sallie Marbury, Croom; John C. Dixon, Friendly; Griffith Mill, Laurel; Charles W. Randall, Forestville; Charles H. Walker, Brightseat [the old Walker Mill]; James T. Sedgwick, Upper Marlboro.

Laurel Cotton Mills, cotton goods; E. Rosenfeld & Company, night robes, Laurel. Simms Brothers, cigars, Beltsville; Gustav H. Dahler, cigars, Bladensburg. Number of employes, 216; value of total product, \$274,500; capital invested, \$22,000; amount paid annually in wages, \$78,440.

Carriages and Wagons--John H. Wooten, Laurel.

Brick and Tile--Gilbert Moyers, Bladensburg; Rauser Brothers, Friendly; Benj. F. Stephen, Riverdale.

Lumber and Timber Products--John W. Beale, Accokeek; J.A. Trueman, John W. Young, Aquasco; Turner & Orme, Baden; Benj. C. Hicks, James M. Knowles, J.B. Knowles & Brother, Bowie; Rubin F. Soper, Cheltenham; Clarence Hawkins, T.B.; Gibbons & Duvaughn, Croom; Miller & Sons, Tippet; Jenkins & Butler, R.H. Perrie, Westwood; Charles H. Walker, Brightseat.

Photography--Ray Peckham, Upper Marlboro.

Saddlery and Harness--John H. Treband, Upper Marlboro; F.M. Baker, Laurel.

The territory of Prince George does not include any oyster beds, and the fisheries, which are in the Patuxent and Potomac, are not extensive. About 100 persons are employed by them and \$11,000 are invested in boats and apparatus. The number of boats is 34. The annual catch is about \$10,000 in value and in weight about 1,000,000 pounds, including 860,000 pounds of alewives and 65,000 pounds of shad. Along the Patuxent River there are marshes to which multitudes of wild fowl resort, including reed birds, ortolan, ducks, etc., and the hunting of them gives employment to many boatmen and hunters.

The forgoing list was a list of manufacturers only, and it omits, of course, the many retail and service establishments then in operation in the county--from the Laurel Department Store, to Bladensburg's Palo Alto Tavern, to the general store in Piscataway. Laurel, one can infer from the list, was our largest (and only true) manufacturing town. The night robe factory and cotton mills there employed most of the manufacturing workers in the county. Statistics on employees and wages, etc., presented in these lists refer to all the concerns listed previously in the paragraph, not just the preceding business.

Finally, we would be most remiss if we did not add that the new president of the Prince George's Chamber of Commerce is Kathy Giannetti, whose husband, John, is president of this society.

--Alan Virta

### Prince George's Bounty

The high school journalism students at Queen Anne School, at Leeland, have recently produced a remarkable book entitled Prince George's Bounty--a collection of local lore, interviews, family traditions, and ghost stories much like the famous Foxfire books. The book was a project for Maryland's 350th anniversary and offers an interesting glimpse at a Prince George's County that once was--the tobacco culture, the Patuxent River, and many of the details of days gone by, from bootlegging to jousting tournaments, Prince George's Bounty contains 108 pages, softbound, and is illustrated with photos and drawings. Order from Queen Anne School, 14111 Oak Grove Road, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20772. Price: \$4.00.

NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince George's County Historical Society**

Vol, XII, no. 7-8 July-Aug. 1984

An Excursion on the Pope's Creek Line

The first passenger train in over thirty years to travel the historic Pope's Creel: line will do so on Saturday, August 18, 1984, on a trip sponsored by the Washington and Baltimore chapters of the National Railway Historical Society. Members and friends of the Prince George's County Historical Society are invited to participate in this journey through Southern Maryland railroad history.

The history of the Pope's Creek Line has been recounted several times in News and Notes; suffice it to say here that it was built between 1868 and 1872 to link Southern Maryland to the city of Baltimore. The line passes through Bowie, Upper Marlboro and Brandywine in Prince George's County and Waldorf and LaPlata in Charles. It terminates now at Morgantown. It has been a freight line only for more than thirty years.

The trip on August 18 leaves Washington's Union Station at 8:35 a.m.; picks up at New Carrollton Amtrack station at 8:45; then heads to BWI Airport station (9:05 a.m.) and Baltimore's Penn Station (9:15 a.m.). It then heads south again, and at Bowie switches over to the Pope's Creek line to Southern Maryland. It will arrive at Morgantown at 12:10. There will be a tour of the PEPCO power plant at Morgantown, and the train will depart at 2:15 p.m. It will arrive again at New Carrollton at 5:45 p.m., after first discharging passengers at BWI and the Baltimore Penn Station.

Capacity of the trains is limited. All seats will be reserved. Prices from Washington or New Carrollton are \$38.00 for adults and \$35.00 for children (age 5 to 11). Children under 5 who do not occupy a seat ride free. The prices from BWI and Baltimore are \$35.00 and \$32.00. All passengers will be required to sign a PEPCO Liability Release form before detraining at the Morgantown Power Plant. There will be light food service on the cars; an optional box lunch of fried chicken, etc., may be ordered for an additional \$3.75

Order tickets from Baltimore Chapter, NRHS. Address orders, with checks, to the Morgantown Specials Baltimore Chapter of NRHS, P.O. Box 10233, Baltimore, Bid, 21234-0233. Include your phone number.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696**

This will be a leisurely and sentimental Journey through Southern Maryland. When was the last time you took the Pope's Creek Line to Upper Marlboro?

### Festival of Maryland Heritage

The Riversdale Society will sponsor a Festival of Maryland Heritage at Riversdale, the Calvert mansion, on Saturday and Sunday, September 15 and 16. The house will be open for tours and there will be an overnight encampment of Civil War troops on the lawn. The troops will offer military reenactments on both days, and there will be a band on hand to play music of the era.

The centerpiece of the festival will be the unveiling of the old cannon. This seventeenth-century cannon, originally located at St. Mary's City, has been at Riversdale since the 1840s. Time and weather have taken their toll, though, and the cannon has been in need of restoration work for years. The Maryland -Heritage Committee of Prince George's County sent the cannon to a laboratory in Pennsylvania to do the work this summer, and it will be returned for its reinstallation at Riversdale very soon. Ceremonies during the Festival of Maryland Heritage will mark this important event.

Details will follow in the next issue of News and Notes.

### The Society's Fall Schedule

The Prince George's County Historical Society will meet this Fall on September 8, October 6, November 10, and December 15--all Saturday afternoons. The October 6 date will be the annual luncheon meeting at the Rosborough Inn, University of Maryland, and the December 15 date will be the Christmas Party. Details will follow in subsequent newsletters.

### James H. Starkey, Jr.

We regret to inform the membership of the death of James Henry Starkey, Jr., a member of the Prince George's County Historical Society for many years. He succumbed to cancer on July 6 at the age of 68.

James H. Starkey, Jr., was a native of Rockville. He worked for the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture for thirty-six years, retiring in 1973 as Deputy Director for Science and Education. He maintained homes in Mitchellville, Md., and Long Beach Key, Fla.

Besides our own society, Mr. Starkey was a member of the Maryland and Calvert County historical societies, Southern Maryland Society, and Vansville Farmers Club. He is survived by his wife, Lucia F. Starkey, three sons, and nine grandchildren.

Next meeting of the Society-Saturday, September 8--2:00 p.m. At Riversdale

### The Battle of Bladensburg

August 24, 1812, will be the 170th anniversary of the Battle of Bladensburg. One hundred and seventy years ago the United States and Great Britain were at war-the War of 1812. Prince George's County became a battle ground. British ships entered the Chesapeake Bay, sailed up the Patuxent River, and discharged several thousand soldiers at Benedict in Charles County. The soldiers marched north, to Nottingham, and then headed for Upper Marlboro and Long Old Fields (Forestville). They encountered no resistance. Learning that the lower bridges of the Anacostia River had been destroyed, they turned toward Bladensburg, where they knew they could ford the river if necessary. There they finally met the defending American Army, positioned on the heights west of town and the

fields below. But it really was no army at all. The American defenders were militiamen from Maryland and the District of Columbia, poorly trained and ill-equipped. They were no match for the British Army, and they scattered under fire. President Madison and his Cabinet were on hand to witness the debacle, and they fled, too. Opponents of the administration mockingly dubbed the battle the "Bladensburg Races." With the flight of the defenders, Washington was unguarded. The British entered the city and burned its public buildings, including the White House and Capitol.

Not far from Bladensburg, at Riversdale, lived George and Rosalie Calvert and their family. Mrs. Calvert was a native of Belgium, and she wrote home about the battle. We publish below a portion of a letter of hers to her sister, Isabelle Stier van Havre, written on May 6, 1815.

"...We spent last summer in a state of continual alarms; the burning of the public buildings in Washington is the best thing that has happened, as far as we are concerned, in a long time since this has finally settled the question of whether the seat of government should stay there. In future, they will no longer keep trying to change it, and as long as the Union survives, the government will stay in Washington, in spite of the jealousy of Philadelphia, New York, and Baltimore. They're very busy rebuilding the Capitol and all the buildings which were destroyed. I was very calm during the battle of Bladensburg, because the only thing I feared was foragers, but we scarcely suffered at all.

"I must tell you an amusing story which happened to my husband when he was on his way to Philadelphia a month or so afterwards. The carriage was full of all sorts of people; they began to talk about the events which had taken place in that general neighborhood, when one man sitting across from Mr. C. mentioned that Bladensburg would certainly have been burned to the ground if it hadn't been for that damned old Tory George Calvert. You can be sure that they made change his tune in a hurry--the poor fellow was really stupefied! . . ."

The Calverts--descendants of the Lords Baltimore--sat out the Revolution, and so had gained reputations as Loyalists. Even after the passage of thirty years, some evidently still thought of them as Tories, and attributed the sparing of the village to some influence they had with the British. It should be pointed out, however, that the British did not burn Upper Marlboro or Nottingham, also in their path as they marched toward Washington.

Very little else by the Calverts written about the Battle of Bladensburg survives. On October 22, 1814, however, Rosalie included this tantalizing line in a letter to her father: "I am sending enclosed an account of the Battle of Bladensburg written by Caroline [her 14-year old daughter]." Unfortunately, the whereabouts of that account are unknown.

Rosalie Calvert's letters home are preserved in private family collections in Belgium. Our thanks to Susan Pearl for obtaining copies and translating them for us from Rosalie's French.

### In Support of Prince George's County's Heritage

In celebration of Preservation Week in May the Prince George's County Committee of the Maryland Historical Trust presented a \$1,000 check to the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission's History Division. These funds are designated for furnishings in Riversdale, the Calvert mansion. The check was presented by W. Dickerson Charlton, chairman, and Ruth Sippel of the County Committee. Receiving the check were John M. Walton, Jr., of MNCPPC and Ann Ferguson, chair of the Riversdale Society.

Another \$1,000 check was presented to the Maryland Heritage Committee of Prince George's County to be used for a poster/map of county historic sites. The check was presented to Joyce Rumburg, chair of

the Heritage Committee by James G. Boss, past president of the County Committee. The map is being designed and prepared by the cartographic laboratory of the University of as the university's contribution to Prince George's County's celebration of the 350th anniversary; the donated funds will be used to cover printing costs.

Barbara C. Dockendorf

We regret to inform the membership of the death of Barbara C. Dockendorf on May 7. A native of Charlottesville, Va., and a graduate of the old Hyattsville High School, Mrs. Dockendorf worked for the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission. She had resided in University Park since childhood. She was a deacon of the Riverdale Presbyterian Church and a member of the Prince George's County Historical Society. Survivors include her husband, Charles Dockendorf, four children, five grandchildren, and her mother, Marion S. Dunn, of Charlottesville,

New members of the Society will be announced next -month



NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince George's County Historical  
Society**

Vol. XII, no. 9 September 1984

The September Meeting: Victorian Glass

"Victorian Glass of the 1880s and the Gay 90s" will be the topic of discussion at the September meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society, to be held on Saturday, September 8, at Riversdale. Our guest speaker will be Jessie Ward of College Park, an American glass historian who is also a member of our society. Mrs. Ward will discuss the exquisite art glass of the Victorian period, including art glass, Tiffany, art nouveau, and colored pattern glass. She will bring a lighted exhibit to accompany her presentation.

As is the custom, the meeting will begin at 2 p.m. Riversdale, the Calvert mansion, is located at 4811 Riverdale Road in Riverdale. Guests are welcome, and refreshments will be served. Plan to be with us at this first meeting of the new season for a most interesting program.

The Festival of Maryland Heritage: September 15 and 16

Prince George's County's celebration of Maryland's 350th year continues with the Festival of Maryland Heritage, a two-day celebration to be held this month at Riversdale. The festival begins at noon on Saturday, September 15, with the rededication of the ancient Calvert cannon. This cannon, which was brought to Maryland in the seventeenth century, has been recently restored by the Maryland Heritage Committee of Prince George's County, and its reinstallation on the mansion grounds will be the occasion for this ceremony.

Other events during the festival include tours of the house, an exhibit by the National Quilting Association (including the Maryland Bicentennial Quilt), performance by the wind quartet of the Prince George's Philharmonic Orchestra, and premier showing of the film, "The Calvert Cannons." Outdoors there will be Civil War encampments by the First Maryland Regiment and the First Minnesota, military music by the Patuxent Martial Band, and a display of antique firearms by Herb Robinson, an expert gunsmith. Hours are noon to 4 p.m. each day. Admission: \$2.00 for adults, \$1.50 for seniors, and \$1.00 for children (includes refreshments). The festival is sponsored by the Riversdale Historical Society and MNCPPC. Information: call 779-2011.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND  
'ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23,1696**

## Revolutionary Encampment at Montpelier

The Maryland Militia, a recreated company of colonial militia, will be encamped at Montpelier, the Snowden mansion, on September 22 and 23, offering visitors an opportunity to see what life was like at a "flying camp" of the Revolutionary era. There will be demonstrations of drills, guard duty, and general camp life each day between noon and 6 p.m. Montpelier, an 18th century home, is located on Route 197 (the Laurel-Bowie road) less than a mile north of the Baltimore-Washington Parkway. There will be a small fee for parking.

## History of Prince George's County

Prince George's Community College will again offer a non-credit course in county history this fall. The course will begin on Tuesday evening, September 25, at 7 p.m. and meet for five consecutive Tuesday nights. The first meeting will be at the community college campus; the other sessions will be at historic sites. Tuition will be \$20.00. The first lecture, on the colonial history of Maryland (as an introduction) will be offered by Alan Virta of the Prince George's County Historical Society. For more, information call the college at 322-0875.

## New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

		Sponsor
Eugenia Lamar Brown	Newberry, S.C.	Mr. F. De Marr
Mr & Mrs Fred Simmons	Silver Spring	Mr. J. Giannetti
Barbara Kirkconnell	Fort Washington	Mr. J. Giannetti
Scott & Mary Sibley	Hyattsville	Mr. F. De Marr
Gail Lisenbee Lacroix	Sterling, Va.	Mr. F. De Marr
Rebecca E. Livingston	Hyattsville	Mr. S. Hines
John E. Rogers	Mt. Rainier	Mr. F. De Marr
Mr & Mrs William H. Bayne,	Hyattsville	Mr. H. Embrey
John Simon Pallas	University Park	Mr. J.L. Pallas
Frank & Sandy Nesbit	Croom	Mr. F. De Marr
Dale Manty	Cheverly	Mr. A. Virta
Elizabeth Tuckermanty	Cheverly	Mr. A. Virta
Lonnie L. Walls	Huntingtown	Mr. P. Lanham
Lauren R. Brown	Greenbelt	Mr. A. Virta,

## A Colonial Wedding

The National Colonial Farm will stage a typical, farm wedding of the mid-18th century on Sunday, September 23, at 1 and 3 p.m. traditional wedding feast and gifts of the period will be displayed, and visitors, may toast the bride and groom with fresh apple cider and taste an 18th-century wedding cake. The farm is located at 3400 Bryan's Point Road, Accokeek. Phone 283-2113.

## The Saint Maries Chapel: An Archeological Excavation

Maryland's history began at the ancient city of St. Maries, known to us today as St. Mary's City. In honor of the 350th anniversary of the founding of Maryland we print below an article that appeared in the Congressional Record of October 4, 1983, and the February 1984 issue of the Chronicles of St. Mary's. Written by Mr. and Mrs. Fred McCoy, it is republished here with the permission of the authors.

In St. Mary's City, Maryland archeologists are conducting an extremely interesting excavation. They are exposing the massive foundations of the St. Maries Chapel and an adjacent schoolhouse. Both were

The Chapel-field is located in the original townlands of the village of St. Maries, just south of the reconstructed State House and next to the home of the first Governor Leonard Calvert. In this field, the first Catholic Chapel was built, as well as a Priest's house and school. In the field is a cemetery which contains the graves of Father Thomas Copley, S.J., Father Gravener, S.J., and Brother Gervase, S.J., as well as other early English missionaries and distinguished Colonial Catholics. The long searched-for final resting place of Governor Leonard Calvert, who died at St. Mary's City in 1647, is probably in this cemetery, adjacent to his home and suitable for his interment in his church's consecrated ground.

Although the Chapel was Catholic and the leaders of these Pilgrims were English Catholic gentlemen, Maryland was not a Catholic colony. Jamestown was an Anglican Colony and Massachusetts a Puritan Colony, but Maryland was unique, it was a haven for all Christians. All her colonists were free to follow the dictates of their conscience in religious matters. Maryland was the first place in the world where religious toleration was made a matter of government policy.

These colonial excavations are interesting to all Americans but especially to Catholics who can trace their American roots to the Chapel of St. Maries, and their school system to a building in the Chapel-field. Here was the first Catholic Church in the Thirteen Original Colonies, built prior to 1638. It succeeded the Indian lodge used by Father Andrew White, S.J., as a place of worship.

This week [one year ago] a great sixteen inch, six-plow tractor, working slightly deeper than the small tractors and horse-plows of the past, turned up the foundation bricks. They had been covered for over two and a half centuries, when in 1704, the Royal Governor Seymour, appointed by the King, padlocked the Chapel and castigated Father Hunter, S.J., for saying Mass, when he should know that religious services were available in the newly-established Anglican Church. It was then that devout Catholics took the bricks from the Chapel and transported them down-river to the St. Inigoe's Manor farm of the Jesuits, where tradition has it they were incorporated into the St. Inigoes Manor House.

Professional archeologists will discover the exact measurements of these old building and can evaluate the artifacts churned up by the deep plow. They can ascertain when and where the last chapel was built circa 1660, and then, the previous one, perhaps burned by Pirate Ingle in 1645, and down to the earliest, prior to 1638. They will explore the cellar of the Priest house and school, grudgingly mentioned by Governor Nicholson in 1697 to the English Board of Trade, "few schools, and those but very mean ones either of Master or House: But the Jesuits and Priests had some, especially one brick one at St. Mary's." Perhaps in the future, they can identify those early graves in this, the oldest Maryland town in our State. However, today's experts did not "find" these foundations. Legend and hearsay from generations of Marylanders have made the Chapel-site common knowledge. Archeological studies of Henry Chandlee Forman in the 1930S outlined the Church building. Bricks from the foundations were used in the Father Andrew White Memorial, across the river from the city in 1934, the 300th anniversary of our founding. Artifacts and bricks were placed in the cornerstone of the "America" national magazine building in New York City in the 1960s. This building was dedicated to Father John LaFarge,S.J., renowned inter-racial leader, author, editor and educator, who served as Pastor of several Southern Maryland parishes in the early 20s and 30s.

Since 1704, the field has been in agricultural use and privately owned. Efforts to purchase or even mark the field were unsuccessful. Much frustration has been experienced by historians, Catholic and non-Catholic alike, about the lack of identification of this known Colonial site where Catholics had a Church, a Priest house, a school and a cemetery. Tourists, visiting St. Mary's City, are shown the stones marking the outline of the original State House, which at the time of the abrogation of the Toleration Act was turned over to the newly-established Church of England. The Capital of Maryland was then moved to Annapolis.

The "Noble and Pious" Experiment of the Calverts was ahead of its time. George Calvert, the first Lord Baltimore, had had experience in colonization. He had been involved in both the Virginia and Massachusetts Colonies and in his own Colony of Avalon in Newfoundland [Canada]. Experience had taught him much. He knew that his Maryland adventure must be well-planned and be economically sound if his altruistic

Henry More, a man of foresight. Calvert and More together settled difficulties with the Jesuit missionaries and plowed new ground in what was to be the church's policy in countries with plural religions. Henry More, S.J. was the great grandson of Sir Thomas More, the "King's Good Servant" and author of "Utopia," who lost his head when King Henry the Eighth demanded "not only the things that were Caesar's but also the things that were God's." Cecil Calvert was determined to found his Utopia in Maryland and worked out a "Modus Vivendi" that would fit a country made up of persons of various faiths. His experiment, with the brief exception of Ingle's and the Puritan rebellion, was a success. From 1634 until 1687, at the time of the so-called "Glorious Revolution," Catholics and Protestants lived in harmony. When the Calverts were replaced by royal governors, the penal laws of England were enforced, priests were persecuted, Catholics were fined for their religious practices, disenfranchised and those of all faiths were taxed to build and support the King's Churches now the established State religion. No wonder Catholics, like the Carrolls, laid their lives and their fortunes on the line to support the American Revolution to recoup their freedom enjoyed in early Maryland. No longer the "Land of Sanctuary," they were joined in their rebellion by the Presbyterians, the Quakers, Methodists, the Reformed and Lutheran Churches and also many parishioners of the King's Church who saw the justice of freedom of religion and who were saddled with an inept clergy sent over from England.

The valiant Jesuit missionaries, some of whom came on the Ark and Dove, lived and died in this Chapel-field. They should be named and honored; Maryland is deeply indebted to them for the success of the colony. Father Andrew White, S.J., is the acknowledged narrator of the voyage and faithful reporter on the Indians, the flora, the fauna, and the terrain of the new colony. The "Blackrobes" as they were called by the natives, were soon beloved by them for their spiritual and physical ministrations. The wellbeing and safety of the colonists in their relations with the Indians was effected primarily through the Jesuit Fathers, in great contrast to the hostilities suffered in the earlier English settlements of Massachusetts and Virginia. For well over three hundred years, the Jesuit Fathers of Maryland served in the mission field. Their houses were the focal point of religious, cultural and social enrichment of the area. From St. Mary's they went forth up the rivers and bays to their Indian missions and English settlements on Kent Island and the Eastern Shore, at Mattapany, Newtown, White's Neck, Port Tobacco, Piscataway, and Anacostia. From here they went to Pennsylvania and to New York State. Their mission schools were the nucleus of Georgetown University in 1789. They established churches, schools and universities in Maryland, Pennsylvania and New England. After the revolution, they were in the vanguard as missionaries and teachers as the frontier pushed farther and farther West. Yes, it was in the Chapel-field in St. Mary's City that the first foundations were laid. These roots, so gently planted in the loam of Colonial Maryland, have yielded a harvest of a thousand-fold.

Editor's note: Continuing excavations have uncovered more foundations and quite a few ancient graves, including some of children. Anyone wishing to contribute to the completion of this project should make their tax-deductible check payable to Chapel Field Project, and mail to Mr. and Mrs. Frederick McCoy, Scotland, Md. 20687.

### Lectures of Local Interest

Sept. 17: Orlando Ridout V speaks on "Architecture in Maryland" to Friends of Montpelier at Montpelier mansion, south of Laurel. 8 p.m. Phone 779-2011 (business hours).

Sept 8: Frederick Tilp speaks on Facts and Fiction on the Potomac. 1 p.m. at Alice Ferguson Foundation's Hard Bargain Farm, 2001 Bryan Point Road, Accokeek. Reservations required. Phone 292-5665.

### A Chronicle of Belair

An important new book will be published this month, A Chronicle of Belair, by Shirley Baltz. A Chronicle of Belair will tell the story of the Belair estate, from the building of the great mansion-house in the mid-18th century to the present day, tracing its history as the Home of Governors, the Cradle of American Thoroughbred Racing, and finally as the site of one of the largest suburban development projects in this



NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince George's County Historical  
Society**

Vol. XII, no. 10 October 1984

The October Meeting: Luncheon at the Rossborough Inn

Saturday, October 6, will be the date of the society's annual luncheon meeting at the Rossborough Inn, University of Maryland. A cash bar will open at noon; lunch will be served at 12:45; and the program will begin at 2 p.m. Fuller details are included on a separate enclosure with this newsletter. Please note that reservations for the luncheon must be placed by October 1.

Our guest speaker for this luncheon meeting will be John Edward Hurley, president and curator of the Confederate Memorial Hall in Washington. The Confederate Memorial Hall is located at 1322 Vermont Avenue N.W., and is the only shrine to the Confederacy in the nation's capital. It was purchased by the Confederate Memorial Association and served for many years as a home for Confederate veterans. It is now a museum dedicated to the preservation of Southern culture. Mr. Hurley will speak to us about the Confederate Memorial Hall, its programs, and about the Confederacy in general.

Plan to join us on October 6 for a most interesting program and an enjoyable lunch in the historic Rossborough Inn.

Belva Lockwood Day and the Grigsby Station Log Cabin

One hundred years ago, Belva Lockwood, an attorney in Washington, was nominated for the presidency by a group of women's rights advocates. One of her supporters, Amanda Best, owned a home in Prince George's County, and it was there that the women's rights advocates held the kickoff rally of Belva Lockwood's campaign. Mrs. Best's home was in Landover; its site is now occupied by a funeral home. An old log cabin that was located on the property was saved, however, and moved last year to Glenn Dale.

The log cabin has been beautifully restored and will be open to the public from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m. on Wednesday, September 19. A ceremony will be held at 4:30 p.m. dedicating the cabin and commemorating Belva Lockwood's campaign. The cabin (covered, as it always has been, with clapboards) is now located at 12450 Sir Walter Drive in the Camelot community. Sir Walter Drive can be reached by Annapolis Road; it is very near Hillmead Road. Women in high places in both parties have been invited to attend this event; it will be interesting to see who shows up!

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696**

## "The Blessings of Good Training"

A few miles southwest of Upper Marlboro, U.S. Route 301 (Crain Highway) cuts through a rural district known as Cheltenham. The hurried motorist can pass through Cheltenham in a matter of minutes without even knowing it; the observant traveler will notice the store, post office, and Methodist church at the corner of Frank Tippet Road which mark the community's center. Cheltenham is still corn and tobacco country, even though a few of the fields have been transformed into small housing developments. Cheltenham is not unlike many other rural districts in southern Prince George's County, but it does have at least one characteristic that sets it apart from the rest, the remarkable number of government institutions located there.

Perhaps the best-known of these institutions is the new Veterans Cemetery located along Route 301. The State Tobacco Warehouse, also on the main highway, is another landmark. The Maryland Forest Service and the Fish and Wildlife Administration maintain offices in Cheltenham, as does the state's Natural Resources Police. The U.S. Naval Communications Station occupies a campus-like setting and quite a few acres on the northern edge of Cheltenham; Cheltenham was also, between 1901 and 1956, the site of a U.S. magnetic observatory. But the oldest and most venerable institution of all is the one known today as Boys' Village of Maryland. It is more than one hundred years, old.

Boys' Village of Maryland was established by act of the state legislature in 1870. Now under the management of the Maryland Juvenile Services Administration, it provides for the care and detention of boys awaiting further court disposition. The home also provides facilities for some emotionally disturbed and mentally retarded boys. Boys' Village was originally known as the House of Reformation and Instruction for Colored Boys, or more popularly, simply as the "House of Reformation." In 1937 it became the Cheltenham School for Boys, and the present name was adopted in 1949. The origins of Boys' Village lie in the reform movements of the post-Civil War era. We present below portions of its first annual report which provide a full accounting of its beginnings.

To the Honorable the General Assembly of Maryland.  
Gentlemen:

The Board of Managers of "The House of Reformation and Instruction for Colored Children" respectfully present their first Annual Report. In doing so it is their special gratification that they can congratulate you, and the People of Maryland in general, that we have an Institution that will confer the blessings of good training and discipline upon a class of persons hitherto deprived of such advantages.

The doors of our jails and penitentiaries were open to receive them, but a home was not offered in any reformatory institution in which they would be free from the influence of bad example, and, under the guidance of those who would cultivate their better nature, become useful men and citizens. We hope to do this good work; to diminish the number of prison inmates, and prove that we have really a House of Reformation and Instruction, which will diffuse its blessings throughout our State, and make it the debtor, however liberal may be its contribution. The discipline is paternal. There is no semblance of prison life. A home is provided where no bolts or bars confine the inmates either by day or night, and after a few weeks they generally show no disposition to escape. There are at present seventy-two boys in the Institution, and no boarding school has a more contented class of pupils than those under the care of Gen. John W. Horn, Superintendent, whose mild yet firm discipline, and the zeal and energy with which he discharges his duties, have secured the approbation of the Board, and won the confidence and affection of those under his care....

An Act of Incorporation was passed by the Legislature in 1870, and twelve citizens were named, who were "declared a body politic and corporate by the name and style of 'House of Reformation and Instruction for Colored Children.' Section 3d says: The estate and concerns of said corporation shall be managed and conducted by sixteen Managers, of whom twelve shall be elected by members of the Association, two appointed by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore, and two by the Governor. The money conditions of

the Charter were that five thousand dollars (\$5,000) should be paid out of any unappropriated money in the Treasury for the end and benefit of the "House of Reformation" for the period of two years. But, before the Comptroller should issue his warrant for the first quarterly payment, the Managers were required to furnish satisfactory proof that the sum of thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000) had been collected by private subscriptions." A vigorous effort was made to effect an organization to raise the money.

An address was issued to the public, pointing out the importance to the State of an institution of the kind proposed, and soliciting contributions from our citizens. An agent was employed to call upon them in person, and committees from the Board were appointed to aid in the good work. A voice from our Grand Juries had gone forth year after year urging the necessity for having a "place of detention to reform the many negro children who were committed to the jail," there being no other place of commitment.

"The immediate erection of such an institution" was "strongly recommended as a matter of social and moral necessity, as negro children were then "serving out sentences in the jail. [Editor's note: a house of reformation for white children had already been established elsewhere.]

Judge Gilmor, and A. Leo Knott, Esq., Prosecuting Attorney, added the weight of their testimony "not only to the usefulness, but to the necessity of such an Institution." Fortified and encouraged by such strong testimony, the Agent, Mr. N. Noyes, and the Committee went encouragingly to work, and labored during the years '70, '71, and '72. After long and patient work and waiting, the amount named in the Charter was more than realized, viz: \$38,822.09.

Of the private subscriptions, \$22,600 are included as the value of the farm of "Cheltenham," which was the handsome donation of Enoch Pratt, Esq., and was accepted by the Comptroller as the equivalent in cash. This enabled the Board to call upon the Treasurer of the State for the ten thousand dollars promised on the condition of \$30,000 being raised by private subscription. In 1872 an application was made to the Legislature, which granted an appropriation of twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) for 1872 and '73, ten thousand for each year, provided we could from other sources raise an equal amount. The City Council of Baltimore made an appropriation of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for 1872 and ten thousand (\$10,000) for 1873. This enabled us to obtain the State appropriation for said years...

A contract to erect suitable buildings was entered into under Messrs West and Carroll in the fall of 1872. Under the most favorable circumstances we could not have the buildings ready for occupancy in less than a year; but so great was the demand of the State ("many children under twelve years of age being in our prisons for want of a suitable place to put them") that the Board, desirous of relieving the public anxiety in regard to the reception of colored children, decided to enlarge and otherwise improve the old Farm Mansion, and receive all they could at as early a day as possible.

On the fourth day of February, 1873, the first two boys, Nos. 1 and 2, were received. The number rapidly increased, crowding our limited room; but all were properly cared for, and the Superintendent now reports: "We have a school of contented and happy boys." Though upon an open farm, but few of the boys have escaped, of those who did, nearly all have been sent back; some of them returned and gave themselves up voluntarily. The absence of all apparent hindrance to escape seems to remove the desire to do so. After the trial of a few weeks, during which time the homesickness wears off, and they become acquainted with their companions, they seem as the Superintendent says, contented and happy.

By the terms of our charter we are to receive colored children; this includes males and females. The managers consider it entirely impracticable to receive and manage both in the same institution. The experience of the Superintendent and Managers of the House of Refuge [for white children] justifies the Board in this opinion. They tried the experiment in houses and yards separated by high walls, yet failed to maintain that discipline so essential to good government. We respectfully ask a modification of the charter in this respect.

The Farm is situated in Prince George's County, Md., 45 miles from Baltimore, on the line of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad [the Pope's Creek line], which passes through it about half a mile from the buildings. The Board expects to donate enough land to the Railroad Company for a station and post-office, to be called "Cheltenham," the name by which the farm is known. This will add much to our convenience and comfort....The situation is high and healthy, commanding an extensive view. There has been but little sickness among the inmates. At the time of making this Report word comes, "All doing well."

We respectfully ask for an appropriation of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) each for the years 1874 and '75 for needed current expenses, and fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) for building purposes, to be called for in quarterly installments, as it may be needed. This may seem extravagant, but if we estimate, the cost of arresting, trying and supporting criminals, and think of the evil they inflict and entail upon the community, we will find the proposed expenditure economy instead of extravagance. Boys are now serving a term of two years in our city jail, and a large number could be found there at all times. There are many in the penitentiary at the present time, but none have been sentenced to either the jail or penitentiary since the House of Reformation at "Cheltenham" was opened. We ask you, therefore, to consider it a State Institution, and entitled to the fostering care of the State. It is a school, an agricultural school, and not a prison; its inmates are the wards of the State, receiving instruction that will qualify them for positions of usefulness in the community. The plan proposed for their reformation and instruction is not an untried experiment. In 1858 the State Reform School, near Lancaster, Ohio, opened its doors for the reception of juvenile offenders. Since then 1,822 boys have been received; 1,379 discharged, and 443 are now enjoying its advantages. The report for 1873 says: "Today the Institution stands as a proud monument of the great success of the humane and philanthropic enterprise." In Indiana, Iowa, New Jersey and other States are similar institutions, each one "performing its great mission in behalf of the fallen and unfortunate wards of the State."

The time is short since it was discovered that an open farm, with comparative freedom from restraint, is much better for young offenders than prison walls. The prison system of our country is a relic of barbarism, and needs reformation in accordance with the enlightened and progressive spirit of the age. The plan adopted by the various reform schools of the country is a wide departure from the old system, which is one of punishment, and not reformation. It has nothing to elevate the individual in sentiment and feeling, "to win him from vice, and attach him to virtue," but it hardens his nature, and turns him into the community at the expiration of his allotted time a greater criminal than he was when he received his sentence. Far different is it with those who go out from our reformatory institutions. All the influence surrounding them is good, and a large majority become useful and respectable citizens.

We have 72 boys, who, for various offences, were committed by our courts to the care of the institution. They have been saved from prison life and its pernicious effects, and have been under the influence of good discipline and moral training. They have given but little trouble; their conduct being generally very good. They performed most of the labor on the farm during the past summer, "working in squads under the supervision of one of their own number, and in no instance was the confidence reposed in them betrayed." We hope, in due time, to be able to furnish the farming interest of our State with a good class of laborers, now so greatly needed. When our family building shall be completed, we will have a school room and other apartments well furnished, and admirably suited to the needs of the inmates. Since the organization of the Board we have lost two valuable members, James Baynes and Henry W. Drakeley. They were efficient, earnest workers, had the interest of the cause at heart, and to them we are indebted for much encouragement and valuable assistance.

Reviewing the work of the past year, through all the disadvantage under which we labored, the result is a success. With this to encourage us, we are sure the future will prove the usefulness of the Institution, and secure for it the approbation and continued confidence of the people and the authorities of our State.

Baltimore, January 12, 1874.

The fourth report of the board of managers, issued in 1876, provided some interesting statistical information. There were, at the House, 186 boys on November 30, 1876. Of the total, 105 had been received that year.

The largest group--65 boys--were committed by justices of the peace in Baltimore City. The next largest group--14--were committed by the, Criminal Court for Baltimore City. The rest came from other locations around the state. One boy came from Prince George's. Thirty-one boys were committed for being incorrigible, 28 for vagrancy, 28 for larceny, 12 for vicious conduct, and the rest for a variety of offenses including stealing from the U.S. mail (4 boys). Fifteen of the boys committed in 1876 were age 12, 12 of them were age 13, 15 were age 14, 14 were age 15, and 12 were age 16. The two youngest boys were just seven years old; 11 of them were only age 10. Sixteen boys had lost both parents, 24 had lost their fathers, and 12 their mothers. The fathers of 24 boys were considered "intemperate." The educational attainments of the boys are also interesting. Thirty-two did not know the alphabet, 18 knew the alphabet only, 20 were beginning to spell, another 20 were beginning to read, 11 could read easy lessons, 24 could read books generally, 15 could read and write. Eighteen boys could cypher in addition, 2 in subtraction, 1 in division, and 1 in fractions. Many of the boys, it must be remembered, were what we would consider "elementary school students," so their lack of education should not be surprising. A good many of them, too, must have been the sons of slaves.

Some of the quotations in the first annual report of the board of managers came from the superintendent's report to the sources of the other quotes are not identified. Attentive readers may have noticed several beginning quotation marks (") with no closing quotation marks; that is how the report was printed.

The problem of juvenile delinquency clearly has been with us for-some time. The House of Reformation for Colored Boys at Cheltenham was established to combat that problem; under the name of Boys Village of Maryland it continues its work more than 100 years later.

The Prince George's County Historical Society, Riverdale, Maryland

John Giannetti, President , Alan Virta, Editor

This newsletter is published monthly; dues are \$5.00 per year

NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince George's County Historical Society**

Vol. XII, no. 11 November 1984

The November Meeting: American Victorian Interiors

"American Victorian Interiors and Their Furnishings" will be the topic of the next meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society, to be held on Saturday, November 10, at Riversdale. The guest speaker will be Mr. Denys Peter Myers, an architectural historian from Alexandria, Va. A native of Boston, Mr. Myers worked for twenty years in museum administration, and since 1978 has been architectural historian for the Historic American Buildings Survey and Historic American Engineering Record at the National Park Service. He has taught at the college level, and has prepared a most interesting talk on the home interiors of the Victorian era. The talk will be illustrated by slides.

The meeting will begin at 2 p.m. Riversdale, the Calvert mansion, is located at 4811 Riverdale Road in Riverdale. Guests are welcome, and refreshments will be served. In a brief business meeting, the Nominations Committee will make its report and officers for the coming year will be elected. Additional nominations will be in order from the floor. Plan to be with us on November 10 for "American Victorian Interiors and Their Furnishings."

The Christmas Party: December 15

The Christmas Party this year will be on Saturday, December 15, at 2 p.m. at Riversdale. The traditional site of the party, Montpelier, is still undergoing restoration work and is closed. Details will follow in the next newsletter.

To Be Published Soon ...

The Maryland Heritage Committee for Prince George's County (the 350 Committee), in cooperation with the University of Maryland will publish within the month a handsome map and guide, suitable for framing or for reference, of Prince George's County's historic sites. Pictures of many of the homes will be included, as well as capsule histories of each. Also available in December will be Alan Virta's book, Prince George's County: A Pictorial History. Published by Donning Company in Norfolk, it will contain about 350 photos.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696**

Senator Schall of Minnesota

Over the years, a number of Congressmen and retired Congressmen from other states of the Union have made their Washington homes in Prince George's County. Riversdale, the Calvert mansion, was the home of Senator Hiram Johnson of California, Senators Thaddeus and Hattie Caraway of Arkansas, and Representative Abraham Lafferty of Oregon. Bird Lawn plantation near Clinton-- known in the 20th century as the Terrett farm--became the home of Representative Fred Lewis Crawford (R-Michigan, 1935-1953). Other Congressmen could be added to this list, but perhaps the most remarkable of them all was a Senator from Minnesota, Thomas David Schall.

Thomas David Schall served in the U.S. Senate from 1924 until his death in 1935. Prior to that, he served five terms in the House of Representatives. Schall made his Washington home in Berwyn Heights, a small town in northern Prince George's County. He lived in a very old house, since destroyed, that stood in what is

now the 8700 block of Edmonston Road. What was remarkable about Senator Schall was not his politics or his record, but the fact that he entered the field of politics at all. Schall was blind--the result of an accident when he was a young man. Blind public officials have not been unheard of, but their political careers have usually been well established before their blindness has come about. Such was not the case with Senator Schall. He was blind before he entered Congress.

Senator Schall died in December 1935 as the result of an accident in Cottage City. A member of Congress for nineteen years, a resident of Prince George's County--and an enthusiastic horse back rider--Thomas David Schall was struck and killed by an automobile driven by a Hyattsville man as he tried to cross busy Bladensburg Road. The accident was reported on the front page of the Evening Star of December 20, 1935. Senator Schall died two days later.

## SCHALL, HIT BY CAR, STILL UNCONSCIOUS

### Six Doctors Fight to Save Life

### After Accident at Cottage City

Background: In 1908, a young Minneapolis lawyer walked into a store in Fargo, N. Dak. Purchasing a cigar, he leaned toward an electric lighter, pressed it and recoiled sharply as blinding flash swept his face. Carelessly connected to street lighting system rather than low-voltage battery, that lighter brought complete blindness to Thomas D. Schall. Recovering from shock, Schall, aided by wife, returned to law practice; few years later came to House of Representatives to serve five terms from tenth district, Minnesota. In 1924 he was elected United States Senator, held seat in 1930. For nearly five years prior to April, 1933, his walking eyes were those of German shepherd dog, Lux, who died that Spring while master was attending funeral of late Senator Walsh, Montana. Since advent of New Deal, Senator Schall has been most outspoken critic....

Senator Thomas David Schall remained unconscious at Casualty Hospital today as six physicians fought to save the life of the blind Minnesotan after he was run down by an automobile last night while being led across the Washington-Baltimore Boulevard [now Bladensburg Road] in nearby Cottage City, Md.

Following a consultation shortly before noon today, Dr. George W. Calver, physician of the Capitol, announced examinations had disclosed Senator Schall suffered a skull fracture and fractures of both bones of the left leg below the knee. His condition was regarded as critical and he had not regained consciousness some hours after the accident.

The Senator, who is 58 years old, also suffered internal injuries to the stomach which are believed not serious. Doctors thought they could save the Senator's leg, although the bones were crushed.

The accident occurred shortly after dark, at 6:50 p.m. while the boulevard was full of traffic....

The Senator's companion, Orel L. Leen, 39, of 922 Hamilton Street, an employe in his office, also was bowled over by the automobile. Leen remained at Casualty Hospital today under treatment for scalp cuts, possibly concussion of the brain and minor bruises about the legs and body.

The Senator's wife and son, Richard, a senior at Georgetown University, hastened to the hospital and remained there while doctors worked through the night over the injured man.

Physicians summoned into consultation included Dr. Calver and Dr. John Allan Talbot, a bone specialist. They were assisted by four other doctors.

At the Senator's office today it was said an operation will be necessary if and when the injured man rallies sufficiently.

Senator Schall and Leen were en route from the Senate Office Building to the Schall residence, Wyncrest, at Berwyn Heights, in Md., in the automobile of Harold Birkeland of Minneapolis, an old friend and house guest of the Senator. With them was another friend, James Laughlin, also of Minneapolis.

When the party drove into Cottage City, Birkeland stopped the car while the Senator and Leen alighted to purchase some sandwich bread and meat from a grocery across the boulevard. The Senator wished to make the purchases personally so that sandwiches could be prepared for Laughlin and Birkeland, who planned to leave for Minneapolis early this morning.,

The Senator and Leen were struck as they reached the center of the boulevard.... The fender knocked Leen free of the car, but at least one wheel must have passed over the Senator's leg.

Both men were rendered unconscious. Birkeland and Laughlin warned other automobiles away from where the Senator lay in the middle of the highway while the ambulance of the Bladensburg rescue squad was on the way to the scene. . .

They were afraid to lift the unconscious Senator lest the effort cause him additional injury. The men placed a coat, under Mr. Schall's head and guarded him until the ambulance arrived some 15 minutes later....The accident occurred about 200 yards this side of Peace Monument at a point, police said, where automobiles can be seen for at least several hundred yards in either direction.

The rescue squad ambulance en route to the scene was delayed by scores of automobiles which had halted in the busy thoroughfare, and by throngs of curious persons who collected about the spot where the Senator lay....

Only last Summer Senator Schall took up horseback riding and frequently was seen galloping over the bridle paths near Laurel, Md. He had trained his memory to recall the various turns of his rides through the country and enjoyed the sport hugely.

Prior to that, the Senator's steps about Washington often were guided by Lux, a "seeing eye", police dog with a \$10,000 education as a leader of the blind. Lux, however, died of a broken heart in the Spring of 1933 while the Senator was away from home attending the funeral of the late Senator Walsh of Montana. Senator Schall remained away for several weeks and on his return Lux was dead....

Senator Schall has been a vehement enemy of the "New Deal," making speeches and issuing statements attacking the administration and its policies. Only yesterday he assailed the Roosevelt reciprocal tariff pacts as "star chamber treaties."

A former newsboy, bootblack and circus roustabout, Senator Schall first came to Washington in 1915 as an independent in the House. At that time he had been blind for nine years.

In 1918 Senator Schall was on a ship which was torpedoed while taking him to France on a mission for the Government. The ship limped into Brest after great difficulty. Mrs. Schall, who accompanied her husband, was decorated for bravery displayed on this occasion.

In 1924 Schall defeated the Farmer-Laborite Senator Magnus Johnson, and has since been a member of the Senate [as a Republican].

The ambulance took Senator Schall and his aide into Washington because there were not yet any hospitals in this county. Leeland Memorial, in Riverdale, was the first, but it did not open for another few years.

Congressman Crawford's home near Clinton, incidentally, was (and still is) a most unusual one. He bought an early 20th-century farmhouse, and with Victorian details (mantles, stained glass, porch woodwork, etc.) transformed it into a "virtual museum of high quality late Victorian detail" (History Division, M-NCPPC). The ornamentation came from the home of a lumber baron in Saginaw, Mich. Congressman Crawford's home now stands in the small Stonesboro subdivision, which was built around it, not far off Allentown Road.

An Exhibition: The School of Architecture, University of Maryland is sponsoring an exhibition of photos, drawings, and models, entitled "350 Years of Art and Architecture in Maryland." Located in the school's gallery on Mowatt Lane at Campus Drive, it will be open through December 31. Riversdale, the Calvert mansion, and Greenbelt (noted for its town planning and Art Deco) will be included.

The Prince George's County Historical Society: Riverdale, Maryland

John Giannetti, President

Alan Virta, Editor

## NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY AND COLLECTION

In our first report, issued in July 1983, we promised a monthly communication on the happenings in the library and collection of the Society. Keeping the library open every Saturday afternoon, as well as the collecting and filing of materials tends to take a great deal of time, therefore the reports on our activities may not appear every month as promised. We will therefore keep our reports as current as time will permit. Volunteers to work on all sorts of projects in the library (in your spare time) are still welcome.

PLANTERS ADVOCATE

We are pleased to announce that eleven rolls of microfilm of the Planters Advocate, published in Upper Marlboro 1851-61, were received from the Hall of Records in early April and are now part of the permanent collection. Once again we are indebted to Chris Allan of the Hall of Records for his efforts. And, our appreciation to all of you who have contributed to the support of this project.

OUR THANKS

- Francis Geary, Hyattsville Historian, and Glen Largent, General Manager of the Prince George's Post, for six large boxes of photographs from the newspaper's files, culled during their summer move to new quarters in the George Washington House in Bladensburg. This is the paper's second very valuable, and appreciated, contribution to our archives.
- To Mrs. Mary Charlotte Chaney of College Heights, for a six-year run (1977-82) of Antiques magazine.
- To Ann Ferguson who provided us with many early photos of Riverdale town scenes. From Gen. Frederick Caraway, through the courtesy of Ann Ferguson, we have received portrait photographs of his parents, Senator Thaddeus Caraway and Senator Hattie Caraway, former owners of the Calvert Mansion in Riverdale.
- to Paul Lanham, past president of the Society, for several photos from his personal collection on early Lanham. Also, through Paul's efforts, we have received from Richard Downes, DDS, of Laurel, other early Lanham material, including the Civil War era attendance records of the old Bald Hill School.

-To William H. Whitmore, Jr., MD of Williamsburg, Va. and formerly a Clinton resident, for a detailed documented study of the land title for the St. Elizabeth's Hospital tract. This work contains a wealth of information on early Prince George's County landholders. It was accomplished by Dr. Whitmore as a labor of love during his tenure as a member of the professional staff at the hospital. (The study contains an interesting commentary on the use of saints' names on land tracts in early Maryland and elsewhere.)

- To Mrs. Helen A. Daley and Elizabeth Aman of Hyattsville, for several gifts of memorabilia pertaining to early Hyattsville, Mt. Rainier and Prince George's County.

ACCESSIONS - LIBRARY

<u>Author</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Donor</u>
Taussig, B. C.	Windfall of Inherited Treasures (Aguasco)	Betty C. Taussig (Author)

Frank, B.	A Pictorial Hist. of Pikesville, Md.	Purchase
Goldsborough, W.W.	The Md. Line in the Confederate Army, 1861-65 .(Reprint)	Purchase
Rogers, J.W.	Madame Surratt	Pr. Geo. Co. History Program
Wilson, R.G.	Victorian Resorts & Hotels	Marguerite Ritchie
	Laws of Md. Made Since MDCCLXIII	Anne S. Musgrave
Clark, E. & E.	The Spirit of Captain John	Edith & Eugene Clark
	The Swampoodle Book (Lower Marlboro)	Edith M. Bagot
Nalls, L.	Mt. Rainier Bicentennial Booklet	City of Mt. Rainier
Williams, H.A.	Robert Garrett & Sons	Fred De Marr
State of Md.	Report/Md. Commission to the La. Purchase Exposition (1906)	Minnie M. Hill
Desaint,A.Y./ Rose, L.	So. Md. Yesterday & Today: Crab Pots and Sotweed Fields	Lou Rose
	Proceedings/Grand Lodge of. Md/ A.F. & A.M.	Edith M. Bagot
Newman, H.W.	The Flowering of the Md.-Palatinate	Fred De Marr
	St. Maries City. Tercentenary Program/ 1934.	Margaret Marshall
Shreve, J.H.	Upper Marlboro 250th Anniv. Booklet	Margaret Marshall
Kent/Azrael	The Story of Alex. Brown & Sons 1800-1975	John Giannetti
Preston, D.J. Moore, F. (ed.)	Oxford. (Md.) The First Three Centuries	Purchase
Moore, F. (ed)	The Rebellion Record (Reprint) 12 vols.	Celia Holland

#### HELPING OTHERS

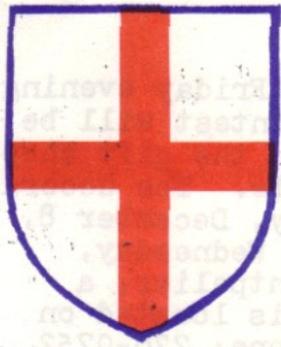
The historical societies in St. Mary's County and Calvert County now have a complete set of the Maryland Historical Magazine in their respective libraries. The missing issues in their collections were supplied from back issues held by the Prince George's County Historical Society's library at Riversdale.

#### CHRISTMAS IS COMING

A part of the Spirit of Christmas is giving. Why not include the library of the Society on your Christmas list this year? Forget your pocketbooks! Dig into your desk, closet, cellar, garage or attic instead! Only you can give that program, book, letter, pamphlet or other bit of memorabilia on Prince George's County or Maryland, which money cannot buy - because it's probably one-of-a-kind.

Bring it with you to the annual Christmas Party, to be held this year at Riversdale on December 15th. Your gift will be treasured by future generations of Prince Georgians.

LIBRARY IS OPEN: Saturdays, Noon - 5 PM. Telephone 779-2313.



NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince George's County Historical Society**

Vol. XII, no. 12 December 1984

The Christmas Party at Riversdale: December 15

Come celebrate the Christmas season with fellow members of the Prince George's County Historical Society at the Society's annual Christmas party on Saturday, December 15, at 2 p.m. This year the party will be at Riversdale, the Calvert mansion. The house will be decorated for the season, and the food and drink will be plentiful. Riversdale is a beautiful house in any season, but particularly at Christmas time. Bring along friends and family. And if you have a holiday food speciality you would like to share--a snack or dessert--bring it along too!

Riversdale is located at 4811 Riverdale Road in Riverdale. Built by the Calvert family in the first decade of the 19th century, it was the center of one of the greatest plantations in northern Prince George's County. Ring in the holiday season in this beautiful home. Take a break from all the hustle and bustle and join us at the Christmas party, on December 15.

Christmas in Prince George's County

Celebrate the season in historic Prince-George's County! Visit our historic sites at their finest.

Belair, December 9: There will be tours of the house, and holiday gift items will be on sale, from 2 to 4 p.m. Belair, the Home of Governors, is one of Prince George's County's finest colonial houses. Location: 12207 Tulip Grove Drive, Bowie. Phone: 464-8619.

Fort Washington, December 16; Games, singing, and decorating for Christmas will be the order of the day, from noon until 5 p.m. A Civil War Santa will visit during the afternoon. The fort's ancient gray bastions stand high above the Potomac River, across from Mount Vernon. Location: Fort Washington Road, off Indian Head Highway. Phone: 292-2112.

Montpelier, December 6& 7: The house is closed for restoration, but candies will be in the windows and the celebrations will still go on outside. The Friends of Montpelier will burn a

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23.1696**

Yule log and light a Christmas tree Thursday and Friday evening between 6 and 9 p.m. Entries in a decorations contest will be on display upstairs in the carriage house, and in the gift shop downstairs, crafts and other gifts will be on sale. The decorations and gift shop will also be open on Saturday, December 8, from noon to 3 p.m. Regular gift shop hours are Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday between noon and 4 p.m. Montpelier, a Georgian masterpiece that dates from the 1780s, is located on Laurel-Bowie Road south of Laurel. Gift shop phone: 776-0752.

Oxon Hill Manor, December 16 "Music at the Manor" and Christmas Open-House. Noon to 5 p.m. Free. Oxon Hill Manor is Sumner Welles's magnificent mansion, built in 1929. Location: 6901 Oxon Hill Road, Oxon Hill. Phone: 839-7783.

Riversdale, December 8 & 9: The house will be decorated and open for tours from noon to 4 p.m. on Saturday December 8, music will be provided by John Douglas Hall, "an 18<sup>th</sup> century gentleman," a regular performer at Gadsby's Tavern. On Sunday the 9th, music will be by Carl Schwartz at the virginal, and the "Mostly Madrigals" carolers. The Prince George's County Historical Quilt Association will display hand-made quilts and the Riversdale Historical Society will offer the Maryland 350th anniversary medallion for sale for the last time. The Gift Shop will be open. Admission: \$2.00 for adults, \$1.50 for seniors and students and \$1.00 for children. Tour and refreshments (traditional fare of Christmas past) included. The fee supports the restoration fund. Location: 4811 Riverdale Road, Phone: 779-2011.

Surratt House, December 16 to 18: Christmas Candlelight Tours will be offered on Sunday from 5 to 9 p.m. and on Monday and Tuesday from 6 to 9 p.m. Admission fee. Celebrate a Victorian Christmas at the Surratt House. Phone: 868-11211. Location: 9110 Brandywine Road, Clinton.

Also this holiday season, the Prince George's Civic Opera, will offer Hansel and Gretel, by Humperdinck, on Saturday and Sunday, December 8 and 9, at 3 p.m., at King Auditorium, Bowie State College.

#### Riversdale to Close for Restoration; Montpelier to Open

Riversdale will close for restoration after the end of the year and remain closed for quite some time. Most of the work will be necessary exterior repairs, such as the roof, windows, etc. The Gift Shop housed in the mansion will thus be closing, too. Last opportunities to see the house and shop will be during the open house on December 8 and 9 and at the Society's party on December 15. On a bright note, Montpelier--which has been closed for a year for restoration work--will reopen in the early spring. The restoration of the Gazebo is almost finished now.

The Winter Break: No meetings in January or February: The next meeting Will be in March

#### Opera in Prince George's County: From 1752 to 1984

The Prince George's Civic Opera will celebrate the holidays with two performances of Engelbert Humperdinck's Hansel and Gretel on Saturday and Sunday the 8th and 9th of December, 3 p.m., at the King Auditorium at Bowie State College. This opera is a holiday favorite, especially among children and will feature an outstanding cast. For information call the opera office at 699-2459 during working hours or 338-4088 in the evenings.

It is worth noting, as this 350th anniversary year draws to a close, that 1984 has been an outstanding year for opera in Prince George's County. There follows a review of the past year in opera from an historian's viewpoint.

Prince George's County made history in September, when its own Civic Opera began its fifteenth season with a "brilliant" production of Mozart's Don Giovanni. (The adjective is a direct quote from the Washington Post's music critic, Joseph McLellan.) Don Giovanni is one of the favorites of all operas, a marked contrast to the Prince George's Opera's earlier production this year, the little-known Beggar's Opera; but The Beggar's Opera, especially in Prince George's County, is historic indeed. The Prince George's Opera performed The Beggar's Opera in June 1984 (to rave reviews) as part of this year's celebration of Maryland's 350th anniversary, and in special commemoration of the performance of the same opera right here in Prince George's County in 1752.

In 1752, the Murray-Kean company (run by Walter Murray and Thomas Kean) made its way through Virginia and Maryland, offering various pieces of comedy and musical theater. After giving performances in Williamsburg and Norfolk, they appeared in Annapolis in June 1752, calling themselves a "company from Virginia," and presented on June 22 the first performance of the tremendously popular Beggar's Opera. The Maryland Gazette announced that as soon as the company finished performing in Annapolis, they would give performances in Upper Marlborough, Piscataway, and Port Tobacco. Accordingly, there soon appeared in the Gazette an announcement of the performance of The Beggar's Opera in Upper Marlborough, on Thursday, August 20, at 7 o'clock in the New Theatre; the company now called itself a "company of Comedians from Annapolis." Another performance at the New Theatre in Upper Marlborough was announced for Thursday, September 14, this time "with Instrumental Music to each Air given by a Set of private Gentlemen." This may well have been the first performance of an opera accompanied by an orchestra in the American colonies. (It is not known whether the company ever went on to perform in Piscataway.)

First performed at Lincoln's Inn Fields Theater (London) in January 1728, The Beggar's Opera had been a great success and had introduced a new art form, the ballad-opera, a light-hearted burlesque of contemporary Italian opera. Its lyrics were written by John Gay, and its music based mainly on popular ballads newly arranged by composer John Christopher Pepush. It was first rejected by London theaters as being too bawdy and down-to-earth. After all, the most popular operas of the day were Handel's, and Handel's stage was peopled with gods and goddesses, and the heroes of myth and literature. The Gay-Pepush stage, in contrast, teemed with highwaymen, beggars, pickpockets, prostitutes, jailers, and receivers of stolen goods. But in 1728, a London producer named John Rich agreed to produce this strange new ballad-opera, and it became an instant success. Most of its songs were familiar folk melodies, although one was a direct steal from Handel: the march from his opera Rinaldo. This effrontery delighted the London audience; The Beggar's Opera ran there for sixty-three performances, and then did a circuit of the provinces, playing forty more performances in such cities as Bath and Bristol. It was, in fact, so successful that Handel's Italian-style operas, which had been the rage in London for nearly twenty years, could not compete, and the Royal Academy of Music (of which Handel was one of the musical directors) collapsed in bankruptcy. The saying soon circulated in London that The Beggar's Opera "made Gay rich, and Rich gay." Through The Beggar's Opera, Gay introduced to the world the dashing highwayman Macheath and his pretty Polly Peachum; two hundred years later Berthold Brecht retold their story in his Dreigroschenoper (1928) with Kurt Weill's famous musical score; their Three Penny Opera has earned a lasting place in the history of musical theater.

When The Beggar's Opera came to Prince George's County in 1752, it was performed in the New Theatre in Upper Marlborough. This building, known also as the Ball Room or Assembly Room, was located on the east side of Elm Street, about half way between Dr. Beanes's tomb and Main Street (approximately where the Barrister Building is now). It must have been newly built in 1752, and it served as a facility for balls, concerts, and theatrical productions for approximately a century. It may have been no more than a glorified warehouse if it was the same structure described by Rev. Andrew Burnaby in his Travels in North America (1760): "I crossed over the Potomac into Maryland... and proceeded on my journey to Marlborough.... I here met with a strolling company of players.... I went to see their theatre, which was a neat convenient tobacco-house, well fitted up for the purpose." In any

case, the Ball Room/Theatre building had ceased to function as such by the mid-nineteenth century. The lots around it were by then owned by prominent Marlboro attorneys Caleb Clarke Magruder and Thomas G. Pratt. (Pratt had served as Governor of Maryland, 1845-1848, and later, 1850-1857, as U.S. Senator.) After the Civil War, Magruder bought up from Pratt (by then removed to Baltimore) the lots adjoining the Ball Room, and in 1870 purchased from the Town of Marlborough Commissioners the Ball Room lot itself. The old building was almost certainly no longer standing at that time; Magruder proceeded to develop the lots into a complex of professional/commercial establishments, and they have remained so to this day.

The 1752 performance of The Beggar's Opera must have been a cultural highlight of that year in Prince George's County, as the 1984 production certainly was in this anniversary year. And the Prince George's Civic Opera, a cultural resource of which the county can be tremendously proud, seems to be well on its way to upholding the historical tradition.

--Susan G. Pearl

### New Officers of the Society

The following slate was elected at the November meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society to serve as officers for the year 1985:

President	John Giannetti
Vice president	Alan Virta
Corresponding Secretary	Margo Ritchie
Recording Secretary	Warren Rhoads
Treasurer	Herb Embrey
Historian	Frederick S. DeMarr
Directors	Susanna Cristofane
	Col. Sam Crook
	W.C. Dutton
	Anne Ferguson
	Paul Lanham
	John Mitchell
	Don Skarda

We take note of two departures from the slate of officers this year. Edith Bagot, after serving for fourteen years as Corresponding Secretary, has elected to retire, and James C. Wilfong, Jr., has stepped down from the post of Historian. Among her other duties, Mrs. Bagot was responsible for the circulation of the newsletter and the maintenance of a mailing list that has grown to over five hundred. Mr. Wilfong is a past president of the society. Our thanks to both, and to the members of this year's nominations committee, Vera Rollo and Jean Speicher.

### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

		<u>Sponsor</u>
Mr & Mrs John A. Williams	College Park	A. Virta
George H. Hayne	Silver Spring	F. De Marr
Joseph J. Sullivan	Beltsville	F. De Marr
L.R. Fox & C.S. Clough	Hyattsville	C. Headlee
Mr & Mrs A.R. McLaughlin	Forestville	A. Virta
Robert A. & Helen C. Neff	Camp Springs	A. Virta

We are also pleased to announce a new life member: Edith Bagot.

### Rented to the Highest Bidder...

"On Thursday the 9th day of January next, will be rented, to the highest bidder, the well known ferry opposite to Alexandria, commonly called Clifford's ferry, with the house and thirty-nine acres of very valuable land. Thomas H. Hanson"

--Maryland Gazette, Dec. 26, 1782

Until the Woodrow Wilson Bridge was built, the only way to get directly from Oxon Hill to Alexandria, Va., was by boat!

### New Books on Prince George's County

Two new books have just been published on Prince George's County, and both of them would make fine Christmas presents for those interested in our county's history.

Shirley Baltz's book, A Chronicle of Belair, is now available by mail-order. It is a 335-page hardback volume featuring a history of the Belair estate and its people from 1681 to 1957, an architectural analysis of the 18th-century Belair mansion (by James T. Wollon), a detailed report on the archeological digs at the mansion (by Susan Pearl), and a genealogy of the Ogle family with names of almost 2,000 descendants of Samuel and Anne (Tasker) Ogle, the first inhabitants of the house. The price is \$12.50, with a \$2.50 fee for mailing and handling (total, 14.00). Checks payable to: Friends of the Belair Estate, 12207 Tulip Grove Drive, Bowie, Md. 20715.

To be released during the second week of December is Alan Virta's Prince George's County: A Pictorial History. This book contains over 350 photos documenting the history of our county from the first exploration in 1608 to the present day. It is a hardbound volume with 250 pages. John Hanson Savings and Loan is sponsoring the first limited collector's edition of the book (each numbered), and the Prince George's Chamber of Commerce is marketing it. The price is \$24.95 plus \$1.75 postage. Maryland residents please add 5% sales tax (\$1.25). Checks p. to: Prince George's Chamber of Commerce, 9827 Central Avenue, Largo, Md. 20772.

--John Giannetti

### More on the Pope's Creek Line

The August train trip on the old Pope's Creek Line was advertised as the first passenger trip on that line in more than thirty years. That appears not to be the case. Mr. Charles R. Kilbourne of Upper Marlboro writes that "in 1969, during the Marlboro Fair... there was a steam excursion train that pulled passengers on round trips from Upper Marlboro to Brandywine for a period of about three days." With the county fair now back in Marlboro, it would certainly be nice to institute those excursions again.

### Furniture in Maryland, 1740-1940

The Maryland Historical Society has recently published a catalog of its collection of furniture entitled Furniture in Maryland, 1740-1940. The book is 342 pages long and contains 24 color plates and 283 black and white photos. Price: \$32-50 plus \$2.50 for postage and handling. Maryland residents add 5% sales tax. Make checks payable to the Maryland Historical and mail to the-society at 201 W. Monument Street, Baltimore, Md. 21201.

This is the monthly newsletter of the Prince George's County Historical Society. P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Md. 20737 Dues: \$5.00 per year

NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince George's County Historical Society**

Vol. XIII, no. 1 January 1985

The Winter Recess

There, will be no meetings of the Prince George's County Historical Society in January or February. The first meeting of the year will be on Saturday, March 9.

Victorian Valentines on Display

The Surratt Society will display Victorian valentines at the Surratt House in Clinton on Saturday and Sunday, February 9 and 10, from noon until 4 p.m. Included will be the old-fashioned, three-dimensional pop-ups and the ornate, lacy, sentimental cards of days past. There will also be demonstrations of paper cutting, calligraphy, and chocolate dipping. Hand-dipped chocolates, as well as reproduction valentines will be on sale. A calligrapher will stand ready to inscribe the old-fashioned cards for you in time for St. Valentine's Day.

The Surratt House is located at 9110 Brandywine Road, Clinton. The house was built in the early 1850s and served as Surrattsville's tavern and post office during the Civil War. The mistress of the house, Mrs. Mary Surratt, was swept up in the tragedy of the Lincoln assassination--but her story is well known. The Surratt House is open Thursdays through Sundays. Admission is \$1.00 for adults, 50 cents for school children, and 75 cents for senior citizens. Phone 868-1121.

The Marlborough Hunt Club

The Marlborough Hunt Club was the subject of a finely-illustrated story in the December 1984 issue of the magazine Maryland Horse. Entitled "Marlborough Hunt Club Adjusts to Modern Times," the article reported the club's introduction of new foxhounds from Pennsylvania into its pack. The vast expanses of open countryside are disappearing from Prince George's County, even in the less-developed south, so there has come a need for foxhounds bred for hunting in more restricted confines. The Pennsylvania hounds fit that bill. The Pennsylvania hounds are also "deer proof"--i.e. they will not be confused by the scent of deer. With less farming now than in the past, deer are returning in greater numbers to southern Prince George's County, so "deer proof" hounds are necessary for good hunting.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696**

The Marlborough Hunt Club was established in 1936. Its clubhouse is at Green Landing on the Patuxent River, not far from Upper Marlboro. The house was once the home of the Patuxent Gun Club, founded 1889. The Society's meeting in November 1979 was held at the Marlborough Hunt Club. We must not neglect to mention, too, that the hounds of the Marlborough Hunt have a most distinguished bloodline. They are descendants of the hounds Robert Brooke brought with him when he came to Southern Maryland in 1650.

Maryland Horse is one of many periodicals devoted to Maryland history and culture received by the library of the Prince George's County Historical Society.

#### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society

		<u>Sponsor</u>
Cynthia R. Ochronek	College Park	E. Walters
Florian Thayn	Cheverly	F. De Marr
Dr. Patricia F. Cunniff	University Park	F. De Marr
Mr. & Mrs. Roy Licari	Fort Washington	A. Virta
Mr. & Mrs. R. Daniel Howard	Bowie	F. De Marr

#### Margaret T. Slingluff

We regret to report the passing of Margaret T. Slingluff on December 4, 1984 at the age of 96. Miss Slingluff lived at Melford, a historic home in the Bowie-Collington vicinity, and was a charter member of the Prince George's County Historical Society. She is survived by her nieces and nephews.

#### Maryland Antiques Show and Sale

Sponsored by the Maryland Historical Society to benefit its many educational programs, the Maryland Antiques Show and Sale will be held this year at the Baltimore Convention Center on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, February 14 to 16, from noon until 9 p.m. and on Sunday, February 17, from noon until 6 p.m. Admission is \$5.00 (\$4.00 for members), and the catalog is \$5.00 (\$7.00 by mail). There will be 35 exhibitors. Phone: 301-685-3750, ext. 322.

#### Riverdale Book Shop to Close on February 1

Lovers of old books will be disappointed to hear that the Riverdale Book Shop will be closing February 1. Located on Rhode Island Avenue about a block from Queensbury Road, it has been a local institution for decades. Until February 1--clearance prices!

### Owners of Runaway Slaves in Prince George's County, 1745-1790

The problem of runaway slaves was one of the most serious problems slaveowners faced in colonial Prince George's County. The problem was two-fold, economic and social. In the tobacco plantation economy of colonial Prince George's County, dependent as it was on forced labor, a runaway slave was literally capital on the run, a considerable investment in flight. A runaway slave was also a challenge to the social order--a social order that required the obedience of the black man to the white. When a slave fled, then, it was in the economic interest of the slaveowner and the social interest of the community at large to secure his return.

We have no idea how many slaves ever fled from the plantations of Prince George's County. A recently published work, however, offers a glimpse into the world of the runaway slave. It is entitled Runaway Slave Advertisements: A Documentary History from the 1730s to 1790. Published in 1985 by Greenwood Press of Westport, Conn., this four-volume set republishes the notices slaveowners placed in colonial newspapers advertising runaways and seeking their capture and return. The advertisements were compiled by Lathan A. Windley, and Volume 2 is devoted exclusively to notices placed in two early Maryland newspapers, the Maryland Gazette of Annapolis (founded 1745) and Maryland Journal & Baltimore Advertiser of Baltimore (founded 1773). (There were no newspapers published in Prince George's County until the 19th century.) The ads are reprinted in full in chronological order, in two sections (one for each newspaper). There is no place or owner index in the book, however, so we publish below a list of advertisements that could be identified as Prince George's County ads. They are listed here alphabetically by owner. Since most owners did state their place of residence, this list should include most of the Prince George's planters who advertised.

The slave flights listed here are probably just a small percentage of those that took place during these years. Most flights were most likely local, short-term affairs, for the difficulties a runaway encountered were immense. Nevertheless, these advertisements offer a fascinating glimpse into the world of the slaveowner and slave, 1745-1790.

We begin by reprinting three advertisements. Two of the three report the flight of female slaves. We should admit that this selection, while interesting, is highly unrepresentative, for by far most advertisements reported male runaways.

"RUN AWAY from the Subscriber, near Upper Marlborough in Prince George's County, on the 24th of February last, two Negroes, viz. a Man and a Woman; the Man is a lusty well made Fellow; the Woman a tall slim Wench, full Eyed: They have carried sundry Cloaths with them, and are supposed to be harboured by the Negro Quarters.

"Whoever will bring the said Negroes to the Subscriber, shall have Forty Shillings Reward, if taken less than ten miles from home: Four Pounds if more than ten Miles from home; and Ten Pounds, if taken over Manockesy [Monocacy]; paid by LINGAN WILSON."

--Maryland Gazette, Sept. 6, 1745

"RAN AWAY from the Subscriber, in August last, a Negro lad named Dick, about 17 years of Age, 4 Feet 7 or 8 inches high, well-set, has remarkable red Gums, which he shows much when he speaks or laughs, has a sly cunning Look, which corresponds very well with his Disposition, is very talkative, speaks plain, and, if examined, can tell a very plausible current Tale. He is notorious for running away, having constantly practised it since he was Six Years of Age, in return for which he has received Two

remarkable Certificates; the first, Stripes, by Whipping; the other, having the Letter D branded, on his A-se, which, however, may be now wore out, as he only received a slight Impression. Notwithstanding the Space of Time since his last Elopement, he has never been heard of but once, which was about Six Weeks after, I am therefore inclined to think he is clandestinely detained in some remote Part of this, or the neighbouring Provinces.

".Whoever takes up, or secures said Negro, so as I may get him again, shall have, if taken in this, or Charles County, Three Pounds; if in any other County in this Province, Five Pounds; if in the Province of Pennsylvania or Virginia, Ten Pounds; and, if in Carolina, Twenty Pounds, and reasonable traveling Charges, if brought home, paid by EDWARD DYER." [Ad headed: Prince-George's County, July 28, 1767]

---Maryland Gazette, Aug. 6, 1767

"RAN AWAY, the 29th of July 1783, from the subscriber, living in Prince George's county, near the Woodyard, a short thick mulatto wench named Phillis, thirty years of age, hath a large sear on one of her cheeks; had on, when she went away, an old shift, old white linsey petticoat, and short gown, with a black stripe round the back; I bought her of Mr. Robert Darnall, and she may pass for his property, may change her name and cloaths, and pass for a free woman. Two years ago she ran away and hired herself to Mr. John Wynn, of Prince George's county, as a free woman, by the name of Charity Maginnis, and likewise to Mr. Samuel Beary, of Charles County, by the name of Charity Swan. Whoever will deliver the said wench to me, shall receive four hard dollars if taken in this county; if in Charles or St. Mary's counties eight dollars; if a further distance a reasonable satisfaction, paid by me IGNATIUS HARDY.

"N.B. This same wench was sold for running away, and hath been very troublesome to me; she is a great liar and a rogue, and artful in passing with many idle tales in her own neighbourhood, pretending to be sent about my business, and at the same time is run away. She hath made away with several articles of my property for her own; they are too tedious to mention; therefore I desire all manner of persons to have no manner of dealings with her, nor to harbour her one hour except my note from this date hereafter, but take her and deliver her to me, and they shall receive the above reward.

"N.B. I do hereby certify, that the said wench is a slave."

ROBERT DARNALL  
--Maryland Gazette, Nov. 13, 1783

Slaveowners Reporting Runaway Slaves  
from Prince George's County  
1745-1790

MG is Maryland Gazette, MJBA is Maryland Journal & Balt. Advertiser

1. Ashton, John. near Bellair. MG 6/15/7-5. Tom, a shoemaker.
2. Barker, William. MG 6/23/68. Register, a blacksmith.
3. Beall, John. Bladensburg. MJBA 6/20/86 Jack.
4. Beall, Joshua. MG 11/16/86. Tom, passes by name Thomas Jenifer,
5. Berry, Ben, Jr. 5 miles from Bladensburg. MG 10/10/71. Tom. (Tom was born near Philadelphia)
6. Boarman, Garrard. near Bladensburg, on road to Georgetown. MG 7/15/84. Phil.
7. Boarman, Garrard. 3 miles from Bladensburg. MG 9/16/84. James.
8. Boone, Henry. MG 6/22/86. Bob. (Reports violence)
9. Boswell, John Baptist. lower part of co. MG 8/24/75. Ireland.
10. Boucher, John Thomas. MJBA 8/12/80. Cyrus.

11. Boucher, John Thomas. near Georgetown. MG 10/2/77. Charles. (bought him of Mr. George Nailor of Nottingham)
12. Boucher, John Thomas. near Rock Creek. MG 8/25/80. Cyrus. (Cyrus born in Talbot County)
13. Bowie; William, III. near Upper Marlboro. MG 9/30/90. Jacob. (Jacob born on Herring Bay; once property of Samuel Chew) I purchased about yr. ago from Col. Pigman of Montgomery Co.
14. Bowie, William, III. Upper Marlboro. MG 9/14/86. Charles. (purchased from Notley Young Esq. on Potomac River)
15. Bradford, Henry. Bladensburg. MG 8/14/77. John.
16. Brogden, William. MG 3/26/89. Jack. (Jack robbed some persons neat Piscataway)
17. Brookes, Benjamin. near Upper Marlboro. MG 5/25/75. Sam Locker., (Sam Locker's wife lived at Walter Bowie's near Forest chapel)
18. Calvert, Benedict. near Woodyard. MJBA 9/2/83. John, blacksmith
19. Calvert, Benedict. MG 5/26/85. Archibald,
20. Calvert, Benedict. Mt. Airy. MJBA 4/27/84. William Anderson,
21. Calvert, Benedict (former owner). MG 12/23/84. Lucy (advertisement placed by Archibald Golder, of Annapolis)
22. Clagett, Thomas, Piscataway. MG 6/10/73,. Frank (who has lately taken upon himself the practice of physick).
23. Clarke, Mary. near Bellair. MG 12/20/81. James.
24. Clarke, Thomas (former owner). MG 4/20/69. Charles, waiting man, (advertisement placed by Wm. Foard, Sr., Piscataway)
25. Cooledge, Judson. Near Selby's Landing, on Patuxent. MG 8/23/70. Charles and Scotland.
26. Crackells, Thomas. Upper Marlboro, MG 11/27/77. Peter. the prpty of Mr. James McCubbin)
27. Darnall, Nicholas Lowe. near Upper Marlboro. MJBA 12/22/89. Charity. (practices midwifery; goes by name Sarah Dorsey)
28. Darnall, Robert (former owner). MG 11/13/83. Phillis (advertisement placed by himself and Ignatius Hardy)
29. Digges, William, Jr., on Patuxent River, near Upper Marlboro. MG 2/6/55. Sam.
30. Duvall, Alexander. MG 12/29/85. Charles.
31. Duvall, Benjamin, MG 6/15/48. Swilli
32. Duvall, Zadoc. MG 7/11/88. Robin (male) (formerly property of Richard William Wells)
33. Dyer, Edward MG 8/6/67. Dick.
34. Dyer, Thomas. near Piscataway MG 9/26/76. Tom.
35. Edelen, Basil. Eastern Branch: MG 2/23/86. Matthew. (father and mother belong to Mrs. Bradford, near Bladensburg)
36. Edelen, Edward. Piscataway. MJBA 9/12/83. Tom, calls self Tom Holland. (ran away and inlisted as soldier last year)
37. Edelen, Samuel. near Piscataway. MG 5/25/86. Will.
38. Elson, Archibald. I near Snowden Iron Works. MJBA 8/3/84. Philip Nicholls.
39. Eltings, Cornelius. near Great Falls. MG 1/25/49. Dan.
40. Evans, Henry. near Cliffords Ferry. MJBA 12/25/81. Tom. (formerly property of Robert Ferguson, 30 miles above Frederick

(To be concluded in the next issue)

### Mareen Duvall of Middle Plantation

The Society of Mareen Duvall Descendants is pleased to announce 'the second reprinting of Mareen Duvall of Middle Plantation, by Harry Wright Newman. Originally published in 1952, the book contains 588 pages and is a hardback edition handsomely bound in red with gold lettering. Mareen Duvall of Middle Plantation is the interpretive story of Mareen Duvall, Gent., from France, who settled in Maryland about 1655, with a genealogical history of his descendants and the role they played in the





NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince George's County Historical  
Society**

Vol. XIII, no. 2-3 Feb.-March 1985

The March Meeting: The Death of Walter Bowie

"The Death of Walter Bowie" will be the topic of the March meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society, to be held on Saturday, March 9, at Riversdale, the Calvert mansion. Walter Bowie was one of Mosby's Rangers, a Confederate officer in the War Between the States, and he was killed in Montgomery County during a guerilla foray in 1864. James O. Hall will tell the fascinating story of this Confederate Prince Georgian and his untimely demise. The meeting will begin at 2 p.m.

James O. Hall is well known to all who have an interest in the Civil War. He was born at Afton, Oklahoma, more years back than he will admit. He is a graduate of Northeastern State College, Tahlequah, and taught school for four years: two years in a one-room country school and two years in a large high school. In 1941, after near starvation on a teacher's pay, he went to work for the U.S. Dept. of Labor in Texas and came to Washington in 1956. He retired from that job in 1972. During World War II he served almost four years in the Army, both as an enlisted man and as an officer. He has written and lectured on Civil War subjects for many years. Mr. Hall lives in McLean, Va.

Riversdale, the Calvert mansion, is located at 4811 Riverdale Road in Riverdale. Refreshments will be served after the meeting, and guests are welcome. Join us for the first meeting of the Spring season.

Thinking Ahead: St. George's Day

This year the St. George's Day Dinner will commemorate the 289th anniversary of the founding of Prince George's County (which occurred on April 23--St. George's Day--1696). The dinner will be held at the University of Maryland Student Union on St. George's day itself, Tuesday, April 23. As at previous dinners, the Society will present St. George's Day Awards to individuals and organizations who have made outstanding contributions to the preservation of our county's heritage. If you have nominations to make, send them by March 11 to President John Giannetti in care of the Society at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Md. 20737.

**PRINCE GEORGE A, S COUNTY, MARYLAND  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APR I L 23, 1696**



## The National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's most prestigious list of historic sites. The register is maintained by the U.S. Dept. of the Interior, and includes districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology, and culture. To date, forty-six properties in Prince George's County have been placed on the Register. We publish below the list of those properties.

B & O Railroad Station, Laurel  
Avondale Mill, Laurel  
Laurel High School, Laurel  
Ammendale Institute, Beltsville  
Snow Hill, Laurel  
Montpelier, Laurel  
Rossborough Inn, U of Md.  
College Park Airport  
Hitching Post Hill, Hyattsville  
Riversdale, Riverdale  
Hyattsville Armory  
George Washington House, Bladensburg  
Magruder House, Bladensburg  
Bostwick, Bladensburg  
Mount Hope, Cheverly  
Holy Trinity Church, Collington  
Melford, Bowie  
Williams Plains, Bowie  
Belair Mansion, Bowie  
Belair Stable, Bowie  
Beall's Pleasure, Landover  
Addison's Chapel, Seat Pleasant  
Pleasant Prospect, Mitchellville  
Bowieville, Leeland  
Concord, Walker Mill Rd.  
St. Ignatius Church, Oxon Hill  
Melwood Park, Upper Marlboro  
Mount Pleasant, Upper Marl.  
Bowling Heights, Upper Marl.  
Compton Bassett, Upper Marl.  
Kingston, Upper Marl.  
Content, Upper Marlboro  
Traband House, Upper Marl.  
Buck House, Upper Marlboro  
Oxon Hill Manor, Oxon Hill  
Fort Foote, Oxon Hill  
St. John's Church, Broad Creek  
Harmony Hall, Broad Creek  
Fort Washington  
His Lordship's Kindness, Clinton  
Surratt House, Clinton  
Pleasant Hills, Upper Marl.  
Mount Airy, Rosaryville

Bellefields, Croom  
St. Paul's Church Baden,

Those familiar with Prince George's County's historic places will undoubtedly wonder why some important properties are not on the list. The application requirements for inclusion on the Register are quite rigorous and involved, and the historical community here has not been able to cover all eligible properties yet.

The National Register recognizes districts of historic merit as well as sites, and there are three such districts in this county: Greenbelt, Hyattsville and Takoma Park.

The National Register of Historic Places should not be confused with the county's own list of Historic sites. The county recognizes approximately 180 historic sites, and through the Historic Preservation Commission, exercises a degree of architectural control over the exterior of them. Inclusion on the county list does not guarantee listing on the National Register. The county list is published in the booklet Historic Sites and Districts Plan, available from the Park and Planning Commission for a small fee.

#### Owners of Runaway Slaves in Prince George's County, 1745-1790

In the last issue of News and Notes, we began publishing the names of Prince George's County planters who advertised for the return of runaway slaves in the Maryland Gazette and the Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser, 1745-1790. The advertisements are printed in full in Lathan Windley's compilation, Runaway Slave Advertisements: A Documentary History from the 1730s to 1790, volume 2 (Westport, Conn. Greenwood Press, 1983). The compilation is not indexed by place, so this listing should serve as an index to Prince George's advertisements placed in those two newspapers.

The list concludes below. The planter's name is listed first, followed by his place of residence (if given), issue of the newspaper, and name of slave. For the full text of the ad, the reader should turn to Windley (where they are printed in chronological order), or to microfilm of the newspapers themselves. The Enoch Pratt Library and Maryland Historical Society Library, both in Baltimore, have the two newspapers on microfilm. McKeldin Library at the University of Maryland and the State Archives, in Annapolis (formerly the Hall of Records), hold the Maryland Gazette on microfilm.

#### Slaveowners Reporting Runaway Slaves from Prince George's County 1745-1790

MG is Maryland Gazette; MJBA is Maryland Journal & Balt. Advertiser

41. Foard, William, Sr. near Piscataway. MG 4/20/69. Charles. (Foard was guardian of Amey Sprigg, "little daughter of late Mr. Gilbert Sprigg." Charles.. formerly belonged to Mr. Thomas Clarke of Pr. Geo. County)
42. Forester, Ralph. near Brick Church, Forest of Pr. Geo. Co. MG 8/25/80. Caesar.
43. Forester, Ralph (former owner). Hill's Delight. MG, 3/1/87.
44. Gantt, John. near Upper Marlboro, MG 7/23/61. Anthony.
45. Gantt Levi. MG 5/31/87. Luke
46. Gantt, Thomas. MG 8/13/61. Syrus.
47. Gantt, Thomas, Jr MG 7/8/56. Cyrus.
48. Gantt, Thomas, Jr: MG 6/29/58. Cyrus.
49. Gordon, George. at Rock Creek. MG 11/2/48. Peter

50. Hall, Benjamin (of Benj.), on Patuxent Riv., nr. Governor's Bridge MG 4/10/83. Jenny.
51. Hall, Richard B. MJBA 11/4/77. John. (formerly belonged to James Miller of Bladensburg; brought from Philadelphia)
52. Hall, Richard Bennet. near Queen Anne. MJBA 8/20/73. Prince.
53. Hamilton, Alexander. Piscataway. MJBA 7/13/87. Harry.
54. Hanson, Samuel. Nottingham. MG 10/11/59. Cato.
55. Hanson, Thomas (former owner). Oxon Hill. MJBA 7/7/78. Stepney (a-man). (ad by Alex. Henderson, Fairfax Co., Va.)
56. Hardy, Ignatius, near Woodyard. MG 11/13/83. Phillis. (Bought of Robert Darnall; has run away before and used name Charity McGinnis; hired herself to John Wynn)
57. Harris, Benj. near Piscataway. MG 12/31/72. Jack; calls him John Gladding)
58. Hawkins, James. near Piscataway. MG 2/9/75, (unnamed slave)
59. Hepburn, J. Rock Creek. MG 7/17/60. Will. (Will's master lives in Upper Marlboro)
60. Hill, Clement. near Upper Marlboro. MJBA 10/11/85. Michael. (Michael has a brother in Alexandria)
61. Hill, Clement. near Upper Marlboro. MJBA 6/23 78. Frank,
62. Hollyday, Clement. near Nottingham. MJBA 9/9/88. Poll, was then pregnant.
63. Hopkins, Gerard, Jr. MG 8/9/64. Cyrus.
64. Jenkins, John. near Bladensburg. MG 3/12/72. Harry.
65. Johnson, Rinaldo. Aquasco. MJBA 9/23/83. Anthony. Anthony talks of relatives at Fielder Bowie's, where called self Jacob)
66. Lamar, John, Jr, MG 7/18/54. Peter (formerly belonged to Mrs. Sarah Beatie, in Anne Arundel Co.)
67. Lowndes, Christopher. Bladensburg. MG 9/13/64. Joe.
68. Magruder, D. Upper Marlboro. MG 3/1/87. Joe. (in flight said he belonged to Ralph Forester of Hill's Delight)
69. Magruder, D. MG 11/6/88. Simon.
70. Mauduit, Jasper. near Bladensburg. MG 9/13/59. Sambo.
71. McCubbin, James (former owner). MG 11/27/77- Peter. (ad placed by Thomas Crackells, Upper Marlboro)
72. Miller, James. Bladensburg MG 1/9/72. Jack, a carpenter.
73. Miller, James. Bladensburg: MG 9/72. Dick. (former master lives in Newcastle County)
74. Miller, James (former owner). Bladensburg. MJBA 11/4/77. John. (ad placed by Richard B. Hall; John brought to Md. from Philadelphia)
75. Monk, Renaldo. near Patuxent Iron Works. MG 8/11/47. young mulatto (apprentice to subscriber; belongs to John Hepburn of Upper Marlboro; seen there often)
76. Moore, George. near Bladensburg. MG, 7/7/85. Davy.
77. Mullikin, James. MJBA 3/12/82. George (raised at Pig Point, by Mr. Richard Wells)
78. Mullikin, Mrs. (former owner). MG 1/12/64. Peter. (ad placed John Kent, of Curtis Creek Iron Works)
79. Naites, George (former owner). Nottingham. MG 10/2/77. Charles. (ad placed by John Thomas Boucher, nr. Georgetown)
80. Noble, Thomas. MG 12/15 57. Forrester, Joe and Bess.
81. Orme, Ebenezer Edm. near Upper Marlboro. 7/11/71. Steven. MG
82. Parker, Mrs. Aletha. MG 5/22/77. Nace. (ad placed by Walter Smith Parker)
83. Parkert Walter Smith. near Piscataway. MG 5/22/77. Nace. (ran away from Mrs. Aletha Parker)
84. Perrie, John. near Benedict, on Patuxent River [in Pr. Geo.?] MG 5/31/64. (unnamed slave)
85. Perrie, John. near Benedict [in Pr. Geo.?] MG 10/30/73. Hammet
86. Rawlings, James. near Snowden Iron Works. MJBA 9/12/83. Sylvia. (May pass for one of Samuel Snowden's Negroes he set free)
87. Savary, P. 3 miles from Alex. ferry. MG 10/14/90. Anthony.
88. Savary, Peter. 212 miles from Harrison's ferry. MG 6/15/86. Isaac.

89. Scott, Andrew. near Bladensburg. MG 9/3/72. Charles.
  90. Scott, George (Sheriff). MG 9/29/63. Jem and Sambo
  91. Scott, Henry. near Bladensburg. MG 7/18/71. Frank. (formerly belonged to Geo. Plater, Esq., St. Mary's Co.)
  92. Smith, Basil, Sr. near Piscataway\* MG 12/3/72. Isaac.
  93. Snowden, Samuel (and John and H. Snowden). Patuxent Iron Works. MG 6/30/74. Jacob. (Ran off with two servant-men, James Lindsey and Thomas Sutton)
  93. Snowden, Richard. Patuxent Iron Works. MG 3/31/47. Tom.
  94. Snowden, Thomas. Patuxent Iron Works. MG 7 26/87. George.
  95. Snowden, Thomas. Patuxent Iron Works. MJBA 5/5/86. Daniel.
  96. Snowden, Thomas. MJBA 8/3/87. George.
  97. Sprigg, Amey. MG 4/20/69. Charles, a "waiting-man." (Ad by Miss Sprigg's guardian, William Foard, Sr. She was "little daughter of the late Mr. Gilbert Sprigg)
  98. Stephenson, Daniel. Bladensburg. MG 8/29/71. Davie, carpenter. (Davie born on Eastern Shore; sent here by James Maccubbin of Philadelphia last Spring)
  99. Truman, James. near Magruder's Warehouse. MG 10/28/73. Lin.
  100. Tyler, Robert. MG 12/8/74. Will. (Ad describes violence)
  101. Wade, Lancelot. near Piscataway. MG 6/25/89. Phil. (Phil brought from St. Mary's Co.)
  102. Waring, John. Mount Pleasant, nr. Upper Marlboro. MG 12/2/84. Hess, alias Hezekiah Scott. (Hess' mother lives in Annapolis)
  103. Waring, Richard Marsham. MG 4/29/62. John.
  104. Waters, Samuel (former owner). MG 2/14/60. Jem. (Ad placed by Caleb Dorsey, Curtis Creek Works)
  105. Welsh, Benjamin. near Snowden's Iron Works. MG 4/30/61. Dick.
  106. West, Stephen. MJBA 5/5/86. Joe. (Ad placed by Edward Gaither of Anne Arundel County)
  107. Whitenhall, John. near ferry on Eastern Branch. MG 6/8/48. Peter.
  108. Wilson, Ligan. near Upper Marlboro. MG 9/6/45. man and woman.
  109. Wootton, William T. MG 8/25/68. Philip and Charles.
  110. Wynn, John. MG 11/13/83. (Ad placed by Ignatius Hardy; his runaway slave Phillis ran away two years ago and hired herself to Wynn under name of Charity McGinnis)
  111. Young, Notley (former owner). On Patowmack. MG 9/14/86. Charles. (ad placed by William Bowie 3d)
  112. Young, Notley. mouth of Eastern Branch. MG 7/8/62. William, a carpenter.
  113. Young, Notley. mouth of Eastern Branch. MG 1/21/62. Billy Carroll, a carpenter.
- Supplemental listing
114. Hepburn, John. near Upper Marlboro. MG 8/11/47. young mulatto. (Ad placed by Renaldo Monk, near Patuxent Iron Works)
  115. Magruder, Dennis. Upper Marlboro. MG 5.18.86. Simmes (lately sold as blacksmith by Mr. Richard Watkins, AA County)
  116. Merriken, William. near Baldwin's Tavern. MG 91 9/4/83. Margaret Fenton.
- [End of lists]

### Prince Georgians in the West

The steady stream of settlers from the East who tamed the great American West included Prince Georgians in their number. Thomas William Clagett was one of them. Born at the Clagett plantation Weston, near Upper Marlboro, in 1815, he served in the Maryland legislature before emigrating to Iowa in 1850. He was a lawyer, and served as legislator and circuit court judge in his adopted state. An interesting story about Judge Clagett is found in the Cyclopaedia of American Biography, under the biography of fellow Iowan Caleb Baldwin, also a jurist.

"Judge Baldwin," according to the Cyclopaedia, "was a man of immense stature, weighing in his prime 430 pounds, and was probably the largest man in public life, either in the state of Iowa or in the nation. The story is told of an early meeting of the Iowa Agricultural Society which was slimly attended, when the secretary said to Judge Clagett, its first president, 'What shall I say, Judge, about the meeting, through the press?' 'Well,' replied Clagett, impressively, 'publish to the world that a large and respectable meeting was held.' 'Why,' said the secretary, 'isn't that stretching it a little?' 'Not at all,' responded Clagett, 'Baldwin makes it large and you and I make it respectable.'"

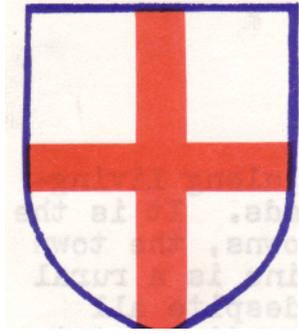
Judge Clagett's son Thomas (1834-1910) did not stay in the West, but returned to Prince George's County. He established a home of his own here and named it Keokuk--a little bit of Iowa in Prince George's County. Another son of Judge Clagett's achieved some prominence in Montana. William Horace Clagett represented the Montana Territory in Congress and was the sponsor of the bill that created Yellowstone National Park in 1872.

Another Prince Georgian who went West was Henry McC. Ward. The bible of Prince George's genealogy--Effie Gwynn Bowie's Across the Years in Prince George's County--does not include Mr. Ward, or tell us what the McC. stood for, but there was a Ward family, with a youngster of about the right age with the first initial H living in the Piscataway district in 1850, according to that year's census. Mr. Ward's story comes from his obituary, published in the Prince Georgian newspaper of June 10, 1870.

"We learn that Mr. Henry McC. Ward, a native of this county, died in Tuscon, Arizona Territory, on Wednesday, the 19th of January, 1870, in the 34th year of his age. Mr. Ward left his native State about 15 years ago, and became a 'pioneer of the far West.' By his sterling integrity, the geniality of his manners, and by his energy and perseverance in whatever he undertook, he rapidly made many friends, not only among civilians, but officers of the army and officials generally. He occupied a seat in the third Legislature of the Territory, and at the expiration of the term was re-elected, but resigned on account of ill-health. He was afterwards appointed collector of customs, the duties of which office he discharged honorably and satisfactorily to the Government. A decline in health compelled him to retire from active life, and he traveled in Mexico with the hope of improvement. Obtaining partial relief, he accepted the position of assessor of internal revenue, which office he held until the date of his death. He leaves two children in Tuscon, a mother, sister and brothers in this county, and many relatives in Washington City."

--Alan Virta, Editor

The Prince George's County Historical Society      Riverdale, Md.



NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince  
George's  
County  
Historical  
Society**

Vol. XIII, no. 4 April 1985

St. George's Day Dinner:  
April 23

All members of the Society, their families, and friends, are cordially invited to attend the twelfth annual St. George's Day Dinner, to be held on Tuesday, April 23 (St. George's Day) at the University of Maryland. This year's dinner will celebrate the 289th anniversary of the county's founding, which took place, by decree of the General Assembly, on St. George's Day 1696. The dinner will be held in the Grand Ballroom of the University of Maryland Student Union. A cocktail reception will begin at 6:30 p.m., the dinner at 7:30.

In addition to celebrating the founding of Prince George's County, the Society will honor several individuals and organizations for their contributions to the preservation of our county's heritage with the presentation of St. George's Day awards. The Hall of Fame will induct another member with the unveiling of a portrait to be placed in the County Courthouse. This year's honoree will be the scientist James Harris Rogers of Hyattsville.

Invitations for the dinner are being mailed to all members of the Society. Please note the cut-off date for reservations. Tickets will not be sold at the door. Plan to be with us!

No Meeting in April

Because of the St. George's Day Dinner, there will be no regular Society meeting in April. The next meeting is scheduled for May 11.

Historic District Hearings: April 15 and 16 (Evenings)

In 1984 the Historic Preservation Commission voted to create the first two local historic districts in Prince George's County at Broad Creek and Aquasco. Some residents in both districts oppose district designation and have appealed to the County Council. The Council will hear testimony pro and con on April 15 and 16 and render a final verdict on the creation of these two historic districts.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696**

The proposed Broad Creek District is centered along Livingston Road between Oxon Hill and Fort Washington roads. It is the site of one of Prince George's County's earliest towns, the town of Aire. Aire disappeared long ago, but what remains is a rural neighborhood, significant because it has survived despite all the development around it. It is the purpose of the district to preserve the rural nature of the neighborhood (a reminder of the past in an area of rapid development) and to enhance the setting of four important 18th-century historic sites located there: St. John's Church, Harmony Hall, Piscataway House, and the oldest, the ancient ruins of Want Water house.

The proposed Aquasco district is located on the other side of the county, in Prince George's southeastern corner. Aquasco is as far away from Washington as one can get in Prince George's County; it is still a rural farming village. Aquasco grew up during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and there are quite a few important 19<sup>th</sup> century landmarks in Aquasco to remind us of its early days. The purpose of the district is to help preserve one of Prince George's County's last remaining rural villages.

If the County Council approves district designation, the Historic Preservation Commission (working through Local Advisory Committees) will gain review power over new construction and architectural changes in the districts. Unlike some districts, elsewhere, though, the Historic Preservation Commission will not have the power to freeze out new construction nor dictate one architectural style in either of the districts. Its primary function will be to preserve the rural and historic nature of the neighborhoods through control of size, scale and setback of buildings.

The County-Council hearings on the Broad Creek and Aquasco districts will be held on the evenings of April 15 and 16 in the County Administration Building, Upper Marlboro. Tentatively, the Broad Creek district is scheduled for April 15 and the Aquasco district for April 16. For final details on the schedule including times call the Historic Preservation Commission at 952-3520.

### Felix Cristofane

We regret to inform the membership that Felix Cristofane, a member of our Society for many years, died on March 14. A native of Washington, D.C., Felix was an attorney and a veteran of World War I. For many years he was an official of the Government Printing Office. He lived at the colonial home, Bostwick, at Bladensburg, with his wife Susanna, who is a director of the Society. To Susanna and her daughter we extend our deepest sympathies.

### "Scenes and Circumstances of the Olden Time"

Broad Creek is a small estuary of the Potomac River in southwestern Prince George's County. In the 18th century it was a busy place, for here was located the village of Aire, a place with a tobacco warehouse, a landing, a shipyard, stores, taverns, a church, and numerous residences. The old tobacco port disappeared like so many other lost towns in Southern Maryland; today it is a rural neighborhood. The name Aire has disappeared too; the place is now called Broad Creek, for the estuary. A historic district has been proposed for Broad Creek, centered around four 18th century properties along Livingston Road. (See the article on the County Council hearings.) A great deal of modern development now surrounds Broad Creek---on Indian Head Highway, Fort Washington Road, and Oxon Hill Road--but somehow the old rural neighborhood has escaped too much modern intrusion. The fate of the proposed historic district--and the fate of Broad Creek--is now in the hands of the County Council.

Broad Creek has been recognized for its antiquity and historical importance for a long time. A booklet entitled Some Old Historic Landmarks of Virginia and Maryland, written by W.H. Snowden late in the 19th century, devoted some attention to Broad Creek. Subtitled "A Hand-Book for the Tourist over the

Washington, Alexandria and Mount Vernon Railway" (a Virginia line), the booklet offers a glimpse at Broad Creek at the turn of the century. It conjures up an image that is not unlike the Broad Creek of today, a neighborhood that many in this county would like to see preserved as a reminder of what Prince George's County--and particularly the Potomac Shore and the Indian Head Highway corridor--was like before the suburbanization of recent years.

From the 6th edition (1904) of Snowden's Some Old Historic Landmarks of Virginia and Maryland:

#### Broad Creek--Old Church and Old Houses

Four miles below Alexandria, on the Maryland shore...is the estuary or bay of Broad Creek. There Washington often went, as he tells us in his diary, with his friend and neighbor, Diggs, of Warburton Manor [across from Mount Vernon in Prince George's County] to throw his line for the finny denizens of the still waters. At the head of this bay, where now only the light draught scow boat can ascend the silt-filled channel, large schooners used to lie at their moorings and load with cargoes of tobacco, wheat, and corn for foreign ports. It was a busy neighborhood then, when the odd and ancient looking houses, which have stood through the changes of one hundred and fifty to two hundred years, were comparatively new, and the surrounding lands were fertile and produced abundantly all kinds of farm products.

There is much in this isolated locality to interest the curious delver into the scenes and circumstances of the olden time. The weather-beaten tenements, so dilapidated and forlorn in appearance; the impoverished fields and the forsaken landing place with never a freight nor cargo to be loaded or discharged, will murmur to him, as he thoughtfully scans the desolation, in audible stories of how the generations of toilers came and went, how they fretted out life's fitful fever, and were at last gathered from their labor of success or failure to the densely populated burial-place of the settlements.

The creek meanders down from the far uplands in bright rivulets, touching in its course the borders of many an old home whose mournful landmarks of falling tenement or blackened hearthstones or deserted springs are mute but eloquent reminders of the long faded years when those now impoverished fields in their primitive fertility yielded to the tobacco and maize planters their fifty and a hundred fold.

More than two hundred years ago an Episcopal church was organized here by the first dwellers. The parish was first known as Piscataway, afterwards King George's, and the Church of St. John's. The first house of worship was of logs and built in 1694, rebuilt with bricks in 1722, and enlarged to its present dimensions in 1763. John Addison, William Hatton, William Hutchinson, William Tannahill, John Emmet, and John Smallwell were of its first vestry, and Rev. George Tubman its first rector. This church antedates all other Episcopal churches of the Potomac region of Maryland. The leading spirit in the organization of this church was Col. John Addison a member of the Governor's council and an uncle of the celebrated Joseph Addison [English essayist].

The burial place of the old kirk is densely peopled with the dead of departed congregations. Over most of the graves is a wilderness of tangled vines. Many of the stones are levelled and sunken nearly out of sight, with inscriptions worn and hard to decipher. Hundreds of graves have no stones at all, presumably of the earliest burials. A broad marble slab lies over the remains of Enoch Lyells, killed in a duel, August 7, 1805, with the following inscription:

"Go, our dear son, obey the call of Heaven;  
Thy sins were few--we trust they are forgiven.  
Yet of, what pen can paint the parents' woe?  
God only can punish the hand that gave the blow."

The quarrel of the duelist had its origin in offensive remarks made at a ball in the village of Piscataway, and the duel took place at Johnson's Spring, on the Virginia shore. The young man who was killed and who had made the remarks was averse to the encounter, but was goaded on to his death by his father and mother. His antagonist was named Bowie, who afterwards fled to the new settlement of the southwest. To him belongs the unenviable reputation of originating the bowie knife. [This is legendary and not supported by the historical record.]

The hip-roofed house over two hundred years old still remains on the shore of Broad Creek where the wounded man was carried by his friends to die. [The house Want Water, now in ruins] It stands lonely and ghost like, scarred and blackened by the mutations of time, a grim memorial not only of the duel, but of the more prosperous days of the locality, when square rigged vessels even, sailed from the now lonely and desolate place with cargoes of tobacco and other valuable freight of a fertile and productive region.

Long after the event of the duel the old house was...an object of aversion; and even to the present time stories handed down through the generations, are told of strange lights which were seen flitting and hovering over the locality, on dark and dismal nights. These lights if seen as averred, may not have been due entirely to the distorted imagination ... but as well to the phosphorescent exhalations from the decaying matter of the surrounding marshes. [End]

Editor's note: The story of the duel is a most tragic one. Young Enoch Lyles does rest at Broad Creek, in the cemetery of old St. John's Church. His story will be told in the next issue of News and Notes.

#### A Short, Bow-legged Old Man

"RAN AWAY from the Subscriber, at Broad Creek in Prince George's County, on the 31st of December last, a Servant Man named Charles Brown, a Miller by Trade, a short old Man, bow legged, and has lost all his Teeth. He had on and with him a new blue Frize Coat, two Cotton Jackets, and old Cloth Coat and Breeches; and hath a blackish Bitch with him, somewhat resembling a Fox-Hound. He is a very roguish Fellow, and has assumed several Names, one of which is Burgess. He is supposed to be gone towards Baltimore County, where he formerly sheltered himself ten Years, and tended a Mill near Baltimore Town. Whoever will take up the said Servant, and secure him so as his Master may have him again, shall, if taken out of Prince George's County, have Ten Shillings Reward, more than the Law allows.

--Humphrey Batt"

From the Maryland Gazette, January 31, 1750. Charles Brown was a white servant, not a slave. Humphrey Batt, his master, operated the shipyard at Broad Creek and owned the Want Water house. The Broad Creek tobacco warehouse was built on his land.

#### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

Tom and June Goodrich	South Bowie	Sponsor
Doris Mullings	Landover Hills	Wm. O. Long
Jean W. Hahn	Upper Marlboro	A. Virta
Harold Klein	Silver Spring	J. McDonal
Catherine L. Farrell	Hyattsville	J. Giannetti
Richard Krafchik	Fort Washington	J. Giannetti
Hobart Key, Jr.	Marshall, Tex.	A. Virta

## Events in April and Early May

- April 13, Manor Ball at Oxon Hill Manor, with, dinner and dancing. 7 p.m. Phone 839-7783 or 839-1648
- April 18: Gardening in Maryland's Past, a series of lectures on gardening history in the state. Maryland Historical Society. Free, but reservations required. Phone 301-685-3750, ext. 322.
- April 23: St. George's Day Dinner
- April 27: National Colonial Farm Day, 1 to 4 p.m. Free. Demonstrations of traditional crafts, sheep shearing, fireplace cooking, children's activities. Phone 301-283-2113. The farm is on Bryan Point Road in Accokeek.
- April 27: Hyattsville 99th anniversary celebration, Magruder Park, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Phone 927-1689.
- May 5: Takoma Park House and Garden Tour, 1 to 5 p.m. Tickets \$5.00, or \$4.00 in advance. Phone: 270-8247 or 270-4048. Minibus transportation provided from Municipal Building, 7500 Maple Ave.
- May 11 Marlboro Day, Upper Marlboro
- May 11 Laurel Main Street Festival
- May 19 Hyattsville House Tour in the afternoon. Phone: 277-2508. See Hyattsville's Victorians.
- May 19: Greenbelt House and Garden Tour, in the New Deal's planned community. Phone: 474-4161

April 27-May 5: Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage.

This year the tour will cover Southern Anne Arundel County, St. Mary's County, Ellicott City, Long Green Valley (Baltimore County), Poplar Hill (Baltimore City), Frederick County, Kent County, and Talbot County. Tickets: \$10.00 each tour, \$3.00 for a single house. For a brochure, call 301-821-6033 or write the Pilgrimage at 1105-A Providence Road, Towson, Md. 21204. A tour book will be sent, for \$2.00.

## Historic Map of Prince George's County

The Maryland Heritage Committee's Historic Map of Prince George's County is now available. The map (in color) measures 25 by 38 inches, and locates 76 of the county's historic sites. Capsule histories and descriptions of each are printed on the back, and photos of 33 of them are printed either around the border or on the back. The map was produced by the University of Maryland as its contribution to Prince George's County's 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary effort. To be available at the various publicly-owned historic sites, or by calling Joyce Rumburg in Upper Marlboro at 952-4140.

The Prince George's County Historical Society, Riverdale, Md.

John Giannetti, President

Alan Virta, Editor  
474-7524

NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY AND COLLECTION

CHRISTMAS GIFTS

In our November report we asked that you remember the Library at Christmas by bringing in gifts from your attic, closet, basement or desk. Well, Margaret Marshall and Ted Bissell each brought in a large bag filled with materials. Going through these was more fun than emptying the surprises from a Christmas stocking! And, Susan Douglas brought us a copy of a popular novel written in 1876 by her grandmother, Sue Harry Clagett (b. Upper Marlboro in 1843). This work is a real collector's item. And finally, Vera Rollo contributed three volumes two of them authored by her. Our thanks to all of them for their holiday kindness! P.S.: Belated Christmas gifts are always welcome!

A TREASURE

The climax of the Christmas season was the gift, by Alan Virta, of a copy of his newly published Prince George's County. A Pictorial History. This is the first work to span the full course of Prince George's County history, from colonial to modern times. It therefore ranks with the works of Van Horn, Hinton and Effie Bowie as one of the classic basic references on county history. Copies may still be purchased at any Prince George's County office of the John Hanson Savings and Loan, the sponsor of the publication, or by mail from the Prince George's Chamber of Commerce.

Incidentally, the many fine photos in Alan Virta's book demonstrates the value of building a good photographic archive of the county. Many of these were from the Society's collection, however there is much, much more material to be gathered. Please share your old photos from the family album with us for copying.

WHITE HOUSE TAVERN

The old White House Tavern (Rhodes Tavern) located on Baltimore Avenue (Rt. 1) next to the Agricultural Research Center in Beltsville is the subject of extensive research source material deposited in the Society's library this month by one of our new members, Fred Simmons of Silver Spring. A recent graduate of the University of Maryland in Chemical Engineering, Fred has assembled eight bound volumes of information pertaining to the tavern and the old Baltimore and Washington Turnpike. Included is information on the property title, owner John Brown and his family genealogy, earlier owners Rhodes and Spurrier, the stage lines, early Beltsville area, Van Horn and his tavern, the turnpike, contemporary travelers' accounts and much more.

This material is a very welcome addition to the collection. It also provides an excellent starting point for a definitive history of the Baltimore and Washington Turnpike. Perhaps Fred will continue in this direction!

LIBRARY ACCESSIONS

<u>Author</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Donor</u>
Stein, C.F.	A Hist. of the So. Md. Soc. 1914-64	Margaret Marshall
Baltz, S.V.	A Chronicle of Belair (incl. Ogle genealogy)	Purchase
Rollo, V.F.	Your Maryland. A History	Vera Rollo
Middleton, A.P.	Tobacco Coast	Purchase
Forman, H.C.	Tidewater MD Architecture.& Gardens	Margaret Marshall

Baker, G.P.	Those Incredible Methodists	Ted Bissell
Rollo, V.F.	The Black Experience in Md	Vera Rollo
Clagett, S.H.	Her Lovers	Susan P. Douglas
Kendall, D.H.	Maryland Postal History	Purchase
	A Review of the Meetings of the	State Adm. Bd. of-
	Presidential Electors in Md. 1739-1980	Election Laws
	Laws of Md.(1867,76,78,80,84,86)	Roy Licari
Kytle, E.	Home on the Canal (C&))	Purchase
Bissell, T	Hist. of Entomology at	Bissell, Ted
	the U./Md.	
	Reubens Genealogy v. 2	Henry de Witte
	Peabody Heights to Charles	VillageMargaret
Kelly, J.		
Marshall		
Martin, M.P.	The Flag House Story	Margaret
Marshall		
Dawson, W.E.	Hist. & Ancestry of Rev. John	
	Foster, 1735-1800 (Pr. Geo's Co.)	W.E. Dawson
Sargent, J.	Stones & Bones (P.G. Tombstones)	Purchase
Schaun, G&V.	Maryland Biographical Sketches	Vera Rollo

#### MISCELLANEA

It is encouraging to note the large number of Maryland history publications which have appeared on the market during the past year, prompted by the 350th Anniversary. . . . We received from Louise Bowen a 1934 program for the Prince George's County Republican Club's dinner in honor of Governor-elect & Mrs. Harry W. Nice which was held at the old Beaver Dam Country Club. Also received, from Edith Bagot, a program from the occasion of Eleanor Roosevelt's visit to the University of Maryland, College Park in the late 1930's. Items such as these are the fabric of local history, and are always welcome additions to our files. . . . We are still in need of volunteers, to spend an occasional Saturday afternoon at the library in order that we might keep it open to our users. Call Fred De Marr at 27.7-0711 if you can help. Even though Riversdale is scheduled to be closed at the end of June, the Library will continue to function during this period of construction with your help!

## NEWS AND NOTES FROM

# The Prince George's County Historical Society

Vol. XIII, no, 5 May 1985

### The May Meeting: The Restoration of Montpelier

More than a year after the work began, the restoration of Montpelier is complete. Its interior and exterior fabric is now in good repair, and the house is beautiful. The Prince George's County Historical Society will meet at Montpelier on Saturday, May 11, at 2 p.m., to see the results of the restoration and learn how it was done. Our guest speaker will be James T. Wollon, Jr., AIA, who supervised the work. One of the foremost restoration architects in Maryland, Mr. Wollon has been associated with several restoration projects in this county. He last spoke to the Society on the Magruder House in Bladensburg. Mr. Wollon's talk on Montpelier will be illustrated by slides, which will cover both the history of the house and the restoration process itself.

For those who do not know Montpelier, suffice it to say it is one of the great Georgian homes of the United States. Built in the 1780s by the Snowden family, the mansion is one of but two National Register Landmarks in Prince George's County. The grounds are beautifully landscaped. Anyone who has not seen Montpelier in the Spring should not miss this meeting.

Montpelier is located along Route 197 (Laurel-Bowie Road) a few miles south of Laurel. It is easily reached by the Baltimore-Washington Parkway. From the Parkway, exit onto Route 197 going north (a left-hand turn at the bottom of the exit ramp). Not far beyond the interchange, turn left opposite the Montpelier Shopping Center (at a traffic light), where large signs will direct you into the mansion grounds. The meeting and slide show will be held in the Arts Barn, but there will be ample opportunity to visit the house itself.

Plan to be with us for this most interesting and informative program. As always, guests are welcome and refreshments will be served.

### Reception to Celebrate Pictorial History

By now Society members should have received invitations to the County Executive's reception on May 16 celebrating the publication of Prince George's County: A Pictorial History, by Alan Virta. Please RSVP at 952-4131. The reception will be at Riversdale, at 7:30 p.m.

## **PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

### The Society and Marietta

Late in March the board of directors of the Society met to discuss the problem of the Society headquarters. At present the headquarters and library are cramped into one small room in the slave quarters at Riversdale. The situation has become quite unsatisfactory, and the board directed the president to meet with officials of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (the owners of Riversdale) to seek more space there.

The results of President John Giannetti's meeting was summarized in this recent letter of his to the board:

"Several weeks ago I met with officials at Park and Planning to ask for more space at Riversdale. There just doesn't seem to be an answer to our problems at that location.

"However, we were given the option of using historic Marietta as our headquarters. At first I was dismayed at leaving Riversdale, but after visiting the site with Fred De Marr and John Walton, Jr., I came away with an entirely different perspective. Locating at Marietta offers a number of advantages and opportunities."

The board met at Marietta to examine the property and discuss the commission's offer on April 27. The board voted "to approve the idea of establishing the Society's headquarters, offices, and library at Marietta and to appoint a committee to negotiate with the Park and Planning Commission."

Marietta is a lovely, old brick home located on Bell Station Road in Glenn Dale. It is near the intersection of Annapolis Road (Route 450) and the newly-cut Glenn Dale-Enterprise Road. It is visible from the newly-cut road. The home was built early in the 19th century by Gabriel Duvall, a native of this county and an associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. The setting is rural and the grounds and surrounding countryside are beautiful. The home has a modern wing with a caretaker's residence and a large, ground-floor room ideal for use as a library. A family lives in the caretaker's apartment and there is an elaborate security system. A number of pieces of appropriate antique furniture are already in place. The Park and Planning Commission maintains the house and pays the utilities. The National Quilting Association has used the mansion as its headquarters, but they are moving out in May. The Society of Maren Duvall Descendants at the present time is restoring Judge Duvall's law office, a small building not far from the house.

There is no room large enough to hold the Society's lecture meetings at Marietta, so for the time being, they will still be held at Riversdale. As attendance at meetings continues to grow, however, even the Music Room is sometimes too small, so other arrangements may have to be made in the near future.

A move to Marietta will offer both advantages and challenges to the Society. The additional space is badly needed, and it will enable us to expand our library. Having "a house of our own" will also give the Society a chance to grow in new directions. The responsibility for opening the house for tours and its interpretation will become ours. The board is looking forward to the move, pending the working out of details with Park and Planning. The Society's June meeting will be held there, on Saturday, June 15, so all members can see the house. Details will follow next month.

### The Sanguinary Practice of Dueling

In the last issue of News and Notes we published a description of historic Broad Creek written in 1904 by W.H. Snowden. That article contained a reference to a duel fought in 1805 by two Prince Georgians which resulted in the death of one of them. In this issue of News and Notes we present an account of that duel written by Susan E. Claggett. Miss Claggett lived at Keokuk, a family home not far from Upper Marlboro. In the early years of this century she wrote historical articles for the Baltimore Sun and the Washington Post. The article below came from the Washington Post and was reprinted in the book, Duels in Virginia and Nearby Bladensburg, by Clara S. McCarty, published in Richmond by Dietz Press about ten years ago. The book, however, does not give the exact date this article appeared in the Post. Miss Claggett died in 1952 at the age of 94.

"We had driven from Washington, for dinner at the inn on an old estate on the edge of the Potomac [on the Virginia side]. . . While waiting for a table we wandered about the well-kept grounds. Many years before upon a level space on the river's bank and near a gushing spring two young men had faced each other in full view of anyone on the Maryland shore. At that spot the river narrowed as it swept past, and from where he stood a father witnessed the death of a dearly loved son upon the field of honor.

"Broad steps now lead down the steep hill to the spring where they had stood. No one at the inn had ever heard the story--not surprising for 1805 is a long way from our own time.

"There was a story, however, the circumstances forgotten except to those of the name, and perhaps even by them, but it so happened my companion remembered. He was a Bowie and his far away cousin, John F. Bowie, was one of the principals that ill fated day. It had its beginnings at Nottingham, on the Patuxent River, a town of some note in those days. At the tavern there the planters gathered for the duck and ortolan shooting and Maccubin, the owner, was no mean hand at cooking and serving the succulent birds. Among those who came was young [Enoch M.] Lyles, of Piscataway, a handsome and pleasing young gallant, invited to all the neighborhood homes. At one of them he met Elizabeth Bowie to whom he lost his heart.

"Piscataway at that time was a district of wealthy landowners, and the center of social life....From Nottingham to one of the balls came John F. Bowie and his sister, Elizabeth, whose beauty and charming way brought the young men about her like bees to honey. Among them young Lyles, who had never forgotten his first meeting with her and now paid assiduous court during her visit to the hospitable home of Richard Hatton.

"He became extremely jealous of the attention showered upon her by his friends and others and gave expression of his feeling in so offensive a manner it was brought to the attention of her brother, and he, with the hot blood of his race, slapped Lyles' face.

"This meant pistols. Later, however, when told the remarks made were not as repeated to him and finding himself in the wrong offered his apology and his hand, both of which were accepted.

"But young Lyles' father, infuriated by Bowie's action, forced his son to send a challenge. The insult must be avenged. Early in the morning of August 7 [1805], the two young men with their seconds crossed to the Virginia side of the river. They were in plain view of several guests, invited by the father, to watch with him his son's victory and vindication.

"But the outcome was otherwise. Young Lyles fell and within the year his father was laid beside him in the Broad Creek Churchyard [St. John's Church].

"Some time after I heard this tale, I received a clipping from my friend. It was from the Alexandria Gazette of August 8, 1805.

'It is with regret that we announce the sacrifice of another victim of the sanguinary practice of dueling. Yesterday morning at 6 o'clock, a duel was fought between Mr. John F. Bowie and Mr. Enoch M. Lyles, of Piscataway, Maryland, at Johnson's spring, six miles from this town, on the Virginia side of the Potomac River. They exchanged shots at but fifteen feet distance; when, unfortunately, Mr. Lyles received his antagonist's ball a little below the right breast; it penetrated his liver, and he expired a few minutes past 11 o'clock yesterday.'

"The story was fresh in my mind several days later as I stood by a large slab covering a sunken grave, the lettering almost obliterated by time and the elements. With great difficulty I managed to decipher the epitaph:

Enoch M. Lyles  
Died 7th August, 1805, aged 26  
Go thou, my son, obey the call of heaven  
Thy sins, my son, we trust they are forgiven.  
Yet, oh, what hand can paint thy parents' woe

Gods only, can punish the hand that gave the blow.

“Not far away stood an unpretentious brick house, old, somewhat weatherbeaten and facing the Virginia shore. It had been the home of Enoch Lyles.”

John F. Bowie was the youngest son of Capt. Fielder Bowie and Elizabeth (Eversfield) Bowie. He was born about 1781 in Nottingham. According to The Bowies and Their Kindred, he decided to enter the military soon after the duel. He entered the Army in 1806; in 1808 he resigned his commission and settle in Mississippi. He served again during the War of 1812. His first wife was Mary Calvert; his second, Phoebe Cochrane. John Fraser Bowie died in Washington, Mississippi, on May 6, 1823, survived by his second wife and several children. He is most often known as "Major John F. Bowie," for his rank during the War of 1812.

Enoch M. Lyles surname appears in several forms; as Lysles and Lyells as well as Lyles; we have used Lyles. Those who still have last month's newsletter on hand will notice that Miss Claggett and Mr. Snowden report young Lyles' epitaph differently.

The Prince George's County Historical Society, Riverdale, Maryland  
John Giannetti, President 422-8988 Alan Virta, Editor 474-7524

# NEWS AND NOTES FROM The Prince George's County Historical Society

Vol. XIII, no. 6 June 1985

## The June Meeting: At Marietta, June 15

Historic Marietta will be the scene of the next meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society on Saturday, June 15, at 2 p.m. Marietta is a beautiful Federal-style home in Glenn Dale, built early in the 19th century by Gabriel Duvall, a justice of the United States Supreme Court and a native of Prince George's County. The program will be presented by Shirley Baltz, a member of the Society, who will speak on the history of the house and the Duvall family. Mrs. Baltz is an accomplished local historian and has recently written and published a history of the Belair estate and the Ogle family. The meeting will be outdoors, under the large trees on the mansion grounds; however, there is a meeting room indoors should there be inclement weather.

The Park and Planning Commission has offered Marietta for the use of the Historical Society because of the overcrowded conditions at Riversdale. The Society's board of directors has endorsed the concept of moving to Marietta, and negotiations over terms are now being conducted. This June meeting will afford an excellent opportunity for the membership to see the house and the lovely grounds.

Marietta is located on Bell Station Road in Glenn Dale, near the intersection of Annapolis Road (Route 450) and the newly-cut Glenn Dale-Enterprise Road. From the Beltway, take Annapolis Road east through Lanham, past Glenn Dale Hospital, to the new intersection with Glenn Dale-Enterprise Road. Turn left at the traffic light onto the new Glenn Dale Road, and then make the first left onto Bell Station Road.

Those coming from the Hyattsville, Riverdale, and College Park areas may find it easier to come via Greenbelt Road, which becomes Glenn Dale Road at Glenn Dale. It is now a straight shot (8 miles) from Route One to Marietta. Turn right onto Bell Station Road just before (and in sight of) the traffic light at Annapolis Road (Route 450). For further directions, call Alan Virta at 474-7524 or Fred De Marr at 277-0711.

Plan to visit Marietta on June 15 to see this important and beautiful house, soon to be (if all turns out well), the home of the library and headquarters of the Prince George's County Historical Society. Guests are welcome, and refreshments will be served.

## New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

Lucille H. Bond	Clinton	Sponsor
Birdie J. Parrish	Hyattsville	Mrs. C. Clagett
Mrs. Hilda L. Hayes	Hyattsville	A. Virta
Doris and Merle Nichols	Hyattsville	L. Tatspaugh
Henry E. Billingsley	Fairfax, Va.	A. Virta
Irene Robb	Fort Washington	F. De Marr
Josephine D. Jeter	Coronado, Calif.	J. McDonald
Bob and Betty Borrell, Sr.	Clinton	Mrs. R. Waller
		F. De Marr

Elizabeth Hamilton

We regret to report that Elizabeth Hamilton, a member of the Society for many years, died in late March at the age of 76. A native of Cumberland, Md., Mrs. Hamilton made her career as a teacher here in Prince George's County. In 1934 she organized the first special education class for the county school system. She was a member of the Prince George's County Retired Teachers Association and other charitable organizations. She is survived by her husband, Arthur B. Hamilton of University Park.

The 1828 Tax List

The Prince George's County Genealogical Society has just published the 1828 Tax List of Prince George's County, a 130-page hardcover volume recording the names of all county landowners in 1828, the names of their tracts acreage, and valuation, together with the personal property tax list, recording ownership of slaves, plate, and other personal property. The lists are completely indexed and preceded by a description of all the public roads in Prince George's County, 1826. Shirley Langdon Wilcox edited this latest contribution to the documentation of Prince George's County's heritage. 1828 Tax List, Prince George's County, Maryland, is available from the Prince George's County Genealogical Society for \$12.00, which includes postage. Maryland residents add 60¢ tax (five percent). Order from the Prince George's County Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 819-A., Bowie, Md. 20715.

Two G's or One G

In last month's issue of News and Notes we misspelled the last name of Miss Susan E. Clagett. She was a one-g Clagett, not a two-g, as we incorrectly had it. Miss Clagett wrote on county history for Baltimore and Washington newspapers in the early years of this century, and she lived at Keokuk, near Upper Marlboro.

The St. George's Day Awards, 1985

At the St. George's Day Dinner on April 23, the Prince George's County Historical Society honored four individuals and four organizations for their work for the preservation of Prince George's County's heritage. The St. George's Day Awards of 1985 were presented to the following:

Queen Anne School, Upper Marlboro, for the publication in 1984 of a volume of oral history interviews entitled Prince George's Bounty. Compiled by the journalism students of Queen Anne School under the direction of Bob Weller, the interviews focus on the traditions, legends, and history of rural Prince George's County. The award was accepted by Richard Fisher, director of development.

Riversdale Historical Society, Riverdale, a volunteer group dedicated to the documentation, preservation, and interpretation of the Calvert mansion, Riversdale. The Riversdale Historical Society has opened the mansion for tours, developed a program of special events, begun the furnishing of the interior, and assisted the Park and Planning Commission (owner of the property) in the creation of a plan for its preservation. The award was accepted by the society's vice president, Doris Pullman.

Glenn Largent, general manager of the Prince George's Post, who has directed the resources of the trust established by the newspaper's late publishers, George and Carmel Aman, to the preservation of the George Washington House in Bladensburg. The funding of the upkeep and maintenance of this important historic site had been a problem ever since the initial restoration; the future of the house is now secure.

Joyce G. Rumburg, and the Maryland Heritage Committee of Prince George's County. The committee planned and sponsored Prince George's celebration of the 350th anniversary of the founding of Maryland; Joyce G. Rumburg was the driving force behind its work. Because of their efforts, the 350th anniversary was a most meaningful one in Prince George's County, celebrated by a visit by the Maryland Dove to the Washington Navy Yard, the anniversary concert by the Prince George's Symphony, the Festival of Flight in Bladensburg, restoration of Riversdale cannon, and publication of a map of historic sites in the county, among other activities.

John Hanson Savings and Loan, Beltsville, for the firm's sponsorship and financial backing of the book Prince George's County: A Pictorial History, written by Alan Virta and co-sponsored by the Prince George's Chamber of Commerce. Without the involvement of John Hanson, the book would never have seen the light of day.

Gail C. Rothrock, honored for the exceptional level of professionalism she brings to the cause of historic preservation in Prince George's County. She has worked as a historic preservation planner in this county for five years, and now serves as executive director for the county's Historic Preservation Commission.

Jean A. Sargent, of Laurel, for her work as editor of a most important research tool, Stones and Bones: Cemetery Records of Prince George's County, Maryland, published by the Prince George's County Genealogical Society. Mrs. Sargent coordinated the work of volunteer transcribers, prepared the histories of the churches that appear in the book, typed the manuscript, and illustrated the text. Because of her work, historians, genealogists, and future generations of citizens will have a permanent record of those whose final resting place is in the soil of Prince George's County.

Before the presentation of the awards, Frederick S. De Marr was honored by a special proclamation from the County Executive commending his service to the citizens of Prince George's County as president of the Historical Society from 1972 until 1984. The evening's program was concluded with the unveiling of a portrait and induction of Dr. James Harris Rogers, the scientist, into the Prince George's County Hall of Fame. W.C. "Bud" Dutton of Upper Marlboro was master of ceremonies.

Editor's note: The St. George's Day Award to John Hanson Savings and Loan was accepted by the firm's chairman, Charles A. Dukes, Jr.

Quiz Question: What Roads are These?

The Prince George's County Genealogical Society's latest publication, 1828 Tax List, contains contemporary descriptions of roads of Prince George's County. Can you figure out what roads these are--and give their modern names? Answers in the next newsletter.

"Commencing at the Priest Bridge on the Patuxent, thence through the White Marsh Plantation; then through Bel-Air, thence through the plantation of Dr, James Magill by the Forest Chapel, thence by Magruders Tavern, thence by Lanhams Shop to the Muddy Hole Gate."

[Commencing in Upper Marlboro, it forks] "near the Federal Spring, and running thence as a dividing line between the lands of David Craufurd and John R. Magruder, thence through Strawberry Hill, thence through Doctor John E. Berrys, thence through Mellwood, thence through Benjamin Clarks, thence to Centerville, thence to the Old fields through Nathan Summers's where it unites with the road leading from Washington City."

The Odd Fellows in Prince George's County

The 1913 national directory of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (a fraternal organization) reveals three lodges in Prince George's County: Forest 41 in Forestville:, Croom 45 in Croom, and Oriole 47 in Hyattsville. A fourth was nearby, Olive Leaf 146 in Indian Head. There were several in Washington. There were about 17,500 lodges nationwide.

--Directory of Subordinate Lodges of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows on the Continent of North America (1913)

### One of the Finest Churches in the Counties

One of the handsome old buildings of Upper Marlboro is St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church, on Main Street on the east side of town. The church was dedicated in the Spring of 1899, as reported in the June 3, 1899 issue of The Catholic Mirror the newspaper of the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

### Dedication at Upper Marlboro'

Upper Marlboro', Md., on Sunday last was the scene of a celebration worthy of the birthplace of the first Catholic Bishop of the United States, Rt. Rev. John Carroll [1735-1815]. On that day Cardinal Gibbons dedicated the new St. Mary's Church, which was completed early in the spring. After the dedication Solemn High Mass was celebrated by the Very Rev. Dr. Alphonse Magnien, S.S., president of St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, with Rev. John Wade, of Newport, Md., as deacon and Rev. Thomas Mory's of St. Stanislaus', Baltimore, as sub-deacon. Rev. Louis O'Donovan, S.T.I., of the Catholic University, acted as master of ceremonies. The sermon was preached by Rev. Dr. D.J. Stafford, of St. Patrick's, Washington, D.C., who chose as his subject "The Divine Origin of the Catholic Church." A number of distinguished clergymen were present, including Rev. John A. Morgan, S.J., president of Loyola College, Baltimore; Rev. Charles Damer, rector of Holy Cross Church, Baltimore; Rev. John Gloyd, rector of St. Patrick's Church, Washington, D.C.; Rev. James T. Gardiner, S.J., of White Marsh, Md.; Rev. John J. Ryan, of Gonzaga College, Washington, D.C.

The church is a brick building trimmed with Hummelstown brownstone, with slate roof. Its length is 120 feet, 58 feet wide and 60 feet high, and it is surmounted with a gilt cross. On the front is a tower 75 feet hi, ornamented with four brownstone turrets. It contains 2 stained-glass windows. The pews, which give a seating capacity of 800, are of solid oak, antique finish.

All things considered, it is one of the finest churches in the counties, and, as His Eminence remarked, compares favorably with the churches of Baltimore and Washington. The church is built on the site of the old one, which was erected about 1830. Ground has been purchased adjoining the church, and a residence for the priest will be erected thereon.

A large part of the funds requisite for building the church was legacies left by Mrs. Eliza G. Graham, Misses Annie and Agnes Hill and Mrs. Elizabeth Snowden Hill, mother of the latter two. The Cardinal spoke feelingly of the memory of these kind benefactors.

A solid oak communion rail, in conformity with the pews, was donated by Dr. Richard S. Hill. The baptismal font, also of oak, was donated by Mr. and Mrs. Francis W. Hill. Two statues, one of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the other of St. Joseph, which surmount the side altars, were donated by the pastor, Rev. Charles J. Trinkaus.

Mr. Hugh A. Campbell, of Washington, D.C., was the architect, and Messrs. Wyvill Bros., of Upper Marlboro', and members of the congregation, were the builders.

The large high altar, formerly in St. Matthew's Church, Washington, D.C., was renovated by Wyvill Bros., with Mr. C. Thomas Seltzer, of Emmitsburg, as architect. The enameling and gilding was done by Messrs. H.J. Trinkaus & Son, of Baltimore.

Stained-glass windows were donated by Mrs. Richard S. Hill, Mrs. Benjamin Bowie, Mrs. Eleanor Martin, Mr. Joseph L. Martin, Wyvill Bros., Mr. and Mrs. John E. Wyvill, Mrs. J. Eckenrode, Wm. S. Hill, Mr. W. Gaston and Miss Mary Hawks, Miss Esther Hill, Mr. F. Snowden and Miss Edith Hill, Judge Geo. W. Wilson, Dr. N.S. Hill, Rev. Thos. J. Kenny, and Henry W. Clagett.

Rev. Chas. J. Trinkaus, the pastor, is twenty-five years of age, and a graduate of Loyola College and of St. Mary's Seminary. He was ordained two years ago by Cardinal Gibbons. St. Mary's is his first charge.

### Beall Family Traditions Sought

The Family History Committee of the Montgomery County Historical Society is collecting information on Maryland BEALLs (all spellings), especially the Alexander Beall (Immigrant) line. They are seeking family traditions and legends--good, bad, comic, and tragic. The story that Col. Ninean Beall's hair was still flaming red at the exhumation of his body long after his demise is already recorded; but the committee welcomes all other family tales to record and study.

The committee hopes to have as many Beall family traditions as possible recorded by September 1985. Please contact:

Genevieve Wimsatt  
Montgomery County Historic Society Library  
103 W. Montgomery Avenue  
Rockville, Maryland 20850  
Phones (301) 762-1492 or  
(301) 762-1576 after 6 p.m.

### The Prince Georges County Historical Society

Subscription to this monthly newsletter is included in the annual dues of \$5.00 per person. To join the Society, write to: Prince George's County Historical Society, P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Md. 20737. The society's library and headquarters are located in the Calvert mansion, Riversdale. Phone: 779-2312.

President: John Giannetti  
Vice president; Alan Virta  
Rec. Secretary: Warren Rhoads  
Corr. Secretary: Margo Ritchie  
Treasurer: Herbert Embrey  
Historian: Frederick S. De Marr

Alan Virta, Editor (474-7524)

Directors  
Susanna Cristofane,  
Col. Sam Crook  
W.C. Dutton  
Ann Ferguson  
Paul Lanham  
John Mitchell  
Don Skarda



## NEWS AND NOTES FROM **The Prince George's County Historical Society**

Vol. XIII, no. 7-8  
July-August 1985

### Marietta: An Update

The Society's Board of Directors has negotiated an agreement with the Park and Planning Commission for the long-term use of Marietta, the home in Glenn Dale built by U.S. Supreme Court Justice Gabriel Duvall. Among the provisions of the contract: the Society agrees to open the house for tours on Sunday afternoons from March through December, beginning next year. The Society will also contribute at least \$1600 annually to a restoration fund. The Society expects to move its library and collections to Marietta early in the Fall. Our most urgent need will be for men and women to serve as docents and tourguides for the Sunday afternoons. Please consider volunteering your time. More details will follow in the next newsletter.

### The Next Meeting: In September

The next regular meeting of the society will be on Saturday, September 14, at Riversdale, Details on the program will follow in the September newsletter..

### Arthur Storer, Astronomer in Colonial Maryland

One of the seventeenth-century immigrants to Calvert County was Arthur Storer, a boyhood friend of Sir Isaac Newton. Storer was an amateur astronomer, and from the neighborhood of Hunting Creek he scanned the skies, tracing the movements of comets and stars. One of the comets he observed was Halley's Comet, set to return to our heavens in 1986. Storer maintained a lifelong correspondence with Isaac Newton, supplying him with astronomical observations and calculations from the New World. Newton incorporated Storer's report's in his Principia and credited him by name--the only astronomer to be so honored.

The Calvert County Historical Society has just published a biography of Arthur Storer written by Lou Rose and Michael Marti.

Long-overlooked by local historians, Arthur Storer now receives the attention he deserves. Arthur Storer of Lincolnshire, and Calvert, County, Maryland: Newton's Friend, Star Gazer, and Forgotten Man of Science in Seventeenth-Century Maryland available for \$15.00 plus \$2.00 for mailing and handling. Order from the Calvert County Historical Society, P.O. Box 358, Prince Frederick, Maryland 20678. Written in clear, non-technical prose it is a delight for students of both local history and the history of science.

### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society.

		<u>Sponsor</u>
Mrs. Sydney Marr	Hyattsville	V. J. Chapman
Mr. & Mrs. James Hickey	Adelphi	H. Embrey
Joseph J. Miller III	Hyattsville	J. Giannetti
Mr. & Mrs. Kay Virta	Hyattsville	A. Virta
Elizabeth & Howard Bradley	Beltsville	J. Giannetti.
Stephen L. & Martha E. Sinden	Greenbelt.	J. Giannetti
Charles D. Hinebaugh	Bladensburg	F. De Marr
John C. Knoerl, Jr.	Hyattsville	F. De Marr
John & Virginia Knoerl	Hyattsville	F. De Marr
Catherine A. Wallace	Greenbelt	F, De Marr

### Andrews Air Force Base Tours

Special tours are being offered of Andrews Air Force Base this summer every Tuesday and Thursday at 10:00 a.m. The one-hour bus tour begins at the 76th Airlift, Division Parking Lot. There is no charge, however reservations are required. Phone 981-4511 for more information and reservations.

### Summer Tour Hours at Historic Sites

Belair: August 11, 2 to 4 p.m. Information: 464-8619.

Montpelier Sundays noon to 4 p.m. Admission fee. 779-2011.

Riversdale: Sundays, noon to 4 p.m. Admission fee. 779-2011

Surratt House: Thursday-Friday 11:00 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, noon to 4 p.m.

Admission fee, 868-1121.

College Park Airport: Friday to Sunday, noon to 4 Free. 779-2011 or 864-5844.

NASA/Goddard Visitor Center: Wednesday to Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free. 344-8981 or 344-8101.

Fort Washington: Daily, 7:30 a.m. to dark. Civil War weapons and Garrison life demonstrations, Sundays, noon to 5 p.m. Free. 292-2112

### James Harris Rogers, Scientist

The most recent inductee into the Prince George's County Hall of Fame was James Harris Rogers, scientist of Hyattsville. The following sketch of his life was read at the induction ceremony, held at the St. George's Day Dinner in April. It was prepared by the late Ellen Rogers and delivered by Alan Virta.

Citizens of Prince George's County, especially the residents of the little town of Hyattsville, never recognized the military leaders, both of this country and Allied forces abroad, who, disguised in civilian dress, were constant visitors to Dr. James Harris Rogers' home and laboratory during the years of World

War I. The large white frame house where Dr. Rogers lived was called Firwood and stood where the County Service Building now stands. In the back was his large square laboratory, the rooms of which were lined with glass-fronted cabinets containing scientific apparatus, most of which were his own inventions.

But the "visitors" did not come to examine these marvels of wizardry. Their business was a matter of life and death, and concerned a great war being fought thousands of miles away on European soil and in the depths of the ocean that rolled between the two continents. In the laboratory, with strictly maintained secrecy, these military leaders listened in on the war by means of Dr. Rogers' great discovery, underground and underwater wireless telegraphy. By means of wireless receiving apparatus and antennae buried underground, electrical impulses transmitted through the earth were picked up from vast distances.

Dr. Roger's had been working on this invention periodically since 1908, but it was not until 1916, a year before America declared war on Germany, that he foresaw the importance of perfecting this means of communication. When the United States entered the war against Germany in April 1917, he patriotically offered his discovery to the government. An investigation by the Navy Department established its extraordinary importance and, by special request of the Secretary of the Navy, letters patent were issued to him.

He installed a receiving station at the laboratory at Firwood and began to intercept messages sent from Germany, from Panama and elsewhere. With perfect clarity he heard official German reports on battles and on submarine operations. Within a short time his underground wireless system was installed at various naval stations and fully justified all claims. At the Belmar, New Jersey, station, the Rogers apparatus was placed in an underground chamber and from that time until the end of the war, four to six operators were constantly listening in or receiving messages from air radio stations of the Allies in Europe. Having no tell-tale antennae above ground to attract the attention of spies, and with storms and other static disturbances powerless to interfere, this means of communication with the Allies was secretly kept in continuous use day and night while the war lasted. It was also used in American "dugouts" in France and often it was the only means of communication. Installed on submarines it enabled them while submerged to communicate with other subs, with battleships, and shore stations.

While the American public was wondering at the fact that our Navy was practically untouched by submarine warfare, a small group of men coming and going from the unguarded Hyattsville laboratory knew that Dr. James Harris Rogers had perfected a wonderful talisman of loops and coils for their protection. His was the only private laboratory permitted to operate during this time and not until after the war was the intensive operation revealed to the public. And at last men in uniform could visit Dr. Rogers openly. One of the most notable of these was Gen. John J. Pershing, who made an official visit to Hyattsville to personally thank Dr. Rogers for his part in winning the war.

The guest book at Firwood read like a roster of diplomatic circles. Public and private congratulations poured in, medals, degrees, and honors were bestowed. Through it all, Dr. Rogers kept steadily at his work. "Rest?" he said, "of course not. Too much remains to be done." And through the course of a busy life, he did indeed accomplish much.

This modest and gifted scientist was born in Franklin, Tennessee, on July 13, 1850, the son of James Webb Rogers and Cornelia Ann Harris. He was educated by private tutors and at St. Charles College in London. Even as a boy he displayed exceptional, inventive ingenuity, and while his parents were living at Boulogne, France, he conceived a plan for using waves of the sea to generate power for propelling ships. His father took him to London to see Commander Matthew F. Maury in order to demonstrate his idea to the noted American scientist. Maury told him the idea was impractical, but he encouraged the boy's inventive ideas.

After returning to the United States, the young scientist, then twenty-two, collaborated with his brother, John Whitson Rogers, in inventing a system of embossed telegraphy, patented in 1872. Other inventions of a telegraphic or telephonic nature followed in rapid succession.

Altogether Dr. Rogers received more than fifty patents, some of the most notable being for improved electric light, central telephone system, cylindrical automatic telegraphy, airplane improvements, visual synchronism, and underground and underwater radio-telegraphy systems. In 1893 he perfected his method of telegraphic printing, which was called visual synchronism, and on March 14, 1895, the first printed telegraph letters were transmitted between Baltimore, Maryland, and Washington, D.C., using this system. By the Rogers method, a key operator was eliminated, and messages were transmitted at what was then phenomenal speed--two hundred words a minute.

In 1909 he ventured further afield. Much impressed with the pioneer efforts of the Wright brothers, he devised an airplane along lines designed to impart greater stability than the machines in use then had. The guest book at Firwood may well have recorded the names of one or both of the Wright brothers, for they, too, visited the laboratory and asked Dr. Rogers to make experiments in his improvised wind tunnel that would help them obtain the proper wing angle for sustained flights.

Behind the tall glass doors of the cabinets that lined the laboratory, the working models of his many inventions grew. The collection was unique in that each of the models really did work for the purpose intended unlike the ideas of other inventors which existed only on paper and frequently failed when actually built, or could not be built at all. One early radio engineer who visited the lab reported being fascinated by a "novel and original high frequency generator which employed a jet of water connected to a high potential source of direct current. High frequency currents of any range up to the limit of audibility, or about 30,000 cycles per second, could be readily obtained with this apparatus," the engineer marveled. All of Dr. Rogers' discoveries and inventions were privately financed, at a cost of untold thousands. After his death a number of these models were donated to the National Museum of American History.

The Rogers family moved to Prince George's County in 1877, residing first at the Parthenon, a historic frame house (now destroyed) where Bladensburg Junior High School now stands, and later at the residence in Hyattsville. Although Dr. Rogers never married, his household included his two sisters and a brother, together with numerous nieces and nephews who frequently visited. "I have more 'grandchildren' than any bachelor who ever lived," he quipped, but he was devoted to his numerous relatives and they in turn were devoted to him and proud of his achievements.

The months of hard work during the World War and the frequent exposure to gases in the subterranean wells which were dug to install the underground receiving apparatus contributed to Dr. Rogers' poor health in his later years. Sometimes he was unable to work in his laboratory for weeks at a time, but he spent the enforced idle hours, as he put it, mentally improving his current invention. And as soon as possible, the frail silverhaired old gentleman was back at his beloved lab, answering a voluminous correspondence from all over the world and guiding his numerous nephews and nieces in their anxious attempts to help "Uncle Harry" with his experiments.

By the end of the World War, the honors began to pour in. The Maryland Academy of Sciences awarded him a medal and honorary fellowship and he was the recipient of its Inventor's Medal in 1919. Local governments and the Maryland Legislature extended thanks for his distinguished contribution to science." He was elected an honorary member of the National Inventor's Institute. He was also awarded the degree of doctor of science in 1919 by both Georgetown University and the University of Maryland. The American Academy of Sciences also nominated him for the Nobel Prize in Physics in

1919. Scientific magazines applauded his undersea wireless as the greatest single invention of the war years.

In late 1925, in failing health, he was forced to curtail his experiments. Hundreds of amateur radio operators flooded his home with letters anxious to know what had happened to his underground signals. He was able to make a few more experiments, which created great scientific interest, and to give a few interviews to reporters from Baltimore and Washington newspapers and from scientific journals. In the early evening of December 11, 1929, he attended a family reunion, with his usual gracious and genial spirits, and undoubtedly delighted at the presence of his young relatives whom he called his "grandchildren'." Early the following morning, on December 12, he died at his beloved Firwood.

While news media nationwide reported his passing, he might have been most pleased by the simple words of the Hyattsville Independent:

"Though the world feels the loss of Dr. James Harris Rogers, internationally famed inventor, it is his own community, Hyattsville and environs, which feels most poignantly the loss of this distinguished man. For here Dr. Rogers lived and labored. Here folks did not know Dr. James Harris Rogers, the world figure. But they did know Dr. Harry, the man. They loved him, and he them. Doubtless, through daily association with Dr. Rogers, his fellow citizens forgot his eminence. Naturally enough they, did not think of this modest, easily approachable gentleman as anyone other than a kindly neighbor, always ready to help them. That is just how Dr. Rogers wanted them to feel about him. And that is just why Hyattsville so genuinely feels his loss."

In today's age of computer and video technology, there is one final note to be made. Dr. Rogers' inventions led to developments in radar and sonar, to improved antennae, to speedier transmissions of both the printed and spoken word. Many of his contemporary colleagues thought one of his most important achievements had been the telegraphic typewriter which transmitted words by what scientists called "visual synchronism." And as a recent Baltimore columnist said, "What is that...but a sort of word processor--an electronic typewriter that transmits words." Dr. Harry wouldn't be surprised to find himself called the "Father of the Word Processor." He would merely have added it to his impressive string of accolades and gone on working, for the enrichment of mankind, for the benefit of his community, and for the joy that science brought to him.

#### Corn Harvest at National Colonial Farm: August 1

Freshly picked corn will be shucked and cooked in huge iron kettles over an open fire and sold for 25 cents per ear. Colonial craftspeople will be demonstrating and selling their wares. Hours are from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., and there is no admission charge. For more information, call 301-283-2113. The farm is at 3400 Bryan Point Road, Accokeek. It is opposite from Mount Vernon on the Potomac River.

#### The Prince George's County Historical Society

Subscription to this newsletter is included in the annual membership dues of \$5.00. Write the Society at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Md. 20737.

John Giannetti President.

Alan Virta, Editor

## Zoning Issues Around Marietta

Marietta, soon to be the home of the Prince George's County Historical Society, is located on Bell Station Road in Glenn Dale, within sight of the intersection of Annapolis Road (Route 450) and Glenn Dale-Enterprise Road. This is a new intersection, created within the past year when the new Glenn Dale Road (Route 193) was out through to meet Enterprise Road. Until now, the land around the intersection has been zoned for residential use (either Rural Residential or Residential Estate). With the creation of the new intersection, however, there have been several applications to rezone much of the land for commercial purposes.

The Board of Directors of the Society is quite concerned that the scenic rural setting of Marietta will be ruined by high-density commercial development at the new intersection. We are asking the membership to take the time to write a letter to the Zoning Hearing Examiner opposing the commercialization of the new intersection, and along Bell Station Road.

There are several reasons to oppose commercial rezoning. First, commercial development will destroy for all time the rural setting of two historic sites, Marietta and the Magruder Brannon House.

Secondly: the master plan for the Glenn Dale area calls for the retention of residential zoning around the new intersection. This master plan was prepared with the full knowledge that a new major intersection would be created; commercial rezoning would be a direct contradiction of the master plan.

Thirdly, Enterprise Road has been touted as the "estate corridor" of Prince George's County, planned as a showpiece of attractive home development. Piecemeal commercial rezoning, particularly at the intersection that serves as the gateway to the estate corridor, would be a detriment to that concept. Unfortunately, experience in Prince George's County proves that it takes just one commercial rezoning to start the dominoes tumbling-further rezoning justified because the character of the neighborhood has been changed by the first.

Three cases in the vicinity of the new intersection are now before the Zoning Hearing Examiner. Will you take the time to write a letter to the Zoning Hearing Examiner stating your opposition to commercial rezoning? The case numbers (which you must cite) are A-9545, A-9547, and A-9529. You must also include the sentences "I request to become a person of record in these cases." This will not require you to attend the hearing; it only allows your letter to be considered as part of the records

Address letters to: Zoning Hearing Examiner, County Administration Building, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20772.

THANK YOU

Update: The Zoning Hearing Examiner denied the rezoning for a shopping center in front of Marietta (on Annapolis Road), but the applicants will appeal to the County Council. Unfortunately, no new testimony can be considered on this case. However, letters are still needed on the other three cases, by August 20. For more information call John Giannetti at 422-8998 or Alan Virta at 474-7524.

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Fall Bus Tour to  
Carroll County, Maryland  
Saturday, October 12, 1985

Come with the Historical Society to see beautiful Western Maryland in the Fall! Itinerary will be as follows:

Leave Park and Planning Building (Kenilworth Avenue, Riverdale) at 8:00 a.m. (Next to Elks Club). Return about 5 p.m.

Tour will include a visit to the Shriver Homestead and Gristmill at Union Mills, Md. The House and Mill date from 1797. The homestead has all authentic Shriver family furnishings from colonial times to the present. The working mill still makes several types of flour. We will be served coffee and samples of local pastries made at a nearby bakery from mill flour.

Then we will visit the Carroll County Historical Society, which operates two houses in Westminster, the Kimmey and Shellman houses, dating from the early 19th century. One house contains a collection of over 400 dolls; the other is furnished with antiques donated by the residents of Carroll County and Society members.

Luncheon will be at Cockey's Tavern, reputed to be the last of the five original taverns in Westminster.

Next stop will be a visit to the Carroll County Farm Museum. In addition to the regular tour of the main house (1853) and grounds, the museum will be celebrating Fall Harvest Day, with special events and arts and crafts exhibits.

Date: October 12, 1985

Price: \$24.00 per person. Includes luncheon and all admissions.

Reservation deadline is September 27. No refunds will be made after that date. Register early, as places will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Guests are welcome. Phone tour director Warren Rhoads at 464-0819 for more information.

Enclosed is my check for      for      seats on the bus tour to Carroll County, Md., on Saturday, October 12, 1985.

My luncheon choice is: Club sandwich      Chopped sirloin  
(Circle one)      Crab cake

Name

Phone

Make check payable tot Prince George's County Historical Society

Mail to Warren W. Rhoads, 12501 Kemmerton Lane, Bowie, Md. 20715

Vol, XIII, no. 9 September 1985

The September meeting: National Parks on the Potomac River

" The National Parks on the Potomac River" will be the subject Of the September meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society, to be held on Saturday, September 14, at Riversdale, the Calvert mansion in Riverdale. Our guest speaker will be Marilyn Nickels, historian with the National Park Service, who will present a slide show on the national parks in Prince George's County, speak on their history, and outline some exciting plans for their future development.

The National Park Service owns several important properties along Prince George's Potomac shore. Piscataway National Park not only provides a scenic view for Mount Vernon, but contains important archeological remains from the Piscataway Indians. The park was the center of Piscataway activity in Southern Maryland for several hundred years before the coming of the Marylanders to this region. The park is also the site of the National Colonial Farm. The huge, gray bastions of Fort Washington are the centerpiece of Fort Washington National Park. Built immediately after the War of 1812, the well-preserved fort is an excellent example of early 19th-century coastal fortification. Another important military fortification, now a park, is Fort Foote, high above the river on Rozier's bluff. It dates from the Civil War. Something quite different is Harmony Hall. Located in Broad Creek, it is a charming colonial home. Another site rich in history is the Oxon Hill Children's Farm. It was the farm for St. Elizabeth's Hospital until the Park Service acquired it. The historic home Mount Welby is located there, and the Park Service still keeps the farm operating, interpreted especially for children. Together these parks preserve several important elements of our county's heritage.

Marilyn Nickels is historian for National Capital Parks East, the office responsible for the administration of these Potomac River parklands. She holds a doctorate in American church history from Catholic University, and has taught on the secondary and college levels. Her husband, Kenneth, works for the County Executive in Upper Marlboro in the Office of Labor Relations. They live in Sliver Spring.

The meeting will begin at 2 p.m. Riversdale is located at 4811 Riverdale Road, Riverdale. Guests are welcome and refreshments will be served.

#### The Society's Programs and the Move to Marietta

If the Society is to grow and develop new programs when it moves to Marietta, it is going to need the active involvement of many more of its members. The most immediate need will be for volunteers to keep the house open on Sundays beginning next March. Tour guides will be needed, so will hosts and greeters. There will be many other opportunities to serve the Society, too. The Board of Directors has created a number of committees and seeks members willing to participate:

Finance: fundraising, development, budget.

House Operations: use, scheduling, insurance, maintenance, etc.

Restoration: long-term plans, furnishing

,House Tours: recruiting, scheduling, training guides

Library: collection development; indexing, cataloging projects

Membership/Communications: lists, newsletter production

Programs: scheduling meetings, speakers

Special events: field trips, St. George's Day dinner, Christmas party, Rossborough luncheon

Bylaws: constitution and bylaws

While committee chairmen are being sought, members of the Board of Directors are taking temporary charge of them. If you are interested in any of the committees, call: Finance, Herb Embrey, 434-2958.

House Operations : Fred De Marr, 277-0711 Restoration: open. House Tours: An Ferguson, 927-8230.  
Library: Fred De Marr, 277-0711. Membership/Communications-. Margo Ritchie, 434-1.524.  
Programs: Alan Virta, 474-7524. Special Events: Warren Rhoads, 464-0819 and Don Skarda, 474-5319  
Bylaws: Col. Sam Crook, 725-4225

### Broad Creek Historic District

Over the course of the summer the County Council gave final approval to the creation of the Broad Creek Historic District. The district encompasses both sides of Livingston Road, in southern Prince George's County, from Oxon Hill Road down to Harmony Hall Elementary School. The district contains several important sites. The neighborhood is a scenic, rural one along the Potomac River, and the purpose of the Historic District is to preserve that atmosphere. The county Historic Preservation Commission will exercise review powers over new construction and additions in the district and will be able to grant tax credits for compatible renovation and construction work. More information on the district published in the April 1985 issue of News and Notes.

At the same time, the County Council reversed the Historic Preservation Commission's decision to create a rural historic district for Aquasco. Strong opposition from many residents of Aquasco was the primary factor in that reversal.

Broad Creek joins the Laurel Main Street Historic District as the second local historic district in Prince George's County.

### "The Arrest of One Bloomenfield"

During the Civil War, the Baltimore and Ohio rail line was the capital city's most important transportation link to the North. The line was heavily-guarded through Maryland for many of her citizens were Southern sympathizers, and federal authorities feared sabotage. From the files comes this strange account of a saboteur caught red-handed, and the disposition of his case by the military authorities. Thanks to John Brennan of Laurel for passing this along.

Hd. Quarters detach. 1st D.C. Vols.  
Beltsville, Md.  
August 8th, 1862.

To the officer commanding' Provost Guard 'at Baltimore, Md.

Sir:

I herewith submit a statement of the arrest of one Bloomenfield, arrested for tampering with the B. & O. R.R. track.

On or about the night of the 27th of July 1862, between the hours of 9 & 12 o'clock, the sentry on post, at the, R.R. bridge, crossing the little Patuxent River, near Annapolis Junction B. & O. R.R. discovered the prisoner, Bloomenfield, in the act of unscrewing the nuts of bolts in said Bridge. Upon being hailed, he made off, and escaped in the darkness. Again, the following morning, about the hour of three o'clock, he was again discovered at the same mischievous work, and arrested by the sentries, but not until he had nearly displaced one of the rails, so that had a train of cars attempted to cross the said

bridge, at the time, they would doubtly have been precipitated into the river below. Lieut Dobson, commanding the Post, when the prisoner was arrested, sent him to these Head Quarters [at Beltsville] for security. The prisoner says he was instigated to the attempt by a Mr. Rose, a Dry Goods Merchant of Baltimore. He also says, to others, that in case he succeeded in throwing the cars off the track, he was promised a large sum of money. It is the opinion of some that the man is deranged. I respectfully turn him over to you for your action.

Very Respectfully,  
Your Obt. Serv't  
(signed) C.J. Morrison  
Major Comdg. detach. D.C. Vols.

Bloomenfield was sent to Baltimore and confined in the city jail, at least until January of 1863, when D.W. Wainwright, Surgeon, U.S. Army, and L.P. Gibbons, Surgeon, U.S. Army, made this report to the Medical director of the 8th Army Corps,

Baltimore:

"Pursuant to your order of this date [January 15th, 1863] the undersigned visited the Baltimore City Jail and carefully examined the prisoner Bloomfield [sic], confined by order of Genl. Wool dated August 9th 1862.

"The result of our examination shows him to be suffering from a condition of 'Mental Derangement' which will probably result in confirmed 'Insanity.'

"We are therefore of the opinion that he is a fit subject for a 'Lunatic Asylum.'"

The next day, January 16, 1863, Robert C. Schenck, Major General commanding the 8th Army Corps, Baltimore, filed this report:

"Respectfully referred to Governor Bradford of Maryland with the charges against Bloomfield [sic] with the request that the Governor will remove him from under the control of the military authorities by which he is now confined.

"Being insane he cannot be tried and his insanity takes such a form as to render it dangerous to the community for him to be permitted to run at large."

What Bloomenfield's (or Bloomfield's) ultimate fate was, we do not know.

### "A Rebel Came Home"

One of the civilian residents of Prince George's County during the Civil war was Floride Clemson, granddaughter of Senator John C. Calhoun of South Carolina. She kept a diary during those years, which was published in 1961 under the title A Rebel Came Home, by the University of South Carolina Press. The diary was edited by, C.M. McGee and E.M. Landers. The following review was written by Society member Theodore L. Bissell.

Florida was a spirited, popular young woman and definitely Secesh, who lived near Bladensburg with her mother, Anna Calhoun Clemson, daughter of the famous John C. Calhoun of South Carolina. Her father Thomas G. Clemson and brother Calhoun, had gone South to join the Confederates.

The Clemsons called their residence and farm "The Home." It was situated on present day Bunker Hill Road between 31st and 32nd Streets across the street from Mount Rainier Elementary School and some three blocks from the District line. This fact is noted in the city's Golden Anniversary booklet (1910-1960).

Floride tells of many people in and around the area: Henry Onderdonk president of Maryland Agricultural College, and Montgomery Johns of the faculty, the Calverts of Riversdale, Dr. William O. Eversfield, who tended illnesses in the region for many years (wrongly identified in the book as John T. but corrected for me by Mrs. Catherine Maisach Eversfield, daughter-in-law of William). Among the relatives she visited and in return entertained: Latrobes in Baltimore, Clemsons and Bakers in Pennsylvania, and Lees in New York. She visited ex-President James Buchanan and his niece Harriet Lane, who had been his First Lady in the White House. Floride even made a tour of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and New York in the middle of the War Between the States. Cleveland was beautiful.

Earlier she bought a bathtub and her brother, Calhoun Clemson, with the help of two Calvert boys, installed it in the spring house, after flooring it, and set up an iron pot for heating, up water--what a luxury! As the war dragged on help became scarce Floride turned handyman. Yet she always dressed in the height of fashion and her inventory of jewelry covers nearly two pages!

Paint Branch and Northwest Branch flooded Bladensburg with each big rain, as they continued to do until the 1950s when the Army Engineering Corps set up controls. Once Floride returned by train from Baltimore and an escort met her at Bladensburg with carriage. They crossed one, stream but at the second they had to desert the vehicle, cut the harness, and straddle the horses to swim out. "They say I did wonderfully well."

January 1864 Anna and Floride had to rent out "The Home" and moved to a small house in Beltsville. In July they witnessed the Confederate cavalry raid of Gen. Bradley Johnson, bent on destroying the railroad from Baltimore to Washington. (See George Calcott's History of the University of Maryland.) "our brave boys made the Yankees skedaddle." Floride mentions Capt., George Emack, son of A.G. Emack. I am told by Miss Ellen Emack of Hyattsville that the father was actually Elbert Grandison Emack, her grand-father. In January 1865 Anna and Floride went home to South Carolina. It took a week to make the Journey, by various means of travel, including a twenty-mile walk, but they found their family and eventually her father and brother joined them.

Anna and Thomas Clemson bequeathed a large part of their estates including proceeds from sale of "The, Home" to the founding of Clemson Agricultural College, which opened in 1893. It is now Clemson University.

### Old Clements

The heritage of Prince George's County was diminished this summer with the loss, to fire, of Old Clements in Bladensburg. Old Clements was a modest house, but important nonetheless, for it was the last pre-Revolutionary frame structure left in town. Most of old wooden Bladensburg was leveled during the 1930s, 40s, and 50s for commercial and industrial development, but somehow Old Clements survived. Its massive chimneys and steeply-pitched roof added some character to a street lined with flat-topped industrial buildings. After years of neglect, its future actually looked bright this Spring, for a buyer with a serious offer and restoration plan came forward. A web of legal difficulties rising from the house's divided and inherited ownership prevented sale, however, and sealed its fate. Old Clements is now a pile of rubble, victim of neglect, deterioration, and finally the dry weather and a spark.

## Margaret Cook

It is with deep regret that we inform the membership of the death of Margaret Cook, a long-time member of the Prince George's County Historical Society. Margaret was one of the foremost authorities on Prince George's County's history, and she pursued the record of our past with a professionalism and thoroughness second to none. Her work was organized, systematic, and meticulous in its detail. She worked on many projects--including a survey of the old county roads--but perhaps her most important contribution was her investigation into the history of Upper Marlboro. She explored the development of the town lot-by-lot, and she amassed a wealth of information that laid many old legends to rest and filled crucial gaps in our knowledge of the town's past. Future historians of the county seat will be forever in her debt, for few would have the patience, determination, or the skill to do the time-consuming, wide-ranging research work that she so enjoyed. Margaret's work was respected both in academic and local historical circles, and her willingness to help others will always be remembered by many researchers.

Margaret Cook was a long-time resident of Forest Heights, although she and her husband Charles retired to Drum Point Beach, Calvert County, a few years ago. Margaret was a member of the Marlborough Towne Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and served on various historical committees, including the Prince George's County committee of the Maryland Historical Trust. In 1975 she was a recipient of the Society's St. George's Day Award. For the past several years Margaret battled cancer, but did not give up her historical pursuits. At the time of her death she was investigating the history of Brookefield, the ancient Brooke plantation in southern Prince George's County.

To Charles Cook and family, the Society extends its deepest sympathies.

## Events to Note

October 5: Society's Rossborough Inn Luncheon, University of Maryland. Reservation form to come in mid-September.

October 12: Field trip to Carroll County, see enclosed flyer.

November 16: Society meeting at Mount Airy, the newly restored home of the Calverts, Rosaryville State Park, near Upper Marlboro. Lunch will be available.

Please note that neither the October nor the November meetings fall on the usual second Saturdays.

September meeting--September 14--2 p.m.--At Riversdale

John Giannetti,  
President  
Alan Virta',  
Editor

## NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY AND COLLECTION

### THOUGHTS FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE

In the September 1931 issue of Maryland Historical Magazine it was noted that "the Maryland Historical Society possesses some two hundred thousand historical papers (which) are uncatalogued, uncalendared and, therefore, unavailable (for research)."

Lack of space and staff did not prevent them from assembling what is today one of the outstanding collections in the country.

The finest facilities can be built at any time, but you can never regenerate lost documents and artifacts, no matter how great your monetary resources may be.

Here in Prince George's County, let us follow the state society's good example and foresight, and gather the materials today in order that future generations may study them as evidence of our local culture and heritage. Can you help? Let us hear from you. -FSD

### VOLUNTEERS

Several volunteers have been active since our last report in April. Kay Virta has been sorting the hundreds of photos received from the Prince George's Post and Sara Bourne is working on the master photo file and catalogue. Clipping old newspapers for the vertical file has occupied Don Skarda and Louise Tatspaugh is busy typing cards for the obituary/biographical files. Their interest and assistance is appreciated very much.

As this is being written, about 90 boxes are stacked on the floor of the library at Riversdale, awaiting the move to Marietta. Still remaining on the shelves are books and other materials which will fill about 50 more boxes. In addition there are perhaps 30 more cartons plus a 75-year file of bound copies of the University of Maryland student newspaper in storage on the second floor of the mansion, which must be moved also. Then, there are four filing cabinets (quite full), framed pictures and paintings and sundry boxes of artifacts which must journey to Glenn Dale as well. After that, we are faced with the task of reassembling the collection in order that it might be used once again for research!

This is a tremendous task, however it is the price we must pay in order to expand. The new space for the library, located at ground level in the caretaker's wing at Marietta, is over four times the size of the space we have occupied in the servant's quarters at Riversdale.

Two days later . . . a great moving crew consisting of John Giannetti, Alan Virta, Herb Embrey Chip Rhoads and Warren Rhoads (with Fred De Marr as supervisor) spent Saturday afternoon moving all of the packed materials and empty bookcases to Marietta. Now the packing process continues and perhaps the final move will be made by the first weekend of September.

We hope to have the library back in operation by October 1st. More news on our progress later.

### OUR THANKS

-To Leland Scott for a photo of an ox cart on US I in front of Rossborough Inn, taken in the early 1900's.

- To Marian Smith for photos of old Hyattsville High School prior to its destruction in the early 1979's.
- To Alan Virta for memorabilia gathered at Bowie Race Course on its last day of racing before permanent closing.

#### LIBRARY ACCESSIONS

Author	Title	Donor
Rose/Marti	Arthur Storer of Lincolnshire, England and Calvert Co., Md.	Lou Rose
	Prospectus/Lord Baltimore Country Club	Jan Gummel
Ellis, J.T.	The Life of Cardinal Gibbons (2 vols.)	Purchase
Griffiths, G.	The Berrys of Maryland	Purchase
	Taming A River/Anacostia River Flood Cont.	Edith N. Bagot.
Willis, J.T.	Presidential Elections in Md.	Purchase
	Code/Town of Hyattsville (1935,ed.)	Edith M. Bagot,
Newman, H.W.	Seignior in Maryland	Purchase
McCarty, C.S.	Duels in Virginia Nearby Bladensburg	Purchase
---	Monument Dedication/Balto-So. Md. Trunk Line/1922 (Robert Crain Highway)	Frances Bowie
Skidmore, W. Thos.	Stonestreet of Burchden, England & Charles Co., Md.	National Park Service
Baker, E.H.	Mullikins of Maryland	Margaret Marshall
Skirven, P.G.	The First Parishes of the Province of Md.	Purchase
Bowie, W.W.	The Bowies and their Kindred	Margaret Marshall
Gude, G.	Where The Potomac Begins	Purchase
Cook, W.G.	Montpelier & The Snowden Family	Margaret Marshall
Kytle, E.	Home on the Canal	Purchase
	District Heights/25th Anniv/1936-61	Alan Virta
Wilcox, S.L.	1828 Tax List/Prince George's Co, Md.	Purchase
---	Program for the Celebration of Rhode Island Ave/Mt. Rainier/1932	Elizabeth Aman

### The October Meeting: The Alice Ferguson Story

The Society's annual luncheon meeting will be held this year on Saturday, October 5, at the Rossburgh Inn, University of Maryland. Please refer to the enclosed reservation form for details of time and price, and please note that reservations are required.

Our guest speaker on October 5 will be Kay Powell, who will present "The Alice Ferguson Story." Alice Ferguson and her husband Henry bought an abandoned farm in southern Prince George's County in the 1920s and soon found a wealth of Indian artifacts under the soil. Professional archeologists were called in; what the Fergusons had discovered were the remains of the most important Piscataway Indian settlement in all of Southern Maryland. After several years of excavations, the archeologists determined that the Ferguson farm was the site of Moyaoane, the Piscataway town visited by Captain John Smith in 1608, and also the site of the Susquehannock Fort, besieged by the Marylanders and Virginians in 1675. Kay Powell will present the fascinating story of Alice Ferguson, the discovery of the Indian remains, and what they reveal about Indian life before and after the coming of the white man. She will also tell of the tragic siege of the Susquehannock Fort, an action that provoked Indian retaliation and led to Bacon's Rebellion in Virginia.

Kay Powell is executive director of the Alice Ferguson Foundation, established in 1954 to carry on the educational and archeological work at the Ferguson farm. A resident of Accokeek since 1966, she received a degree in sociology from Old Dominion University. She worked as an instructor in environmental programs at the Alice Ferguson Foundation before becoming its executive director six years ago.

Be sure to return the reservation form and a check by the deadline indicated on the enclosed sheet. Guests are more than welcome. For those unable to join us for lunch, the program will begin at approximately 2 p.m.

### New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society.

Helen J. Stoltz	Takoma Park	Sponsor
William F. Fronck	Hyattsville	J. Giannetti
		Phil Vogel

### Belair Mansion to be Open

The Belair Mansion in Bowie will be open for tours on Sunday, October 13, between the hours of 2 and 4 p.m. The house is located on Tulip Grove Drive. It was built in the 1740s for Governor Samuel Ogle. For more information, call 464-8619.

### Old Bowie Antique and Craft Street Festival

Saturday, September 29, is the date of the Old Bowie Antique and Craft Street Festival. The greatest concentration of antique dealers in the county is located in old Bowie, at the junction of Lanham Severn Road (Route 564) and Laurel-Bowie Road (Route 197). There will be entertainment, food, and drink, as well as craft and antique displays. Rain date is October 6. For more information, call 262-6200, ext. 303.

## Living History in Baltimore

Living History performances will be offered at ten historic sites in Baltimore throughout the month of October. Actors will portray famous Baltimoreans of the past at each site and recreate, as authentically as possible, the life and times of early Baltimore.

Baltimore's "living legends" to be brought back to life in October will be Francis Asbury (Lovely Lane Museum), William Otterbein (Old Otterbein Church), Diary Katherine Goddard (Baltimore Museum of Industry), Benjamin Henry Latrobe (Baltimore Public Works Museum), Mary Young Pickersgill. (Star Spangled Banner Flag House), Rabbi Abraham Rice (Lloyd Street Synagogue), Thorowgood Smith (Shot Tower Park), Charles Carroll of Carrollton (Carroll Mansion), Edgar Allan Poe (Poe House and Museum), and Dr. John Milles Browne (U.S. Frigate Constellation). Admission is free to performances, however regular admission prices to the historic sites will be in effect. For more information contact the Baltimore Council of Historic Sites, with its headquarters at the Flag House Museum, 844 E. Pratt Street, Baltimore, Md. 21202. Phone: 301-837-1793

## October Luncheon at the Rossborough Inn--Saturday, October 5, 1985

### "One Flash of Lightning"

William Wirt, native of Bladensburg and Attorney General of the United States from 1817 to 1829, recorded some reminiscences of his childhood for his own children in 1825. These were published in *Memoirs of the Life of William Wirt*, by John Pendleton Kennedy, in 1849. One tale, in Wirt's own words, was of a terrible, thunderstorm:

"My mother had come over from Bladensburg, one summer evening, on a visit to my aunt [Mrs. Jasper Wirt, who lived a mile from town] and after school I went down to join her. My aunt dwells upon my memory in strong colours. She was a tall and rather large-framed woman, with a fair complexion and a round face that must have been handsome in her youth. She was a native of Switzerland, and had a cast of character that made her worthy of the land of William Tell. A kinder being never lived. She was full of all the charities and courtesies of life, always ready to suggest excuses for the weaknesses and frailties of others, yet without any frailty or weakness of her own that I could discover.

"She was religious, a great reader of religious books; and had a large, old folio German Bible, bound either in wood or hard black leather, with silver or brass clasps. Often have I seen her read that book with streaming eyes and a voice half choked with her feelings.

"On the evening that I am speaking of there was one of the most violent thunderstorms I have ever witnessed. My aunt got down her Bible and began to read aloud. As the storm increased she read louder and louder. My mother was exceedingly frightened. She was one of the most tender and affectionate of beings; but she had the timidity of her sex in an extreme degree,--and, indeed, this storm was enough to appal the stoutest heart. One flash of lightning struck a tree in the yard and ripped off a large splinter, which it drove towards us. My mother shrieked aloud, flew behind the door and took me with her. My aunt remained firm in her seat and noticed the peal in no other way than by the increased energy of her voice. This was the first thunderstorm I remember. I never got over my mother's contagious terror until I became a man. Even then, and even yet, I am rendered much more uneasy by a thunderstorm than, I believe, I should have been if my mother had, on that occasion, displayed the firmness of my aunt. I could not have been more than five or six years old when this happened. The incident and its effect on me show the necessity of commanding our fears before our children."

Wirt was born in 1772, so this incident would have taken place in 1777 or 1778, according to his recollection. His aunt's house was on the road to Georgetown--now Bunker Hill Road, which runs (in interrupted segments) through Cottage City, Brentwood, and Mount Rainier and then into the District of Columbia.

### Two County Roads

In the June issue of News and Notes we published descriptions of two county roads, 1826, and asked if members could give their present-day names. The roads, again, and the answers:

"Commencing at the Priest Bridge on the Patuxent, thence through the White Marsh Plantation; then through Bel-Air, thence through the plantation of Dr. James Magill by the Forest Chapel, thence by Magruder's Tavern, thence by Lanhams Shop to the Muddy Hole Gate."

Answer: Annapolis Road (Route 450) from the Patuxent River Bridge at Bowie (site of the old Pigeon House Restaurant) to Lanham. Then, as now, the road passed the Catholic Church at Whitmarsh and the Episcopal church known as Holy Trinity, Collington ("the Forest Chapel"). In 1826 the road passed through the Belair plantation; today the road passes through "Belair at Bowie," the first of William J. Levitt's subdivisions that comprise the modern city of Bowie.

[Commencing in Upper Marlboro, it forks] "near the Federal Spring, and running thence as a dividing line between the land of David Craufurd and John R. Magruder, thence through Strawberry Hill, thence through Doctor John E. Berrys, thence through Melwood, thence through Benjamin Clarks, thence to Centerville, to the Old fields through Nathan Summers's where it unites with the road leading from Washington City."

Answer: This is Marlboro Pike (i.e. Old Marlboro Pike) from Upper Marlboro to Forestville (the "old fields"). The plantation houses Melwood and Strawberry Hill still stand, but Benjamin Clark's (Melwood Farm) was destroyed a few years ago. Centerville was the name of the crossroads that today would be called the intersection of Old Marlboro Pike and Dower House Road, although the original course of Dower House Road seems to have been more to the west, in what is now Andrews Air Force Base. Centerville, then, was not far inside the East Gate of Andrews Air Force Base. The locality was later known as Meadows.

This was the road the British took out of Upper Marlboro in August 1814, on their circuitous way to Bladensburg, and then Washington. Today the hurried traveler would take Pennsylvania Avenue (Route 4) between Upper Marlboro and Forestville instead of the old road.

### November Meeting at Mount Airy:

On Saturday, November 16, members of the society and their guests will have the opportunity to see the completed restoration at Mount Airy, the 18th century plantation home of the Calverts southwest of Upper Marlboro. By then it will have opened as a country inn. Details to follow in next month's newsletter.

The Prince George's County Historical Society, Riverdale, Maryland

John Giannetti, President

Alan Virta, Editor



NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince George's County  
Historical Society**

Vol. XIII, no.11 November 1985

November Meeting Rescheduled: Images of Old Prince George's County

The November meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society--originally planned for Mount Airy--has been rescheduled for Saturday, November 9, at Riversdale. Delays in the work at Mount Airy will prevent an opening by that time. We have been invited back sometime after the first of the year.

"Images of Old Prince George's County" will be the topic of the November 9 meeting at Riversdale. Society vice president Alan Virta will show slides of scenes in Prince George's County from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. A number of these photos were published last year in his book, Prince George's County: A Pictorial History, but many were not. This will be an informal presentation, and recollections of those who remember the scenes depicted will be invited.

The meeting on November 9 will begin at 2 p.m. Riversdale, the Calvert mansion, is located at 4811 Riverdale Road in Riverdale. As always, guests are welcome, and refreshments will be served. Again, please take note: the meeting has been rescheduled for November 9 at Riversdale.

Election of officers and Change in dues structure

Society officers for 1986 will be elected at the meeting on November 9. The nominating committee will present a slate for consideration by the membership. Members will also be asked to approve a new dues structure. The Board of Directors is proposing a basic individual membership of \$10.00, couples \$15.00, and students \$5.00.

Dinner at Mount Airy, December 4

The restored Calvert home Mount Airy, southwest of Upper Marlboro, will be the scene of a gala dinner on Wednesday evening, December 4, to benefit the programs of the Prince George's Historic and Cultural Trust. Tickets are \$35.00 per person. For information and reservations call Joyce McDonald at 779-5825.

### Christmas Party, At Montpelier

The Society's annual Christmas Party at Montpelier will be held this year on Saturday, December 21. There will be no regular meeting of the Society that month. On the following day, Sunday, December 22, the Society will open their new home, Marietta, for Christmas tours. Details on both events will follow in next month's newsletter.

### Christmas Candlelight Dinner at Montpelier

The popular Christmas Candlelight Dinner at Montpelier, sponsored by the Friends of Montpelier, will be held this year on Sunday, December 15. Ticket prices are \$30.00 per person. The dinner sells out quickly; early reservations are a must. Phone Helen Hass at 776-7636.

### Zoning Around Marietta: Rezoning-Granted on October 14

Despite a recommendation of denial by the Zoning Hearing Examiner and the People's Zoning Counsel, the County Council approved the rezoning of a large tract of land adjacent to Marietta. Previously zoned residential, the tract has now been rezoned commercial. Plans for the land, located on the northwest corner of the new Glenn Dale Boulevard and Annapolis Road, are for a shopping center. The Board of Directors of the Society opposed the rezoning application as inconsistent with the already adopted Glenn Dale master plan, but that view did not prevail with the Council. Voting against rezoning (i.e. for maintaining the residential zoning) were Council members Bell and Castaldi. In favor of rezoning were Council members Ammonett, Casula, Cicoria, Herl, Mills, and Wilson. Mrs. Pemberton was absent.

In other Zoning Actions--the Zoning Hearing Examiner recommended the denial of two other rezoning requests in the vicinity of Marietta on October 14, but these cases too may receive final consideration by the Council. Those tracts are on the southwest corner of Glenn Dale Boulevard and Annapolis Road (across Annapolis Road from the above) and the-southeastern corner of Glenn Dale Boulevard and Bell Station Road (across the new road from Marietta). Again, these are requests for rezoning from the residential to commercial zones.

The Board of Directors expresses its thanks to the many members of the Society who wrote to the Zoning Hearing Examiner in support of its position on these rezoning requests.

### New Phone Number; New Members

The Society's phone has been relocated to Marietta. The new number is 464-0590. An answering machine is on when no one is there. The mailing address remains Box 14, Riverdale, 20737.

Several new members have joined recently; their names will be published next month.

Rescheduled Meeting--Saturday, November 9 at Riversdale, 2 p.m.

### The Weems Line on the Patuxent

For almost a century, steamboats of the Weems Line plied the waters of the Patuxent River, calling at the landings in St. Mary's, Charles, Calvert, Anne Arundel, and Prince George's counties. The steamboats carried freight and passengers between Baltimore and the Patuxent ports; perhaps their most important cargo was the tobacco of Southern Maryland. In 1908 the Baltimore Sun published a series of articles entitled "History of the Steamboat on the Chesapeake." We publish below extracts from that series pertaining to the Weems Line and its Patuxent River trade.

## The Weems Line, Founded in 1817

The history of the Weems Steamboat Line is practically a history of the Weems (or Wemyss) family of Maryland, and if ever a family followed a maritime calling by inheritance it is this one.

The line was founded 96 years ago by Capt. George Weems, and continued uninterruptedly in the possession and under the personal management of the family until October, 1904, when the fleet, with its rights and privileges, was purchased by the Maryland, Delaware and Virginia Railway Company, which also purchased the Queen Anne's Railroad and the Chester River Steamboat Line.

The Weems family is of Scotch descent, and when Bruce made his first experiment with a Scottish Navy Sir Michael of Weymss was its admiral.

Williamina, David and James Weymss were brought to America early in the last century by their maternal uncle, William Locke. Williamina Weymss married William Moore, of Moore Hall, Pa., secretary to William Penn, while David Weymss settled in Maryland and was the father of Parson Mason Locke Weymss and of David Weems, the last of whom became the father of Capt. George Weems, founder of the Weems Line.

Parson Weymss was George Washington's pastor and first biographer, and to him the kindergartner of today is indebted for the uplifting story of the hatchet and the cherry tree, the inspiring lettuce bed nature study and other moral and instructive anecdotes concerning the Father of His Country.

David Weems, son of David Weymss, emigrant from Scotland, married Margaret Harrison, whose sister, Mme Hoxton, was the last mistress of Brooke Manor. Ann Weems, sister of David Weems, married Horatio Ridout, of White Hall.

David Weems, brother of old Parson Weems, lived on his estate, Marshall Seat, at Tracey's Landing [Anne Arundel County], across from what is now Fair Haven. Before the possibility of propelling boats by steam power was understood David Weems had his slaves construct at Marshall Seat a sailing vessel, upon which he crossed the ocean to England, returning thence laden with many rare and beautiful treasures, and towing in the wake of his vessel a great mahogany log, which he had found adrift in mid ocean and from which he afterward had carved a mahogany table, which is still in possession of his descendants. He also brought to Maryland a silver flagon for ale or cider, which is included among the family heirlooms. Small wonder, then, that Captain George Weems, son of David Weems, inherited a love of adventure and the sea. When quite young he went to the East Indies with Capt. James Norman. The latter died in the tropics and George Weems was put in full command of the ship and brought it back to Baltimore.

He subsequently visited every quarter of the globe. During the War of 1812 he fitted a sloop in the privateering service, was taken prisoner and his cargo of flour was confiscated. In the year 1817, ten years after Robert Fulton had, in 1807, succeeded in propelling a boat upon the Hudson river by steam power, the Weems Steamboat Line was established by George Weems, who chartered the steamer Surprise to run between Baltimore, the Patuxent river and landings upon the Chesapeake bay shore.

Captain Weems commanded the boat and the Surprise continued to run until 1821, when the steamboat Eagle was secured. This boat, like the Surprise, was built in Philadelphia, Pa., and came around to Baltimore by sea, it being the second steamboat that ventured out into the ocean.

Judged by modern ideas, the Eagle was a tiny craft. She boasted but 261 tons and was scarcely larger than the seagoing tug of the present day. Her length was 130 feet, with a width of 22 feet, and she

carried a mast forward with sails, which were spread when the winds were fair, to increase her speed. Her average speed, then considered phenomenal, was about five miles an hour.

Most of the freight room was filled up with wood, which was her only fuel. There was no upper deck, but in warm weather an awning was stretched over the quarter deck. There was no pilot house and the ladies' cabin was fitted with berths and located in the stern of the boat. Between the ladies' cabin and the engine was the dining room, around which were berths, in which the men slept when meals were not in progress.

Both the Surprise and the Eagle, as has been said, were built in Philadelphia, Pa.

The arrival of these boats was an event in the history of Baltimore and great concourses of people assembled regularly upon the wharves to witness the exciting episode of landing their passengers.

When these steamers were built it was not known that the engines were reversible. There were no bells to communicate with the engineer and orders had to be shouted from commander to engine room for the manipulation of the craft.

Instead of slipping, as the modern boat does, like a noiseless swan to her moorings, the engines of these early boats had to be stopped a long distance from the wharf which the steamer was designed to reach. The chances of miscalculating speed or distance made the work of landing a critical and often dangerous feat. Occasionally the steamer crashed into the pier with violent force.

on such occasions Capt. George Weems would stand on the bow and warn people to get out of the way if they valued their lives as collision between boat and wharf was inevitable. It was by accident that it was learned that the paddles of the steamer had a backward as well as a forward motion, and after that the landing of the steamers became a far less perilous if more commonplace occurrence.

Capt. George Weems was born at Marshall Seat, May 23, 1784, and living in the vicinity all his life, was quick to realize the wonderful opportunity for development of trade along the Chesapeake bay and in Virginia.

Before steamboats were introduced as a commercial element in the bay trade, the carrying of passengers and produce between Baltimore and points on the bay was chiefly by means of sailing packets, small schooners and bay craft whose progress from point to point was controlled by wind and tide. The trips were necessarily irregular, because they were affected by the seasons of the year and the changes of the weather.

The advent of the steamboat caused a revolution in commerce with waterside points -and stimulated traffic in every direction. The pioneer Weems steamers plied at different periods to Frenchtown, Herring Bay, Annapolis, Chestertown and other points, and touched at landings in Calvert and Anne Arundel counties [on the Bay] and on the Patuxent river [including landings in Prince George's County].

In later years the Weems boats were official carriers of the United States mails, but long before they became Government agents the captains and clerks were the voluntary letter carriers for innumerable patrons of the steamboat line, who, through the courtesy of the company, were thus enabled to transmit letters to waterside points far more quickly than by the regular coast riders.

The staunch little Eagle continued to run her useful commercial career until wrecked by the explosion of her boiler off North Point while returning, on April 19, 1824, from Annapolis to Baltimore. Captain Weems and all his crew were more or less injured. The explosion set the vessel on fire, but with the aid of the passengers and crew the fire was extinguished.

Captain Weems' son, Thomas Weems, a lad of about 13 years, was blown from the cabin through the skylight without injury. Capt. George Weems was severely scalded. The Eagle was a wreck. The passengers and crew were taken off by the Union Line steamboat Constitution which happened to be in the vicinity.

By this accident Captain Weems not only lost almost everything he possessed, but was himself so seriously hurt that for a long time he was confined to his room, unable to attend to any business. This catastrophe also caused the death of one of the passengers of the Eagle, District Attorney Henry M. Murray, and the injury of several deckhands.

Mr. Murray lingered until April 28, when he died. This was the first fatal steamboat explosion on the Chesapeake bay, and Mr. Murray was the only passenger ever killed during the entire time the Weems Line continued in existence....

In 1827 [Captain Weems] organized a company which built the Patuxent. This steamer was at that time regarded as a floating palace.... The Patuxent was the first steamer of the Weems line that claimed the proud distinction of being "made in Baltimore," and it was the subsequent policy of the owners to have their boats built especially for their own service at Baltimore shipyards.

Capt. George Weems died in 1853, but long before his death had given up the entire management of his boats to his four sons. These were Mason Locke Weems (named for his great uncle, Old Parson Weems), Mason Theodore Weems, George Weems, and Gustavus Weems....

In 1874 Mr. Henry Williams, of Baltimore, then State Senator from Calvert County, became manager of the Weems Line of steamers, succeeding his father-in-law, Capt. Mason Locke Weems [the last surviving son of Capt. George Weems], who had died that year. Shortly afterward the heirs of Capt. Mason Locke Weems--Mrs. Georgiana (Weems) Williams, wife of Mr. Henry Williams, and Mrs. Matilda (Weems) Forbes--purchased the interest of the other heirs of Capt. George Weems, and became the sole owners of the Weems Steamboat Line.

This is doubtless the only case in history where two women were the sole owners of an enormous nautical enterprise ....

At the date of the transfer of the line to the Maryland, Delaware and Virginia Railroad Company [in 1904], the Weems Line employed about 600 men and possessed a fleet of ten vessels. These were the Lancaster, Richmond, St. Mary, Essex, Westmoreland, Calvert, Anne Arundel, Potomac, Middlesex, Northumberland. As will be noted, the vessels took their names from the counties of Maryland and Virginia. [Elsewhere the article noted that the line at that time "carried practically all the products of the counties on the banks of the three chief rivers of the western shore of the bay, namely, the Patuxent, Potomac and Rappahannock, and of all the bay shore from Pair Haven to Drum Point."]

The Weems steamers were recognized everywhere by the distinctive symbol of a red ball painted upon their smoke-stacks. Their owner's flag, which always fluttered at the masthead, had a blue field adorned with a red ball....

Baltimore Sun, Jan. 26 and Feb. 2, 1908

An old Weems Line broadside in the possession of the Calvert Marine Museum, Solomons, indicates that in 1868 Weems steamers ventured up the Patuxent River as far north as Hill's Landing, near Upper Marlboro. Earlier in the century they had gone even further upriver.

One branch of the Weems family, related to the steamshipping Weems', lived in Prince George's County. Dr. James Weems purchased the ancient house Billingsley in 1740, and it was held by the family until 1841. The old brick hone (built in the 1690s) overlooks the Patuxent River, William Locke Weems of Billingsley was a justice of the County Court throughout the Revolutionary era. Philip Weems, along with William Beanes and former Gov. Robert Bowie, was taken by the British from Upper Marlboro during their retreat to their ships after the sacking of Washington in 1814. Weems and Bowie were released, but Dr. Beanes was taken to Baltimore--his release was the object of Francis Scott Key's famous mission in September 1814.

Prince George's County Historical Society at Marietta, Glenn Dale  
John Giannetti, President

Alan Virta, Editor



## NEWS AND NOTES FROM **The Prince George's County Historical Society**

Vol. XIII, no. 12 December 1985

### The Christmas Party at Montpelier: December 21

Come celebrate the holidays with the Prince George's County Historical Society at the annual Christmas Party on Saturday, December 21. This year the party returns to its traditional site, Montpelier, the Snowden mansion south of Laurel. The house will be beautifully decorated, and there will be food, drink, and good cheer aplenty. The party begins at 2 p.m.

Each year we invite members to bring along a Christmas specialty of theirs to share--a dessert, a snack, or the like. The bountiful spread adds to the Christmas spirit. Guests are welcome, too. Bring a friend or neighbor and show off this magnificent 18th century Georgian mansion at its best. There is no admission fee.

Montpelier is located on the Laurel-Bowie Road (Route 197) just north of the Baltimore-Washington Parkway interchange. Exit from the Parkway and turn left (north) onto Route 197. Montpelier is less than a mile away. Turn left opposite the Montpelier shopping center where signs will direct you onto the mansion grounds.

### Christmas Open House at Marietta: December 22

The Society will open its new home, Marietta, to the public on Sunday afternoon, December 22, between the hours of noon and 4 p.m. The house will be decorated for the season, and docents will lead visitors on informative and interesting tours. There will be a small admission fee (\$2.00 for adults, \$1.50 for seniors and students, \$1.00 for children). Proceeds will benefit the restoration fund. Come see the house in all its Christmas finery and support its preservation at the same time. Refreshments will be served. The public is invited.

Marietta is a brick Federal-style house built about 1810 by U.S. Supreme Court justice Gabriel Duvall. Marietta is located in Glenn Dale on Bell Station Road, just north of the intersection of Annapolis Road (Route 450) and Glenn Dale Boulevard-Enterprise, Road. From the Beltway, take Exit 20-West (Annapolis Road) and follow Annapolis Road about 4 miles. Turn left (at the light) onto Glenn Dale Boulevard, and then make a quick left onto Bell Station Road. Join us at Marietta on December 22!

## New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

		Sponsor
Mr & Mrs. Louis R. Winemiller	College Heights	Dr/Mrs Etienne
John B. Bourne	College Heights	R. Bowie
Dorothy Gonthier	Greenbelt	Mary Dunn
Bill & Dianne Wilkerson	Greenbelt	A. Virta
Dr. Rita G. Cameron	Tantallon	W.C. Dutton
Margaret H. Reilly	Hyattsville	J. Giannetti
Patricia & William Cramer	Silver Spring	F. De Marr
Col. Robert S. Drake	Adelphi	F. De Marr
Mary K. Jones	Hyattsville	Mary Dunne
Mrs. Leo M. Swift	College Park	Jean Anderson
Karen D. Miles	Dunkirk	F. De Marr
Clinton F. Wells, Jr.	Dickerson	F. De Marr
Adele W. Worthington	College Park	F. De Marr

## Officers for 1986

The incumbent slate of officers was reelected to serve another year at the Society's November meeting. The officers are John Giannetti, President; Alan Virta, Vice president; Warren Rhoads, Recording Secretary; Margo Ritchie, Corresponding Secretary; Herbert Embrey, Treasurer; Frederick S. De Marr, Historian; and the following directors: Susanna Cristofane, W.C. (Bud) Dutton, Ann Ferguson, Col. Sam Crook, Paul Lanham, John Mitchell, and Don Skarda.

Thanks to Vera Rollo, chair of the Nominating Committee, for her service in that capacity again this year.

## Christmas Open Houses

By now all members should have received a mailing announcing the open houses at the various historic sites in the county. To refresh your memories: Belair in Bowie: December 8 (262-2854); Montpelier in Laurel: December 11-14 (776-0752); Riversdale in Riverdale: December 14-15 (842-8041); Oxon Hill Manor: December 15 (839-7782); Surratt House: December 15-17 (868-1121).

## Autograph Party: George Callcott's Maryland and America

The Maryland Book Exchange in College Park invites Society members to an autograph party and reception for Dr. George H. Callcott celebrating the publication of his recent book, Maryland and America, 1940 to 1980. It will be held on Sunday afternoon, December 8, 1985, at the book exchange, 4500 College Avenue (opposite the south gate of the University of Maryland). Please call 927-2510, ext. 22, if you plan to attend.

## Doctor William Beanes: Physician, Gentleman, Prisoner-of-War

High above the town of Upper Marlboro, on the schoolhouse hill, the remains of Dr. William Beanes and his wife rest in a tiny family graveyard. In recent years the graveyard acquired a forlorn look, its

stones cracked, its fence in disrepair, and trees invading its hallowed ground. Over the course of the summer and fall, the Prince George's County Committee Of the Maryland Historical Trust undertook to restore the graveyard. That good work was recently completed, and on November 12, 1985, ceremonies were held rededicating the gravesite. The following memoir of Dr. Beanes was read at the ceremony. It was written by Shirley Baltz, a member of the Prince George's County Historical Society.

### Dr. William Beanes

Doctor William Beanes, the son of William Beanes, Jr., and his first wife Mary (Bowie) Beanes, was born 24 January 1749, probably at Brookridge, a tract which appears to have been the home plantation of his father. On 25 November 1773 Beanes married Sarah Hawkins Hanson, the daughter of Samuel and Anne (Hawkins) Hanson of Charles County and niece of John Hanson, the first president of the Continental Congress after the adoption of the Articles of Confederation.

By the 1770s he had earned the title "Doctor." One of the officers who met him as the British marched on Washington in 1814 wrote that Beanes was a Scotsman, having migrated about twenty years before, and that he "still retained his native dialect in all its doric richness." That he was born in Scotland is untrue inasmuch as he was at least the third generation of his family born in Maryland. Perhaps, however, there is an explanation for the Scottish accent. In colonial times many Americans seeking a career in medicine took their training at the University of Edinburgh, a school of world renown. It's possible Dr. Beanes received his education in Scotland and, at the same time, acquired an accent which remained with him the rest of his life.

At the time of the Revolutionary War, was it the father, the son, or a cousin (another William Beanes) who was on the Committee of Observation for Prince George's County in 1775, on the committee to raise supplies for the army in 1778, and county tax assessor in 1779 and 1781? It is difficult to determine. At a meeting of the Maryland Convention on 4 September 1777, there is no doubt; it was Doctor Beanes who was appointed Surgeon to the Maryland Marching Militia. He is reputed to have tended the patients in the military hospital in Philadelphia.

In August 1779 his father, primarily a planter, purchased one acre of land adjoining Upper Marlboro, "lying on the west side of the street that leads from the Landing up towards the Ball House at the corner of Richard Snowden's lot," from William Sprigg Bowie. The price paid--2000 pounds--would indicate that the dwelling houses, out buildings, and other improvements mentioned in the conveyance were substantial in size and value. Perhaps when Dr. Beanes returned to civilian life he took up residence immediately at that locale for when the father, by deed of gift, conveyed the acre to his son in 1793, the deed noted that William Beanes, physician, was already residing there.

When the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of the State of Maryland was established in, 1799 Dr. Beanes was listed as one of the incorporators, and at the initial meeting of the organization in Annapolis he was selected to serve on the Board of Examiners for the Western Shore. He sat on the county Levy Court in 1808 and was one of the founders of Trinity Episcopal Church in 1810. He was named to the first Vestry of the new parish and helped to draw up the bounds of the lot to be donated to the congregation by David Craufurd. Dr. Beanes was a gentleman of untainted character, a man universally esteemed and respected by his fellow citizens, when he was caught up unwittingly in a stream of events which would imprint his name in our national history.

During the War of 1812, when the British began their march from Benedict to Washington, the rural village of Upper Marlboro lay in their path. A sub-altern in the army recorded that the troops made camp in advance of the village which, on a search for provisions, they found deserted. The army

remained at rest the next morning and several men took advantage of the respite to stroll back into the village. The only inhabitant they found in his house was Dr. Beanes who assured them he was a Federalist and, therefore, an opponent of the war with Great Britain. The men commandeered what they needed, but because of the doctor's civility in offering them anything within his house and on his farm, the commissary paid him full value for the supplies taken.

The troops soon marched off toward Bladensburg where they were engaged by the hastily-gathered defenders of the capital city. The battle was of short duration, and with little further interference the British continued into Washington. After completing their plan, of destruction, they pulled out of the city and headed back for their ships waiting at Benedict. Late in the afternoon of the 26th of August, 1814, they passed through Upper Marlboro without incident and camped to the south.

The next day, Saturday, former governor Robert Bowie went to Dr. Beanes' farm, and as the two walked over the land, they met and arrested an enemy straggler. Three others were also taken and all were brought into Upper Marlboro. Governor Bowie dispatched one man to Queen Anne Town in the company of Robert Bowie, his son, and Benjamin Oden, Jr., who along the way took another captive. A deserter was turned over to William Lansdale for delivery to Queen Anne. Then, fearing the other men detained in the village might be freed by the alarmed citizenry [fearful of British reprisal], Bowie, with the aid of John and Benjamin Hodges, escorted them to Queen Anne where the entire group was placed under guard. In all, six men were held, four stragglers and two deserters.

When news of the captives reached British command a detachment of cavalry was ordered to Upper Marlboro to demand their return. Entering the town about midnight finding, after the search of several houses, that the prisoners had been moved, the officer in charge, Major Evans, delivered an ultimatum: unless the men were turned over by noon the next day, the town would be destroyed. To insure compliance, the cavalry carried off Dr. Beanes, whom they had roused unceremoniously from his bed, Philip Weems, and Dr. William Hill as hostages.

Believing the British meant to make good their threat, on Sunday morning the Hodges brothers went to Queen Anne where John Hodges' determined arguing with the men on guard finally secured the release of the prisoners. While Hodges marched the four stragglers to meet the British, the two deserters, facing a possible firing squad, were left in the custody of Benjamin Oden, Jr., who did virtually nothing to prevent their escape.

With the return of the stragglers, Mr. Weems and Dr. Hill were released, but the British refused to free Dr. Beanes, taking him along as they returned to their ships and sailed down the Patuxent. Concerned for the doctor's safety, some of his friends hastily took action. Richard W. West, inheritor of the Woodyard from his father Stephen, also a close family friend and patient of Dr. Beanes, headed for Georgetown to request help from his brother-in-law, Francis Scott Key. The wives of the two men were sisters, the daughters of Edward Lloyd IV. Key, a prominent attorney, went to President Madison who gave permission for him to seek out the British fleet, ordering John S. Skinner, our agent in charge of exchanging prisoners, to accompany him. The men started from Baltimore aboard the *Minden* and two days later located the English ships at the mouth of the Potomac. Under a flag of truce they were permitted to board the flagship *Tonnant* where they met with General Ross and Admiral Cochrane. Although Key and Skinner were treated cordially, they found that Dr. Beanes, still wearing the same clothes as when he was seized, was being held in solitary confinement and had been dealt with harshly by his captors. At first the officers, and especially General Ross, refused to consider the release of Dr. Beanes, but after Mr. Skinner displayed some letters written by wounded British soldiers left behind in Bladensburg, letters in which they told of the kind treatment they had received, they relented. They would honor the request but not at that moment; they were preparing to sail for Baltimore and so that their plans would not be revealed to the Americans, the men would have to accompany them. The story of the subsequent bombardment of Fort McHenry [and the writing of the Star Spangled Banner] is well

known and will not be covered here. On September 14, 1814, after the enemy ceased their shelling and as the flag still flew over the fort, the Americans were permitted to go ashore.

Dr. Beanes returned to Upper Marlboro to spend the rest of his days. In 1817 he was among those who incorporated the Philanthropic Society, an organization dedicated to promoting literature and science. His wife died 15 July 1822, and the doctor was laid beside her in October 1828, "in the 80th year of his age". The couple left no children.

In his will Beanes devised "my present dwelling and all the grounds, gardens and buildings...attached thereto, also the mill, Meadows and all the land... adjoining the same" to John Read Magruder as trustee for the benefit of his brother Colmore. After the latter's death the bequest was to descend to his nephew Philip Key, grandson of Colmore, but only if he, Philip, had issue.

Otherwise the property was to be sold. Key died unmarried in 1833 and Dr. Beanes' other heirs went into the Court of Equity petitioning for the sale as directed. It wasn't until 1841 that John B. Brooke, the court-appointed trustee, conveyed the house to William N. Boteler. In the meantime, in 1835 the Upper Marlboro Academy was established, with William N. Boteler as one of its trustees.

Perhaps Boteler donated the site to the Academy for it appears to have been situated on Dr. Beanes' lot, yet there is no conveyance recorded. In 1855, unfortunately, the school and the principal's house, "one of the oldest in the village and for many years the dwelling of the late Dr. William Beanes," burned to the ground. The insurance payment, plus a subscription raised in the county, enabled the trustees to rebuild the school. In 1908 it became Marlboro High School and in 1917 the facility was turned over to the Prince George's County Board of Education. A new high school built on the site of the old, was dedicated in 1921, and that is the core of the present building which stands there now.

The tombs of Dr. Beanes and his wife were originally restored in conjunction with the centennial celebration of the writing of the Star Spangled Banner. In a speech delivered 3 September 1914, C.C. Magruder noted that "A few months ago the tombs...were broken into many fragments. The walls surrounding were nearly level with the ground, and unsightly, gnarled sassafras trees were undermining the foundations.... Today such pieces of the old tombs as could be recovered, pieced with new marble to the original size, rest on marble supporters above repaired vaults." In the past seventy years trees have done their work again, and so the Prince George's County Committee of the Maryland Historical Trust has undertaken to remove the huge stump invading the enclosure, to reconstruct the wall it had damaged, to repair the slabs, and to replace the cannonball missing from one of the fence pillars. We are pleased to act as latter-day agents to implement Dr. Beanes' wish that "the Graveyard in the Garden... is to be kept up and in complete order."

--Shirley Baltz

### Zoning Update: Good News for Now

On November 18 the County Council voted to put on hold all re-zoning applications in the vicinity of Marietta. The previous decision to re-zone as commercial the large tract between Marietta and Annapolis Road Was reversed and the case returned to the Zoning Hearing Examiner. The Council directed the Planning Board to undertake a special study of the area and make recommendations for orderly development. The Historical Society, the city of Bowie, and citizens of Glenn Dale-had objected-to what they believed was the beginning of a piece-meal rezoning of the area and are pleased to see the reversal and the special study. Thanks to the many members who contacted their Council members and to President John Giannetti who so ably represented the Society at the many hearings and meetings held the past few months.



## NEWS AND NOTES FROM The Prince George's County Historical Society

Vol. XIV, no. 1-2 Jan-Feb. 1986

### The Winter Recess

There will be no meeting of the Society in January or February. The first meeting of 1986 will be on Saturday, March 8, at Riversdale, the Calvert mansion.

### Forest Tree Arboretum at National Colonial Farm

The nation's first arboretum for native forest trees soon be planted at the National Colonial Farm in Accokeek, in southern Prince George's County. Society member Frederick Tilp -- best known as a marine historian, but a qualified forest historian as well -- is guiding the development of the program. He hopes the arboretum in Prince George's County will serve as a pilot project, and that similar arboretums will be planted in the other southern Maryland counties.

Only trees similar to those seen by Maryland's first settlers will be planted in the arboretum. Regional forester Gene Piotrowski of the Maryland Forest, Park, and Wildlife Service has suggested five rows of thirteen trees each, spaced fifty feet apart; a total of sixty-five trees. According to Tilp, "With no primeval forest hazards such as poison ivy, thorny underbrush, snakes, or even big worms, this will be a pleasant place for students to study each species of sixty-five different native trees when grown in an open field under favorable environmental conditions.

Officials of the U.S. Forest Service, American Forestry Association, National Arboretum, and Mount Vernon (directly across the river from the planned arboretum) reviewed the plans and specifications and hope for cooperation from local garden clubs, chambers of commerce, civic and school groups.

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation in Annapolis and Richmond expressed hope that this idea would spread to the sixteen Maryland tidewater counties and the twenty-four Virginia tidewater counties,

Dedication is planned for Maryland's Arbor Day, the first Wednesday in April. For more details phone the regional forester at 301-888-1638.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

**ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696**

## New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

Jan Jennier	Bowie	Sponsor
Margaret McKnew	Riverdale	Mr. De Marr,
Dorothy L. Davidson	Riverdale	Mr. Giannetti
Helen E. Gillions	Hyattsville	Mrs. Skarda
William Z. Haskell	Upper Marlboro	Mr. De Marr
Josef & Gloria Brown	Hyattsville	Mr. Dutton

## Dues Reminder

Members are reminded to return their renewal notices with their dues promptly to Mr. Embrey, the treasurer. Dues for individuals are now \$10.00 for couples the dues are \$15.00. Mr. Embrey's address: 10414 Tullymore Drive, Adelphi, Md. 20783. Phone: 434-2958

## Dates to Note

Feb. 4-6: Lecture-demonstrations of Black American dance and local Black history, at Publick Playhouse, Cheverly. Sponsored by the University of Maryland Dance Dept., History Division of M-NCPPC, and Publick Playhouse. 10 a.m. and noon. Phone 277-1710 for more information.

Feb. 9: Belair Mansion open for tours, 2 to 4 p.m. Donation requested Mansion location: 12207 Tulip Grove Drive.

Feb 20-23: Maryland Antiques Show and Sale to benefit the Maryland Historical Society, at the Convention Center, Baltimore. Admission fee of \$15.00 includes catalog. Opens noon each day.

## "Formidable Operation"

"Caesarean Operation: This rare and formidable operation has recently been performed by Dr. John H. Bayne of this county, with the assistance of Drs Heiskell, Wood and Hill, on a servant of Mr. R.Q. Bowling. The woman has entirely recovered."

--Planters' Advocate, October 1, 1856

## The Patuxent River

The National Park Service has completed an admirable project of marking the roads and streams over which the Baltimore-Washington Parkway passes. The "Little Patuxent River" is correctly identified; however, the sign-painters got a little carried away in designating its sister stream the "Big Patuxent River." For that gentle stream, "Patuxent River" is quite sufficient.

## The Black Public Schools, 1924

Until the 1950s, Prince George's County operated dual school systems--one for white students, another for blacks. A superintendent was appointed for each; there were parallel administrative structures. An interesting look at the black public school system, 1924, is contained in a survey published by the Colored Public School Trustees Association. A committee of the association visited each of the forty-two black public schools in Prince George's County during the months of December, 1923 and January 1924, and they reported on the state of each. We publish selections from that report below.

Our thanks to Bianca Floyd, coordinator of the county's black history survey, for passing along a copy of the report. The original is located in the Moorland-Spingarn Library of Howard University.

A SURVEY  
of  
COLORED PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
of  
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY  
MARYLAND

Trustees, Teachers and Patrons of Colored Public Schools, Prince George's County, Maryland,  
Friends, Fellow-Citizens,

Upon the suggestion to the Colored Trustees' Association in their meeting at Upper Marlboro on Tuesday, December 4 [1923] that a committee be appointed to visit all our schools and make a survey of the needs for school buildings and equipment and to make a comprehensive report covering the whole county to the Board of Education, the undersigned committee have been appointed to make the survey.

The Committee feels that each community will be willing to share the expense of this survey for printing, postage, stationery, taking pictures of school buildings and travel. We are therefore requesting each school community to contribute \$3. It would help the committee if you have this sum ready when we reach your community.

It is our purpose to send a notice to the teacher two or three days ahead of our visit so that she can notify you through the children. Kindly pass this notice around. The Julius Rosenwald Fund for colored schools and other available funds cannot help our children if the people are not interested.

Yours for Prince George's County,  
Chairman, Thos. J. Calloway, Lincoln, Glendale, Md.

[The introductory letter was also signed by the other committee members: Secretary, George D. Brown, Collington; Ignatius Mitchell, Oak Grove, Marlboro; and Isaiah Gray, Poplar Hill, Aquasco. It was addressed to the president of the Colored Trustees' Association, S.J. Trotter, of Seat Pleasant.]

[Selected school reports follow]

Accokeek: Miss Mabel Parker, Teacher. Trustees: Henry Lewis, Henry Munson, William Gladden

This school is in the extreme southwest corner of the County, near the line of Charles County. There is an enrollment of 33 pupils. The outbuildings need attention. Otherwise the plant appeared to be in fair condition. The community spirit was shown by the presence of a representative of the parents to greet the committee. We suggest to the people of this community that if they have not already a strong working community club that they lose no time in organizing and making a drive for a better public road to the school and to create a social life for the young people about the school.

Aquasco; Miss Matilda F. Glascoe and Miss Blanche B. Johnson, Teachers. Trustees: James M. Douglas, John B. Tolson, John Glascoe

This is a two-room, two-teacher school with an enrollment of 67 pupils. The community was found to be co-operating with their teachers, having provided through proceeds from entertainments for the

purchase of a bell, flag and other equipment. School desks are seriously needed, particularly for the little children. It was suggested that the community proposes to fence in the school grounds and it was under consideration to use barbed wire. We do not feel that fencing is a good policy for school yards, and under no circumstances would we use barbed wire because of the danger to clothing and person of the children.

Bladensburg: Mrs. Lucy S. Robinson and Mrs. Virginia Q. Jenkins, Teachers. Trustees: Burdett Culley, George Queen, Mrs. E.J.L. Bowler.

One of the oldest towns in the county, is located at junction of Washington highways leading to Baltimore and Annapolis. The building is modern, has recently been put in good repair and is fairly well equipped. There are both front and rear entrances, cloak rooms and spacious playgrounds. The Community Club has recently raised \$100 and presented it to the Board of Education to apply on purchase of pupils' desks, and they are raising other funds to meet expenses for some instructional material not provided by School Board. The principal and her assistant seem to have won the full co-operation of their patrons. Out buildings are in urgent need of rebuilding. They are not only insanitary but lacking in proper privacy as between the sexes.

Bowie: Mrs. Inez Prout and Miss M. Myrtle Holmes, Teachers. Trustees: L.S. James, J.H. Prout, Jr., Benjamin Cole.

Bowie is the junction of the main line and the Pope's Creek branch of the Pennsylvania Railway. The public school lies between the town and the State Normal School [Bowie State College]. From the location one would expect to find a model public school. On the contrary we found one of the three worst plants in the County. There is an old building, that the most backward district should be ashamed of, out of repair, ancient school desks that have been carved and whacked, little or no blackboards, and the grounds are muddy and illkept. The portable building nearby is out of repair, lacks paint, has kindergarten chairs for the pupils to sit in, cannot be properly heated. There was no evidence of community spirit of helpfulness behind the teachers. Certainly, a new two-room school building is urgently needed, but we feel that the people of Bowie should learn from their near neighbors at Ducketsville and Fletchertown to form a strong organization and make a drive for better local organization. Better school is sure to follow.

Glen Arden: Mrs. Anna B. Cosey, Teacher. Trustees: G.W. Washington, Mrs. G. Hamilton, H.S. Wildy.

This is the best built and best equipped two-room Rosenwald school in the county. It is located upon a sloping elevation in full view of the W.B. & A Electric and the Pennsylvania, Railroads. Only one room is used, but both will certainly soon be in demand. The parent - teacher association has presented the school with a sewing machine. Other donors have given shades, a cook stove, etc. The electric light fixtures are very handsome, the interior decoration is attractive and there is nothing lacking. We were sorry that the community so well favored did not feel able to contribute \$3 asked to meet the expenses of this survey.

Laurel: Mrs. Rosa E. Neal, Miss Lucy Gardner, Teachers. Trustees: George Jonson, Walter McCoy, Colbert Addison.

It would be supposed that a town as large as Laurel with 80 to 100 children of school age would have a creditable school. On the contrary, the committee found, without question, the worst condition of any school in the county. For while other places, such as Bowie and Lakeland, have similar school conditions as to the buildings, at Laurel we found the two buildings placed, one behind the other on the

narrow lot, probably 50 by 150 feet. We are informed that no demand has been made upon the public funds for better conditions. We can not understand why the spirit that has resulted in a new concrete stone church, tastily built, has not been extended to the public school. We doubt if any of the stables of the Laurel race track would be permitted for a horse if they were as run down as these two places in which teachers are forced to labor. Get busy, Laurel, or hang your heads in shame.

Lincoln: Mrs. Elizabeth D. Snowden, Mrs. Maude S. Socks, Teachers. Trustees: T.J. Calloway, J.H. Sanders, W.E. Gibson.

The Lincoln school is the result of community team work. Four or five years ago the community club decided to work for a new building to replace the one-room building similar to many now in the county. Entertainments were given, subscriptions taken and committees appointed. Finally, after \$700 or more was in the treasury of the club it was decided to ask the school board for \$5,000 with the promise that the community would match it with a like amount. The building is not yet completed, but it has cost about \$12,000, of which the county has paid a half. There are four class rooms, a library, cloak rooms, teachers' lockers and a large community hall. The building is lighted with electric lights. Over \$600 has been invested in new desks by the community which is buying a piano. The plans are now on foot to install a steam heating plant and sanitary toilets with running water.

There are 42 communities in the county with a Negro public school. As imperfect as some of these schools are, each is, nevertheless, the largest single influence in every one of the communities. Community clubs and parent-teacher associations have proven the best means of extending the work of the teacher to the adult population. The result of this extension service where seriously attempted has been very marked and has given promise of greater results yet to follow. Those forward looking citizens in each community who wish to be of the largest service should dedicate themselves to working in a community organization in co-operation with the school teacher.

There are few, if any, white people now who are opposed to Negro education. They recognize that an illiterate person is of little value and that some education and training are essential to every human being. It is true that officials, up to this time, have administered public funds on the theory that a colored teacher should receive less than a white teacher and that white schools should have a longer year than the colored. This inequity should be corrected. Since we have separate schools for the white and colored people simple justice would seem to dictate that equal pay for equal service was the only true Americanism that can be depended upon for fair adjustment. We pray that public opinion will soon convince statesmen of this plain right.

Other counties of Maryland and other States having separate schools will be able to appreciate such efforts as have been made for the solution of the problems of our county. The Committee feels that since Prince George's County constituted the larger part of the suburban zone of the National Capital this county should become a model of rural efficiency in education and industry of its people. In so far as the Colored Trustees' Association of this county can contribute to these ends its service is sincerely pledged.

THE COMMITTEE.

[In 1923, there were 2,619 pupils at the 42 black schools. There were 6,806 students at 73 white schools. "Rosenwald schools" named in the text were built with the assistance of the Rosenwald Fund, a national trust established by philanthropist Julius Rosenwald to support the construction of rural black schools.]

**NEWS AND NOTES FROM**  
**The Prince George's County**  
**Historical Society**

Meeting on March 22: The Design of Formal Gardens

The Prince George's County Historical Society's first meeting of the spring season will be held on Saturday, March 22, at 2 p.m. at Riversdale, the Calvert mansion. Our guest speaker will be Lucy Coggin, horticulturist for Historic Annapolis at the William Paca Garden. She will present a slide show and talk on formal gardens entitled "Classic Elements of Design Displayed in the William Paca Garden."

Lucy Coggin graduated from Occidental College in California, where she studied botany and art history. She was awarded a fellowship at Harvard University's Arnold Arboretum and has worked independently as a garden designer. She has also written a newspaper column on gardening. Her slide show will include photos of English and European gardens, and she will illustrate how the William Paca Garden exemplifies many of the classic garden design elements.

Please take note that this meeting will be held on March 22, not on the usual second Saturday of the month. Riversdale, the Calvert mansion, is located at 4811 Riverdale Road in Riverdale. Guests are welcome, and refreshments will be served. For more information, call Alan Virta at 474-7524 (evenings).

Please come and join with us to begin the spring season with this most timely presentation on formal gardens.

St. George's Day Dinner and Awards

The Society will celebrate St. George's Day, the anniversary of the founding of our county, on the evening of April 23 with the annual St. George's Day Dinner. The Board of Directors solicits nominations for the St. George's Day Awards, presented each year to individuals and organizations who have made noteworthy contributions to the preservation of our county's heritage. If you have a nomination, please write to the Board at the Society's mailing address, P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20737, or call President John Giannetti at 422-8988.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

## Where is Westphalia?

In November 1985 the Maryland Chamber of Commerce received a letter from the sesquicentennial committee of the town of Westphalia, Michigan. The committee was beginning to compile an anniversary book and was seeking information on other towns in the United States of the same name. An old reference source they had come across stated that there was a Westphalia in Maryland, but they could not locate it in any atlas. Could the chamber assist them?

Eventually that letter came to the Prince George's County Historical Society, for Westphalia is a Prince George's County placename. Yes, we were familiar with Westphalia. But close investigation revealed that the name has migrated over the years-and different people had different ideas on just where Westphalia was.

The first Westphalia was a land grant, a 500-acre tract patented by Robert Wells in 1673. Located on the Western Branch of the Patuxent River, it was immediately south of Largo and just west of Perrywood. During the 18th century it was the home of several generations of the Burgess family, a family of some social importance in colonial Prince George's County, whose names appear frequently in the county histories by Mrs. Bowie, Mrs. Hinton, and Judge Van Horn. Otho Berry Beall acquired the Westphalia plantation early in the 19th century, and during Beall family ownership, the plantation became known as the "White House." White House Road, which connects Largo Road (Route 202) to Ritchie-Marlboro Road, bisects the old land grant.

The name Westphalia reappears on the county map in another context late in the 19th century. In 1891 the federal government authorized a post office to serve the rural community along the upper stretches of Ritchie-Marlboro Road, northwest of Upper Marlboro, an area heretofore served out of the Forestville post office. Large landowners in this vicinity at the time included Alonzo G. Darcy (county register of wills during the 1880s), Alexander Penn Hill (a county commissioner in the 1870s), Benjamin H. Brown, James C. Marr, William H. Shuler, William Binger, Roderick M. McGregor (a Magruder descendant), and Miss Sarah Ann Osbourne. The community was served by a school, built about 1876, and James C. Marr operated a general store about a mile north of the schoolhouse. There was a Methodist church (Green Mount) at the junction of Ritchie-Marlboro Road and White House Road. By no means could this area have been considered a town but in an era when the government was establishing post offices in even the smallest of locales, it seemed to have qualified for one. The post office was opened in James C. Marr's general store, and it was given the name Westphalia.

The new Westphalia post office was actually located about a mile south of the boundaries of the old land grant, and the schoolhouse (known as the Westphalia school) even farther south. Thus began the migration of the name Westphalia.

The Westphalia school was (and though closed, still is) located at the junction of Ritchie-Marlboro Road and the country road leading three miles west to Forestville. During this century that road has been known as Westphalia Road. This has brought about, in recent decades, another migration of the name Westphalia. The western end of Westphalia Road connects to Pennsylvania Avenue (Route Four) just below the Beltway. There has been some suburban and business development at that end of the road. One of the larger developments is named Westphalia Estates, because of its location on Westphalia Road, and a black church that was built on the road in 1968 took the name Westphalia United Methodist Church. The State Roads Commission has even erected a small sign on Route Four below the Beltway marking the place as "Westphalia." Recent county atlases, in large letters, attach the name Westphalia to this general vicinity at the western end of Westphalia Road. Thus, another

Westphalia. So, "Where is Westphalia?" It depends on which one you mean--the colonial land grant, the rural community of the turn of the century, or the modern suburban locale.

Printed below is the Society's response, in somewhat more detail, to Westphalia, Michigan's question, "Where is Westphalia?" They were most interested in the late 19th century rural community, so the story begins there.

### Westphalia, Maryland

Westphalia is the traditional name of a rural neighborhood in Prince George's County, Maryland. Tobacco and corn are its principal crops; it has been farming country for more than three hundred years. Westphalia is located five miles northwest of Upper Marlboro, the county seat. It is also close to Washington, D.C. The suburbs of Washington are just two or three miles to the west and northwest. As the crow flies, it is only ten miles to Capitol Hill.

Westphalia is an unincorporated area, so its boundaries are not precisely defined. Traditionally, however, Westphalia has been considered to be that area along Ritchie-Marlboro Road where it is joined by Westphalia Road (from the west) and Brown Road (from the east). In this vicinity were located the old Westphalia school, the post office, and general store. This stretch of road is no more than a mile or two long. It is entirely rural, as it always has been; the road is a winding and narrow (though well-paved) country byway. Several of the more prominent farms in the Westphalia neighborhood are marked by signs: Turkey Branch Farm, Edgewood Farm, and Meadowview Morgans (Morgan horses) are three of them. There are also a number of small homesteads along the road that are not farmed. They are rural homes for people working in Washington or the suburbs.

### Ancient Westphalia

Westphalia owes its name to the Westphalia plantation, a 500-acre land grant patented by Robert Wells in the year 1673. The Wells were one of the prominent families of colonial Maryland. The founder of the family in Maryland was Robert's father, Richard Wells, who brought his wife and eleven children to Maryland from Virginia in 1653. In Virginia Richard Wells had attained some degree of prominence, sitting in the House of Burgesses from Norfolk County, 1645-1647. He was, however, a Puritan, so when the political climate in Virginia turned hostile to Puritanism, he joined the great Virginia Puritan migration to Maryland. Richard Wells acquired several land grants in Maryland, but settled on Herring Creek, in Anne Arundel County, on the Chesapeake Bay. Surviving legal documents reveal that he was a planter, merchant, and physician; he is styled "Chirurgion and Gentleman" in many of them. During the period of republican government in Britain, he was appointed as one of the Lord Protector's representatives "for ordering directinge and gouverninge all the Affrayers of Maryland."

Among Richard Wells' younger children were Robert, Benjamin, and Mary. Robert and Benjamin became merchants; they also invested in lands on the Maryland frontier--now Prince George's County. In 1671 Benjamin patented a tract of land he named the Vail of Benjamin, located along the Western Branch of the Patuxent River. Two years later brother Robert patented an adjoining tract of land and named it Westphalia. The reason for the name Westphalia is unknown; perhaps it signified that the land was on the western frontier. Neither Benjamin nor Robert Wells held their land grants very long and almost certainly never lived there. They apparently assigned their titles to their brother George, for in 1677 he sold both Westphalia and the Vail of Benjamin to sister Mary (Wells) Stockett Yate and her second husband, George Yate. Ten years later, in 1687, the Yates sold Westphalia (500 acres) to Ursula Burgess, widow, of Anne Arundel County. Like the Wells, the Burgesses were one of the prominent families of colonial Maryland. Ursula Burgess' deceased husband, Col. William Burgess, served as high sheriff of Anne Arundel County and deputy governor of the province.

The widow Burgess never lived at Westphalia, but her son, Charles Burgess, did. In 1704 he purchased Westphalia for 150 pounds sterling from his step-father, Mordecai Moore, who had married (and survived) Ursula Burgess. Charles Burgess turned the land grant on the frontier into a prosperous and well-ordered plantation, and increased its size to 1060 acres. He died in 1740, leaving a sizeable fortune to his heirs.

Westphalia remained in the hands of the Burgess family for more than one hundred years. Several of Charles Burgess' children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren made their homes at Westphalia. They attained a measure of social prominence in Prince George's County, and local histories refer to them as "the Burgesses of Westphalia." Particularly notable was the Revolutionary war service of Charles Burgess' grandsons, Dr. Richard Burgess and Major John Magruder Burgess. Another grandson, Charles, served as foreman of the county grand jury on several occasions during the Revolutionary era. A fourth grandson, Basil Burgess, served in western Maryland during the French and Indian War. Like their neighbors, the Burgesses were slaveholders; they depended upon slaves to plant, cultivate, and harvest their tobacco crop. An account of social life in late 18th and early 19th century Prince George's County was recorded by Col. Richard Burgess of Washington, D.C., in the 1850s. A descendant of Charles Burgess, he knew Westphalia in his youth. The recollection of balls, horse races, and other social events was published in Thomas Scharf's History of Maryland (1879; v. 2, p. 86-87) and also in News and Notes from the Prince George's County Historical Society, November 1978, in an article by Herbert Embrey.

Westphalia plantation passed out of the hands of the Burgess family early in the 19th century. Otho Berry Beall (1790-1853) acquired the land, and he passed it on to his descendants. Under the ownership of the Beall family the plantation became known as the "White House Place," and their fine home simply as the "White House." Neither the colonial homes of the Burgesses nor the Bealls' "White House" are still standing.

### Westphalia in the 19th Century

During the course of the 19th century, and particularly after the Civil War, the large plantations in the Westphalia vicinity, including Westphalia itself, were divided into smaller farms. Quite a few of these smaller farms were established along Ritchie Marlboro Road, which passed through the old Westphalia plantation and the land grants to the south. A schoolhouse was built along Ritchie-Marlboro Road about 1876; a county map of 1878 reveals the presence of a general store to serve the area. The 1878 map does not attach the name Westphalia to this vicinity; nor does an earlier map of 1862. The name was not forgotten, however, for when a post office was established there in 1891 it was named Westphalia. The Post office actually was about a mile south of the boundaries of the old Westphalia land grant; the schoolhouse was even further south. Thus, during the latter part of the 19th century, the name Westphalia came to signify the area slightly to the south of the original 1673 land grant.

Westphalia kept its post office until 1909, when it was discontinued with the establishment of rural free delivery out of Upper Marlboro. Even today, the homes in the Westphalia vicinity bear an Upper Marlboro mailing address. In 1898 the Chesapeake Beach Railroad was opened between Washington, D.C., and Upper Marlboro (and later on, to the Chesapeake Bay). It passed through the Westphalia vicinity, and a station was established there. That station, however, was named Brown's Station, as it was built on the property owned by Benjamin Brown. On some maps today the name "Brown" appears, rather than the traditional name Westphalia.

### Another Westphalia

The road from Forestville to old Westphalia (three miles long) is named Westphalia Road. At its eastern end, by old Westphalia, it is a narrow, hilly, country road. At the western end, by Forestville, there has been some suburban development in the past decade or two. One housing subdivision there is named Westphalia Estates; a park there has been named Westphalia Neighborhood Park; and a new black Methodist church is named Westphalia United Methodist Church--their names derived from their location on Westphalia Road. Recent street atlases of Prince George's County thus assign the name Westphalia to the western end of Westphalia Road, rather than the eastern end. To many of the suburban residents who have come to the county in the past few decades, this area on the western end of Westphalia Road, by Forestville and the Capital Beltway, is Westphalia. They are not aware that traditionally the name was associated with the rural neighborhood three miles away at the other end of the road. The "new Westphalia" will almost certainly continue to grow, as more and more suburban development creeps down Route Four from Forestville. This "new Westphalia" is located just a mile from the north gate of Andrews Air Force Base, the home of Air Force One and the ceremonial air gateway to the nation's capital.

Old Westphalia is still located out of the main path of suburban development in Prince George's County, but how long that remains so remains to be seen. The state has plans to build an entirely new road from Largo (Enterprise Road) to Melwood (Woodyard Road), a across what has always been countryside. That road will pass through old Westphalia. When (and if) that does indeed take place, the tobacco barns that have marked Westphalia for almost three hundred years may finally given way to housing developments and convenience stores.

--Alan Virta

Additional notes: The Westphalia schoolhouse, south of the colonial land grant, was built on part of a tract of land known as Alexandria. During the colonial period Alexandria was a Magruder property (patented by Alexander Magruder, 1670). It was adjacent to Dunblane. During the 19th century, the largest part of Alexandria (about 330 acres) was held by Jesse Talburtt (d. 1850), grandfather of the Miss Sarah Osbourne named in the introduction. A tobacco barn built by Jesse Talburtt still stands on Westphalia Road not far from the schoolhouse. "J. Talburtt" is clearly inscribed in one of the hand-hewn posts.

The Vail of Benjamin was immediately to the north of Alexandria, between it and Westphalia land grant. Originally a Wells patent, the Vail of Benjamin was divided in the 1690s into several pieces. Over the years various parcels were held by members of the Berry, Beall, Magruder, and Duvall families, among others. The Vail of Benjamin was home of Mareen Duvall II (b. 1661), his son Mareen Duvall III (1687-174?), and then Mareen Duvall IV (1714-1783). Mareen Duvall II (known as Mareen Duvall the Elder) was the son of Mareen Duvall the Immigrant, of Middle Plantation. He was virtually forgotten in the Immigrant's will (save for a bequest of five shillings) and forced to move from Middle Plantation. He moved to the Vail of Benjamin, inherited by his wife, Frances Brackett, from her parents, Thomas Brackett and Mary (Wells) Stockett (later Yate).

The Westphalia post office had but two postmasters in its eighteen-year history: James C. Harr and William Shuler.

Westphalia, Michigan, was first settled in 1836 by immigrants from Germany.

Sources: Newman, Harry Wright. Anne Arundel Gentry. (Wells family)

Bowie, Effie Gwynn. Across the Years in Pr. Geo. County. (Burgess family, Beall family)

Newman, Harry Wright. Mareen Duvall of Middle Plantation. (Duvall family)

United States Official Register. editions 1890s-1910s. Official records--wills, deeds, etc.

Meeting on March 22--Design of Formal Gardens--Riversdale--March

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Spring Bus Tour to  
Montgomery County, Maryland  
Saturday, April 5

Come with the Historical Society to see some of the historical sites in our neighbor county to the north. Itinerary as follows:

Leave the Park and Planning Building on 'Kenilworth Avenue (next to the Elks Club, Riverdale) at 8 a.m. Return about 5 p.m.

First stop on the tour will be the historic C & O Canal Museum at Great Falls. Built about 1830 as a tavern, it was also the home of the lock-keeper. Inside now are several exhibits illustrating the history of the C & O Canal. From Great Falls, the tour will move on to Glen Echo to see the Clara Barton House. Clara Barton, the founder of the Red Cross, lived there from 1897 to 1912; it was also the headquarters of the organization. Clara Barton's furniture and personal belongings are still there; the interior of the house is designed in a most unusual style. The third stop on the tour will be the Seneca Schoolhouse, a one-room school built about 1865.

Luncheon will be at the Meadowlark Inn in Poolesville, after which we will visit the John Poole House (1793). There is a gift shop there, also a Civil War display. The gift shop includes many items of Civil War memorabilia. The tour's final stop will be the Beall-Davison House in Rockville, built about 1815. It is now the home of the Montgomery County Historical Society. The house is beautifully furnished. One of the outbuildings has been transformed into a 19th century doctor's office.

Date: April 5, 1986

Price: \$22.50 per person

Includes all admission fees and buffet lunch

Reservation deadline is March 31, however, we suggest you reserve a place early as we had to turn down quite a few who wanted to go along on our Fall tour. Places filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Register by sending your check now. Guests are welcome. For more information, call tour director Warren Rhoads at 464-0819.

Enclosed is my check for \$     for     seats on the bus tour to Montgomery County, Md.) on Saturday, April 5, 1986.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to: Prince George's County Historical Society Mail to: Warren W. Rhoads, 12501 Kemmerton Lane, Bowie, Md. 20715



**NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
The Prince George's County  
Historical Society**

### St. George's Day Dinner

By now all members of the Society should have received invitations to the annual St. George's Day Dinner on April 23. This year's dinner commemorates the 290th anniversary of the founding of Prince George's County on St. George's Day 1696. We will be joined by the Hall of Fame of Prince George's County who will unveil a new portrait and induct Governor Joseph Kent into the Hall of Fame.

Please note that the deadline for reservations for the dinner is April 14. No tickets will be sold at the door. The pre-dinner reception begins at 6:30 p.m., the dinner itself at 7:30. The St. George's Day Dinner will be held at the University of Maryland Student Union building. For more information, call Corresponding Secretary Margo Ritchie at 434-1524.

### Spring Meetings

There will be no meeting of the Society in April (besides the St. George's Day Dinner), but, the meeting schedule will resume on the second Saturday of May with a program by Francis X. Geary on the history of Hyattsville. This is Hyattsville's 100th year, and appropriately, the meeting will be held in that city. On the second Saturday of June, members will have the chance to visit the Mount Airy plantation, home of the Calverts, for a meeting and luncheon. Recently restored by Frank and Pat Kulla, Mount Airy is now the home of a country inn.

Those interested in gardening should be aware of a program at the Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore on April 24 (from 9:30 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.) entitled Pleasure Gardening in Colonial Chesapeake. Several speakers will address various topics in the history of gardening in this region; it should be a delightful follow up to the March meeting of this Society. Fee for the program is \$20.00; a luncheon (limited to 100 guests) will be offered for an additional \$15.00. Reservations for the program and/or lunch should be placed with the Maryland Historical Society by April 18 at 201 W. Monument Street, Baltimore, Md. 21201.

Attn: Office of Public Programs. Information: 301-685-3750, x 322.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

## New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

		Sponsor
Mr. & Mrs. Jack White	Upper Marlboro	J. Giannetti
Marina King	Washington, D.C.	S. Pearl
Eugene D. Roberts, Jr	Bowie	W. Dutton
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Van Ness	Upper Marlboro	V. Kutish
Mr. & Mrs. James D. Collett	Annapolis	E. Powers

We are very pleased to announce these new Life Members:

John B. Bourne, Hyattsville  
Mrs. Jessie M. Ward, College Park  
Mrs. Sarah J. Harvey, College Park

## Lloyd T. Knox

We regret to inform the membership that Lloyd T. Knox, a member of our Society for many years, died in January. Mr. was retired and lived in Adelphi. For several years, he and Mrs. Knox served on the Hospitality Committee, providing refreshments after Society meetings. The Society extends its deepest sympathies to Mrs. Knox and the family.

## Spring House Tours: Takoma Park, Hyattsville, and Charles County

Takoma Park's annual house and garden tour will be held this year on Sunday, May 4, from 1 to 5 P.m. Entitled "Tradition with a Twist," the tour this year will feature houses that display a diversity of American architectural styles from turn-of-the century Victorian villas to 1930s bungalows. Tickets are \$5.00. Begin at the Municipal Building, 7500 Maple Avenue. Phone: 270-4048 or 270-8247.

Hyattsville's Centennial House Tour will be held on Sunday, May 18 from noon until 5. Start at the newly restored Castle, on Route one. This year's tour will be bigger and better than ever in celebration of the city's 100th year. Within the past year Hyattsville's Victorians have been featured in the Washington Post's Home section as well as in television commercials.

The 1986 Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage will come to our neighbor county, Charles, on Saturday, April 26. Other tours in the series: Anne Arundel, Montgomery, Roland Park. (Baltimore), Northern Baltimore County, oxford (Talbot County), and Queen Anne's County. More Information: 301-621-6933, or write the Pilgrimage at 1105-A Providence Road, Towson, Md. 21204.

## The Changing Times: The Evolution of a Bank

All over the county, Suburban Bank signs are being replaced by new ones announcing a new bank on the local scene, Sovran Bank, based in Virginia. Suburban Bank began in Hyattsville in 1915 as Prince George's Bank; it is with mixed feelings we see it absorbed by one of the Mid-Atlantic region's banking giants.

Maryland's Patriotic Signer of Continental Currency: The Forgotten Peale, by William A. Aleshire

Our nation was blessed with dedicated individuals who emerged during the period of the Revolutionary War and helped sow the seeds of freedom throughout the colonies.

As we turn the pages of Maryland history, we must consider those unheralded patriots, who in the spirit of a troubled nation, gave their talents to help promote growth and development.

One of these unheralded countrymen was St. George Peale, who was overshadowed in history by the successes of other Peale family members.

St. George Peale was born on St. George's Day (April 23) 1745 in Chestertown, Kent County, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. He was so named in honor of St. George, the patron saint of England. St. George, a Christian martyr, was made a patron saint about 1344, under Edward III, and is best known for the legend of the conquest of the dragon.

St. George Peale's father, Charles Peale, had served as a clerk in the General Post Office in London, and arrived in the colonies around 1736. He established himself as the Master of King William's School in Annapolis in 1739; as Master of the Free School, Queen Anne's County in 1741; and Master of the Kent County School in Chestertown, Maryland in 1742.

His mother was Margaret (Triggs) Peale, who reared a family of talented children, namely: Charles Willson (1741), Margaret Jane (1743), St. George (1745), Elizabeth (1747), and James (1749). In 1773, St. George married Elizabeth Emerson Callister, who established herself as an instructor in painting, and drawing at Washington College in Chestertown, Maryland.

St. George Peale was the businessman of the family, who took care of the family's investments, wrote their legal documents, and saw to their overall welfare. The handling of Charles Willson Peale's debts and creditors was such an undertaking that it truly established St. George as the "leader behind the scene." His career record began in 1762, at the age of 17, when he was appointed head clerk of the Maryland Land Office. He was appointed clerk of the Lower House in Annapolis on March 26, 1774, and appointed, in 1776 to sign Maryland colonial currency which was issued dated August 14, 1776. Matthew Tilghman, President of the Maryland Provincial Convention, also known as the "father of the Revolution in Maryland," and Samuel Chase and Charles Carroll, delegates to the convention, in a letter to the Honorable John Hancock, President of the Continental Congress, recommended St. George Peale for the position of Care of the Military Stores in Baltimore.

Having left Philadelphia, because of the British advancement on the city, the Continental Congress moved their sessions to "Congress Hall" in the city of Baltimore, on December 20, 1776. It was on February 1, 1777, that the members of Congress elected St. George Peale, by ballot, to the office of Military Stores in Maryland. A prestigious position, he was required to obtain, store, and deliver supplies to the tattered Continental Army on the front lines. During the same session on February 1, he was also approved by the Congress to sign Continental currency. This appointment distinguished him as being the only signer of Continental currency out of Maryland's approximately 45 total signers of Maryland colonial currency, issued between 1733 and 1701.

The first federally issued currency was established in 1775 by the Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia. The financial burden of this enactment was borne directly by taxes collected from, the colonies, as the cost of maintaining a Revolution was as great as was the "fight for freedom." Approximately 280 signers of Continental currency were either elected or appointed during the printing period of the paper money, which continued until its financial collapse about 1780. The issue of all Continental currency during this period was passed by Congressional resolution while Congress

was meeting in Philadelphia, Baltimore (1777), and York (1777-1778), and these facts were printed on each denomination.

St. George Peale was appointed Register of the Land Office in Annapolis in 1777 and served as a lieutenant in the Maryland Militia. He died on July 3, 1778 in Baltimore, Maryland, of consumption, commonly referred to today as tuberculosis. The Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser dated July 7, 1778, remarked; "interred with great deserved marks of distinction and respect." Charles Willson Peale was at St. George's bedside during his last moments and no doubt pondered the years of service rendered by his brother. Charles Willson Peale, best known for his artistic works of genius, especially portraits of George Washington, served in the Continental Army, and later as an elected representative from Philadelphia in the General Assembly.

St. George Peale died a young man, having achieved a distinguished and respectable career, leaving one to believe, that had he lived longer, his name would have been listed among the leading patriots in Maryland's history.

#### Post Offices in Prince George's County, 1849

A U.S. government publication, Register of All Officers and Agents, Civil, Military, and Naval, in the Service of the United States, issued in 1849, records these postmasters and post offices in Prince George's County in that year:

Aquasco, John W. Thomas  
Beltsville, John T. Holzman  
Daniel Barron  
Brandywine, Leon H. Early  
Fort Washington, T.S. Everett  
Good Luck, Wm. B. Brooks,  
John Beall  
Horse Head, Arabella J. Menger

Laurel Factory, Robert C. Davis  
Long Old Fields, James J. Jarboe Bladensburgh,  
Nottingham, William T. Hyde

Palmer's Tavern, Thomas Grimes  
Piscataway, James Griffin  
Queen Ann, James R. Davis  
Upper Marlboro, J. Milliken, Jr.

#### Marietta Open for Tours

A reminder: Marietta, home of the Prince George's County historical Society, is now open for tours on Sunday afternoons. Location: Glenn Dale Boulevard (Route 193) and Annapolis Rd. (450).



**NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
The Prince George's County  
Historical Society**

The May Meeting: "Our Hometown Called Hyattsville"

Francis X. Geary, author of the forthcoming book, Our Hometown Called Hyattsville, will speak on the history of Hyattsville and his experiences in compiling the book at the May meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society, to be held on Saturday, May 10, at 2 PM. Mr. Geary grew up in Hyattsville and has been the chronicler of Hyattsville's history for many years. He has written Fire Call, the history of the Hyattsville Volunteer Fire Department (1977), as well as Hyattsville's 90th anniversary history book (1976). Our Hometown Called Hyattsville, commemorating the centennial anniversary of the city's incorporation, will be 376 pages long and include 655 photos. Publication is set for June.

The meeting will be held in the Hyattsville City Council chambers, at 4307 Jefferson Street, one block west of Route One. The building is directly behind the Castle (which faces Route One). There is plenty of parking. Guests are welcome, and refreshments will be served.

Luncheon at Mount Airy Plantation. June 14

Mark your calendars now for the Society's luncheon at the newly-restored Mount Airy Plantation on June 14. A separate mailing with a reservation form will follow in mid-May. Attendance will be limited, so please return the reservation forms as soon as possible once they arrive.

The Aquitaine Progression

Devotees of spy thrillers certainly know the work of author Robert Ludlum. In one of his recent works, The Aquitaine Progression (Random House, 1984), a major character resides in Oxon Hill and holds a crucial dinner meeting "at a small restaurant in Clinton, approximately ten miles from my house." We'll give nothing more away.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696



## Dr, Truman E. Hienton

We regret to inform the membership that Dr. Truman E. Hienton died of cancer at age 87 on April 1. A native of Independence Ohio, Dr. Hienton worked as a research engineer. From 1946 until his retirement in 1969 he headed the Dept. of Agriculture's research on farm electrification. He was a veteran of both world wars, an active member of the Riverdale Presbyterian Church, and in recent years served, on the Historical Society's Awards Committee. His late wife, Louise Joyner Hienton, was the author of Prince George's Heritage. The sympathies of the Prince George's County Historical Society are extended to the family.

## Events in the month of May

- May 10: Historical Society meeting (see first page)  
Marlborough Day, Upper Marlboro. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. 248-1260  
Laurel Main Street Festival, Laurel, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. 490-7770
- May 17: Open house, Andrews Air Force Base. Free. 981-4511.
- May 17-18: "Celebration of Spring," Calvert Mansion, Riverdale. 779-2011
- May, 18: Bowie Heritage Day, Belair Mansion and Stables Museum, 2 p.m. to 5  
262-6200, ext. 302.  
Tobacco planting at National colonial farm, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. 301-263-9113.  
Hyattsville House Tour, noon to 5 p.m. \$5.00. Begin at the castle.
- May 25: Colonial games at National Colonial Farm, Accokeek, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. 301-263-2113.
- June 14-15: Festival of Flight, at historic College Park Airport. 10 a.m. to dark. Free. 927-0700.
- June 8: Civil War wedding and reception, Surratt House, Clinton. noon to 4 p.m. Admission fee.  
868-1121.

## Mary Dunn

We regret to inform the membership of the death in April of Mary Dunn, a longtime member of the Prince George's County Historical Society. A resident of Hyattsville; she was buried in North Carolina. The sympathies of the Society are extended to the family.

## The Deadly Mantis

Most members of the Society probably missed the television program, Creature Feature, on Channel 20 on April 12. The feature film was The Deadly Mantis, one of the giant insect films of the 1950s. During the course of the movie, the heroes (a reporter and an Army officer) drive through Laurel, Md. (clearly marked by a sign) to witness the mantis' handiwork on a train four miles north of town. It seems, then, that the insect wreaked its havoc beyond the county limits, but we still thought it worth mentioning here.

## The Brookes Family: Innkeepers of Upper Marlboro

The United States Postal Service will soon begin building a new post office for the town of Upper Marlboro. The site they have selected is on Elm Street, on the corner across from the schoolhouse. The new building will face east, fronting on that part of Elm that runs between the school and Plain Street. An old bungalow half a block north of Main Street (the Tickles residence) has already been acquired by the U.S. government. The very corner of Elm (where the street bends to the west) is undeveloped. It has been part of the Trelawn property since that old house was built further west on Elm about 1870.

County historians, as well as the Maryland Historical Trust, are quite anxious that the Postal Service conduct archeological investigations before they begin construction work, for this site was once the location of one of Upper Marlboro's most important buildings, its colonial hotel. Kept by the Brookes family for more than one hundred years, it burned down on New Years Eve night, 1853; its destruction prompted the conversion of the Hepburn mansion (Governor Pratt residence) into the Marlborough House hotel. As part of her investigations into the history of Upper Marlboro, Margaret Cook did a lot of research on the Brookes family and their establishment. The following article, written out and revised in her own neat hand, was among Mrs. Cook's papers. We publish it through the courtesy of Charles Cook and Sandra Cross.

#### Brookes Family Inn, Upper Marlboro, Md. by Margaret Cook

The Brookes family had an inn at Upper Marlboro for more than one hundred years. Margaret Brookes was issued a county ordinary keepers license in 1745 to operate an inn (ordinary, tavern, hotel) at the county seat. Members of her family continued to own and/or operate the place until it burned in 1854. County court records show that over the years licenses were issued to Elizabeth Brookes, Benjamin Brookes, Margaret (Brookes) Gibson, another Elizabeth Brookes, and then again a Benjamin Brookes until he leased it to John Halkerston after the Revolutionary War. Halkerston, too, had family connections, in a way, because his widow Elizabeth in 1799 married Major Benjamin Brookes, the owner of the inn. Some of the later operators included Samuel Hamilton, James Kemp, Richard Burroughs, and Justin Greenwell.

In January 1854 the Marlboro Hotel which was operated by Leonard W. Chew and owned by Captain John Brookes was "burned to the ground" according to an entry in the county land records. The location was given as being by George W. Wilson's and the Marlboro Gazette office. These places were at the northwest corner of Main and Water Streets, adjacent to lot 32, which was owned by Captain John Brookes.

Although Margaret Brookes was licensed to operate a Marlboro ordinary as early as 1745, the earliest purchase of the land in question, by her family, did not occur until 1759. Purchase of the next parcel was announced in the May 7, 1761 issue of the Maryland Gazette, stating the sale of part of the real estate of James Wardrop deceased. Among the properties listed was a lot in Marlboro with a brick house and several other improvements, then in the possession of Mr. Benjamin Brookes. In July 1762 Benjamin Brookes, innholder, purchased this property. The deed states that a brick building on the place was occupied by Brookes. Four years later in 1766 Brookes purchased the adjoining lot from Henry Waring. That deed also states that the lot had been improved. This last purchase completed the Brookes' inn holdings in Marlboro, being a strip of land continuing along Water Street from the north boundary of the corner lot at Main Street to the corner where Elm Street turns west. At that time Elm Street was the main road to points north and west of town.

After the fire of 1854 a corporate body was formed to rebuild the Upper Marlboro Hotel "lately destroyed by fire" on the site of which the ruins stood. The conditions were that the building would be rebuilt if \$ 10,000 would cover the cost of purchasing the land and the reconstruction. Shares were to be sold at \$ 100 each. Evidently the scheme was unsuccessful because on January 1, 1859, the Marlborough House opened on Main Street. The Messrs. Medley and Oyer had had the old Hepburn Mansion repaired and enlarged.

George Washington visited Upper Marlboro many times. Traditionally, he stayed at the Marlborough House, which of course was impossible, since it did not become a public place until 1859-sixty years too late to have accommodated him! It is more logical to believe he patronized what was known as the Marlboro Hotel, the Brookes family establishment. His diary does not state where he dined and/or

lodged in Upper Marlboro, but it does give exact dates: October 1, 1771; October 2, 1773; August 31, 1774; and May 4, 1775.

The Brookes' inn/Marlboro Hotel was in operation for a longer period of time than any other public house in the town. Archeological findings at the site could be invaluable to the history of Upper Marlboro and Prince George's County.

References: Prince George's County assessment lists, court records, land records, marriage license records, probate records  
Maryland Gazette  
Laws of Maryland  
George Washington's diaries

[Editor's notes: Historically, Water Street in Upper Marlboro was that street running from the schoolhouse hill down to the water. Today, however, that portion of old Water Street north of Main (on which the Brookes' inn stood) is designated Elm Street, even though it runs north-south and the main segment of Elm Street runs east-west. The United States Postal Service plans to build the new Upper Marlboro post office fronting on Elm/Water Street on property once part of the Brookes' inn complex. This certainly makes Mrs. Cook's call for archeological investigations of the site all the more crucial now. And finally, any descendants of the above-named Brookes are entitled to membership in a hereditary society--Flagon and Trencher, Descendants of Colonial Tavernkeepers, 421 Summit Avenue, South Orange, N.J. 07079.]

#### The Saint George's Day Awards, 1986

The Grand Ballroom at the University of Maryland was the scene of the presentation by the Society of the 1986 St. George's Day Awards at the Saint George's Day Dinner on April 23. This year the recipients were:

David E. Shikles, for the Castle Restoration. Since 1918, one of the landmarks of Hyattsville has been its National Guard armory. The armory is unmistakable--there is no other stone fortress like it anywhere on Route One. For more than fifty years the armory was the home of Company F of the First, and later the 115th Infantry Regiment. The National Guard moved out in 1971 and for the next decade the building served a variety of uses. In recent years, however, the future of the building began to look dim. It deteriorated badly. Then David Shikles entered the scene, with an ambitious proposal to convert the armory into a combined cultural/restaurant/ and commercial facility. His plans have become a reality, and the old armory--rechristened The Castle—is an arts center, an office building, and will soon house a restaurant. The Castle Restoration is more than an economic and esthetic achievement, however, it is a social one as well, for it has helped to bring some nightlife back to downtown Hyattsville. It is all the more fitting to recognize this achievement in Hyattsville's centennial year.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Nicolai, for their home, Riverview. At the turn of the century, a popular summertime destination for Washingtonians was the Riverview Amusement Park, located along the Potomac River in southern Prince George's County. With its roller coaster, carousel, shooting gallery, and other amusements, Riverview was just a short Sunday afternoon steamboat ride down the river. At the heart of the Riverview Amusement Park was its pavilion, a strong, sturdy structure, the site of dances, concerts, and other entertainments. The amusement park was closed during World War I, the roller coaster dismantled, and the pavilion made into a house. In recent years, Frank and Shirley Nicolai have converted the old pavilion house into one of the finest and most interesting homes in Prince George's County. With a lot of work they have remodeled the interior to create a home with

large open spaces that capture the spirit of the old pavilion, yet retain a cozy and comfortable atmosphere that make the house most livable.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Kulla, for the Mount Airy restoration. One of the most important colonial homes in all of Maryland is Mount Airy, southwest of Upper Marlboro. Built by Benedict Calvert in the mid-18th century, Mount Airy is the only colonial home associated with Maryland's proprietary family still standing. Recognizing its importance, the state acquired the house in the early 1970s with the intent of making the property into a state park. Unfortunately the plans lay idle, the house deteriorated, and our precious heritage was threatened. To the rescue came Frank and Pat Kulla from Connecticut, with a plan to rent the property and convert it into a country inn. Despite bureaucratic red tape, escalating costs, and restoration problems that would have discouraged most, they persevered, and today Mount Airy Plantation is the showplace of Prince George's County. Mount Airy lives again. Nowhere in this county can one find a better meal in such a gracious setting. [Frank and Pat Kulla will be the Society's hosts at the luncheon at Mount Airy on June 14]

Mr. and Mrs. Courtland Lee, for the Grigsby Station log cabin. Few areas of Prince George's County were as heavily developed during the 1950s and 60s as Landover. What was farmland before World War II became the site of housing developments, apartment complexes shopping centers, and commercial warehouses in the two decades after. Somehow amidst all of this development a reminder of the rural past survived--a small log cabin, located just a few yards off of Landover Road behind the old house known as Grigsby Station. The cabin was a modest structure, covered with clapboard siding, its origins obscure. In 1983 the future of the log cabin looked bleak. It was uninhabited, victimized by constant vandalism, and scheduled for demolition, along with the Grigsby Station house. They stood in the way of a funeral home and a parking lot. The owner of the property donated the cabin to the Prince George's County Historical and Cultural Trust, on the condition that it be moved away. That is when Courtland and Elaine Lee came onto the scene. They fell in love with the little log cabin, and at their own expense, moved it to Glenn Dale, where they have restored it and improved it and made it into a home once again. The log cabin now stands in the Camelot community, beautifully sited on the grounds of the old Addison home, Maple Shade.

William George and the City of Mount Rainier, for the city's 75th anniversary book. On March 3, 1897, the Maryland and Washington Railway began streetcar service from New York and Florida Avenues to the District Line. The extension of the streetcar out to Maryland gave a great boost to the development of a small suburban town right on the District line--a town that was given the name Mount Rainier by some early investors and developers from the Pacific Northwest. In 1910 Mount Rainier was incorporated; in 1985 the city celebrated its 75th anniversary. As part of the celebrations the city published a history book, compiled and edited by lifelong Mount Rainier resident William George. Well written and handsomely designed, the book captures and distills in an interesting, informative, and entertaining style the history of one of Prince (George's County's oldest suburban towns. Joining Mr. George in accepting the award was Mayor Stanley Prusch of Mount Rainier.

The Hall of Fame, Prince George's County, inducted Governor Joseph Kent into the Hall with the unveiling of a portrait of the Governor. Henry Leonnig of Upper Marlboro, a member of the family, spoke on the Governor's life and career. Among the many family members present were the former commissioner of baseball, Bowie Kent Kuhn, and his mother, Alice Merrick Roberts Kuhn. The master of ceremonies for the evening was Prince George (a.k.a. Robert A. Crawley).

## NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY AND COLLECTION

### UPDATE

Our last report in late August indicated that the library was partially moved to Marietta and that we expected to reopen by October 1, 1985. How wrong we were!

The final move came on the second weekend of September. The moving crew was the same as before - all Society officers - plus Don Skarda and President John Giannetti' son Gregory and nephew Mark Broglio. Sorting the boxes, about 175 in all, took longer than expected. There was also the task of anchoring the shelves and building new ones, which was accomplished by Warren Rhoads.

Under pressure from our public, we opened for business on the first Saturday of December. Long hours during the Christmas holidays, with much appreciated logistical assistance from Patricia and Louise Tatspaugh, brought results. Most of the books were logged in and shelved by January 1st.

Presently there are about 3500 volumes on the shelves, plus uncounted numbers of newspapers, magazines and microfilm. There are also the vertical files, photo files an obituary/biographical files. Maps and a large number of artifacts yet to be formally catalogued round out the collection. At present there are about 20 or more boxes of materials primarily clippings and brochures, yet to be sorted and filed. And, more arrives each week!

Our visitors on Saturday (12-5) at the library have been both members and the general public with a great variety of questions and interests. Several new members have been recruited from our visitors to the library and those on house tours.

Do drop by for a visit. Anything you might want to bring along for the collection will be gratefully accepted!

### SOCIETY OF MAREEN DUVALL DESCENDANTS

At the quarterly meting of the Council of the Society of Mareen Duvall Descendants held at Marietta in January, two copies of Harry Wright Newman's book, Mareen Duvall of Middle Plantation, were presented to the historical society's library. This fine reference work on early Prince George's County is a valuable addition to the collection, and will serve as a helpful reference for our docents.

The Council also voted to utilize space in the library for the files and archive of the Duvall family. The Prince George's County Historical is pleased to welcome and cooperate with the Society of Mareen Duvall Descendants in this venture.

### OUR THANKS

--To TED BISSELL for 10 early volumes of Reveille (Md. Agr. College yearbook.), Martenett map of Montgomery County, and vertical files containing valuable information on Ft. Lincoln (Cemetery) and the Bradford Pear tree plantings in University Park.

--To Mary Charlotte Chaney for three more years of Antiques magazine.

--To the Society of Descendants of Lords of the Maryland Manors for a generous contribution to the library endowment, as a result of their recent tour of Prince George County which included Marietta and the library.

--To Marjorie Hienton Frantzreb for the manuscript of Louise Joyner Hienton's Prince George's Heritage and for a very rare copy of Mrs. Hienton's History of the Riverdale Presbyterian Church.

--To Francis Geary, Hyattsville Historian, and the Prince George's Post-Sentinel for 10 bound volumes of the Prince Georgian newspaper for the period 1940-45 and for the bound complete 13 year run of the Star-Leader of Clinton.

--To Edith Bagot and Alan Virta who provide a constant flow of miscellaneous material on Prince George's County people and events.

### FROM MARIETTA

--Exterior painting %-as completed prior to Christmas and the parking lot and driveway were covered with bluestone.

--The Christmas Open House was relatively successful, considering the fact that it had, not been widely publicized. Following the Open House the officers of the Society hosted a small reception for some of our neighbors in the Glenn Dale area.

--on March 2, 1986 the house was reopened for the regular tours which are held every Sunday afternoon, 12 Noon - 4 PM. Our appreciation to docents Elaine & Willard Entwisle, Margaret Kelly, Dorothy Moore and Rene Walters as well as Alice Skarda and Edith Bagot who have coordinated the house tours.

--The west chimney (upper 3') has been rebuilt since the wind brought down loose brick in March. --A. now roof is scheduled for the house. The old slate will be removed and rotted sheathing boards will be replaced before a new slate roof is put in place. The decking and roof over the garage will also be repaired.

--The Society of Maren Duvall Descendants is proceeding with the reconstruction of the original book shelves in the law office building. When completed, appropriate materials will be placed on display there.

### ACQUISITIONS

Author	Title	Donor
Marlborough Towne DAR	Tombstone Inscriptions of So. Anne Arundel County, Md.	Purchase
Walker, S.H.	The Walkers of Toaping Castle, Md.	Paul T. Lanham
Phipps, G.M.	John Mitchell of Mitchellville, Pr. Geo's Co., Md.	G. M. Phipps
Browne, J.L.	From Sotweed to Suburbia. A Hist. of Crofton, Md.	Purchase
- - -	The Decisive Blow Is Struck. (200th Anniv. of State Govt. in Md.)	Edith M. Bagot
Callcott, G.H.	Maryland & America. 1940-1980	Purchase
- - -	American Clan Gregor Soc. Yearbook (1985)	ACGS
Wearmouth, J.M.	Charles County's Railroad (Pope's Creek Line)	Wearmouth, J.M.
Lee, C.	Legacy of the Land. (250 Years of Agr. in Carroll Co., Md.)	Purchase
Beirne, F.F.	The Amiable Baltimoreans	Margaret Marshall

Lanham, W.J.

- - -

The Lanham Family's 17th Origins From  
Md.'s Eastern Shore  
Maryland Manual (1930)

W. J. Lanham

Edith M. Bagot



NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince George's County  
Historical Society**

Luncheon at Mount Airy Plantation

A reminder: the Society's luncheon at Mount Airy plantation will be held on Saturday, June 14. Cocktails (cash bar) will begin at noon; the lunch itself at 1 p.m. After lunch, Frank and Pat Kulla will talk about the history of Mount Airy as well as the process of restoration of this colonial treasure. A flyer with a return reservation form was mailed out several weeks ago; reservations are due by June 7. The price is \$16.00. Reservations should be mailed to Mr. Warren Rhoads, 12501 Kemmerton Lane, Bowie, Md. 20715.

The early history of Mount Airy is unclear, but it is believed that Benedict Calvert, son of the 5th Lord Baltimore, built the house in the mid-18th century. Architectural evidence in one wing suggests that a 17th-century structure--perhaps the famous Calvert hunting lodge--was incorporated. Mount Airy was the scene, in February 1774, of the wedding of Elizabeth Calvert and John Parke Custis. Young Mr. Coates' stepfather, George Washington, was present. Mount Airy remained in the Calvert family until 1903; later owners included Eleanor "Cissy" Patterson, publisher of the Washington Times-Herald. The State of Maryland acquired the house in 1973, and only recently entered into a long term lease with the family-owned Chambord Corporation to restore the house and open a country inn. Frank and Pat Kulla are the operating officers of the corporation and our hosts on June 14; their restoration (for which they received the St. George's Day Award) is quite impressive.

Mount Airy plantation is located in Rosaryville State Park on Rosaryville Road. From the Beltway take Pennsylvania Avenue (Route 4) east to Woodyard Road (Route 223); right on Woodyard Road two miles to Rosaryville Road. Bear left at the stoplight; Mount Airy is about two miles south, on the left. From Marlboro or Bowie, take Crain Highway (Route 301) south to Rosaryville Road; right on Rosaryville Road about a mile to Mount Airy on the right.

Mount Airy is also open for business during the week and on weekends. Phone 856-1860. For further information about the Society's luncheons phone Warren Rhoads at 464-0819.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

## The Duvall Pecan Trees and Thomas Jefferson

[In May 1977 a short note on the Duvall pecans was published in News and Notes. Society member Ted Bissell provides this update.]

At Marietta, home of Gabriel Duvall and his successors, are four huge pecan trees. In 1977 Dr. John Kundt, Dept. of Horticulture University of Maryland, and the writer, measured the diameter of the trees as 31 to 41 inches (2 1/2 to 3 21 feet) and 81 to 103 feet in height. A short time later Mr. Sam Lyon, Naturalist, National Capital Park and Planning Commission, by making borings of the trunks estimated the age of the trees as 100 to 105 years.

At the homes of Jimmy and John Byron Duvall at Naylor are more old pecan trees. In 1977, I measured the largest as 44 in diameter and the branches spreading some 50 feet. This is the largest pecan tree I know in the State of Maryland.

Tradition in the Duvall family says these trees were the gift of Thomas Jefferson whom we know was a friend of Gabriel Duvall and, when President, appointed him Treasurer of the United States. We have not been able to find a record of such a gift but there is ample record of Jefferson's interest in pecans.

There are at least ten entries in Jefferson's Garden Book, edited by Edwin Morris Betts, of planting "paccans" at Monticello, then in 1800 he wrote Daniel Clark of New Orleans that he had two trees planted in 1780, "flourishing but have not produced nuts. Clark in reply suggested the comparatively high elevation retard bearing.

Then when Mrs. Anna Bankhead gave Jefferson some cape jesszmine he offered her various plants including pecan, for her planting.

In 1781 in response to an inquiry from Europe Jefferson wrote a lengthy treatise, "Notes on the State of Virginia," which includes information on the people, crops, minerals, and much more. It contains a description of the pecan in Latin, in formal botanical style, naming it Juglans alba and adding "It grows on the Illinois, Wabash, Ohio and Mississippi Rivers." The treatise was published in Paris in 1785.

A few years later while Jefferson was Minister Plenipotentiary from the United States to France he wrote three different men in American to send him pecan nuts for planting. He specified nuts from Illinois, "the western country," and said they might be obtained in Pittsburg. Several lots were sent and acknowledged. One lot had been "Pilfered." It would be more than interesting to know if any of these trees survive in France.

From their ages it is obvious that the present trees are progeny of the originals given by Jefferson.

--Theodore L. Bissell

No meetings in July or August; Society meetings resume in September  
Luncheon at Mount Airy, June. 14  
Festival of Flight-College Park Airport--June 14 & 15

"Only Twenty Minutes From Washington "

Suburban development began in Prince George's County not long after the Civil War. While there certainly were a few people settled here earlier because of the county's proximity to Washington,

organized suburban development--the platting of towns and formal subdivision of land--dates only from the late 1860s and 1870s. The city of Hyattsville was this county's first successful suburban community. This country crossroads village along the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad was transformed into a suburban town when B.F. Guy and C.C. Hyatt began subdividing large parcels and selling building lots not long after the Civil War. A map of 1873, on file at the Library of Congress, shows an orderly row of cottages just east of the Melrose crossing, and twenty-eight numbered lots on the other side of the tracks, as well as a scattering of other residences and buildings along the Baltimore turnpike and the railroad line. Formally incorporated in 1886, Hyattsville celebrates its 100th anniversary as a municipality this year.

Hyattsville was by no means the only attempt at suburban development in that pioneer suburban era; it had at least three contemporaries. Two of them came to naught: Spa City and the City of the Highlands. Spa City was promoted in a brochure published in Washington in 1868. It was to be built adjacent to old Bladensburg, around the famous spa, but its impressive plans never came to fruition. The City of the Highlands was to be built where Cottage City now stands. The Highlands brochure, published in 1870, promised the suburban ideal: homesites "away from the dust and unwholesome clamor of city life, in the quiet and peace of beautiful scenery, and the green fields, fresh air, and religious surroundings of nature"--and at prices lower than could be found in the city.

The fourth town of that pioneer suburban era was Huntington, known today as "old Bowie." Like Hyattsville, Spa City, and the City of the Highlands, it was a railroad town--for in that pre-streetcar and pre-automobile age, the railroad was the suburban lifeline to the city, the means of commutation and travel. Huntington was built at the junction of the Pope's Creek and Washington branches of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad (later the Pennsylvania line). It was by no means the only scene of homebuilding along that line--the villages of Lanham and Seabrook being two other late 19th century examples—but Huntington was the most ambitious and the earliest, platted even before the railroad line was completed. The publication promoting Huntington recently came to our attention through the courtesy of Susan Pearl, researcher for the county Historic Preservation Commission. Portions of that brochure are published in this issue of News and Notes, recalling the early years of suburban development in Prince George's County.

-- Alan Virta

N.B. The Baltimore and Potomac Railroad was not completed until 1872, despite the fact that the brochure's author writes of the line and its connections as being accomplished facts.

Prospectus  
of  
HUNTINGTON  
Prince Georges County, Md.  
on the lines of the  
Baltimore and Potomac Railroad,  
connecting Northern and Southern States  
By Air Lines.

An Important Junction of Railways  
Takes Place at Huntington.

1870

Ben. M. Plumb & Co. Proprietors.

No. 254 F street,  
Washington, D.C.

That large property known as the "Carrick Estate," containing, with the additional ground laid out, upwards of three hundred square acres, has been purchased and subdivided the present for a large Town Site.

The junction of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad with the railway to Aquia Creek takes place on the property, the Main Stem of the Railroad passing directly through its centre, the town being upwards of a mile in length, the ground gradually rising each way from the Junction and Railways for a half mile--especially adapting the spot to the purposes of a large town, which the proprietors are already assured will be very rapidly built up there. The ground is neither hilly nor stony, but has that Pleasant gentle slope from each direction to the Railways. This general account entirely explains the lay of the ground, and renders any more detailed account unnecessary.

#### Location.

Huntington lies a little north of east the city of Washington, and less than twelve miles distant, on the high table lands between the valleys of those historical and romantic rivers, the Potomac and Patuxent. The station upon the Annapolis Branch of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad of the same name as the last named river, and upon that stream, lies seven miles further east from Huntington.

#### The Railroad Connections.

The Baltimore and Potomac Railroad forms a direct connection within the city of Baltimore with the Northern Central and the Pennsylvania Central Railways, the former Road now being engaged in tunneling under a portion of the city in order to enable them to make such connection, and avoid the heretofore necessary and slow transit with horses through the city. At the Potomac River the B. & P.R.R. connects with a direct line of rail to Richmond, and by this and its connections farther South will be able to bring passengers from extreme southern points to Baltimore and the North by nearly an Air Line, with complete connections, saving the public the delay of traveling by boats to Washington, and there paying double fare to Baltimore. Near Washington it connects the Point Lookout Road through Southern Maryland, and in Washington City with the Orange and Alexandria R.R., entering the city by crossing the Eastern Branch just below Benning's Bridge, and thence running on Virginia Avenue to Seventh Street West.

#### Transfer of Passengers at Huntington.

The transfer of all passengers from Washington and the North and West to the South, and from the South to the North and West and Washington, takes place at Huntington. Huntington is only twenty minutes ride from Washington.

#### Fare to Huntington.

The R.R. Company have determined to commute the fare from Washington, by the Quarter, at the rate of eleven cents per day, thereby making the short and pleasant ride on new and comfortable cars a less expense than rides upon our [i.e. Washington] streetcar,

#### Wide Streets and Avenues

have been laid out, and reservations for Church and School purposes have been made which latter will be deeded free of expense to such Denominations as will build at once. The Episcopal Society have already under consideration the erection of a Church upon one of these reservations....

Chestnut Avenue promises to be one of the most important thoroughfares of the place. It runs nearly through the centre and directly across the junction point of the railways....

Each building lot is laid out according to the points of the compass, either lying with north and south or east and west lines, and contains two thousand five hundred square feet of ground, and at the rear of each is a 15-foot public alley....

#### Water

There are a number of fine Springs upon the property, which those who have lived there for forty years past testify to have been perpetual and never failing, to one large one of which the people from the surrounding country have often come for miles to enjoy the superiority of the water it affords.

#### Healthfulness of Huntington.

The climate is both moderate and regular. The Town will be upon elevated ground, and free from any wet land whatever. Persons desiring a change of climate for health cannot but be benefitted by the pure country air at Huntington, which, although upon high ground, is not open to the blasts of the seasons. There is no miasma or malaria. Chills and Fevers are entirely unknown. Of one family that have lived there for nearly half a century past not one has had a Chill or Fever. Good health is thus assured every settler at Huntington.

#### Society at Huntington.

More than 500 Building Lots have already been sold, the large majority of the purchasers of which are making preparations to build at once, and judging from the intelligent and industrious classes to which these advance settlers belong, the very best of Society, and a beautiful Village, is assured at Huntington by the end of the coming summer.

The greater number of our people will be fully able to appreciate a home where children can be reared away from city temptations, and amid the refining influences of rural beauty and social culture.

. . .The proprietors are also prepared to exhibit plans and specifications of the latest and most approved plans of Country Residences, of brick, with verandahs, containing respectively four, six and eight rooms, and to build the same for about half the cost of frame ones, for a portion cash and the balance on long time.

In connection with this subject there have already settled at Huntington two first-class carpenters, who have purchased a large number of lots, and who, being thereby interested in the full success of the place, will contract with any purchaser or purchasers of Building Sites to build houses on any desired plan at prices and terms that cannot but suit.

#### Our Prices and Terms.

For the present, we offer these Building Sites for \$25 cash or \$30, with \$5 down and the balance in installments of \$5 per month. To those classes in Washington who get a stipulated salary, our long time

payments will especially

## NEWS AND NOTES FROM **The Prince George's County Historical Society**

commend themselves....The  
twenty minutes ride will be  
nought but a pleasure. . . .

Ben. M. Plumb & Co.  
Proprietor.

Editor's notes: The railroad  
junction at Huntington never  
did become the great North-South transfer point as the proprietors predicted; no great Chicago arose at Huntington. The town boasted 460 residents in 1900. Huntington incorporated as Bowie in 1916. The oldest house in Huntington stands on 7th Street, a brick town-house with Italianate features built about 1870. Together with the stucco-covered cottages east of the Melrose crossing in Hyattsville, it stands as a relic of the very early days of suburban building in Prince George's County.

Vol. XIV, no. 7-8 July-Aug. 1986

### The Fall Schedule

Mark your calendars now, for the Board of Directors has planned a busy schedule of events for the early Fall:

--Saturday, September 13, Regular meeting at Riversdale, 2 p.m., with guest speaker. Details to follow in September newsletter.

--Saturday, October 4: Luncheon meeting at Rossborough Inn, University of Maryland. Guest speaker.

--Saturday, October 18: Bus tour to Charles County

Members are also reminded that Marietta, once the home of Supreme Court Justice Gabriel Duvall (and now the home of the Prince George's County Historical Society), is open for tours every Sunday afternoon front noon until 4 p.m. Bring your out-of-town summer guests--or your family and friends--to see this important part of Prince George's County's heritage. There is a nominal admission fee which is contributed to the restoration fund. Marietta, a fine Federal-style country home built in the early years of the 19th century, is located on Bell Station Road just north of the intersection of Annapolis Road (Route 450) and Enterprise Road-Glenn Dale Boulevard (Route 193). The rural setting is a lovely one. Phone: 464-0590. A reminder, too, that the Society's library at Marietta is open on Saturday afternoons beginning at noon. The library entrance is at the rear of the house.

### Tobacco at Marietta

Our thanks to Society member Marie Adell for presenting two tobacco plants for the garden at Marietta. They have been faithfully attended by librarian Fred De Marr and parks department staff, and they are doing just fine despite the drought.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

## Special Development Districts: An Editorial Opinion

On July 29 the County Council passed a bill submitted by the County Executive that authorizes the creation of special development districts in Prince George's County. The purpose of the districts are to "foster the attractiveness and functional utility of developing areas of the County and enhance the desirability of the County as a place to live and work." Within each district, special development review commissions (composed of citizens, developers, and businessmen) will advise on development plans with the aim of "Preserving the integrity, quality and discernible character" of the area. The Council immediately created two districts: Enterprise Road Corridor and Piscataway; others may follow.

Development is booming in Prince George's County. Every week acres and acres of undeveloped land are being transformed into offices parks, housing developments, and shopping centers. Not all of this is bad, but it is also undeniable that not all of it is quality work, that much of it is unattractive, and that many county roads are turning into local versions of Rockville Pike. The idea that there will be some additional firepower fighting this at least somewhere in Prince George's County is probably not a bad one. Yet other events this summer are troubling, and cynical persons might claim that these special development districts are simply smokescreens. Are the bad old days of the free and easy 1960s to return to the rest of the county? Look at Glenn Dale. This summer a large townhouse development was approved behind Glenn Dale Heights, and recently industrial zoning was granted to a tract on Glenn Dale Boulevard. And the dollar signs are flashing before many an entrepreneur with eyes on the Annapolis Road corridor between Lanham and Bowie. Glenn Dale as it is now is a nice residential area with a rural character, but how long will it remain that way if decisions like these continue to be made? Is it the intent of the county government to carve out islands of nice development and let the rest of the county sink in a sea of build, build, build?

The pressures of development, like the sea, are inevitable, we are told, and can not be turned back. But development itself is not a force that exerts pressure. People exert pressure, and the county government can tell them either yes or no. There are quite a few nice places to live in Prince George's County--some urban, some suburban, some rural. They all need protection... Boneheaded like the one to plop a townhouse development down in the middle of old Glenn Dale bode ill for the future outside the special development districts.

--Alan Virta

## Hyattsville Anniversary Book Delayed

The publications of the City of Hyattsville's 100th anniversary book has been delayed. A number of unforeseen and unexpected changes requested by the city council will push back publication probably until early 1987.

## The Walkers of Pleasant Prospect

One of Prince George's County's fine old homes is Pleasant Prospect, in Woodmore. Situated on a long private drive, it is not visible from the road; thus most students of county history know it only from photographs. Pleasant Prospect is a large house. Built of brick laid in Flemish bond, it is two and one-half stories high with a steep gable roof. Interior brick chimneys project from the ridgeline at each gable end; at the center of the east front is the handsome and ornate main door. Pleasant Prospect was built in 1798, and it attracted the attention of the Historic American Buildings Survey in the 1930s. "The survey workers who examined the great height of the massive ivy-covered gable end must have

done so in open-mouthed astonishment, wrote former Society president James C. Wilfong, Jr. in the Prince George's Post some nineteen years ago. "This is a towering structure indeed, and the three window openings here [in the gable end] are all but lost in the brick immensity."

Pleasant Prospect was built at the close of the eighteenth century by Dr. Isaac Duckett on a tract of land known as Sprigg's Request. Dr. Duckett died in 1823, and his son-in-law, John Contee, formerly of the U.S. Navy, became master of the house. Pleasant Prospect passed in turn to his son, Capt. John Contee, also a former naval officer; he died there in 1864. The house was then sold to one Jonathan T. Walker of Washington, D.C. Walker was actually a Prince Georgian, one of the Walkers of Toaping Castle. He removed to the city to make his fortune at business, and successful at that, decided to return to his native county. Pleasant Prospect remained in the Walker family for more than one hundred years. Though it passed out the family's hands in 1978, the name Walker, and names of their kin, still can be found on the mailboxes in front of other homes on rural Woodmore Road.

An interesting account of the Walker family appeared in the Washington Evening Star of November 13, 1883. The occasion of the report was the fiftieth wedding anniversary of Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan T. Walker celebrated at Pleasant Prospect. The newspaper account was printed in a small booklet later that year which recorded in greater detail the history of the family--certainly one of the earliest genealogical works on a Prince George's County family. The article in the Star was titled "The Walkers of Toaping Castle, Md." Toaping Castle was the first Maryland home of the family. That house was located in what is now Greenbelt. The short drive leading off of Greenbelt Road into the business park known as the Golden Triangle is called Walker Drive in honor of the family whose house once stood just a few feet away.

On the following page we reprint the Star's account of the Walker family and the golden wedding anniversary celebration.

### THE WALKERS OF TOAPING CASTLE, MD.

#### A Notable Anniversary, Recalling an, Interesting Family History

"There was a notable gathering today at Pleasant Prospect, Prince George's County, Md., the handsome country place of Mr. Jonathan T. Walker, who for many years was one of the leading citizens of the District. The occasion was the celebration of the golden wedding of Mr. and Mrs. Walker, and it brought together several hundred of the relatives and friends of the venerable couple, who are both still hale and hearty.

"Governor [Oden] Bowie was present, and over one hundred families in Prince George's County were represented. Among those from Washington were Mr. Zeph Jones, the Cohens, Bealls, Scotts, Yosts, Jacksons, and Seufferles; Thos. J. Turner and Mr. Spangler of Baltimore. There were present, including the husbands and wives of their children, over fifty children and grandchildren, and from them the venerable couple received a gift of a handsome service of silver. There were also gold and silver presents from other relatives and friends. Probably the gift most highly prized was a cane made from the old log house- Toaping Castle erected by Mr. Walker's grandfather and his brothers at the head of Bear Garden Branch [Greenbelt] shortly after they arrived here. Misses Martha and Sarah Seaver, who were Mrs. Walker's bridesmaids, were among those present. There was presented to the couple a neatly written sketch of the family, from which the following is taken:

EThe Family History.

"Mr. Walker is of Scottish descent, his grandfather, Isaac, and granduncles, Charles and Nathan, being forced to flee and find temporary secrecy and security in France when George I was crowned King of England and Scotland. From France the brothers came to America, prior to the middle of the last century. Isaac left his wife behind him with the intention of returning for her-not daring to write to her lest the whereabouts of himself and brothers should become known-a reward of £ 500 being on their heads as rebels and felons. By a strange coincidence when he arrived at Alexandria, Virginia, to take passage for Scotland to bring his wife over, he met her at the wharf, she having come over in the vessel in which he intended to sail. The brothers built a white oak log house at the headwaters of Bear Garden Branch [later Indian Creek], about nine miles northeast of this city, which remained standing till about twenty-five years ago. They called it "Toaping Castle" after their stronghold in the old country. After they thought it safe to acknowledged their identity a patent for the land was obtained by Isaac Walker from "Frederick, Absolute Lord and Proprietary of the Province," February 5th 1754, the original of which Mr. Walker now holds. Charles and Nathan Walker subsequently removed first to Kentucky and then to Mississippi the Hon. R.J. Walker being of the same stock. Some of the other descendants removed to northern Pennsylvania and Massachusetts. Isaac Walker and his wife, Elizabeth Stuart, raised three sons, Isaac, Charles, and Nathan, and a daughter, Kate, who married into the Sheriff family. Isaac married a Miss Hamilton and settled near Baltimore. Charles settled near this city and was the father of Zachariah Walker, who formerly resided near the insane asylum [St. Elizabeth's]. Mrs. Sarah Davis, who died a few years ago in East Washington at the age of 96, was the sister of Zechariah Walker. The only direct descendant of this branch of the family is Charles Hoffman. Nathan Walker first married Miss Baggerly, of Montgomery County, Maryland, by whom he had three children, and in 1810 married Miss Elizabeth Thomas, of Charles County, Maryland, by whom he had seven children in nine years, Mr. Walker, born August 4th, 1811, being the eldest. Nathan, the next, died in Florida in 1839; the third is Mrs. Catherine Beall, of this city; the fourth, Jane, married Alpheus Beall, now of Baltimore; the fifth, Samuel Hamilton, became the celebrated Capt. Walker, of Texan Ranger and Mexican War fame, who was killed in the charge at Hua Mantla, October 9th, 1847; the sixth is Mr. Charles Walker, the well-known carpenter and builder of this city, and the seventh, Mary Thomas, married John Beall, of Francis, Montgomery County, Maryland. Mr. Jonathan T. Walker spent most of his life in this city, where he was engaged successfully in business.

#### After the Inauguration of President Lincoln

"Mr. Walker, fearing the city would be the scene of riot and bloodshed, retired to the quiet of "Toaping Castle," though continuing his business in this city. In 1866 he purchased Pleasant Prospect, and retired altogether from business.

Mrs. Walker is the daughter of Cephas and Annie Harvey Benson born at Annapolis, July 3d, 1813. Her father was the principal of the Academy at Annapolis for many years. Mr. and Mrs. Walker have had twelve children. The grandchildren number 32, and there is one great grandchild. The children are James T. Walker, Elizabeth J. Lester, Chas H. Walker, John N. Walker, Samuel H. Walker, George Newton Walker, Alice A. Townshend, and Howard Spedden Walker."

So ends the account in the Evening Star. A county newspaper, the Prince Georgian, reported on the celebration in its issue of October 8, 1883. This report included names of more county residents at the reception: Mrs. Alexander Fall and sister, Mrs. Governor Bowie, Mr. and Mrs. C.C. Magruder, Jr., Mrs. Ash, Rev. and Mrs. Stanley, C.C. Hyatt and lady, Hobert Duvall and lady, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas J. Turner, George W. Duvall of Dennis and lady, Fielder C. Duvall and lady, Dr. and Mrs. Fairfax, Judge and Mrs. James Mullikin, Dr. Bird and lady, John Beall, Fillmore Beall, Thomas Berry of Concord, and Jeremiah Duckett. The reporter who signed the article as "Guest," wrote that thirty-four children and grandchildren were present, and "it was refreshing to see the harmony that prevailed among them. In these degenerate days such accord as this is beautiful, and must be gladdening to the aged parents."

## Changes in News and Notes

Twelve years ago it was my pleasure to accept the position as editor of News and Notes. This issue (the 130th since then) will be my last. I have been awarded an Andrew Mellon Foundation fellowship in archival administration and will be spending the academic year 1986-87 working in the archives and historical manuscripts department at the University of Southern Mississippi library. Needless to say, I will not be able to edit the newsletter long distance, so I must relinquish this post which has been so enjoyable these past several years. My predecessor as newsletter editor, Frederick S. De Marr, has agreed to serve as interim editor until a new editor and new writers can be found. Those of you with writing and editorial skills and an interest in our county's history, now is the time to come forward. There are hundreds of stories of county history waiting to be told; many of them can be uncovered in the documents and books in the Society's library.

News and Notes is the cooperative effort of many individuals. Without their efforts it would never see print and make it into your homes. Special thanks must be given to several who, over the years, have devoted time and effort beyond the call of duty: Edith Bagot, Frederick S. De Marr, Herbert Embrey, John Giannetti, Warren T. Rhoads, Margo Ritchie, and Louise Tatspaugh. Thanks also to three individuals who were helpful particularly in my first years as editor, when I was still learning the ropes: Paul Lanham, Elizabeth Ticknor, and the late Frank F. White, Jr. Finally thanks to all the members of the Society for their encouragement and support while serving as your editor.

--Alan Virta

## New Members of the Society

We welcome the following individuals to membership in the Prince George's County Historical Society:

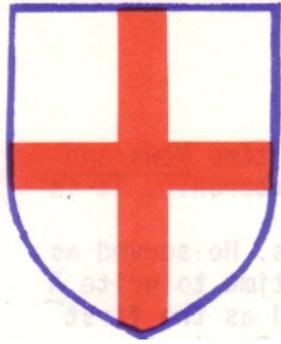
Mrs. Marie Crump	Bowie	Mrs. McLiesh
Mrs. Willard Ledbetter	Greenbelt	Mrs. McLiesh
Kathryn N. McClay	Hyattsville	Mrs. Tatspaugh
Judge and Mrs. Samuel Weloy	Upper Marlboro	Mr. Embrey

## Tobacco Harvest in Accokeek

On Sunday, August 17, between 1 and 4 p.m. the staff of the National Colonial Farm in Accokeek will give a tobacco cutting demonstration and explain the tobacco growing process. Admission one dollar, children under twelve free. Phone: 283-2113.

News and Notes from the Prince George's County Historical Society

John Giannetti, President	Alan Virta, Editor
Margo Ritchie, Corr. Sec.	Herb Embrey, Treasurer



NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince  
George's  
County  
Historical  
Society**

Vol. XIV, no. 9 September  
1986

The September Meeting -  
September 13

The Society's fall season will commence with the meeting on Saturday, September 13 at Riversdale, the Calvert Mansion, at 2 p.m. We are fortunate to have one of our members as guest speaker, Jean Sargent of Laurel who was honored with the St. George's Day Award in 1985. Her topic will be "Secrets of Genealogical Publishing."

Mrs. Sargent made a major contribution to the preservation of our County's heritage when she produced Stones and Bones for the Prince George's County Genealogical Society. This monumental work contains all known tombstone inscriptions in Prince George's County, with the exception of those in the large commercial cemeteries. In addition a wealth of local history is included for each of the church and private cemeteries listed.

Stones and Bones is one of several genealogical publications published by Jean Sargent. She will share with us her experiences in the field and discuss how the fruits of individual research may be recorded for future generations.

Riversdale is located at 4811 Riverdale Road in Riverdale, Maryland. As usual we welcome the general public to attend and encourage members to bring guests. A social hour will follow the meeting.

In Appreciation

On page 34 of last month's issue of News and Notes Alan Virta announced his resignation as editor in order to accept an Andrew Mellon Foundation fellowship in archival administration at the University of Southern Mississippi for the 1986-87 academic year. For those of you who look forward to receiving this publication each month, I am sure that the shock has not yet been felt.

Back in 1974 when the editor threatened to cease publication if a replacement did not volunteer, Alan stepped forth and picked up the ball. And he ran with it in fine style for twelve years. We have grown to take it for granted that each month we would receive a first-class newsletter containing current events of the historical scene and fascinating tales of our past. As president of the Society for ten of those years it was a pleasure to know that one major facet of our program, the newsletter, was in good hands and that the job would

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

be done well. In this time News and Notes has provided a central focus for our programs and membership. It is highly respected by other historical groups.

Alan did not limit his talents to his editorial duties. He served as a director of the Society and as vice president. He found time to write A Pictorial History of Prince George's County. And, he served as the first chairman of Prince George's County's Historic Preservation Commission.

We could go on ad infinitum concerning Alan's contributions to the historical and cultural scene of the County, but we certainly do not want this to sound like an obituary. We simply want to say that a talented and generous friend has left our midst--temporarily--and that we wait with anticipation for his return to Prince George's in June of next year.

Many thanks for all of your efforts, Alan.

--Fred De Marr

### Suitland Revisited

Most members of the Society are familiar with the name of Col. Samuel Taylor Suit whose life and exploits have been recorded both in this publication and in Mrs. Norton's work on Suitland, Maryland. This native Prince Georgean made his fortune in the distillery business in Kentucky and later returned to the County as a "Colonel" to become prominent as an agriculturalist, railroad founder and politician.

Just this past week, on Labor Day (Sept. 1, 1986), a bit of Suit memorabilia resurfaced at an antiques auction in Frederick, Maryland. Item #151 in the catalogue was a miniature stoneware whiskey jug upon which was stenciled the following inscription: "Little brown jug -The whiskey in this jug was made in 1809 and jugged by me 1880. S.T. Suit, Suitland, Md."

Listed as being "Extremely RARE & desirable size in super condition", the successful bidder was privileged to pay \$230 for this small bit of Prince Georgeana!

### October Meeting

Our meeting scheduled for October 4, 1986 at Rossborough Inn, University of Maryland will feature Herbert Reichelt as speaker. Mr. Reichelt, a former Mayor of Mt. Rainier, served as Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of Prince George's County. This being the election season, he will speak on County politics of an earlier year. This promises to be both interesting and entertaining.

RESERVATIONS ARE DUE BY SEPTEMBER 27th.

### The Newsletter

Because we have fallen somewhat behind on our publication schedule, this issue is limited to only 2 pages. Next we will endeavor to produce a full issue. Your literary contributions as well as your comments and criticisms are welcome at all times. And, if you are so inclined, your applications for the position of editor will receive our immediate attention.

--Fred De Marr, Acting Editor

CHARLES COUNTY TOUR - OCTOBER 18, 1986

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Fall Bus Tour to

CHARLES COUNTY, MARYLAND

Saturday, October 18, 1986

Delightful October weather is forecast for our planned visit to our neighbor to the south, Charles County.

We will depart in our deluxe coach from the Park and Planning parking lot at 6600 Kenilworth Road, Riverdale at 8 A.M. Return about 5 PM.

Our first stop will be the restored DR. SAMUEL MUDD HOUSE. This 1830 early Victorian farmhouse has much of the original furniture which was returned by relatives of the physician who was jailed for giving medical assistance to John Wilkes Booth after the Lincoln assassination. The next stop will be PORT TOBACCO, the original county seat. Here we will visit the reconstructed CHARLES COUNTY COURT HOUSE which has some exhibits on the early town. From her we will go to CHAPEL POINT at the confluence of the Port Tobacco and Potomac Rivers, which has one of the most beautiful views in the Tidewater Region. Here you will also view the exterior of the ST. THOMAS MANOR HOUSE, built by the Jesuits in 1741 and the adjoining ST. IGNATIUS CHURCH (1798).

We will then return to a restaurant in the Port Tobacco area where you will have lunch at water's edge, featuring a crab cake or chicken platter. (Cocktails may be purchased if you desire.)

After lunch we will proceed to SMALLWOOD'S RETREAT the reconstructed early 18th century home of General William Smallwood, famed Revolutionary War officer and Governor of Maryland from 1785 to 1788.

Price: \$25 per person (includes transportation, admissions and lunch.)

Reservation deadline is October 8, however we suggest you respond right away because we had to turn down requests for our Fall tours in the past. Guests are welcome. For more information, please call our tour director, Warren Rhoads at (301) 464-0819.

DEADLINE. October 8, 1986

CHECKS payable to: Prince George's Co. Historical Society

Please reserve space for the following persons on the Oct. 18 tour to Charles Co.

NAMES (Please list each person in your party) CRAB CAKE CHICKEN

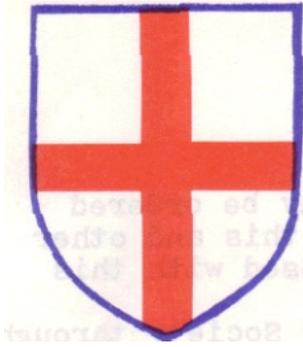
(Check preference for each person)

My check @ \$25. per person is enclosed. My telephone # is:

MAIL TO: Warren W. Rhoads

12501 Kemmerton Lane

Bowie, Maryland 20715 Phone: (301) 464-0819



**NEWS AND NOTES FROM**  
**The Prince**  
**George's**  
**County**  
**Historical**  
**Society**

Vol. XIV, no. 10 October  
1986

The October Meeting

Our next regular meeting will be held at Rossborough Inn at the University of Maryland, College Park, on Saturday, October 4, 1986 at Noon. A cash bar will be available prior to the luncheon which will be served at 12:30. (Reservations due to Warren Rhoads by Saturday, Sept. 27. Telephone: 464-0819.

The speaker will be Herbert W. Reichelt, former Mayor of Mt. Rainier (1949-54) and a member of the Prince George's County Board of Commissioners (1954-62). Mr. Reichelt served as President of the Board of Commissioners during his second term. Currently he is an attorney with offices located in Greenbelt. His remarks will involve "County Politics in Earlier Years", an appropriate subject for the current season.

Members unable to attend the luncheon are invited to join the meeting, which should begin no later than 2 P.M. There is ample parking in the lots behind the Dairy Building and Rossborough. The entrance is from U.S.1.

Society Elections

The Nominating Committee, composed of Vera Rollo, Alice Skarda and Paul Lanham, chairman, will deliver its report at the October meeting. The elections for officers of the Society for the coming year will be held at the November meeting on Saturday, November 1, 1986. Nominations from the floor will be received at both meetings and the proposed slate will be published in the next issue of News and Notes.

Prince George's County: A pictorial History

We are pleased to announce that three hundred copies of Alan Virta's book have been received by the Society and are for sale. For those who missed out on the original edition, this should be good news. They may be purchased at Marietta, our headquarters,

on Saturdays and Sundays, 12 Noon - 4PM. They may be ordered also by mail. A flyer containing particulars on this and other publications available from the Society is enclosed with this issue of News and Notes.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23,1696

These -books have been made available to the Society through the courtesy of the Prince George's County Government, and we are indebted to member Joyce Rumburg of the County Executive's Office who completed the arrangements with the publisher. Sales profits will benefit Marietta.

### National Pin Oak Champion

A huge pin oak tree in Mitchellville may be the national champion, according to several knowledgeable foresters. The tree stands near the old home known as Forest Place, built by Dr. John Peach in two sections (1869 and 1882). Forest Place is located near the intersection of Mitchellville and Collington Roads, and a shopping center is planned for the site. The Historic Preservation Commission is negotiating with the prospective developers in an attempt to save both the house and the tree. The tree only came to the attention of historians during these current negotiations. For more information, contact Gall Rothrock at the Historic Preservation Commission, 952-3520.

-- Alan Virta

While on the subject of championship trees, it should be noted that Ted Bissell's article on the Duvall pecan trees prompted a note to the Society from Sandy Nesbitt, a Master Gardener with the county's Extension Service. Nominations are being sought currently for big trees in Prince George's, which could qualify as state or national champions as well.

If you know of a big tree in your area, write down the tree species (common name), location, owner (if known), circumference (distance around trunk) at 4" feet above ground, and list a contact name, address and telephone number. This should be mailed to Maryland Forest, Park and Wildlife Service, P.O. Box 116, West Bowie, Md. 20715-0116. Att: Cynthia Tuck.

Your interest will be appreciated. In the past, Prince George's has had several state champions. -Ed.

### Map Highly Commended

While doing some research recently, Society member Susan Pearl noted the following item in the "Local and Personal" column of the March 9, 1859 issue of the Planters' Advocate (published in Upper Marlboro 1851-1861).

#### A Map, of the County

We learn that Mr. Simon J. Martenet, Surveyor, of Baltimore City, proposes, if sufficiently encouraged by subscriptions, to publish from actual survey, a large and complete map of this county. From one of his circulars, we take the following statement that the work is to be:

"The map is to be 3 or 4 feet square, and to show distinctly marked and accurately located, all the Roads, Streams, Post offices, Churches, Schools, Mills, Stores, Taverns, Smithshops and other public places, and also all the dwellings throughout the county with the owners, names opposite; forming a complete directory to the citizens; with enlarged plans of the larger towns and villages on the margin. The whole to be well engraved, colored in districts, varnished, backed on muslin, mounted on rollers, and embellished as far as justified by subscriptions, so as to form an elegant ornament for the office, library or parlor."

Mr. Martenet has already published maps of several of the other counties, which we have noticed highly commended by the press. Such a work would be one of great interest and value to our citizens, and we do not doubt that, if it shall be undertaken, it will be most liberally encouraged by them. The price will be \$5 per copy, payable on delivery.

(Reproductions of this map, minus the varnish, muslin and rollers, may be purchased from the Society. -Ed.)

### Where Are They?

A recent library accession, courtesy of member Ted Bissell, was a Gazetteer of Maryland, published by the Maryland Geological Survey in 1941 with assistance from the Writers Project of the Works Progress Administration (WPA). This contains a complete listing of settlements (cities, towns, villages) as well as waterways in the state. Such items as population, exact location, post office and railroad stations are listed after each entry, however no information as to the origin of the place name is included.

The unusual feature of this publication is that a number of entries are simply listed as being "in Prince George's County." Some other places are listed only as being a certain distance from another point.

Listed below are a few of these entries. Can any of our readers supply information concerning the exact location and the source of the name? Replies will be published.

Alonoay	Glen Mary	Brooks	Healthy Green
Beamer's Ridge	Woodcot	Chew	Horn Station
Fill	Boune Down	Rigley	Cross Keys

### November Meeting

This meeting will be held on the first Saturday, which is the first day of November, at Montpelier. Please mark your calendars.

### Last Call For Charles County

Space is available on the bus for the Society's Charles County Tour scheduled for Saturday, October 18th. This visit to our neighboring county will include the Dr. Samuel Mudd House, old Port Tobacco and its restored court house, St. Thomas Manor at Chapel Point, and Smallwood's Retreat, the home of Revolutionary War general and Governor William Smallwood. There are interesting items in the gift shops at the Mudd House and the court house.

If you have misplaced your reservation form, please call tour director Warren Rhoads at 464-0819. Deadline: October 8th.

### Marietta Tours

Docent volunteers are needed to staff the Noon-4 PM open house tours on Sundays at Marietta. We invite you to spend at least one afternoon in the country to share our headquarters with visitors for the remainder of 1986. Call Alice Skarda (474-5319) or Edith Bagot (927-3632).

### A Different Sort of Program

Over the years you have witnessed any number of period events at historic sites and at anniversary celebrations, involving everything from weddings to military battles. How about a colonial funeral for a change?

Yes, on Sunday, October 19th at 1 PM the staff of the National Colonial Farm in Accokeek will recreate the funeral of Mary Goodnight who passed on due to complications of childbirth. When death

touched colonial society the living, both family and the community, gathered at the burial. Libation was plentiful and gifts for those who attended were abundant.

To reach the farm, take Indian Head Highway (last, exit from Beltway to Southern Maryland before Wilson Bridge) south to Bryan Point Road. A right turn here will lead you to the site at 3400 Bryan Point Road, Accokeek. Admission is one dollar.

The Prince George's County Historical Society

Headquarters: Marietta, 5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale

Library Hours: Saturdays, Noon - 4PM

House Tours: Sundays, Noon - 4PM

Mailing address: P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Md. 20737 Headquarters Telephone: 464-0590

John A. Giannetti, President

Herbert C. Embrey, Treasurer

Margo Ritchie, Corres. Secty

Frederick S. De Marr, Acting Editor



# NEWS AND NOTES FROM **The Prince George's County Historical Society**

Vol. XIV, no. 11 November  
1986

## The November Meeting First Saturday at Montpelier

"A Little Light On Gas", the history of gas lighting in America, will be the topic of our next meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society, to be held on Saturday, November 1st at Montpelier. The speaker will be Mr. Denys Peter Myers, an architectural historian from Alexandria, Va., who has written a book on the subject. Some of our members will remember Mr. Myers' lecture to the Society just two years ago on "American Victorian Interiors and Their Furniture."

The meeting will begin at 2 PM. During the brief business session officers of the Society for the coming year will be elected. Please bring a guest. Refreshments will be served. Montpelier is located on the Laurel-Bowie Road (Rt. 197). From the Baltimore--Washington Parkway, take Rt. 197 west toward Laurel. Turn left at the first traffic light (Muirkirk Rd.) and then a right into the grounds.

## Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee composed of Vera Rollo, Alice Skarda, and Paul Lanham, Chairman, has submitted the following slate of officers for the coming year. Nominations will be received from the floor as well.

President	Warren W. Rhoads	Bowie
Vice Pres.	W.C. Dutton, Jr.	Upper Marlboro
Rec. Secty.	Joyce McDonald	Hyattsville
Corres. Secty.	Margo Ritchie	Adelphi
Treasurer	Herbert C. Embrey	Adelphi
Historian	Frederick S. De Marr	Hyattsville
Directors	Susanna K. Cristofane	Bladensburg
	Col. Samuel Crook	Laurel
	Edith M. Bagot	Hyattsville
	Ann Ferguson	Riverdale
	Donald D. Skarda	Berwyn Heights
	John W. Mitchell	Upper Marlboro
Paul T. Lanham	Huntingtown	

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

## Prince George's County Place Names

The first answer to our request last month for information on certain place names in Prince George's County ("Where Are They?" - News and Notes, Oct. 1986) came from member Susan Pearl of Bowie who works as a research historian for the Historic Preservation Commission.

CHEW was a station on the Pope's Creek Branch of the Baltimore and Potomac (later Pennsylvania, now Conrail) Railroad, about two miles south of Upper Marlboro.

During the 1840's Philemon Chew built a house on a 630 acre farm which he called Ellerslie. This property passed to his son, Richard B. Chew, a judge of the Circuit Court. Construction of the railroad around 1870 divided Ellerslie into two distinct parts because of the deep cut of the roadbed. The house and a few farm structures were west of the right-of-way, while barns and other structures were located on about 2/3 of the farm to the east of the tracks. As a result, the railroad was forced to build a bridge over the tracks in order that the farming operation might be carried on. This structure, a remnant of the original, construction of the Pope's Creek Branch, exists today as Chew's Bridge. The station was located west of the tracks, just south of the bridge.

Ellerslie is located east of Crain Highway off Chew Road. The farm lane, which is served by the bridge, appears on maps as Van Wagoner Road, named for John Van Wagoner who purchased the property from the family in 1925. The handsome Colonial Revival house, now vacant, was built by Judge Chew in 1895 after the earlier structure built by his father was destroyed by fire. The property is currently owned by a Washington bank.

(Ellerslie is also the name sometimes applied to Partnership, the property on Central Avenue now occupied by Wild World amusement park. For the record, it is interesting to note that during the post WW II years, the Tuck family of Perrywood and the Zantzinger family of neighboring Woodlawn were descendants of Philemon Chew of Ellerslie.)

## More Place Names

Help is requested on the identity of the following places, in addition to those listed last month.

Marshall Point                      Cedars                      Mound Cottage  
Millwood.                              Mills                              Cottage View  
Oakland (listed as being 21/2 miles NW of Forestville)

## The End of An Era

The Baltimore Sun reported in its October 14, 1986 edition that the CSX Corp. will eliminate the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad - our nation's first railroad - as a separate entity by consolidating it into the company's transportation division.

In the 1960's, when the C&O merged with the B&O to create the Chessie System, Inc., state and city officials insisted that the railroad retain its identity. When CSX was formed in 1980 by the merger of the Chessie System and Seaboard Coast Line, the B&O continued to retain its identity, although "Chessie" the cat got top billing on all of their equipment. A few months ago the company announced that "Chessie" was being retired as a business symbol.

"The passing of the B&O as an independent, Baltimore-named institution reflects the decline of the city's link to its past for the sake of big business", said James Dilts, a Baltimore author who is writing a history

of the first 25 years of B&O. "This is another example of a major, important institution in Baltimore losing its identity through the homogenization of industry."

So, now we will ship freight on the CSX and we will continue to commute to Baltimore and Washington on the state's MARC!

(Industry isn't the only sector being affected by homogenization. Have you ever considered the effect of ZIP codes instead of town names, route numbers instead of road names and fire company numbers instead of fire company names among others - upon the character and traditions of Prince George's County? -Ed.)

### In Memoriam

We regret to report the deaths of the following members of the Prince George's County Historical Society:

T. Hammond Welsh, Jr., a native of Hyattsville and a prominent lawyer, civic and business leader died on October 7, 1986 after a long illness. He is remembered by us as one of the group of twelve people who met on September 15, 1952 to organize the Prince George's County Historical Society.

Hammond Welsh was long associated with the Maryland Federal Savings and Loan Association (the old Hyattsville Building Assoc.) and retired as its Board Chairman. He had served as president of the Prince George's County Bar Association, the Prince George's Chamber of Commerce, the Kiwanis Club of Prince George's County and the Maryland League of Building, Savings and Loan Associations. He was a former Vestryman and treasurer of St. Luke's Episcopal Church of Bladensburg and was a board member of both Citizens Bank of Maryland and Suburban Trust Company. He also served as Board Chairman of St. Mary's College of Maryland.

Mr. Welsh is survived by his wife, the former Mildred Lowndes Berry, and two children, Milly B. Welsh and Thomas H. Welsh, III; a sister, Helen DeWalt and two grandchildren.

William S. Schmidt, who served as Superintendent of Schools of Prince George's County for 19 years until his retirement in 1970 passed away on October 3, 1986.

Born in Frederick, Mr. Schmidt joined the school system in 1944 as principal of the Oxon Hill High School. He later served as director of instruction and assistant superintendent before being named superintendent in 1951. His tenure covered the gambit of problems of a small school system rapidly expanding to a large one which then had to be desegregated. The enrollment soared from 30,000 to about 160,000, one of the largest in the nation. The number of classrooms in this period expanded from 978 to 5,790.

Mr. Schmidt was active in the Evangelical Reformed Church and was a past president of the College Park Rotary. In 1969 the University of Maryland awarded him an honorary LL.D. degree.

He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth Griffith Beveridge Schmidt and a son, William Earl Schmidt. Mr. Schmidt's first wife, Lois Mary Sloan died in 1974. He is also survived by two step-daughters, Susan Perikles and Lynn DeMeester, and six grandchildren.

Mrs. Margaret G. (Roeder) Lewis of Seattle, Washington State died on June 30, 1986. Although she had left her native Upper Marlboro in the early 1920's to reside in Seattle, she always maintained a keen interest in Prince George's County through her relatives and the Society. Her father, Ambrose Roeder, Sr., served as Postmaster of Upper Marlboro 1891-93 and a nephew, Rt. Rev. Msgr. John B. Roeder was Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Washington.

Mrs. Lewis is survived by two sons, Jack of Federal Way, Washington State and Robert of St. Louis; a sister, Sister Philip Neri, SCN, of Nazareth, Kentucky, and several grandchildren.

The Society extends its deepest sympathy to the members of their respective families.

### Beltsville Methodist Anniversary

On Sunday afternoon, October 26, 1986 the members of Emmanuel United Methodist Church will dedicate a state historical marker at the corner of Powder Mill Road and Old Gunpowder Road to commemorate 150 years of Methodism in Beltsville. It was here that church trustees erected the Ebenezer Meeting House on one acre of land purchased from Evan Shaw. After building in two other locations in Beltsville, the congregation erected its present church on Cedar Lane in 1961.

As part of their anniversary celebration, Emmanuel has published a history - 150 Years of Methodism in Beltsville, Maryland 1836-1986 - a copy of which has been presented to the Society's library.

In our next issue of News and Notes we will relate a more detailed story on Emmanuel Church and at least two more county churches which have recently celebrated major anniversaries.

### The Prince George's County Historical Society

Headquarters: Marietta, 5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale

Library Hours: Saturdays, Noon - 4 PM

House Tours: Sundays, Noon - 4 PM

Mailing address: P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Md. 20737

Headquarters Telephone: 464-0590



# NEWS AND NOTES FROM The Prince George's County Historical

Vol. XIV, no. 12 December

1986

## The Christmas Party at Riversdale - December 20

The Society's annual Christmas Party will be held at Riversdale, the Calvert Mansion, on Saturday, December 20, 1986 beginning at 2 PM.

Please bring a friend to enjoy the holiday spirit in this pleasant atmosphere. Mary Kaye will be there with her harp, playing the music of the season.

As in the past, we invite you to bring a sample of your favorite cookie or snack to add to the selection of Christmas delights on hand for all to enjoy. But even if you have momentarily lost your cookbook, we would like to see you and your friends anyway.

Riversdale is located at 4811 Riverdale Road, Riverdale. (Two blocks south of East-West Highway, between U.S 1 and Kenilworth Avenue.)

## Marietta Christmas Tour

The Society's headquarters, Marietta, will be open for the public Christmas Tour on Sunday, December 21, from Noon - 8 PM.

The small admission fee will benefit the restoration fund. We invite all of our members to bring their friends over to see Justice Duvall's home decorated and illuminated for the holiday season.

## Col. Samuel L. Crook, Sr. 1921-1986

We regret to report the sudden death of Col. Sam Crook on November 7, 1986. Recently reelected as a member of the Board of Directors, he had performed long and valued service to the Society as Treasurer on two occasions in the past as well.

Before retirement in 1971 Col. Crook had a distinguished career in the Medical Services Corps, U.S. Army, serving in World War II, Korea and Vietnam. A graduate of the Command and General Staff College, he later served on its faculty and was president of the Ft. Leavenworth Historical Society. While stationed in Europe he completed his degree from the University of Maryland in Heidelberg.

In retirement Sam was active in civic affairs in his home area of Laurel, volunteering his time and serving in leadership positions with such groups as the Association of Retired Persons, Citizens Association, the Democrat Party, Laurel Historical Society and the Farm Bureau.

Col. Crook and his wife, the former Genevieve Aitcheson, raised sheep at

Maiden's Fancy, the Aitcheson ancestral farm just west of Laurel. The officers and directors join Col. Crook's many friends in the Prince George's County Historical Society to express to Jenny, daughter Genevieve Long and son Sam, Jr., our deepest sympathy.

Officers For 1987

At the November meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society held at Montpelier, the following officers were elected for the coming year.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

President	Warren W. Rhoads	Bowie
Vice President	W. C. Dutton, Jr	Upper Marlboro
Rec. Secretary	Joyce McDonald	Hyattsville
Corres. Secretary	Margo Ritchie	Adelphi
Treasurer	Donald D. Skarda	Berwyn Heights
Historian	Frederick S. De Marr	Hyattsville
Directors	Susanna I K Cristofane	Bladensburg
	Edith M. Bagot	Hyattsville
	Col. Samuel L. Crook, Sr.	Laurel
	Ann Ferguson	Riverdale
	Paul T. Lanham	Huntingtown
	John W. Mitchell	Upper Marlboro

Our new president, Warren Rhoads, has been active in the Society for several years as Recording Secretary and as director of our outstanding tour program. A message from him is contained in this newsletter. We pledge to him our support as he begins to lead us in new programs.

Vice President Dutton and Treasurer Skarda have served on the board in past years. Two new persons have joined the board. We welcome Recording Secretary Joyce McDonald, the newly-appointed Chairwoman of the Historic Preservation Commission and long-time leader in the Prince George's County Historical and Cultural Trust. Her expertise in antique furnishings will most helpful to us at Marietta. Edith Bagot, our Recording Secretary for many, many years, returns to the board as a Director. Even in "retirement" she has performed yeoman service as a mainstay in the docents' program at Marietta.

Two names are very obviously among the missing from the above list. President John Giannetti retired after long service as a director, vice-president and program chairman, and finally as president. He and Kathy hope to spend a little more time on the restoration of Hitching Post Hill. Also absent is Herbert Embrey who has rendered outstanding service to the Society as treasurer for the past nine years. His service to the Society has always been above and beyond the call of duty. To John and to Herb we extend our appreciation and our sincere thanks.

Two vacancies currently exist on the Board of Directors, those caused by the death of Col. Crook and by Don Skarda's acceptance of the nomination and election to Treasurer. These will be filled by action of the Board of Directors.

(Advertisement)

W. M. Dixon's Grist Mill  
-at LARGO, Md.  
Grinds Mondays, Wednesdays and  
Fridays. Ear corn crushed also.  
Feed of all kinds ground and mixed.

--The Riverdale Sentinel, Nov. 28, 1913  
(v. 5, no. 39)

### Our Neighbors' Christmas Tours

The traditional Christmas tours and open house programs will be held in the several historic sites in Prince George's County. We have listed the pertinent details below for your convenience. Do take advantage of the opportunity to visit these lovely homes. It is a wonderful way to get into the holiday spirit.

Montpelier 9401 Montpelier Drive, Laurel

Tours on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Dec. 10, 11, 12 - 6-9 p.m. Saturday, December 13, Noon -3pm Admission for tours.

Dinner on Sunday, December 14 beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Dinner Ticket Reservations, Jean Speicher (776-3806) or Mary Larson

Oxon Hill Manor -6901 Oxon Hill Road, Oxon Hill

Open House on Sunday, December 14, Noon - 5 p.m. - Free admission

Belair 12207 Tulip Grove Drive, Bowie,,-

Open House on Sunday. December 14, Noon - 4p.m. -Free admission.

Surratt House - 9110 Brandywine Road, Clinton

Tours on Sunday December 14, 5 9 p.m. Monday & Tuesday, December 15 & 16, 6 -9.p.m. Admission for tours.

Riversdale 4811 Riverdale Road, Riverdale

Tours on Saturday, December 27, Noon - 4, 7 9 p.m. Sunday, December 28, Noon - 4 p.m. Admission for tours.

Please note that the Riversdale opening is on the weekend following Christmas Day. This will provide a good alternative for those who got caught up in the pre-holiday rush. Remember, there are 12 days of Christmas!

Perkins Chapel

On Sunday, Oct October 26, 1986 the Glenn Dale United Methodist Church celebrated its Homecoming Sunday. This was a very special occasion, because their original historic structure, the Perkins Chapel, was reopened for worship after sitting idle for about twenty years.

Located at Springfield and Good Luck Roads', James Turner Perkins was the principal benefactor of this church whose construction was begun in 1861. It is located less than a mile from the old Pleasant Grove Meeting House and was probably a result of conflicting views which arose in the Methodist Church concerning the issue of slavery. The structure was not completed until after the Civil War and it was dedicated as Perkins Chapel in February 1869. For a long period of time the church was on the Bladensburg Circuit along with those in Lanham, Bladensburg and Bowie.

In 1957 the congregation, now the Glenn Dale United Methodist Church, purchased 5 1/2 acres of land from the federal government to supplement the existing 2 acres. They became an independent station in 1957 and in 1965 opened a new church on the property to house their expanding congregation. Perkins Chapel, thankfully, was not destroyed.

Alan Virta's PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY. A PICTORIAL HISTORY is still available for sale at Marietta on Saturdays and Sundays, Noon-4 pm. Price: \$26.20. Or it may be ordered from the Society at Box 14, Riverdale 20737 for \$28.20. It's a great candidate for your Christmas shopping list!

Ferdinand's Fiftieth Birthday

During the Fall season a number of stories have appeared in the public press commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the appearance of that lovable character, Ferdinand the Bull. Reprinted below is an editorial which appeared in the Washington Times (Nov. 5, 1986)

SMELLING THE FLOWERS

It's hard to believe that a half century has passed since, down with the winter wheezles, we lay in bed leafing through The Story of Ferdinand and, snug in our folds of innocence, unmindful that this tranquil little bull was thought to be a Trojan horse rolled past our defenses by the sneaky pacifists.

Hitler had remilitarized the Rhineland just months before, "making nonsense of both the Versailles and the Locarno pact," as Paul Johnson put it. The New Deal was rewiring the Constitution, and civil war had erupted in Spain. But between the covers of Munro Leaf's slim volume the sun still shone, the birds still chirped, and all around the majestic cork trees bloomed the flowers that Ferdinand much preferred to the vanities of the bull ring.

Leaf's widow, Margaret, denies that her husband intended anything more than a charming tale about a bull who, disesteeming the glitter and frenzy of the arena, sought the pastoral life. But the world, as always, was politically obsessed, and Ferdinand was widely denounced. The Nazis called the book "degenerate democratic propaganda" and the esteemed Cleveland Plain Dealer found that it subverted American youth. A jittery Harold Ginsberg, President of Viking Press, had even proposed holding up publication "until the world settles down."

An interesting idea. That was in 1936, since when the world has seen, to hit only the low spots, World War II, the Holocaust, the Stalinist rape of Eastern Europe, and Mao's Great Cultural Revolution. If Viking had heeded Mr. Ginsburg, Ferdinand never would have been published at all.

But, as is so often the case, the reading public was wiser than the secular prophets. By 1938 Ferdinand had gone through eight editions and had displaced Gone With the Wind at the top of the charts. Today the world is still unsettled, but Ferdinand, sensible Ferdinand, is safely ensconced beneath the cork trees where he always belonged.

Your editor is sure that Ferdinand brings back fond memories-for many of our readers, but, why a story on the subject in News and Notes? Well, author Munro Leaf once lived in Prince George's County. He was born 'in Baltimore, and grew up in the Washington area as did his wife. Four very pleasant years of his life were spent on the campus of the University of Maryland at College Park where he was a member of the Kappa Alpha Fraternity and the Lacrosse team and a Captain in ROTC. His career in publishing took him to New York but in retirement he returned home to the Washington area and resided in Garrett Park at the time of his death.

The critics can say what they wish. Munro Leaf's goal in life was to make children laugh and enjoy reading!

The Prince George's County Historical Society  
Headquarters: Marietta, 5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale  
Library Hours: Saturdays, Noon - 4 PM  
House Tours: Sundays, Noon -4 PM (Closed Jan-Feb)  
Mailing address: P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Md. 20737  
Headquarters Telephone: 464-0590

NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY AND COLLECTION

UPDATE

We have just completed our first full year of operation in our new quarters at Marietta. The additional space has enabled us to expand the collection and make it more available for our users. There are still many boxes of miscellaneous material and clippings to be filed, however we have adequate space. Continue to keep us in mind when you clean out your desk, attic or garage! We have one of the better collections of local history in the area, and you can help make it the best.

OUR THANKS

- To Celia Holland for a large number of back issues of the newsletters from the St. Mary's and Baltimore County historical societies.
- To Ted Bissell for several more volumes on Maryland and Prince George's history.
- To Lt. Dennis Campbell of the Prince George's County Police Department for several photographs covering the early development of the department.
- To Don Skarda for several booklets containing Victorian house plans.
- To Francis Geary for bound volumes of the Hyattsville INDEPENDENT, 1934-45 and the PRINCE GEORGEAN, 1946-47. We received also a large amount of Hyattsville material from his files.
- To Patricia Tatspaugh for material on the Hyattsville/Northwestern Band (one of the first two school bands in the county, founded by the late Michael Ronca) and the University of Maryland Band.
- To Paul Lanham for a 1903 survey map of Capitol Heights and a presentation folder-and medallion presented by Goddard Space Flight Center to his late wife Shirley Pyle Lanham, a member of the ground support team for the Apollo 11 Lunar Landing. ("The Eagle has landed" 4:18 P.M. e.d.t./July 20, 1969)
- To John Giannetti for a large wooden chest containing the complete files of the George Washington House Restoration Project.
- To Elizabeth Aman for a wedding dress worn by her mother, Doris Weber of Mt. Rainier, who married Capt. Joseph L. Aman of Hyattsville when he returned from France after World War I. Also included was a lovely portrait photograph of the bride.
- To the Mayor and Council of Landover Hills for copies of their recently printed town history. (They also gave us some copies to sell for the benefit of the society.)

WISH LIST

Please give us a call (464-0590) if you know of anyone who might wish to donate any of the following items to the library.

TYPEWRITER      DEHUMIDIFIER      MAP FILE CASES

FROM MARIETTA

--The new wooden shingle roof on the house is quite attractive, as is the new deck over the garage. They

--The Christmas house tour of Marietta will be on Sunday, December 21, Noon-8 PM. If you can't make it on that day, decorations will be in place on both Sunday, December 14th and 28th, Noon-4 PM. Do stop by to see our headquarters building during the holiday season!

The house will be closed in the winter months of January -and February. It will reopen on the first Sunday in March. The Library remains open every Saturday of the year.

-- A major goal for 1987 will be to obtain more furnishings for Marietta, either by gift or on loan, and to present changing exhibits on special subjects for our visitors. More on this next month.'

LIBRARY ACQUISITIONS (This is a sample of recent titles received.)

Author	Title	Donor
Garrow/Wheaton	Oxon Hill Manor Archeological Report 2 vols.	Md, Dept. of Trans.
Ball, A.M.	A Hist. of St. Jerome's Cath. Ch., Hyatts. 1886-1986	Helen A. Daly
---	Catalogues, Md. House & Garden Pilgrimage (19)	Edith Meredith Bagot
Baltz, S.	A Closer Look at the Annapolis Conv/Sept 1786	Shirley Baltz
Weiser, F.S.	Md. German Church Records Vol. I	Purchase
Radoff, M.L.	Bldgs. of State of Md. at Annapolis	Theodore Bissell
Hallowell, B.	Autobiography of Benjamin Hallowell	Theodore Bissell
---	150 Years of Methodism in Beltsville 1836-1986	Emmanuel U.M. Church
Thompson, R.	The Good Doctors(Hist of Vet. Medicine in Md.)	R. Gary Roop, D.V.M.
---	Chestertown/An Architectural Guide	Louise Tatspaugh
Goldsborough, J.F.	Silver in Maryland	Alice Skarda
---	Salute to the Servicemen/Glenn Dale,Md/WW II	Darius Vizzi
Elder/Bartlett	John Shaw/Cabinetmaker of Annapolis	Purchase
Wright, F.E.	Md. Militia/War of 1812/Pr. Geo's Co., Md.	Purchase
Corkran, C.H.	Hist. of Bells Methodist Ch/Camp Springs,Md., 1849-1954	Mr. & Mrs. Darrell Bush

NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince George's County.  
Historical Society**

## News and Notes Anniversary

As may be noted from the masthead above, 1987 is the fifteenth year of publication for News and Notes. The first issue (March 1973) was mailed during the month of February to about 130 members.

Included were the following events and stories:

-John McGrain of the Baltimore County Historical Society was to speak at the March meeting at Montpelier on Maryland Mills.

--The Society's Historian, Judge R. Lee Van Horn passed away in December, 1972.

- METRO had assumed control of the area transit system, begun in 1854.

- Historic Annapolis was asking for support in their fight against a proposed state office building to be erected on the block between Church Circle and State Circle, east of the Government House. (They were successful!)

- The County had purchased the College Park Airport.

- A state historical marker had been erected at Bellefields in Croom in Dec.

- The feature story, "On Leisure Time in Prince George's County", discussed the early development of fraternal groups in the County.

The rationale for this first issue was stated as follows:

"It costs the Society 8¢ (the 1973 first-class postage rate -ed.) to circularize the membership for every meeting. Therefore we are taking full advantage of the weight allowance with this publication."

Actually, our primary motivation was the fact that after almost 20 years of operation a publication which would provide a cohesive force was long overdue. There were words of encouragement from the members and a second issue appeared in April. Among the items appearing in that issue was a list of new members of the Society. One name stands out - - that of Alan Virta who was to begin his long tenure as editor in the Fall of 1974. Finally, with the May issue, the designation Vol. 1, No. 3 was carried on the masthead and the commitment to a permanent

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

publication for the Society had been made. With this, the 153rd issue of News and Notes, we continue the tradition of bringing our readers all matters of historical interest in Prince George's County and Maryland.

-FSD

### St. George's Day Award Nominations

At the 14th Annual St. George's Day Dinner, scheduled for Thursday, April 23, 1977, the Society will continue the tradition of extending recognition to individuals and organizations who have made a significant contribution toward the preservation of the heritage of Prince George's County.

The selection committee solicits your nominations for the St. George's Day Awards, which should be mailed to the Society at Box 14, Riverdale, Md. 20737, by March 15th. In addition to names, please include the reasons why the nominations should be considered for the award. Please contact any officer of the Society if you have any questions.

### From Holiness to Hamburgers

Americans tend to think that historic preservation is a smooth and routine process in Europe where many centuries-old structures continue to exist for the enjoyment of both residents and tourists. The following excerpt, taken from the Dec. 18, 1986 issue of The Uptown Citizen, a local paper in Washington, D.C., tells an all-too-familiar story!

St. Mark's Church in North Audley Street, London, was built in 1825 in purest Greek style; the plain interior was "sumptuously rebuilt" in 1878 in lavish Italianate style, But in 1974 the church was closed. Standing near the American Embassy, St. Mark's had been shared with the American Episcopal Church whose offer to buy it was rejected. Now a scheme has been proposed to alter the edifice so as to suppress any evidence the building was once a church and to convert it into an American style restaurant chain specializing in hamburgers. Conservationists are working to prevent the switch from holiness to hamburgers."

### Docent Training

A training session for both current and prospective docents for Marietta has been scheduled for

Saturday, February 28th. The session, which will emphasize the "how to" aspect of being a docent, will be conducted by member Virginia Rinehart who has served in this capacity for several years at Mrs. Marjorie Merriweather Post's estate, Hillwood, in Washington, D.C. Interested volunteers are encouraged to call Recording Secretary Joyce McDonald at 779-5825 for more information and the specific time.

### Advertisements---

Benjamin O. Beard  
General Merchandise  
Halls, Md.  
Phone, Marlboro 21 - 3

A. W. Chaney, & Sons  
Undertakers and Funeral Directors  
Halls, Md.  
Phone, Marlboro 21 - 21

--The Riverdale Sentinel\_28 Nov. 1913 (V.5, no.39)

President of the Senate

The recent opening of the 393rd session of the General Assembly of Maryland in Annapolis on January 14, 1987 saw a change of leadership in both houses. Delegate R. Clayton Mitchell of Kent County became the new Speaker of the House of Delegates. We note with special interest - and pride - as Prince Georgians, the election of Senator Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr. of Clinton as President of the Senate.

Senator Miller is beginning his 4th term in the Senate, having been elected in 1974 after serving one term (1971-75) in the House of Delegates. He is a native of Clinton where he attended local schools before graduation from the University of Maryland (1964) and its law school (1967).

Senator Miller's law office is located on Old Branch Avenue in his home town. As one who has an abiding interest in the heritage of Prince George's County, he is a long-time member of the historical society and is a recipient of the St. George's Day Award.

Sen. Miller is the sixth Prince Georgian to serve as President of the Senate. In his acceptance address, the senator noted that 200 years ago Daniel Carroll held this office. Actually Carroll served on four separate occasions in the period 1786-1789. Born in Upper Marlboro on July 22, 1730, young Carroll attended school at the Jesuits' Bohemia Manor in Cecil County and St. Omer's College in France, returning home in 1748. Like his father he became a planter and merchant. In 1780-84 he was a member of the Congress, signing the Articles of Confederation in 1781. As a member of the Constitutional Convention in 1787 he was one of Maryland's signers of the U. S. Constitution and he was elected a representative to the first U.S. Congress.

Daniel Carroll was appointed by President Washington as one of the original commissioners of the District of Columbia (1791-95) whose duty was to establish the new national capital. During his later years Carroll lived on an estate at Rock Creek where his distinguished brother John established St. John's Catholic Church, Forest Glen. John Carroll, of course, was the first Roman Catholic bishop in the United States and was the founder of Georgetown College in 1789. Daniel died at Rock Creek on May 7, 1796 and is believed to be buried at St. John's.

The next to occupy the president's chair was John B. Brooke, Jr. who was born in Upper Marlboro in March 1826. After attending Georgetown College and Harvard Law School he practiced law in Upper Marlboro and was later elected to the House of Delegates. Brooke became President of the Senate in 1860, however his was to be a short tenure. As a Secessionist he was arrested by Federal authorities and imprisoned with some other members of the General Assembly, in order to make sure that Maryland would remain in the Union. Upon release from prison he went South, where he remained for the duration of the Civil War. In 1865 John Brooke resumed his law practice in Upper Marlboro and was elected Judge of the Circuit Court in 1881. Judge Brooke retired from the bench in 1896 and died in 1905. (As a matter of interest, Judge Brooke's grandson, the late William Hill Brooke of Upper Marlboro, served as the 5th president of the Prince George's County Historical Society, 1963-1965.)

The first of those to lead the Senate in the 20th Century was a long-time political leader in the County. Born in Upper Marlboro on September 30, 1893, Lansdale Ghiselin Sasscer, Sr. attended Central High School in Washington and the Tome School in Port Deposit prior to his graduation from Dickinson Law School, Carlisle, Pennsylvania in 1914. He practiced law in Upper Marlboro and served as a 1st Lt. in the Artillery during the St. Mihiel and Argonne offensives in France 1917-19. Mr. Sasscer returned to his practice and was elected to the Senate in 1922, serving until 1939. He was President during the 1935 and 1937 biennial sessions of the General Assembly. In 1938 Senator Sasscer relinquished his seat in order to mount what proved to be an unsuccessful campaign in the Democratic contest for governor against Herbert R. O'Connor. After the general election Rep. Stephen Gambrill died and Senator Sasscer was elected to the unexpired term, taking his seat in the U.S. House of Representatives on February 3, 1939. He served six more terms in the House before stepping down to carry the Democratic banner in the U. S. Senate campaign



against Republican Rep. J. Glenn Beall, Sr. Unsuccessful in this effort, Mr. Sasscer return to the practice of law in Upper Marlboro, where he passed away on November 5, 1964.

Perhaps the shortest term as Senate President was that of L. Harold Sothoron of University Park. He was elected to preside over a one-day special session in October, 1950.

Born in St. Mary's County, Harold Sothoron came to the Washington area as a youth, where he attended law school and engaged in the practice of law. For many years he served a legal counsel for the Town of Brentwood. Mr. Sothoron was a member of the House of Delegates from 1936 until his election to the Senate in 1946. He served as Majority Leader of the Senate but was defeated in his quest for re-election in the 1950 Republican landslide in Prince George's by John Raymond Fletcher of Cheverly. Senator Sothoron died at, age 84 on October 13, 1978.

Of the past senate presidents, the best known to our readers is Steny H. Hoyer of District Heights. Having attended the Prince George's County schools, Mr. Hoyer graduated from the University of Maryland (1963) and Georgetown Law School ('66). In 1966 he was elected to the first of three successive terms in the Senate. At the beginning of the third term (1975) Senator Hoyer was elected President. He was the first of the Prince Georgians to preside over an annual session of the Senate.

Senator Hoyer relinquished his Senate seat in 1979 after an unsuccessful primary race for Lt. Governor on the ticket of Acting Governor Blair Lee III. With the illness of Rep. Gladys Spellman in 1980, the Fifth District seat in the House of Representatives became vacant. Steny Hoyer was the winner in the special election and was sworn in on June 3, 1981. He has been reelected each time since.

Thus we have them, Carroll, Brooke, Sasscer, Sothoron, Hoyer and Miller a distinguished group of Prince Georgians.

### Membership Response

Corresponding Secretary Margo Ritchie and Treasurer Don Skarda wish to express their appreciation to all of our members for what has been a very prompt and generous response to the dues notice mailed in mid-December. Your cooperation has lightened their burden considerably.

If you are one of the few who have not responded as yet, they would appreciate hearing from you before the March 31st deadline. Again, many thanks!

The Prince George's County Historical Society  
Headquarters: Marietta, 5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale  
Library Hours: Saturdays, Noon - 4 PM  
House Tours: Sundays, Noon - 4 PM (Closed until 1st Sun. in March)  
Mailing address: P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20737  
Headquarters Telephone: 464-0590  
President: Warren W. Rhoads 464-0819

Vol. XV, no. 3 March 1987

March Meeting in Upper  
Marlboro - March 7

**NEWS AND NOTES, FROM  
The Prince George's County  
Historical Society**

On Saturday, March 7, 1987 the regular meeting of the Society will be held in the County Administration Building in Upper Marlboro.

The program will be presented by the staff of the Historic Preservation Commission --

Executive Director Gail Rothrock and research historians Susan Pearl and Marina King. This slide-illustrated lecture will cover the buildings researched during the 1986 historic building survey in Prince George's County. Among these are a number of "pattern-book" houses of the Victorian period which appeared in the suburbs of the late 1800s. The wide variety of types and styles of structures covered, including some from the 20th century, should prove to be of broad interest to our members.

On Saturdays, parking is no problem in Upper Marlboro. Those attending should use the Gov. Oden Bowie Drive entrance to the County Administration Building which looks out on Schoolhouse Pond. There should be adequate on Gov. Oden Bowie Drive. The guard on duty at the entrance will direct you to the meeting room.

If you haven't been in Upper Marlboro during the past year, it is suggested that you take a few minutes after the meeting to see the new mall between the County Administration Building and the Court House.

As usual, guests are welcome.

50th Annual Maryland House and Garden Tour - April 11

The Prince George's County portion of the 50th Maryland House and Garden Tour will be held on Saturday, April 11, 1987 from 10 am - 5:30 pm.

With the exception of Montpelier at Laurel, which was on the original tour back in the early Thirties, most of the houses are new to the tour and are located in the Upper Marlboro and Croom areas. They are: Bowling Heights, Patuxent Farm, the Buck House (exterior only - under restoration), Content, Waverly, St. Thomas' Church of Croom, Mattaponi, Trinity Church, Brookefield of the Berrys, Dukeshire and Mt. Airy.

The tour ticket cost is \$12 (includes tour booklet/map) or \$4 for individual house admissions. If you are completely unfamiliar with the location of these sites, we suggest that you start in downtown Upper Marlboro (Content-Buck House-Trinity Church) where you can pick up your tour booklet with map.

The local sponsor of the Prince George's tour is the Forest Garden Club. Members planning to take the tour are encouraged to purchase their tickets through the club. They will receive a wall portion of the price which will be used to place an entrance gate and historical marker at the Buck House in Upper Marlboro when its restoration is completed.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY\_ APRIL 23, 1696

Do call Lisa Raffetto at 627-3877 to order tickets or receive further information

(The other tour dates are as follows: Apr. 12, Federal Hill and Fell's Point in Balto. City; Apr. 25, Anne Arundel; Apr. 26, Calvert; Apr. 29, Balto. County; Apr. 30, Carroll; May 1, Howard; May 2, Kent; May 3, Talbot.)

### St. George's Day - 1987

The 14th annual St. George's Day Dinner will be held in the Grand Ballroom of the Stamp Student Union, University of Maryland on Thursday, April 23, 1987.

Our special guests at the dinner will be Lord and Lady Fairfax who will be visiting Prince George's at the invitation of the county government.

We are also pleased to announce that the Hall of Fame will induct Daniel Carroll, an Upper Marlboro native and one of Maryland's signers of the U.S. Constitution, in commemoration of the bicentennial of our national government.

Invitations will be mailed within the next two weeks.

### Wedding Gowns Past and Present

A free workshop, "The Conservation of Wedding Gowns", will be held at the Riversdale Mansion on Saturday, March 28 from 9:30 to 12:30 p.m. Dr. Margaret T. Ordonez, Textiles and Clothing Specialist, University of Maryland Cooperative Extension Service, will conduct the session. You will learn what method can be used to clean an antique wedding dress (or other old fabric) as well as the best way to store a wedding dress to preserve it for future brides. Among other professional affiliations, Dr. Ordonez is a member of the Washington Conservation Guild and the Costume Society of America.

The workshop is sponsored by the Prince George's County Historical Society. Coffee, tea and sweet rolls will be served. Riversdale is located at 4811 Riverdale Road, Riverdale, Maryland. For more details call: 779-2011. No reservations are required. Bring your own costumes for special advice on their care and conservation.

### Houses By Mail

A major source of houses in the he developing suburbs of Prince George's County during the first half of the present century was the Sears-Roebuck House Catalogue. Nationwide, during the period 1908-1940, over 100,006 of these structures were built. Well designed, and with many models to choose from, the Sears-Roebuck house was the answer to the needs of the lot-owner who could not afford an architect or secure the necessary financing during this era prior to the developer-built mass communities.

A recent article, "Cheverly's Mail Order House" appeared in the Winter 1986 issue of Friends of Preservation. Author and Town Historian Raymond W. Bellamy, Jr. identified 25 Sears-Roebuck houses in Cheverly, among which 20 different models are represented. His own life-long residence is an Alhambra model, built by his father in 1925.

The Historic Preservation Commission is in the process of compiling a list of Sears-Roebuck houses in the county. Members are encouraged to call research historian Marina King at 952-3520 if they know the location of any Sears-Roebuck houses.

## Baron von Steuben in Upper Marlboro

There are very few commemorative monuments in Prince George's County such as the Peace Cross. In the city of Washington there is a monument on almost every corner, with applications pending for hundreds more. However, there is a monument in Prince George's County that used to be in Washington, D.C. and when it was dedicated in May 1870 there was a huge military parade and a celebration that lasted all day. The President of the United States, generals, senators, ambassadors and the mayor of the city were present at its dedication.

The monument I speak of is that of Baron von Steuben, general and hero of the American Revolution. It now stands on the lawn of the German Orphan Home just outside of Upper Marlboro, Maryland. The original monument was twelve foot, six inches tall prior to being moved to its present site in 1966. The base of the monument was left behind at the old German Orphan Home on Good Hope Road, S.E. in Washington. It was placed at the old German Orphan Home in 1893 and stood on the front lawn overlooking Good Hope Road until it was moved to the Upper Marlboro location.

The monument had been moved to Good Hope Road in 1893 by the Schuetzenverein, a German musketry and marksmanship club. This had been a very active German club in Washington and during the war between states they had raised a company of troops to defend the city. The statue had originally been placed in the Schuetzen Park at Georgia Avenue and Kenyon Street N.W. in May 1870 by the Schuetzenverein and the Steuben Monument Association. The Schuetzen Park for many years was a center of social activities for the German community of the City of Washington.

Baron von Steuben was the great hero of the German community and an association was formed as early as the 1850's to raise the funds to construct this monument. The war and other problems delayed this project until 1870. The day of dedication started out with a great military parade that began at eight in the morning. Led by the U.S. Marine Band, the parade marched up Seventh Street Northwest with the marching unit of the Schuetzefterein, officers mounted, stepping out right behind the band. They passed the new buildings at Howard College and proceeded up the Seventh Street pike (now Georgia Avenue) to the green space of the park that was just coming into full bloom in May. At the park the Marine Band went to the band pavilion and there was dancing, eating and beer drinking all day.

Late in the afternoon the festivities were punctuated by the measured sequence of a twenty-one gun salute and onto the grounds, pulled by the finest and fastest team in the city, was drawn the carriage of the President of the United States. The Marine Band struck up "Ruffles and Flourishes" and "Hail to the Chief" and President Grant, perhaps a bit dusty and rumpled, climbed from the carriage and waved. With him were General William T. Sherman, the German states Ambassador Baron von Gerolt, Mayor Bowen of the District of Columbia, Senator Carl Schurz and representatives of the U.S. Congress.

After much singing by the Masonic Choir and the Sangerbund and many speeches, the monument was unveiled. The Schuetzen Park was closed in 1893 and this required that the monument be moved. Thus it was transferred to the relative obscurity of the German Orphan Home in Southeast Washington. However, the von Steuben Committee had been successful in raising funds for another monument more appropriate to the old baron - this one at Lafayette Park across from the White House. The date of the unveiling of this monument was December 7, 1910 and President Taft was present for the dedication. It still stands in one of the corners of the park.

--Robert A. Crawley

References: Archives, The Washington Evening Star and The Washington Post.  
Pierce, III; Frank H. The Washington Saengerbund. A History of German Song and German Culture in the Nation's Capital.

## Antiques Market Gone Crazy!

For those who follow the purchase and sale of antiques, it might be of interest to note some recent events which have been reported in the public press as well as antiques journals.

Item: A Baltimore album quilt was sold recently at auction for \$148,000.

Item: George Caleb Bingham's painting of "The Jolly Flatboatman" was sold in January by private sale for a mere \$8 million! Bingham, a 19th century American genre painter, specialized in scenes of life along the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. This work was commissioned by the American Art Union in the 1840's and brought the artist the handsome sum of \$450. You may see this painting on display at the National Gallery of Art in Washington where it has long been on loan and will continue to be in the future.

Item: The so-called "Cadwalader Chair" was sold at auction in New York for \$2.75 million - a world record for a piece of furniture. This Philadelphia Chippendale wing chair was purchased by Gen. John Cadwalader from Philadelphia's noted cabinetmaker, Thomas Affleck, for £4.10 on December 20, 1770.

What, you might ask, makes this chair so unusual? Well, it just so happens that it has carved hairy paw feet! If you are curious about hairy paws please stop by the Society's library on a Saturday afternoon and consult Nicholas Wainwright's Colonial Grandeur in Philadelphia. The House and Furniture of General John Cadwalader. It is shelved with the materials on Kent County, Maryland.

As an aside comment, you might wonder why a book dealing with a Philadelphia gentleman's furniture is on the shelves of the Prince George's County Historical Society. The answer is that John Cadwalader married a member of the Lloyd family of Wye House in Talbot County. They owned a large farm in Kent County and the Cadwalader family history is closely entwined with that of old Shrewsbury Parish church. Gen. Cadwalader served in the Continental Army and represented both Kent County and the Eastern Shore in both houses of the Maryland General Assembly.

Returning to the matter of these breath-taking prices paid for antique objects, one is reminded of the surrender at Yorktown in 1781. The British troops, with colors cased, marched out to the American lines to stack their arms. The fifers played "World Turned Upside Down", a tune which expressed their opinion of the then state of affairs. Perhaps the spirits of those fifers have been roaming about the antique markets of late!

--FSD

## Publications

Copies of Alan Virta's Prince George's County. A Pictorial History are available, however it is recommended that you procrastinate no longer! If you will need a copy for Aunt Matilda's birthday or Uncle Alex's Christmas, buy now before the supply is exhausted. \$26.20 at Marietta on Saturday & Sunday afternoon. \$28.20 by mail.

The Prince George's County Historical Society  
Headquarters: Marietta, 5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale  
Library Hours: Saturdays, Noon - 4 PM  
House Tours: Sundays, Noon - 4 PM (March thru December)  
Mailing address: P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20737  
Headquarters Telephone: 464-0590  
President: Warren W. Rhoads 464-0819

Corres. Secty: Margo Ritchie 434-1524 (address changes)  
Treasurer Donald D. Skarda 474-5319  
Newsletter Fred De Marr 277-0711

NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince George's County  
Historical Society**

## St. George's Day - April 23, 1987

An outstanding program has been arranged for the St. George's Day Dinner in commemoration of Prince George's County's 291st birthday. This event, now in its 14th year, will be held in the Grand Ballroom of the Stamp Student Union, University of Maryland, College Park.

The St. George's Day Awards will be presented to six individuals and organizations which have made significant contributions toward the preservation of the county's heritage.

In this, the bicentennial year of our national government, the Hall of Fame will induct Daniel Carroll II, an Upper Marlboro native who was one of Maryland's signers of the U.S. Constitution. His portrait will join those of his brother, Archbishop John Carroll, and other distinguished Prince Georgians on display in the main foyer of the Court House. The President of the Senate of Maryland, Sen. Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr. of Clinton will make the presentation.

Bringing greetings to the Society on this occasion will be Lord Fairfax of Cameron, a relative and good friend of many Prince Georgians. Some of our members will recall this personable member of the English Bar from the reception held by the Society at Montpelier, home of his Snowden ancestors, on July 30, 1978. We are pleased that Lady Fairfax will accompany her husband on this good-will visit to Prince George's County.

Do join us on this memorable occasion. Invitations have been mailed and reservations should be returned by April 15. Guests are welcome.

For further information call Margo Ritchie (434-1524) or Warren Rhoads (464-0819)

## Notice of May Meeting at Riversdale

Saturday, May 9, 1987 at 2 PM is the date for our next regular meeting of the Society to be held at Riversdale. Please mark your calendars.

The speaker will be Frederick Tilp, a native Prince Georgian now residing across the Potomac in Alexandria. His topic will be "Fact, Fiction and Fun on the Potomac."

Mr. Tilp is a member of the Society and has received the St. George's Day Award. His slide lectures on the Potomac are superb!

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
**ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696**

## Life Members

Five new life members have been added to the Society's membership during 1987. We appreciate their support of our programs.

The up-dated list of life members is as follows.

Mrs. Frank Bagot	Hyattsville
John B. Bourne	College Heights
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Bourne	College Park
Anath & Margaret Bright	College Park
Eunice E. Burdette	Boonsboro
Mrs. Felix E. Cristofane (Honorary)	Bladensburg
Brice M. Clagett	Friendship
Charles T. Clagett, Jr.	Washington, D.C.
Mr. & Mrs. Fred Clagett	King City, Oregon
Mr. & Mrs. Page B. Clagett	Washington, D.C.
Willard R. Entwisle	Forestville
Sarah J. Harvey	College Park
Phyllis Herndon	University Park
Forrest S. Holmes, Jr.	College Heights
C. Harold Hutcheson	Laurel
Mrs. Catherine M. Kotrla	Southern Pines, N. Car.
Paul T. Lanham	Huntingtown
Mrs. G.W.S. Musgrave (Honorary)	Lake Wales, Florida
J. Spencer Overholser	Oley, Pennsylvania
Mrs. Maxie D. Phillips	University Park
Gertrude L. Poe	Ashton
Mrs. David R. Ray	Fayetteville, N. Car.
Mrs. A. H. Seidenspinner	College Heights
Patricia Tatspaugh	Hyattsville
Jessie M. Ward	College Park

## Events of Interest

Apr. 14 -House & Garden Pilgrimage: A Companion Lecture (7-9:30 P.M.) (Tues.) For those who would like more detail about April 11th's House and Garden Pilgrimage, this lecture will provide historical and architectural details of some of the Prince George's County houses included on the tour (Bowling Heights, the Buck House, Content, Trinity Church, Waverly, Brookefield and Mt. Airy. Lecture by Susan Pearl. Sponsored by Pr. George's Community College at Largo. Call 322-0797 for information. FEE.

Apr. 26 -Slide lecture on Forest Memorial U.M. Church (1320) and the Community. (Sun.) (Magruder's Plains to Oldfields to Forestville.) by Willard Entwisle. 7:30 MI at the church. 3111 Forestville Road. FREE.

May 14 National Register Properties in Pr. George's County. (7-9:30 PM) (Thurs) Over 40 properties in the county are on the National Register. This slide lecture will describe and discuss some of the important sites and explain the significance and process of National Register listing by Susan Pearl. Sponsored by the Pr. George's Community College at Largo. Call 322-0797 for information.

May 17 Hyattsville Historic House Tour (1-5 PM) 8th Annual Tour (Sun) Tickets may be Purchased at the Hyattsville Armory (The Castle) 1-4 PM for this walking tour.

### Brother Against Brother

Over the years much material has appeared in the form of novels and film on the subject of divided loyalties among families living in the border states during the Civil War. The extent of this "brother against brother" situation is being researched currently by a member of the Department of Family Studies in the University of Kentucky. As a matter of interest to the members of the Society, we publish herewith a letter of reply prepared by our past editor, Alan Virta.

Hattiesburg, Mississippi  
February 19, 1987

Dear Dr. Crosby:

In the February 1987 issue of the Prince George's County Genealogical Society Bulletin (of Maryland) a notice of your research on combatant Civil War brothers was published. While most combatants from Prince George's County, Maryland, fought for the Confederacy, local histories record at least three pairs of brothers who took opposite sides. Since I am temporarily in residence in Mississippi (until June), I cannot verify these instances in either the county records or military records at the National Archives. I pass them on to you, nonetheless, should you be interested.

(1) From Across the Years in Prince George's County, by Effie Gwynn Bowie. Richmond, Va.: Garrett and Massie, 1947. Reprint 1975, Baltimore, Md.: Genealogical Publishing Company.

On page 690 is presented a biography of Col. Thomas Bowie (1767-1823), a native of Montgomery County, Maryland, who resettled in Prince George's County, in the town of Bladensburg, and built the historic home (since destroyed) known as War Park, or the Parthenon. Col. Bowie was a planter, state legislator, justice of the peace, judge of the orphans' court, and colonel of the 34th Maryland Regiment during the War of 1812--a man of local distinction, and bearer of a historic Maryland surname. His grandchildren were divided by the Civil War, according to Across the Years. Grandsons Argyle Campbell Bowie (b. 1840) and Henry Clay Bowie (1842-1929) -- the sons of his son George Washington Bowie (b. 1804) -- chose opposite sides, as did grandsons Thomas Daniel Bowie (b. 1832) and Leonard Osborne Bowie (b. 1844) -- the sons of his son Richard Cramphin Bowie (1808-1863).

According to Across the Years Argyle Campbell Bowie "entered the U.S. Navy at the outbreak of the War between the States; honorably discharged April 26, 1865. Single." (p. 692). His brother, Henry Clay Bowie "was with Mosby in the Confederate States Army. He was later a merchant in Washington, D.C." (p. 789). Across the Years records this concerning the other pair of grandsons- Thomas Daniel Bowie, "b. 1832; d. in the Confederate Army, single." (p. 736) Leonard Osborne Bowie "removed with his parents to Baltimore where he remained until December 15, 1861, at which time he entered the United States Army as a clerk in the Commissary Department, Army of the Potomac. He resigned this position at City Point, Virginia August 9, 1864 and on October 4 of that year was appointed a clerk in the Pay Department, United States Army, at Washington." (p. 791) The widow of one of Leonard Osborne Bowie's grandsons is a member of the Prince George's County Historical Society. (Mrs. William Bowie-Ed.)

Col. Thomas Bowie's oldest surviving son--the uncle of these two pairs--was a staunch Union man. He was known as John Bowie of Bladensburg, and he inherited War Park on Col. Bowie's death (according to Across the Years). He was a Unionist member of the state legislature and was federal provost marshal. (p. 736) He had one son, Thomas John Bowie (1837-1898) who was also a Union man and



also a provost marshal (at age 25). He later was active in Republican politics, serving in the legislature like his father and grandfather before him (p. 788).

(2) From Stones and Bones: Cemetery Records of Prince George's County, Maryland edited by Jean A. Sargent. Bowie, Md. Prince George's County Genealogical Society, 1984.

On page 225, tombstone inscriptions of Epiphany Episcopal Church Cemetery, Forestville, Maryland: "George T. Jarboe. Co. F, 1st Va. Inf., C.S.A.11 In parenthesis is added this note: "His brother was a soldier for the North and had a stone next to George. Stone was stolen and only footstone remains. May have been brother William age 7 in 1850 or brother James age 11 in 1850".

Prince George's County, Maryland, adjoins the District of Columbia. Now largely suburban, it was in the 1860's chiefly agricultural. Tobacco was the principal crop. There were more slaves than whites in the county. The social and political life was dominated by a plantation gentry with pronounced Southern outlook. While approval of slaveholding was almost universal, opinion on secession was divided, at least at the beginning of the war, while President Lincoln carefully divided the issues. The Union Party (led by slaveholders) actually managed to carry the county elections in the Fall of 1861. At the same time, there was little enthusiasm for prosecuting a war against the seceding states, and very few entered the Union Army. Quite a few local men did go South, however, to fight for the Confederacy. Prince George's County is a prime example of the wisdom of Lincoln's policy of separating the issues of secession and slavery early in the war, for once he issued the Emancipation Proclamation, the support the Union cause had in Prince George's County virtually disappeared.

Sincerely,  
Alan Virta

### Marietta Gift

The Society has received a \$300 contribution from the Prince George's Jaycees, to be used for furnishings in Marietta. We appreciate the Jaycees' interest and support.

### James C. Wilfong, Jr.

As this issue of News and Notes was going to press we were saddened to learn of the death of James C. Wilfong, Jr. on April 2, 1987 in Prince Frederick. Mr. Wilfong was President of the Prince George's County Historical Society 1968-1970.

We extend our deepest sympathy to his wife, Annette, and the other members of his family. A commentary will appear in next month's issue.

The Prince George's County Historical  
Society  
Headquarters.\* Marietta, 5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn  
Dale  
Library Hours: Saturdays, Noon-4 PM  
House Tours. Sundays, Noon-4 PM (March thru  
December)  
Mailing address: P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland  
20737  
Headquarters Telephone: 464-0590  
President: Warren W. Rhoads 464-0816

Vol. XV, no.5 May 1987

The May Meeting - May 9th  
at Riversdale

**NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
The Prince George's County  
Historical Society**

"Fact, Fiction and Fun on the Potomac" will be the topic of the May meeting of the Society to be held on Saturday, May 9th at 2 PM.

The speaker will be Frederick Tilp - Prince George's native, Alexandria resident, architect and author. His slide-illustrated lecture will reflect a three-quarters of a century appreciation for his beloved Potomac River.

The meeting will be held at Riversdale, the Calvert Mansion located at 4811 Riverdale Road in the Town of Riverdale. Refreshments will be served following the meeting. Members are encouraged to bring guests.

Other May Events of Interest

For those who might want to make a full day of it on Saturday, May 9th, we direct your attention to some events which you can visit prior to the Society's 2 PM meeting.

First, there is the Marlborough Day Celebration, the annual all-day program at the county seat. At 11 AM a special ceremony commemorating the Bicentennial of the U. S. Constitution will be held on the Pedestrian Mall at the County Administration Building on Main Street. In northern Prince George's County, Laurel's Main Street will come alive with the annual all-day festival - another highly-popular local event.

May we also remind you of the Hyattsville Historic House Tour on Sunday, May 17th. Starting point for the tour will be the Castle (old Hyattsville Armory) where tickets may be purchased 1-4 PM.

**NEXT MONTH'S MEETING OF THE SOCIETY - JUNE 13 RIVERSDALE**

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
**ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696**

### Pauline Roby Seidenspinner 1895-1987

We regret to note the passing of Mrs. Arthur H. Seidenspinner on April 21, 1987.

A native of Prince George's County, she was long active in a real estate and insurance business in Riverdale with her late husband. Together they were the developers of College Heights Estates, one of the outstanding residential areas of the county. She had resided on Calverton Drive for almost 60 years.

Mrs. Seidenspinner was active in many organizations, among them being the Business and Professional Women's Club, the Prince George's WCTU and the Riverdale Presbyterian Church. As an avid sports fan she was a long-time member of the University of Maryland's Terrapin Club. The Prince George's County Historical Society was pleased to have her as a Life Member and as a recipient of the St. George's Day Award.

Kind, thoughtful, loyal and generous are but a few words which describe this wonderful lady. In the history of the county it would be difficult to find another person whose good works touched the lives of as many as did Pauline Seidenspinner.

We extend our sympathy to her niece.& and nephew.

### St. George's Day Awards - 1987

Six awards were presented at the 14th annual St. George's Day Dinner held in the Grand Ballroom of the Stamp Student Union, University of Maryland. Recognized for their significant contributions toward-the preservation of the heritage of our county were the following individuals and organizations.

#### Francis & Linda O'Brien

One of the recent outstanding examples of historic preservation in Prince George's County is Brookefield of the Berrys, located in Croom. Francis and Linda O'Brien were honored for their courage in undertaking what seemed to be an impossible task, and for their determination in completing this restoration of a very early 19th century plantation house and its outbuildings.,

#### Rev. John Baldwin

As rector of the historic King George's Parish, the Rev. John Baldwin has encouraged the on-going restoration and preservation of St. John's Episcopal Church, an 18th century structure at Broad Creek. He has been active in the community effort to preserve the historic Broad Creek area from unwanted commercial intrusions. With the designation of this area as Prince George's County's first rural Historic District, he became the first chairman of its Citizens' Advisory Committee.

#### Angela Ball

In recognition of her authorship of the Centennial History of St. Jerome's Roman Catholic Church of Hyattsville, the Society commends Mrs. Ball for the detailed record of the clergy and lay persons who were responsible for the development of this pioneer parish in the Prince George's County suburbs.

#### Raymond W. Bellamy, Jr.

A Cheverly native, Mr. Bellamy was recognized for his long and outstanding service as Town Historian of Cheverly and for his continuing efforts in the field of historic preservation as a board member of Prince George's Heritage, Inc. and the Historic Preservation Commission.

#### Emmanuel United Methodist Church

Presented to the minister and congregation of Emmanuel U.M. Church who in observance of their anniversary published the history of 150 Years of Methodism in Beltsville 1836-1986 and placed a roadside historical

marker near the intersection of Powder Mill and Old Gunpowder Roads to designate the site of Shaw's Meeting House which was the birthplace of their congregation. The award was accepted by Mrs. Victorine Hopkins.

#### Town of Landover Hills

Presented to the Mayor, Council and citizens of the Town of Landover Hills for publishing their town history which chronicles the story of their pre-World War II community. As the first of the new communities in the Annapolis Road corridor, Landover Hills has prepared a primary reference document for local history. The award was accepted by Doris Mullings.

Following the presentation of the awards, the Hall of Fame inducted Daniel Carroll II, signer of the U.S. Constitution. His portrait, which will be placed in the Court House, was unveiled by two 7th generation nieces, Mrs. Eleanor Koenig Carleton and Mrs. Annette Roberts Slowinski. Both are descendants of Eleanor, a sister of Daniel Carroll. Mrs. Carleton is also a descendant of Ann, another sister.

Hall of Fame Chairman W.C. "Bud" Dutton then introduced the President of the Maryland Senate, Senator Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr. of Clinton, who spoke briefly on Carroll's contributions in the Constitutional Convention.

County Executive Parris Glendening brought greetings from the county government and introduced our speaker, Lord Fairfax of Cameron. Lord Fairfax gave a lively account of his family that included their involvement in the English Civil War, the 18th century settlement of Virginia and their move to Prince George's County in the 1860s. At the turn of the present century, it was Lord Nicholas' grandfather, Albert Kirby Fairfax, who returned to England and became known as the "American peer."

President Warren Rhoads presented an honorary membership to our guest as a memento of his visit to Prince George's County. Earlier in the week Lord Fairfax and his lovely wife, Lady Annabel, participated in ceremonies at Lake Arbor (Northampton), Mt. Airy and Marlborough Town.

#### James C. Wilfong, Jr. - An Appreciation

We were saddened last month to learn of Jim Wilfong's death at age 77.

We remembered that in 1974 one of the first St. George's Day Awards was presented to him. For at least a quarter century he had traveled the county - with young daughters in tow - photographing our architectural heritage. And for almost as long, Prince Georgians eagerly anticipated the weekly newspapers which carried his columns. Five huge scrapbooks in the historical society library attest to the partial extent of his writings. Even after his retirement to Barstow, Calvert County in the late 70's the stories continued to appear.

Even though Jim served as the 7th president of the Prince George's County Historical Society, and then for many years as its historian, just what was his real contribution to our cultural heritage?

We think the best answer is contained in this letter sent by our past editor, Alan Virta, who also served as the first chairman of the county's Historic Preservation Commission.

“Jim Wilfong was a pioneer in the historic preservation movement in Prince George's County. Forty years ago--long before there was a county historical society or preservation commission--Jim embarked on a personal survey of the eighteenth-century architecture of Prince George's County. His goal was to identify and photograph every eighteenth-century structure in the county. He did not limit his work to the great houses--the Belairs, Montpeliers, Mattaponis, and Bostwicks--he sought out modest structures as well: old country taverns, small planters' dwellings, rough farmers' cabins. His search took him to every corner of the county, down dusty roads few visitors traveled. He carefully recorded the tradition and lore surrounding each house and captured its image on film. Many of the houses he visited are gone now; his work is a lasting reminder of them.

“For thirty years Jim Wilfong shared the progress of his search for the past through his regular columns in the county newspapers. He introduced many a newcomer to our fascinating local history. He had a knack for a well-turned phrase; he captured the spirit of each house with his words, and conveyed to his readers an appreciation that could never be gained from any amount of technical data.

“Jim Wilfong was the first local writer to approach the architecture of Prince George's County as an organic whole. He did not treat each house in isolation; instead, he drew out the historical, familial, and architectural relationships among them. Many of the local traditions he so faithfully recorded have been overturned by modern research, but that in no way diminishes his contribution to the preservation of our county's heritage. Jim Wilfong was the first popularizer of our county history. Through his columns the infant preservation movement in Prince George's County found its voice. Forty years ago his work was a personal effort; today the movement he helped bring to life in this county flourishes.”

--Alan Virta

The Prince George's County Historical Society  
Mailing address: P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Maryland 20737  
Headquarters Telephone: 464-0590  
President: Warren W. Rhoads 464-0819

**NEWS AND NOTES FROM**  
**The Prince George's County**  
**Historical Society**

## June Meeting - Saturday, June 13th

The last meeting before the Summer break will be held at Riversdale, the Calvert Mansion at 2 PM on Saturday, June 13, 1987.

We have a surprise speaker for the program that day. Alan Virta, our past vice president and editor, will return to the county just a few days before the meeting and he has consented to speak. His topic will be "Reminders of Maryland in Mississippi."

During his ten month absence on a fellowship at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, Alan has had the opportunity to travel and photograph many interesting structures and sites. (No newsletter to type, no Historic Preservation Commission meetings to attend, etc.) A surprising number of these have some historical association with Maryland. Alan's slides will bring this portion of the deep South alive for your enjoyment on the 13th.

Please come and help us welcome Alan back to Prince George's County. And bring a friend as well. A social hour will follow the program.

Riversdale is located at 4811 Riverdale Road in the Town of Riverdale.

## Docent Training Session

Another training session for docents will be held at Marietta on Saturday, June 13, 1987 from 10 AM - 12 Noon. (This is the same day as our June meeting at 2 PM at Riversdale). Society member Virginia Rinehart who is a volunteer docent at Marjorie Merriweather Post's "Hillwood", will again conduct the session.

Members are encouraged to attend and volunteer an afternoon or two of their time each year to conduct tours at Marietta. It's fun and you meet a lot of interesting people! For information, call Joyce McDonald at 779-5825

## Treasures on Display

19th century crystal, a collection of paperweights, children's clothes ca. 1865, some personal item of the Calvert family, a unique display of fans -- and more, will be featured at a special open house at Riversdale, the Calvert Mansion on Sunday, June 14, Noon - 4 PM. The admission (refreshments included) benefits the restoration of the mansion.

# PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

Over a century ago when life in the county was less hurried than today, the County Treasurer or his deputy would visit each election district to receive the annual tax levy payments from the inhabitants. Printed handbills were posted in prominent locations around the county to notify the public of this service - and their obligations as taxpayers as well! The text of the notice was as follows:

### NOTICE TO TAX-PAYERS!

The undersigned, Treasurer, will attend in the several Election Districts of Prince George's county, at the following named places, on the following days, in the month of June, 1884, between the hours of 9:30 A.M., and 5 P.M., either in person or by Deputy, for the purpose of collecting the State and County Taxes, levied by the County Commissioners of said county for the current year, commencing March 26th, 1884

In Laurel district in the Town of Laurel. 1. Monday, June 9th, 1884.  
In Vansville district, at Beltsville Tuesday June-10.  
In Bladensburg district the Town of Bladensburg, on Wednesday, June 11th.  
In Bowie district, at Bowie, Thursday, June 12th.  
In Queen Anne district, at Bevan's Store, Friday, June 13th.  
In Kent District, at Bright Seat, Monday, June 16.  
In Spaldings district at Forestville, Tuesday, June 17.  
In Oxen (sic) Hill district, at Gregory's Store, Wednesday, June 18th.  
In Piscataway district - - (page torn) - - June 19th.  
In Surratts district at Surrattsville, Friday, June 20.  
In Marlboro' dis., at Beall's Store, Saturday, June 21.  
In Nottingham dis., at Nottingham, Tuesday, June 24.  
In Aquasco district, at Woodville, Wednesday June 25, and at Horse Head on Thursday, June 26.  
In Brandywine dis., at Brandywine, Friday, June 27.  
At. Messrs. Jackson, Bro. & Co.'s, 'Washington, D.C., Saturday, June 28th, and Monday, June 30th.

JOHN G. HALL

(Editor's Note- All taxpayers paying before the last day of July 1884 were allowed an 8% deduction on their bill!)

### In Memoriam

We regret to report the deaths of two of our members since the last issue of News and Notes.

Anath Bright of College Park was a Life Member of the Society. A real estate appraiser and broker for 42 years with offices in Riverdale, Mr. Bright was born in Bladensburg and attended the old Hyattsville High School and the University of Maryland. He was a past president of the Prince George's County Board of Realtors, the College Park Lions Club and the 21st District Democratic Club. Mr. Bright is survived by his wife, Margaret Bowers Bright; two sons, Dr. Donald S. Bright and Dr. Charles J. Bright; four grandchildren; three sisters and one brother.

Charlotte Calvert Spence Wilton passed away on May 9, 1987. Mrs. Wilton was a resident of Alexandria where she had served as the academic secretary to the headmaster of Episcopal High School. She was a 1923 graduate of the University of Maryland, which had been founded by her great-grandfather, Charles Benedict Calvert of Riversdale. She was the daughter of Prof. Thomas H. Spence, a dean and one-time acting president of the college, and his wife, Charlotte Calvert. The Spences were the last of the Calvert family to live at MacAlpine, built on Cat-tail Hill in 1867 by Charles Baltimore Calvert.

Mrs. Wilton is survived by a daughter, Charlotte Wilton Smith and a son, Thomas Spence Wilton as well as seven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

### Grants Program Established By Preservation Group

On May 13, 1987 Prince George's Heritage, Inc. held a reception at the Magruder House in Bladensburg to commemorate Preservation Week in Prince George's County.

Of major significance was the announcement by Prince George's Heritage of a grants program to assist individuals, a group of individuals or an association/organization who seek to promote the interest of Prince George's County history and of historic preservation any one of the following ways:

1. Restore, repair, maintain or otherwise improve a historic resource in Prince George's County;
2. Research the history of a particular structure, property, site or district which may enhance the goals of preservation or history related studies;
3. Enhance, promote or publicize the interests of Prince George's County history or historic preservation.

Grants of up to \$1,000 will be given at the discretion of Prince George's Heritage, Inc. based on the need of the applicants and the resources available.

Also at this gathering pamphlet racks were presented to all of the public historic sites in the county for purposes of displaying literature for distribution to visitors. Two of these racks were received by the Society for use at Marietta and the Society's library. This display of literature will promote tourism at the several houses and sites open to the public in the county.

The Margaret Cook Award was presented to a graduate student in the Historic Preservation Program at the University of Maryland on this occasion as well. This cash prize honors the memory of a late member of the Society and of Prince George's Heritage who was a pioneer in the county's preservation movement.

Prince George's Heritage, Inc., chaired by W. Dickerson Charlton, is the county advisory committee to the Maryland Historical Trust. Grant applications or inquiries may be directed to the Magruder House, 4703 Annapolis Road, Bladensburg, Maryland. 20710.

### NIH In Beltsville?

The National Institutes of Health are celebrating a Centennial this year. A little-known fact is that back in the Thirties NIH had need for a piece of property on which to build a structure to house the raising of laboratory animals. An overture was made to the Department of Agriculture for a small parcel of land at the vast Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, but the request got bogged down in the government bureaucracy.

In the meantime a public-spirited citizen offered land on Rockville Pike in Bethesda for general government use. NIH pursued this, erecting their animal building and in the intervening years, major medical and research facilities as well. Can our readers picture NIH in Beltsville?

This fascinating Centennial history of NIH is the topic of a recent issue of The Montgomery County Story, a quarterly publication of the Montgomery County Historical Society. It may be consulted in the library at Marietta.

### U.S. Constitution Bicentennial in Prince George's County

On Saturday, September 19, 1987 the Prince George's County Constitution Bicentennial Committee, in cooperation with the Society of Maren Duvall Descendants and the Prince George's County Historical Society, will hold a ceremony at Marietta honoring the memory of Justice Gabriel Duvall.

As was the signer of the Constitution, Daniel Carroll II, honored by the Hall of Fame at the St. George's Day Dinner, likewise Prince George's County's only member of the U.S. Supreme Court will be commemorated for his long service during the infancy of our new government.

At this early afternoon ceremony the historical society will place a plaque on Justice Duvall's law office and the Society of Maren Duvall Descendants (the Duvall family association) will dedicate a tombstone on the justice's new grave on the grounds of Marietta. Following the ceremonies Marietta will be open to the public for tours.

Members of the society are encouraged to make donations to help defray the cost of the memorial plaque. Any amount, large or small, will be accepted graciously. Please send your check, payable to the Prince George's County Historical Society, to Warren Rhoads, 12501 Kemmerton Lane, Bowie, Md. 20715 by September 1st.

(prior to the ceremony an invitation-only reception will be held by the Bicentennial Committee in honor of members of the county, state and Federal benches who will be in attendance. Society donors of \$25 or more will receive invitations to this event.)

The Prince George's County Historical Society  
Headquarters: Marietta, 5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale  
Library Hours: Saturdays, Noon-4 PM  
House Tours: Sundays, Noon-4 PM (March thru Dec.)  
Mailing address: P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Md. 20737  
Headquarters telephone: 464-0590  
President: Warren W. Rhoads 464-0819



NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince George's County  
Historical Society**

Vol. XV, no. 7-8 July-August, 1987

Fall Programs

Although we are suffering still from the oppressive heat of summer, it is time to inform our membership of the early dates of our fall programs in order that calendars may be undated.

On September 19 - the third Saturday our first meeting will be the U. S. Constitution Bicentennial program to be held at Marietta.

On September 26, the annual fall tour will take us to Western Maryland sites in Sharpsburg and Hagerstown. (See enclosed flyer.)

On October 11, our annual luncheon meeting will be held in Rossborough Inn at the University of Maryland.

Our program chairman, Bud Dutton, has arranged some outstanding events. The complete schedule through Christmas will be published in the September issue of News and Notes. In the meantime, we look forward to seeing you again in cooler weather at Marietta on Saturday, September 19th.

Great Happenings at Marietta!

Over the summer much progress has been made at our headquarters, Marietta. We want to share the details with all of you.

In June Gov. William Donald Schaeffer signed the bill passed by the General Assembly which provided \$150,000 in RESTORATION funds. We are indebted to Delegate Charles "Buzz" Ryan and Senator Leo Green of Bowie as well as the rest of the county delegation for their interest and efforts. Thanks are due also to our members who wrote letters in support of this legislation. We have every reason to believe that the County government will provide the matching funds which will enable work to commence in the future.

On another front, most of you will remember that in the summer of 1985, concurrent with our move to Marietta, several ZONING applications were filed for commercial development adjacent to the property. We are pleased to report that as of early summer

all of these requests were denied by the County Council in accordance with the area master plan. Our thanks to members who wrote letters and attended meetings to help bring this to a happy ending. And also, very special appreciation to Doris Nebel and the Glenn Dale Citizens Association for their untiring efforts.

In Marietta the dining room, hall and main living room are being redecorated in preparation for the U.S. Constitution Bicentennial celebration on September 19th. Under the enthusiastic leadership of our House Chairman, Joyce McDonald, volunteers have removed the peeling wallpaper and fresh paint is in the process of being applied. Many thanks to all of our hard-working crew, Sarah Moseley, Sammi Sharkey, Cheryl Adams, Carol Nelson, Ann Bacon, Lisa Thorpe, Julie and Warren Rhoads, and Joyce McDonald who have spent countless hours on the job. The Society is indebted also to William Vaughn of Duron Paints who donated the paint for this project.

## **PRINCE GEORGE S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

**ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23,1696**

The FURNISHINGS are another item receiving attention. Recently Cathy Wallace of the History Division of Park and Planning and Joyce McDonald completed the building inventory, and several Duvall family artifacts held in storage have been placed on display including a soup tureen and plates which were part of Judge Duvall's dinner service. Other items are needed for the house. Members and friends having furniture or other items which they might place on loan or present as a gift are encouraged to call Joyce McDonald at 779-5825.

The LAW OFFICE, a project of the Society of Maren Duvall Descendants, is beginning to take shape as well. The authentic reproduction of the bookshelves which cover one entire wall of the building have just been completed. Interior painting is now in progress and the floor finishing has been scheduled. The sparse furnishings listed in the judge's inventory will be in place for the September 19th festivities. David Duvall, president of the Society of Maren Duvall Descendants and Orlando Ridout IV have been the movers on this project.

The GROUNDS have been receiving attention as well. In late spring the state historical marker was erected at the gate as was a sign bearing the tour and library hours. . . Recently the maintenance section of Park and Planning pruned many of the trees and a much-needed brick sidewalk from the parking lot to the front entrance is under construction. For all of this activity put forth by the Park and Planning Commission, we wish to acknowledge the support of Chairman John Rhoads, Hugh Robey, Director of Parks and Recreation and John M. Walton, Jr., Coordinator of the History Division. We wish also to recognize the many courtesies extended on an almost daily basis by the caretakers of Marietta, Mr. & Mrs. Darius Vizzi.

This has been a lengthy report however we wanted to share the good news with our members. And, if you feel you can volunteer some of your talents, please call Joyce McDonald. She would be pleased to hear from you.

#### WHO WENT TO PHILADELPHIA?

Four of the five men who represented Maryland at the Constitutional Convention, like most of their counterparts from the other states, were wealthy (or at least comfortable) members of the upper class. They all were well-educated and had a great deal of political experience. Although they did not participate very much in the convention debates, as officeholders and politicians they knew what was necessary to make the government efficiently. They had to decide if the new Constitution could provide the kind of government the country needed. Three of them thought it could; two did not.

DANIEL CARROLL (1730-96) was the wealthiest Maryland delegate. He was a planter and merchant from Rock Creek in Montgomery County and owned about 7,500 acres in Montgomery, Frederick and Prince George's counties. A Roman Catholic, he was educated in Jesuit schools in Maryland and France. His brother, John Carroll, was the first Roman Catholic bishop in the United States.

Carroll's political experience included several terms in the Maryland Senate and the Continental Congress, where he was also president for brief periods. He was elected to the new U.S. House of Representatives in 1789.

Carroll favored the Constitution. In the months before Maryland's ratification convention met, he kept James Madison informed of local gossip and activities, thus helping Madison plan Virginia's ratification strategy.

DANIEL of ST. THOMAS JENIFER (1723-90) was a fourth generation Marylander who was born in Charles County. By the 1780's he was living in Anne Arundel County and owned over 6,000 acres of land.

Jenifer began his long career of public service at age twenty-six as a justice of the peace. By the time he went to the Philadelphia Convention, he had served Maryland in many offices, such as a member in the Maryland Senate and delegate to the Continental Congress.

Perhaps Jenifer's most important job, however, was as a state superintendent of revenue from 1783 to 1785. As a special agent to settle the business of the Commissions of Confiscated Property, he worked on disputes between debtors and creditors and the problems of inflation, and became convinced that the national government had to have the power to raise money and issue currency, as proposed in the Constitution.

JAMES McHENRY (c. 1752-1816) came from Ireland to Philadelphia when he was about twenty. His family came a few years later, and he moved with them to Baltimore, where his father became a merchant.

McHenry studied medicine with the famous Dr. Benjamin Rush in Philadelphia and joined the Continental Army as a surgeon, but he stopped practicing when he became a member of George Washington's staff in 1773. He finished the war as a major on Lafayette's staff and joined his father's business. In 1787 he owned only a few slaves and very little land.

Often ill, McHenry spent many summers at spas in western Maryland and Virginia. His poor health did not keep him from holding public office, however. He was elected to the Maryland Senate five times and to the House of Delegates twice. He served in the Continental Congress and as Secretary of the War Department under President John Adams. Fort McHenry is named for him.

McHenry supported the Constitution and worked to gain the support of all of the other Maryland delegates. Concerned with the needs of Baltimore's merchants, he was instrumental in assuring that duties and import taxes would be the same throughout the country.

At twenty-eight, JOHN FRANCIS MERCER (1759-1821) was the youngest Maryland delegate at Philadelphia. Born in Stafford County, Virginia, he had moved to Anne Arundel County in 1785, when he married Sophia Sprigg.

Membership in the Maryland delegation was Mercer's introduction to state politics, but he had already held public office as a delegate to Congress from Virginia. He later served as a member of the Maryland legislature, Maryland representative in Congress, and governor of the state.

Mercer had attended the College of William and Mary and studied law with Thomas Jefferson, but did not make the law his profession. Instead, he was a planter. He lived on a 1500 acre plantation his wife had inherited and owned slaves in Maryland and Virginia.

Mercer opposed the Constitution because it required full payment of pre-war debts, and because it did not guarantee individual liberties and states' rights.

LUTHER MARTIN (1748-1826), unlike the other members of the Maryland delegation, was not wealthy. His father had been a New Jersey farmer of modest means. In 1787, Martin himself owned no more than one Baltimore lot and a few slaves. But he was well-educated and a seasoned public official.

After graduating from Princeton, Martin came to the Eastern Shore to teach school. He soon went on to study law and practiced in Somerset County, where he became involved in revolutionary politics. In 1778 he moved to Baltimore and was appointed Attorney General of Maryland, an office he held for thirty-one years, a record unmatched by any of his successors.

At the Philadelphia Convention, Martin vigorously opposed the plan for representation based on a state's population, and was probably one of the authors of the "New Jersey Plan," which proposed equal representation for all the states. He served on the compromise committee which created the bicameral congress, but, still worried about the expanded power of the national government, he decided he could not support the Constitution and left the Convention. A leading proponent of the anti-federal philosophy, Martin was the most influential Marylander at the Convention.



## NEWS AND NOTES FROM **The Prince George's County Historical Society**

--Dr. Gregory Stiverson

(The above article by Maryland's Assistant State Archivist and Bicentennial Office Director is taken from the Maryland Bicentennial Gazette. Free copies are available at the Society's library.)

The Prince George's County Historical Society  
P.O. Box 14, Riverdale 20737      Tel. 464-0590  
President: Warren W. Rhoads      464-0819

Vol. XV, no. 9 September, 1987

### September Meeting

On Saturday, September 19, 1987 at 2 P.M. the Society will meet at Marietta to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the signing of the U. S. Constitution.

Distinguished members of the Bench and Bar will join the Prince George's County Historical Society and the Society of Mareen Duvall Descendants to honor the builder of Marietta, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Gabriel Duvall.

A commemorative plaque will be placed on the law office building by our society. The law office will be formally opened for the first time by the Society of Mareen Duvall Descendants, which has been responsible for its restoration and furnishing. A new grave marker, presented by the Prince George's County Committee for the U.S. Constitution Bicentennial, will be dedicated at the new graveyard site on the west lawn. Following the program the law office, the house and the Society's library will be open for tours.

We believe that our membership will be pleased with the many improvements which have been made at Marietta by our House Committee and the Society of Mareen Duvall Descendants with the generous assistance and cooperation of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and its History Division.

Marietta is located at 5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale. This is just off Glenn Dale Boulevard (Greenbelt Road) about 2 blocks from its intersection with Annapolis Road at Enterprise Road. This is the regular September meeting of the Society. Guests are welcome.

### Fall Tour - September 28th

A few seats are available still for our Fall tour to Washington County which includes visits to Antietam Battlefield as well as the Jonathan Hager House and the -Washington County Historical Society headquarters, both located in Hagerstown. If you have misplaced your flyer from last month's newsletter, please call Warren Rhoads at 464-0819 for information and reservations. The deadline for reservations is Friday, September 18th.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

## October Meeting

On Saturday, October 10, 1987 our traditional meeting will be held at Rossborough Inn, University of Maryland, College Park.

We are pleased to announce that Dr. John S. Toll, President of the University of Maryland, will be our speaker.

A separate flyer containing details and a reservation form is enclosed with this mailing.

## Belair's Later Years

In a recent issue of the Staff Newsletter of the Prince George's County Memorial Library System (April 14, 1987) an interesting story recanted by Agnes Spriggs, a staff member of the Bowie Branch, appeared in the Profiles column. We would like to share with you this recollection of life at Belair during its later years as a working estate under the ownership of William Woodward, Sr.

“I am from a family of nine children, five brothers and four sisters. We all were born and grew up on the William Woodward, Sr. estate known as the Belair Farm. My grandparents lived there and raised a family of four brothers and one sister. The brothers all worked on the farm and raised their families there. After the death of the senior Woodward, the mother and junior took over. We lived there for many years until the son was killed.

“One day my uncle came to me and asked if I would like to work at the Woodward's mansion when they came down from New York. They needed more help. It had 48 rooms with halls and stairways, but no elevators. The house was heated with coal. There were four of us working. Two did the cooking and myself and another lady took care of the housekeeping, mostly keeping the recreation room clean. It was used at all times. They played bridge and other games. I cleaned the coffee cups, glasses and ashtrays when they left the room. But when it came time to serve meals, the caretaker of the mansion planned the menu. They had a small pantry for the butler and a pulley that worked with ropes, sending everything up and down. He would send the china plates to the kitchen to be heated in a cast iron coal stove before all meals were served. While they were having dinner, myself and the lady I worked with went through the bedrooms to see that they all had a glass pitcher of ice water on the night stands, a flashlight, and to lay a quilt on the foot post of their beds. They were hand made and very old. Soon as they were through dinner they would head to the bedrooms. The butler cleared the tables and sent everything to the kitchen. The four of us washed dishes, glasses and sent them back to the butler. He had to put everything away. We were through around 10.

“Two of my uncles were their chauffeurs. They took turns taking me home. When the moon was out, I would walk. I lived on a hill looking down on Fox Hill Lake. The rest of the ladies stayed there because they had to rise early in the morning but not me. There's no place like home. Most of the generation was buried in (continued on page 30)

## The Duties of a School Superintendent

The modern era of public education in Prince George's County began in 1865 with the passage of the School Act by the Maryland legislature. The act created the position of superintendent of schools in each county and placed the old decentralized system of district schools (in which each local school was governed by local trustees) under the county superintendent's direction. Despite the legislative mandate of 1865, the actual transformation of the district school system into a strong unified county system took many years. The first fifty years witnessed remarkable progress in Prince George's County, not only in the

Frederick Sasscer served as superintendent from 1902 until 1914. He was born in 1856, the son of Dr. Frederick Sasscer and his wife, Rosalie Ghiselin, of Upper Marlboro. Though trained as a lawyer, Sasscer interests led him into journalism. He became editor, and later owner-publisher, of the Prince George's Enquirer, an Upper Marlboro newspaper. "I tried to combine the practice of my chosen profession (the law) with the publication of a newspaper and the result was that the latter proved more fascinating to me," he wrote. "The varied work of a country editor thus became the absorbing task of the best years of my life."

Frederick Sasscer was appointed superintendent in 1902, succeeding Thomas S. Stone in that post. Though a lawyer and newspaper editor by profession, he had long been interested in the cause of education, and served as principal of an academy for five years immediately upon leaving college. Among the accomplishments of his twelve-year tenure as superintendent were the establishment of the county's second high school (Surrattsville, 1906), the incorporation of the venerable Marlboro Academy into the public school system (1908), and the creation of an agricultural high school at Baden (1910). Sasscer argued forcefully in reports to the state superintendent for higher education standards for teachers, noting that only one-quarter of his teachers hold normal school certificates, while only five percent were college-educated.

Throughout his career Sasscer was called upon to make public addresses. In 1925 he collected a number of these speeches and published them in a booklet entitled Occasional Addresses. (The quotations above come from its Foreword). Among the topics were "National Pastimes" (delivered to the Washington Irving Literary Society at Upper Marlboro, 1888) and "Learn, That You May Be Strong" (delivered to the Philomathean Society at his alma mater, St. John's College, Annapolis). A copy of Occasional Addresses was recently presented to the Society by Mr. and Mrs. Lansdale G. Sasscer, Jr. The handwritten incomplete manuscript, of another address, not included in the booklet, was also presented by Mr. and Mrs. Sasscer. It was untitled and undated, we publish it below.

(Found in the desk of Frederick Sasscer in his house on Elm Street, Upper Marlboro.)

"The business side of the County (School) Superintendent's work presents many perplexities. The first great problem is how to keep out of debt. The situation sometimes seems desperate, hopeless. We usually start out upon a year's operations with a definite sum of resources that will be available sooner or later, and it might naturally seem to the business man that a very (small) financial problem is presented. One would say why limit your expenditures to your receipts. But can this always be done? The law directs that the schools be kept open ten months in each year, if possible: popular sentiment demands that they shall be kept open as long as possible - certainly as long as the law requires. The School Board rightly feels that this should be done. In growing communities the demands upon the School Fund are constantly increasing. The Superintendent as Treasurer of the Board and the bonded custodian of those funds realizes that prudence, firmness and economy are needed to withstand the threatened inroads. Unfortunately School Commissioners do not always realize or appreciate the situation. The requests for improvements or extensions may individually seem insignificant but in the aggregate assume large proportions. The schools are crowded during the fine weather of autumn, more seats are needed; additional teachers must be provided, new school houses built. The demands of the public seem reasonable: it is hard to turn down earnest petitioners in a matter of increased school facilities where the need is evidently urgent, although it may be temporary. (People will not believe that in many cases it is only temporary). The consequence is (that) additional schools are opened, furniture and supplies ordered, the number of teachers increased, and almost unconsciously thousands of dollars of increased liabilities incurred. At the end of the financial year the Superintendent may be confronted by a deficit instead of a surplus, and perhaps censured for a lack of business management. County Commissioners, who make the levy, cannot always be convinced how imperative the needs are: they may be more liberal in appropriations for roads than for schools, they may, and in my county generally do, fix upon some specific amount to meet current expenses of schools, pay interest on

but those who have little love or aptitude for the work are often overpaid, if we consider the results attained rather than the hours of labor spent in the effort of teaching. Of course, the Superintendent hears complaints - complaints from teachers of the inadequacy of their pay, complaints from patrons of defects in the school work, often imaginary, however. He is confronted with the ever threatened danger of losing the best equipped and most useful members of his teaching force, and yet any attempt to hold them by special compensation (even had he the power to grant it) would cause jealousy and contention and consequent disorganization.

“I suppose all superintendents have had trouble with the adjustment of incidental expenses, particularly when over-officious trustees are interested. There seems to be a prevailing sentiment in some communities that services rendered to the public are worth more than services rendered to an individual, and should be paid for in a spirit of bountiful liberality. In other words that the public funds are public property, and that it is lawful and right to get all you can. Woe to the unfortunate superintendent who dares to cut a bill for cord wood, or for cleaning the school grounds or for hauling a stove. Correspondence, interviews, appeals to the School Board ensue, and a final adjustment whereby the trustee (who may be a political power in the community) wins out, or, if defeated, in a spirit of revenge sends in his resignation and for the future does all he can to discourage the poor teacher and impair the school. One man, in my experience, renders such an exorbitant bill periodically, for cleaning out the spring, that its pure and crystal waters should now be patent to cleanse the community of all human ills. He, at least, sets an example to the school children that work should be thoroughly done and through his physical spring inculcates the doctrine we may hope to "Drink deep or taste not the Pierian spring". In my county, we have attempted to establish a uniform rule for adjusting these small accounts, but there are so many varying conditions that the rule cannot in all cases be followed. The price for services of janitors varies in different communities, the price of fuel varies, the degree of efficiency on the part of trustees is so marked and so uncertain that we are compelled to recognize these discrepancies and pay bills upon the most reasonable and equitable basis that an economic administration will permit.

“The purchase and distribution of school books and supplies form a responsible feature of the superintendent's work. I have found that the requisitions for books sent in by teachers, especially by the younger and more inexperienced need to be carefully scrutinized. There is a tendency to accumulate in schools superfluous books that might be used elsewhere and I have been advising my teachers against doing this. The book fund is not more than sufficient for the needs of the schools, and the strictest economy in the purchase and use of text books, if not imperative now, soon will be so. Changes and new adoptions are delusive and always expensive. Nearly all texts are good enough. The securing of thoroughly capable teachers is the great essential. But perhaps I have indulged too much in a pessimistic vein. The business side of the Superintendent's work is not altogether fraught with perplexity and trouble. (It has) its rewards. If we can realize that each little rural community is awakening under the influence of the school and of the teachers to higher ideals not only of intellectual life, but of business life and moral life, our labor is well spent. If we can even from an egotistical viewpoint see more commodious and comfortable school houses . . .”

Frederick Sasscer died in 1929. The junior high school in Upper Marlboro is named for him. He was the father of the late Congressman, Lansdale G. Sasscer and the grandfather of Lansdale G. Sasscer, Jr.

--Alan Virta

Belair's Later Years (cont. from p. 26)

back of the Mansion.

“I live in Prince George's County, am married, have five children and have worked for the PGCMLS maintenance department since Bowie's opening. My husband has retired from the system.”

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Headquarters: Marietta, 5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale, Md.

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 14, Riverdale, Md. 20737

Marietta is open for tours each Sunday afternoon, 12:4 PM - 4 PM, March thru December.  
The Society's research library and collection is open every Saturday of the year, 12 - 4 PM.

Telephone: 464-0590

President: Warren W. Rhoads (464-0819)



NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince George's County  
Historical Society**

PRINCE GEORGE'S  
COUNTY HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

ANNOUNCING: The  
October Meeting at Rossborough Inn  
Saturday, October 10, 1987  
Social Hour: 11:30 Luncheon: 12:30  
(Program follows lunch.)

Our traditional October luncheon meeting will be held once again in the delightful setting of Rossborough Inn at the University of Maryland.

We are pleased to announce that our speaker will be:

Dr. John S. Toll  
President  
University of Maryland

In his address, Dr. Toll will share with us some of the exciting plans for the future role of the University. Members are cordially invited to bring guests to this outstanding annual event.

Rossborough Inn is located on U.S. I (Baltimore Avenue) next to the Dairy Building (Turner Lab) and opposite Ritchie Coliseum.

Turn at the traffic light on the street between the Inn and the Dairy. There is ample parking on the lot behind the Inn.

RESERVATIONS DEADLINE: Saturday, October 3.

Mail to: Warren W. Rhoads, 12501 Kemmerton Lane, Bowie, Md. 20715

Please reserve \_\_\_ seats for me for the luncheon at Rossborough Inn on Saturday, October 10, 1987  
Cost: \$13.25 per person (gratuity incl.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_  
Please return by October 3<sup>rd</sup>

Vol. XV, no.10 October 1987

October Meeting Canceled

We regret to announce that because of a poor response our October meeting scheduled for Rossborough Inn has been canceled.

Plan now to attend the November meeting to be held in the County Administration Building in Upper Marlboro on Saturday, November 14, 1937. Prof. David Fogle's slide presentation on Kiplin Hall, Sir George Calvert's home in Yorkshire, England will be one of the outstanding programs presented by the Society.

### Society Business

At the November meeting a revision of the by-laws will be voted on by the membership. ( copy is enclosed for your reading.) This is the first major revision since the Society was formed in 1952.

We will also hold our annual election of officers. The Nominating Committee report from Vera Rollo, Florian Thayn and Sarah Bourne, Chr., will be printed in the next issue of News and Notes, which you will receive prior to the meeting. Suggested nominations can be given to Sarah Bourne (277-5468) and nominations can be made from the floor.

### Halloween Party at Marietta

The House Committee is sponsoring an old-fashion Halloween Party for Society members and guests at Marietta on Friday, October 30th at 3 PM.

Admission, which includes refreshments, is \$5 per person in costume. If you want to attend without costume in order to laugh at your friends, the charge is \$10 per person. Proceeds will benefit the Marietta House Fund.

Since there is limited space, advance reservations must be made by calling Joyce McDonald at 779-5825. October 23rd is the cut-off date.

Come join the fun!

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

## Greenbelt Museum to Open October 13

On Saturday, 10, the Greenbelt Museum will open its doors to the public for the first time. The museum opening is one of several events taking place that weekend in Greenbelt in celebration of the city's 50th anniversary.

The museum is operated by the Friends of The Greenbelt Museum, Inc., in one of the original Greenbelt rowhouses. The house has been furnished with original Greenbelt furniture, designed by the Special Skills Division of the U.S. Resettlement Administration. Greenbelt was built between 1935 and 1937 by the New Deal as an experiment in city planning as well as an employment relief project. The house (located at 10-B Crescent Road) is well situated near the center of the city, and many of the planning concepts pioneered in Greenbelt are evident in the vicinity. Also on display in the house will be artwork by WPA artists of the 1930s depicting Greenbelt.

A formal dedication program for the museum will begin at noon on October 10 in the common area near the museum. A reception will follow in Center School, and the museum will be open for tours from 1 until 4 pm. Regular museum hours will be from noon until 4 pm every Sunday. That schedule will commence on October 11. There is no admission fee.

The Greenbelt Museum, at 10-B Crescent Road, is located across the street from the Greenbelt Library. Visitors on October 10 are encouraged to park in the lots around the Center Hall. Other anniversary events during the weekend include a gala dinner-dance, a sock hop, and a reunion of Greenbelt's "first families" (original residents).

## Docent Training Session

New features, added since the recent redecoration of Marietta, will be covered in a docent training session to be held on Saturday, October 24 from 10 am to Noon. Current docents and new volunteers are cordially invited to attend.

## Other Events of Interest

October 21 - 7:30 pm - A slide lecture on the 'National Register properties in Prince George's County' will be given by Susan Pearl, research historian for the Historic Preservation Commission at Belair Mansion, Bowie. Admission (\$3.) for benefit of mansion restoration fund.

November 20, 21 (10 am to 4 pm) and November 22 (Noon - 4 pm) - A Doll Show and Sale will be held at Marietta. Admission (\$3.) for benefit of the house fund.

## A Feeble Solution

With the coming of the Civil War, the Federal government was faced with a major problem which would be present throughout the entire period of conflict. Washington, the capital city, was located on the military frontier and was surrounded by the enemy to the south and her none-too-friendly Maryland neighbors to the north. The men and materiel necessary to provide protection for the government proved to be a constant drain on the total war effort.

Recently, Society member Guy Barron of Glenn Dale us with a clipping from The West Virginia Hillbilly (Jan. 29, 1987) which contains a novel approach to Washington's dilemma in 1861. Entitled "Map Hints of Old Dominion Breakup Before 1863", tells of a solution proposed by Secretary of War

Stanton which was based upon major boundary changes - a rather feeble approach since the rebels would still be present to hinder the war effort regardless of what the jurisdiction was called.

(Since News and Notes does not have picture reproduction capabilities, the map references listed below must be located by our readers on their own maps of the area.)

The big rock on the West Virginia state seal reports that the state of Virginia was officially cast asunder on June 20, 1863. That date, while it apparently isn't a red letter day on the Old Dominion calendar, is an occasion for some kind of ovation in the state that Abe Lincoln broke off from the original.

However, new evidence has come to light, thanks to a former history professor in Virginia, John Hays Morgan, now living in Tucson, that as early as 1861 the federal government had its eye on dismemberment of Virginia. That evidence consists of a copy of Harper's Weekly for December 21, 1861, sent to us by Professor Morgan.

Reprinted herewith, and possibly for the first time in a century and a quarter is the map Harper's used, and this article:

"On this page we give a map showing the proposed reconstruction of the States of Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware. This can be best understood by references in the following extract from the Report of the Secretary of War:

"The geographical position of the metropolis of the nation, menaced by the rebels and required to be defended by thousands of our troops, induces me to suggest for consideration the propriety and expediency of a reconstruction of the boundaries of the states of Delaware, Maryland and Virginia. Wisdom and true statesmanship would dictate that the seat of the National Government, for all time to come, should be placed beyond reasonable danger of seizure by enemies within, as well as from capture by foes from without. By agreement between the states named, such as was effected, for similar purposes, by Michigan and Ohio and by Missouri and Iowa, their boundaries could be so changed as to render the capital more remote than at present from the influence of State governments which have arrayed themselves in rebellion against Federal authority. To this end, the limits of Virginia might be so altered as to make her boundaries consist of the Blue Ridge on the east and Pennsylvania on the north, leaving, those on the south and west as at present. By this arrangement two counties in Maryland (Alleghany and Washington) would be transferred to the jurisdiction of Virginia. (At this time Garrett County had not been established. -Ed.) All that portion of Virginia which lies between the Blue Ridge and Chesapeake Bay could then be added to Maryland, while that portion of the peninsula between the waters of the Chesapeake and the Atlantic, now jointly held by Maryland and Virginia, could be incorporated into the State of Delaware. A reference to the map will show that these are great natural boundaries, which, for all time to come, would serve to mark the limits of these States.

"To make the protection of the capitol complete, in consideration of the large accession of territory which Maryland would require under the arrangement proposed, it would be necessary that the state should consent to modify her Constitution as to limit the basis of her representation to her white population.

"In this connection, it would be the part of wisdom to reannex the District of Columbia that portion of its original limits which by act of Congress was retroceded to the State of Virginia.

"This arrangement would reduce the size of the State of Virginia at least one-half, leaving the name of Virginia to that part only which is now mainly loyal. The disloyal section, comprising all the great cities of Virginia -- Richmond, Norfolk, Fredericksburg, Lynchburg, etc. -- and all by the seacoast, would be annexed to Maryland, while Delaware would rise, by spreading over the whole peninsula between the Chesapeake and the ocean, to be a state of considerable magnitude. Under this construction, Maryland

would become one of the three great States of the Union. We need hardly direct attention to the clause in the Secretary's report which hints the emancipation in Maryland must be the price for this acquisition of territory."

### Letters From Our Members

I believe you will want to make the membership aware of a recently published book: Tobacco and Slaves -- The Development of Southern Cultures in the Chesapeake, 1680-1800, by Allan Kulikoff (University of North Carolina Press, 1986).

It is based largely, if not primarily, on research in Prince George's County, and contains a great deal of information and analysis about the county.

Brice M. Clagett  
Holly Hill, Friendship, Md.

(The Society's library has recently acquired a copy of this work. - Ed.)

I am getting the greatest pleasure from receiving and reading the P.G. Historical Society's News Letter. Please accept my thanks as it enables me to keep in touch with the Society's work and the endless source of local historical information.

The item "From Holiness to Hamburgers" was read with considerable interest, as this idea regards churches no longer in use, has provoked much cross-fire between citizens and Council in many towns in England. (Some churches have had the main body of the church removed and the Tower retained with a pedestrian walk-way so that it allows the flow of people traffic in the busy center of town, e.g., Gloucester.)

I still receive news from my home town of Cheltenham, Glo'shire, England, and I thought you might like to read the enclosed report on just such another example of "From Holiness to Hamburgers". Heaven forbid. All good wishes to the Society.

Cynthia R. Ochronek  
Santa Cruz, California

(Mrs. Ochronek's clipping from the Cheltenham News notes that four of the old coaching inns have been turned into modern stores and now the ancient parish church of St. Mary's in the downtown area is in danger of becoming a shopping mall! Mrs. Ochronek is a former resident of College Park. -Ed.)

### Advertisement

FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF HYATTSVILLE  
Organized 1904  
Directors

Joseph W. Aman  
C. Frank Carr  
C.G. Heitmuller  
Wm. Shedd Holton  
Geo. H. Lanhardt  
Guy W. Latimer  
W. P. Magruder

H.J. Patterson  
Jackson H. Ralston  
Harry W. Shepherd  
G.W. Sexton  
E. Quincy Smith  
Charles A. Wells  
Samuel W. Woodward

CAPITAL AND SURPLUS OVER \$50,000  
ACCOUNTS SOLICITED

--The Triangle, Maryland Agr. College, Dec. 1, 1911

The Prince George's County  
Historical Society  
Warren Rhoads, President P.O. Box 14, Riverdale 20737

# THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## BYLAWS

### Article I Name

The name of this organization shall be "Prince George's County Historical Society, Incorporated" hereinafter referred to as the Society.

### Article II Objectives

Section 1. To foster an understanding and appreciation of the history and heritage of Prince George's County.

Section 2. The collection, recording, organization, restoration and preservation of historical data, artifacts and all associated materials relative to Prince George's County and the state of Maryland Section 3. To promote and encourage research into all aspects of Prince George's County history and heritage.

Section 4. To acquaint and make available to members and the general public historical data and all associated materials relating to Prince George's County through programs and publications arranged or sponsored by the Society.

Section 5. To encourage and participate in the protection and preservation of historic sites and structures in Prince George's County.

### Article III Membership/ Dues

Section 1. Membership shall be open to anyone interested in promoting the objectives of the Society. An application for membership shall be made in writing and shall be filed with the membership committee.

Section 2. Membership shall be classified as Active, Life, and Honorary.

Section 3. Active members shall pay annual dues as determined by the Board of Directors. Life members shall make a one-time payment for a lifetime membership. Honorary membership may be conferred for life by two-thirds affirmative vote of the Board of Directors in recognition of an outstanding contribution to the objectives of the Society. Honorary members are exempt from payment of dues. Section 4. Dues are payable by January 1st for the calendar year. Dues not paid by April 1st will result in member being dropped from membership. New members paying their initial dues after September 1st shall be considered paid for the remainder of year and the following year.

### Article IV Officers

Section 1. The officers of the Society shall be a President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, and Historian, who shall be elected on an annual basis.

Section 2. There shall be six directors, elected for two year terms, three of whom shall be elected in alternate years. The officers together with the six directors shall constitute the Board of Directors, and shall be elected at the November general meeting of each year for the following calendar year. A slate of candidates for these offices shall be presented at the October general meeting by the Nominating Committee and at which time nominations from the floor will also be accepted. In the event of there being more than one nominee for any office, election shall be by ballot.

Section 3. In the event of a vacancy on the Board of Directors, the Board shall appoint a member of the Society to fill the vacancy until the end of the term vacated.



Section 4. All past Presidents shall be ex officio members of the Board of Directors with voting privileges.

#### Article V Duties of Officers and Directors

Section 1. The President shall be the chief executive officer of the Society, shall preside at meetings and shall appoint Committee Chairs.

Section 2. The Vice President shall assume the duties of the President in the absence, incapacity or resignation of the President. He shall also hold

responsibility for the Program Committee. Section 3. The Recording Secretary shall keep the minutes of meetings of the Society and the Board of Directors.

Section 4. The Corresponding Secretary shall handle the general correspondence of the Society, shall maintain a file of the Society's correspondence and shall maintain a record of all Society Members.

Section 5. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the safekeeping of Society funds and for maintaining a financial record in accordance with accepted accounting practices. He shall collect dues and deposit all funds received in the name of the Society. Monies shall be paid out by check for all Society activities. He shall present a financial report at all meetings of the Board of Directors.

Section 6. The Historian shall be the custodian of the library and archives of the Society and shall make those records available to Society members, researchers and the general public.

#### Article VI Meetings/Quorums

Section 1. The Board of Directors shall meet a minimum of three times a year and at the call of the President.

Section 2. There shall be a minimum of three membership meetings a year.

Section 3. A quorum for meetings of the Board of Directors shall consist of six Board Members. Section 4. A quorum for membership meetings shall consist of twenty-five members.

Section 5. Committee chairpersons and all interested members may attend Board meetings.

#### Article VII Committees

Section 1. The Society shall have standing committees for: Membership Programs; Finance and Publicity.

Section 2. Special committees may be established for specific tasks and may be terminated at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

#### Article VIII Amendments to Bylaws

These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of members present at any general membership Meeting provided the Board of Directors has reviewed the Proposed change and the membership has been notified of said change not less than thirty days prior to the meeting.

No Bylaw change shall be made that is contrary to the intent of the original Articles of Incorporation signed December 8th, 1954.

Recommended by the Board of Directors this 19th day of September 1987 to be presented to the General membership for approval.

/s/

Vol. XV, no. 11 November  
1987

## NEWS AND NOTES FROM **The Prince George's County Historical Society**

November Meeting to Feature  
Kiplin Hall

Saturday, November 14 at 2  
PM is the time of our next  
meeting, which will be held in  
the County Administration  
Building in Upper Marlboro.

Professor David Fogle of the School of Architecture, University of Maryland, will give an illustrated lecture on "Kiplin Hall, Yorkshire Home of Sir George Calvert." This Jacobean manor house of splendid proportions was built c. 1622 and is currently operated by a private foundation. During this past summer Prof. Fogle and a group of Maryland architecture students performed restoration work, at Kiplin Hall.

Parking in Upper Marlboro is plentiful on Saturdays. Please enter the County Administration Building from Gov. Oden Bowie Drive located by School House Pond.

You are encouraged to bring guests to this outstanding program. Refreshments will be served.

### Society Business

As indicated in last month's issue of News and Notes, a revision of the by-laws will be voted upon at the November meeting. Copies have been mailed to all members.

The annual election of officers will also be on the agenda. Since the Nominating Committee is still at work on their report at press time, it will not be available until the meeting.

### Doll Exhibit and Sale - November 20-22

At Marietta a doll exhibit and sale of related items will be held on November 20-22 (Friday and Saturday, 10 am – 4 pm; Sunday, Noon - 4 pm. For those who have old dolls, Phylis Salak, a doll expert, will appraise them for you for a small fee. (2 for \$5.) Also, Lena Dixon will conduct a workshop on the making of cornhusk dolls. Materials are included in the \$10 charge. (Appraisals made 1-4 pm Sat. & Sun. only.)

The admission charge is \$3 for adults and \$2 for Seniors and children over 6. Refreshments will be served. All fees and admissions are for the benefit of the Marietta House Fund. Please come and bring a friend.

And while you are at the doll exhibit you will be able to do some Christmas shopping in the gift shop at Marietta. Stationery, crafts, dried flowers, pewter, ceramics and books of local interest are among the many items to choose from.

For workshop reservations or further information, call Joyce McDonald at 779-5325.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY - MARIETTA - SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

## From the House Committee

Society members who visited Marietta for the September 19th program were pleasantly surprised by the new and fresh appearance of the house interior. This transformation was accomplished by our hard-working House Committee under Joyce McDonald's direction after many hours of labor during August and early September. Gone are the peeling paint and wallpaper, having been replaced by bright colors. The committee would like to share with our members the following information prepared by committee member Sarah Moseley for use of the house docents.

### Notes on Colors Used at Marietta

The house committee used the historical color selection approach to choose paint for this stage of recreating the interior of Marietta.

We removed as little of the existing paint and wallpaper as possible to insure that sufficient evidence remains when the scientific paint analysis is funded.

In the course of our preparation for painting we determined that the plaster on the walls of the drawing room and the dining room has never been painted. This indicates that these rooms were originally and subsequently wallpapered. There is strong evidence to indicate that the color which predominated at some point during the early history of the house was a rich red. The fragments of wallpaper that appear to be the earliest, i.e., the layer found next to the plaster, were noted and saved for future reference. The red shows up in the woodwork as well but the age is impossible to determine without a professional paint analysis. The dye used for the red on these paper fragments permeates both paper and unprimed paint.

There is a historical precedent for this color in the Federal period. The red fragments match the documented red of Dolly Madison Damask, a historic wallpaper reproduced by Thibault. We know that Jenny Duvall was a friend of Mrs. Madison and she may have been taken with this color as well.

As is evidenced by the bold statement in the upstairs bedroom this color selection would be quite daring for our modern tastes. Therefore, our committee researched other colors of the period for this initial stage of restoration, our next phase will be to determine if the red is indeed the oldest color. We used as our color sources other rooms in historic properties that have had recent scientific paint analyses conducted. Also, painter's handbooks published in the early 19th century gave us written descriptions of the colors used in that day.

In the drawing room we chose blue walls and cream trim to lend a classical theme to the room. The rose beige brings emphasis to the details of the mantelpiece. Note, a similar rose beige color was discovered during the paint analysis of the law office. The dark brown seen on the baseboards throughout the house is evidenced in most homes of the period. This use of dark paint was a practical solution called a "mop board."

The yellow of the hall is another vibrant Federal statement. The unvarnished stair treads and the brown risers are again reminders of what it was like to care for and live in a 19th century plantation house.

The choice of the peach color in the dining room was made to complement the Judge's formal blue and gold china. We are fortunate to have surviving examples of this china for reference and display. A variation of the peach color was discovered by the paint analysis done in the John Warren house in Middlebury, Vermont.

## Some November Anniversaries

Nov. 151, 1869 - In Laurel, the Laurel Wreath Lodge #149 was chartered. This is the oldest continuously active Masonic lodge in Prince George's County.

Nov. 21, 1722 - In St. Barnabas' Church,, the Hon, Charles Calvert, Gov. of Md., was married to Rebecca Gerrard by the Rev. Jacob Henderson, Rector of Queen Anne's Parish.

### "Opportunity, Not Disaster."

Exactly three-quarters of a century ago this month a major disaster, which would prove to become a turning point to better times, occurred in Prince George's County. We reprint herewith the contemporary account which appeared in The Triangle (Vol. IV, No. 5 - Dec. 1, 1912), the student newspaper of the Maryland Agricultural College.

#### OLD M. A. C. SWEEP BY FLAMES The Old Barracks and the "New Building" a Smoldering Heap of Ruins - Cadets Fight Fire Gallantly, But to No Avail.

While the moon soared to its zenith calmly and amid a cloudless sky on the night of November 29, the landscape for miles around College Park was illuminated by the glare of a conflagration that was, before its extinction, to level two of M.A.C.'s proudest structures to the earth. To the loyal friends of the College who battled with the fire it seemed for awhile that nothing could save the remaining buildings; but in the end the loss was limited to the "Old Barracks which has served its purpose since 1856, and the "New" Administration Building which was completed in 1904.

The exact origin of the fire will probably never be known. A dance was in progress on the first floor of the "New Building." The guests were seated in the dining room in the Old Barracks about 10:15 o'clock, when fire was discovered, by a cadet, between the third and fourth floors in the northwest corner of the "New Building." He promptly notified some of the cadet officers in the dining room, who in turn quietly announced that the College was on fire and requested the guests to go outside the building. The whole procedure was orderly and without panic. The cadets then returned to the "New Building" to fight the fire.

As the Thanksgiving holiday had not expired only about thirty-five cadets were in the College. This small band at once attacked the fire, but owing to the difficulty in getting near the flames and the dense smoke which quickly filled the building, they were soon compelled to desist fighting the fire and began removing the records from the offices of the President and the Treasurer. Meanwhile the flames had burst through the roof and the upper part of the building became a roaring furnace. Undaunted the cadets struggled frantically to remove from the various rooms of the doomed building their own and their absent College mates' clothing and personal equipment. In this work they were aided by some of the young ladies, guests at the dance, who braved the dangers of the fire in order to aid the work of salvage.

The falling of a portion of the roof drove every one from the New Building, and, untiring, the cadets turned their attention to the Old Barracks in order to save the building if possible; if not, to empty it of whatever was valuable. While a party of students, now aided by some of the professors who had arrived on the scene, mounted to the roof of the Old Barracks and played streams of water upon portions of the cornice which were ablaze, others were busy carrying trunks and clothing out of the zone of danger.

But the heat was too great and ere long the volume of smoke that poured through the hallways of the Old Barracks from the roaring furnace of the New Building drove the cadets from the halls and made it urgent that the party on the roof should give up their brave fight. Several narrow escapes from suffocation were experienced as the party slowly beat its way down four flights of stairs through the volumes of thick smoke that billowed through the halls. One boy became unconscious and was dragged by his companions down to the clear air outside where he quickly revived.

By this time the Fire Department from Hyattsville had arrived and joined in the fight to save the other College Buildings. The two dormitory buildings were given over as lost and all efforts were concentrated upon the prevention of the spread of the fire from the northwest corner of the New Building to the Science Hall, only about fifty feet distant. It was a long, hot fight but at last the tide turned in favor of the heroic fighters, most conspicuous and effective among whom was Melton, the janitor of the Science Hall.

By this time two companies of firemen from Washington had arrived on the scene, and although they were too late to save the dormitories, they remained until all danger of further spread of the fire was past. From this stage the conflagration was chiefly spectacular and for those who find the soul thrilled by the awe-inspiring rush of roaring, leaping, flames crowned lay billowing, eddying clouds of smoke, the spectacle was grand, indeed. By four o'clock in the morning the flames had lowered so that the anxious friends of old M.A.C. could seek some rest for their tired bodies.

Members of the faculty and friends in the neighboring towns took the homeless cadets under their care for the short remainder of the night. In the Morning the cold glare of daylight showed the blackened walls of the Old Barracks still standing though badly cracked, while the New Building was a smoldering heap of ruins.

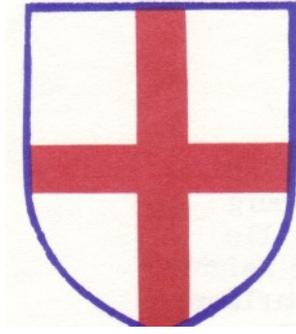
The loss, including the loss to the students whose effects could not be removed from the buildings, will probably total \$150,000. The College risk was nearly covered by insurance. The fire probably started by the crossing of electric light wires between the floors of the third and fourth stories of the New Building.

As soon as the Faculty could be assembled resolutions were passed expressing determination to keep up the work of the College without break in spite of the loss. The boys will reassemble at noon on Wednesday, December 4, and they will be assigned to temporary quarters in the neighboring villages until new dormitories can be provided. This action was endorsed by the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees and it is expected that all of the boys will be back to College during the week.

The little school on the hill in what became College Park had been struggling for its very existence since the first students entered in October, 1859, less than two years before the Civil War and the dark days which followed. During the 90s and the first decade of the 20th century, aided by Federal funds provided under the Hatch Act for the Experiment Station and related agricultural projects, it finally began to flourish under the leadership of President Richard W. Silvester. New building construction, more students and increased numbers in the graduating classes were good signs. In one evening all of this progress seemed to be wiped out by the conflagration which destroyed all of the dormitory space of a residential school.

In writing an editorial entitled "Opportunity, Not Disaster", the student editor of The Triangle assumed the role of a prophet. Many people and groups gave aid to the school which in a short time shed its archaic ways and began to assume the image of a contemporary institution.

The insurance was used to build the first modern residence hall (Calvert Hall) which opened in 1914. Students, living off-campus in the meantime, were, no longer subject to the old military regimen. Many



## NEWS AND NOTES FROM **The Prince George's County Historical Society**

new types of student activities, including fraternities, began to flourish. The State of

Maryland assumed full control in 1916 and necessary funding became available for a broad program in liberal arts in addition to agriculture, science and engineering. During the same year the first two women students were admitted. Finally the college was merged with the professional schools in Baltimore to form the University of Maryland in 1920.

In effect, the fire of 1912 had brought the old Agricultural College into the 20th century and provided the impetus for the support which has since made it a major center of education.

Ref: Callcott, George H. A History of the University of Maryland. Balto. 1966.

The Prince George's County Historical Society Box 14, Riverdale, Md. 20737

Vol. XV, no. 12 December 1987

### Society Christmas Party - December 12 -

The Holiday Season is upon us! Marietta, the society's headquarters, will be the setting for the annual Christmas Party on Saturday, December 12, 1987 beginning at 2 PM.

Traditionally members may bring a sample of their favorite holiday specialty to add to the wonderful variety of food at the party; however this is not a requirement. Most important of all is that you join with us at this festive time. Bring along a friend as well.

### Marietta Candlelite Tours

Public tours of Marietta are scheduled for Friday and Saturday evenings, December 11 & 12 from 7 - 9 PM. The \$1 admission will benefit the furniture fund.

The house will be decorated for the Holiday Season throughout the entire month of December and can be visited each Sunday, including Dec. 27th, from noon - 4 PM.

Marietta will be closed during January and February for tours. However, the Library will be open as usual each Saturday from noon - 4 PM.

### Society Officers for 1988

At the annual meeting of the society held in the County Administration Building, Upper Marlboro, on November 14, 1987 the revised by-laws were adopted and the following officers were elected for the 1988 calendar year.

President	John A. Giannetti	Hyattsville
Vice President	(vacant)	
Rec. Secty	Joyce McDonald	Hyattsville
Corres. Secty	Cheryl Adams Lanham	
Treasurer	Donald D. Skarda	Berwyn Heights
(OVER)		

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23, 1696

## Society Officers (cont.)

Historian	Fred De Marr	Hyattsville
Director Emerita	Susanna K. Cristofane	Bladensburg
Directors	Edith M. Bagot	Hyattsville
	John B. Bourne	College Heights
	W. C. Dutton, Jr.	Upper Marlboro
	Anne Ferguson	Riverdale
	William Z. Haskell	Upper Marlboro
	John W. Mitchell	Upper Marlboro
(Past Pres.)	Paul T. Lanham	Huntingtown
(Past Pres.)	Warren W. Rhoads	Bowie

The members of the society wish to express deep appreciation to Warren Rhoads for his outstanding efforts as president during this past year. We are pleased that he will continue his efforts on behalf of the society as a member of the board of directors. Thanks are due also to past vice president/program chairman Bud Dutton who will continue on the board as well.

Also due our appreciation is corresponding secretary Margo Ritchie, who has done so much to computerize our mailing list and carry out the never-ending task of mailing this newsletter for several years. Assuming emeritus status on the board will be our good friend, Susanna Cristofane, a founding member and an officer for 35 years who has done much to promote the society over the years.

We also wish to extend our thanks to the continuing officers and extend a hearty welcome to Cheryl Adams, Jack Bourne and Bill Haskell. Finally, we extend a very special welcome back as president to John Giannetti.

The vacant office of vice president will be filled by action of the new board.

## Another Farewell

This past summer we had the pleasure of welcoming past vice president and editor Alan Virta back home from his sabbatical in Mississippi. And, if you wonder why you did not see his name among the officers elected for 1988, there is a reason. Alan has accepted the position of archivist in the library of Boise State University in Boise, Idaho. He will be leaving for his new assignment about January 1, 1988. Our best wishes are extended to Alan for every success in this new endeavor. Hurry back!

(Alan is not the first person from Prince George's County to roam the wilds of Idaho. William Horace Clagett, who served as the Montana Territory's Delegate to Congress, was the President of Idaho's State Constitutional Convention in 1889. -ed.)

## Anne Sightler Musgrave 1890-1987

On October 23, 1987 Mrs. George W.S. Musgrave passed away in Lake Wales, Florida, to which she had retired in 1968.

A Laurel resident for 49 years, she and her late husband were practicing attorneys in Prince George's County. She organized the Brigadier Rezin Beall Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Laurel and had served as Maryland State Regent and as Vice President General of the National Society, DAR. She was later designated as honorary state regent and honorary vice president general.

Mrs. Musgrave was one of the founding members of the Prince George's County Historical Society and served as its first secretary for many years. Upon retirement she was made an Honorary Member of the society.

## Some December Happenings in Years Past

Dec. 3rd In 1815 Archbishop John Carroll, an Upper Marlboro native and first American Roman Catholic bishop, died in Georgetown. He was buried in the Cathedral of the Assumption, his seat as Archbishop of Baltimore.

On this same date in 1974 current Maryland Secretary of State Winfield M. Kelly, Jr. (D) was sworn in as the second Prince George's County Executive, succeeding William W. Gullett (R).

Dec. 6th Benjamin and Susannah Tyler Duvall became the proud parents of a son, Gabriel, who was destined to become a U.S. Supreme Court justice. The birthplace was Darnall's Grove, and the year was 1752.

In 1954 there was the long-awaited groundbreaking ceremony for the Bladensburg Flood Control Project. Governor Theodore R. McKeldin (R), U.S. Senators John Marshall Butler (R) and J. Glenn Beall, Sr. (R) and county officials gathered for the occasion on the east bank of the Northeast Branch at Riverdale Road.

Dec. 7th 1929 brought the official opening of Rhode Island Avenue between Mt. Rainier and Hyattsville. (Formerly the routes between these two points were via Bladensburg or via Queens Chapel Road.) At the same time the grade crossing of the railroad at Hyattsville was eliminated with the dedication of a new bridge. (A replacement span is currently under construction.)

Dec. 10th In 1748 Frederick County was erected out of the western portion of Prince George's County. It included all of present-day Montgomery, Frederick, Washington, Allegany and Garrett Counties. The same act of the Assembly returned to Charles County a small wedge of Prince George's County located north of Mattawoman Creek on the Potomac.

Dec. 13th 1819 election of Samuel Sprigg of Northampton as Governor of Maryland. He served until Dec. 16, 1822.

Dec. 17th Act passed by the Assembly in 1812 which established the Baltimore & Washington Turnpike Company, to sell \$100,000 in stock at \$50 per share. The pike was to be 60' wide.

In 1973 University Park resident Dr. Charles Greeley Abbott died at age 101. He had served as the fourth Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, 1928-1944.

Dec. 19th Maryland, in 1791, ceded to Congress the territory for the future District of Columbia. The largest portion of this ten square mile area came from Prince George's County. Actual Federal control came in 1800.

## Halloween Results

The First Annual Historical Society Halloween Party was so entertaining that there were requests for a Second Annual Party next Year! More than fifty costumed revelers followed a candlelit trail, through ghostly shapes floating in the trees (courtesy Leslie Vizzi), to Marietta Mansion, where the Halloweeners sampled refreshments, toured the redecorated historic house, and engaged in sparkling conversation with a vampire, a cat, three bears, wizards, 18th century ladies and gentlemen, a German brewmeister and his serving wench, as well as a beribboned ambassador and his lady, two monks, a flapper, a Pharaoh, Grandfather and Grandmother clocks ... just to name a few. After a costume parade, the guests voted for their top choices. First Prize was awarded to Dracula, aka John Giannetti; second place went to gold lame-draped Harvey Moseley; NASA scientist John Mather won third prize for his Wizard hat and robe; and Joyce McDonald, disguised as "Sheet Music", received a fourth place prize, Local businesses Ledo, Tick Tock, Plaza Liquors, Gourmet International and the High's of College Park and Langley Park donated the refreshments. Neighboring Darrow Brothers Farm contributed the pumpkins and



NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince  
George's  
County  
Historical  
Society**

corn shocks for decorations.

Everyone had a good time,

and more than \$200 was

raised toward the purchase of the bow front Sheraton chest (c.1800-1810) now on display at Marietta, courtesy of Robert Weikel.

Dolls - Dolls - Dolls!

Colorful dolls of all sizes, shapes and descriptions brought life to Marietta during the November 20-22 weekend. Our thanks to Edith Bagot and Joyce McDonald along with the many other volunteers who made this first-time event a success. Both admissions and the gift shop sales were gratifying. We hope all of our members and their friends will be able to attend next year's repeat engagement.

Other Holiday Open House Events

County Administration Building Sunday, Dec. 6th; 1 - 4 p.m.

Montpelier - Candlelite Tours, Wed., Dec.9 thru. Fri., Dec. 11, 6 - 9 p.m.; Sat., Dec. 12, 11 am - 2 pm;

Candlelite Dinner, Sun., Dec. 13, (reservations required - 776-3086)

Belair - - Sunday, Dec. 13, 2 - 4 p.m.

Surratt House - Sun., Dec. -13, 5 - 9 p.m.; Mon.& Tues., Dec. 14-15, 6 - 9 p.m.

Riversdale - Closed for restoration

A Final Note

This December issue of News and Notes completes 15 years of publication for the enlightenment and enjoyment of the members of the Prince George's County Historical Society. It has been published through the efforts of member Sarah Bourne, which makes it a very special occasion for your current editor who has had the honor of publishing every other issue over the years. Many thanks, Sarah! -FSD

A VERY JOYOUS

REGULAR IN

The Prince George's  
14, Riverdale, Md.  
Marietta- 5626 Bell  
464-0590



HOLIDAY SEASON TO ALL!

MEETINGS RESUME IN MARCH

County Historical Society P.O. Box  
20737  
Station Rd., Glenn Dale, Md. Tel:

Vol. XVII, No. I and 2

January-February 1989

There will be no meeting of the Prince George's Historical Society during the months of January and February. We have learned from experience that these meetings are often cancelled by winter weather or if not cancelled

are attended by cruel winds and ice-covered streets and walkways. For years, therefore, we have begun our meetings for the year with the March meeting.

The March meeting will be held on March 11th, a Saturday, at the County Administration Building, Council Auditorium, Upper Marlboro, at 2:00 P.M. You may wish to enter from the lower level where there is parking on Gov. Oden Bowie Drive, then go up to next floor.

Our speaker is to be Don Creveling, Archeologist for the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. His subject will be "Recent Archeological Discoveries in Prince George's County." Mr. Creveling brings to us a wide range of experience. He was formerly with the archeological program, Alexandria, Virginia; has done survey and excavation in Tennessee, D. C., Maryland, North Carolina and Delaware. He has worked in St. Mary's City and Annapolis. His particular interest is the archeological history and pre-history of the Middle Atlantic region. A graduate of the University of Maryland in anthropology, he is completing work on a Master's degree there in applied anthropology.

Bring a guest if you wish to this interesting lecture. Refreshments will be served.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23,1696

## FROM THE NORTHERN SHORE: FINNS AND SWEDES IN COLONIAL MARYLAND

By Alan Virta

[In previous installments, we learned about the first settlers to the Delaware Bay area, Swedes and Finns, who landed there in 1638. Even under other governments, these early settlers clung to their homes, culture and languages. Within a generation, however, they were numerically overwhelmed by a tide of British immigration. Gradually the Swedes and Finns began to speak English and to use Anglicized names for places.]

### PART III

Perhaps the most prominent Swedish inhabitant of Maryland during the 18th century was the artist Gustavus Hesselius, a resident of Prince George's County. Hesselius was born in Sweden in 1682, emigrated to Philadelphia in 1712, but soon removed to Prince George's County. He lived in the county from about 1719 to 1734 and became a renowned portrait painter. His most important work, however, was not a portrait; it is his depiction of the Last Supper (1721-22), commissioned by Queen Anne Parish. "The Last Supper" is important in American art history, for before its execution, American painting had been limited to portraiture, "The Last Supper" is the first American painting to depict more than one figure, and the first commissioned for a public building (a church). It hangs in the sanctuary of St. Barnabas Church, Leeland, Maryland.

Few other Scandinavians ventured into Southern Maryland during the colonial era. Gunder Erickson of Prince George's County was one of the few. On September 4, 1721, Erickson and Arthur Nelson were granted 450 acres of land in the county which they named Denmark. Erickson soon received another grant which he named Norway. A naturalized British subject, Erickson was a merchant in Nottingham and Queen Anne Town. He married Mary Hall, daughter of the Rev. Henry Hall and Mary Duvall Hall (daughter of Mareen Duvall). Erickson and his wife had one daughter, Martha, whose married name was to be Martha Roundell. It is believed that a brick vaulted tomb, on property once owned by Martha Roundell near Nottingham, contains her remains and those of her Scandinavian-born father.

And what of the Maryland patriot John Hanson, whose remains are believed to rest at Oxon Hill Manor? Was he a descendant of the settlers of New Sweden? The documentary record is inconclusive. A number of individuals named Hanson came to Southern Maryland in the 17<sup>th</sup> century; Hanson is both a Scandinavian and an English surname. Randle Hanson, who patented Hansonton, on Piscataway Creek, in 1662, is believed to be the same man who immigrated to New Sweden in 1642; he may have been accompanied by kinsmen to Maryland. Other Hansons in Southern Maryland at the time and in succeeding generations bore less distinctive Christian names, such as John and Samuel. The frequency of common forenames, incomplete documentation, and vague references in the official record make it almost impossible, with complete certainty, to determine the European origin of the patriot's Southern Maryland ancestors. Nevertheless, Swedish Americans proudly claim the first president of the United States under the Articles of Confederation as one of their own.

Today the memory of the Finns and Swedes in colonial America is kept alive in museums, churches, and historic sites in the Delaware River region. The oldest of these--- perhaps the oldest standing structure in Pennsylvania --- is the Morton homestead in Prospect Park, Pennsylvania, between Philadelphia and Chester. The log and stone house, which dates to the mid-17th century (before William Penn's arrival) was built by Morten Mortenson, a native of Finland and great-grandfather of John Morton, Signer of the Declaration of Independence. The homestead has been restored and is operated as a museum by the State of Pennsylvania. Also located in Pennsylvania is the American Swedish Historical Foundation Museum, on Pattison Avenue in Philadelphia.

One venerable shrine of New Sweden is Old Swedes Church in Wilmington, Delaware, built as a Lutheran chapel in 1698. Swedish pastors offered Swedish-language services here until 1791, when the congregation (by then almost entirely English-speaking) agreed to accept the Episcopal form of worship. The church is now known as Holy Trinity Episcopal; its historic burying-ground holds the remains of Swedish, Finnish, and English colonials. Nearby is the Andrew Hendrickson House museum, built in 1690 by a son of New Sweden.

Maryland also boasts an Episcopal church of Swedish-Finnish origin. In 1706 the General Assembly created the parish of North Elk in Cecil County. The church (now known as St. Mary Anne's) was organized by the Rev. Jonas Auren, a Lutheran clergyman who ministered to a congregation of English, Finns, and Swedes. Four generations of the Auren family, as well as the names of other Swedish and Finnish Marylanders, appear in the early parish registers. The present church structure, built in 1742, is located in the town of North East, Maryland.

Cultural historians have long studied Swedish and Finnish contributions to colonial America's material culture, from weaving patterns (the Finnish "summer and winter" technique, for example) to boat design (the Swedish forssbat, transformed into the American keelboat). Perhaps no contribution of the Finns and Swedes, however, is as celebrated as the house they introduced to America: the log cabin. This type of shelter, so well suited to the Northern forests of Scandinavia, was rare in Great Britain. Most of the early English inhabitants of New England, the Chesapeake region, and the Carolinas built homes of frame construction. But pioneers of all nationalities found the Scandinavian log cabin admirably suited to the American frontier. Historians have traced the spread of the log cabin from the Swedish and Finnish settlements on the Delaware into Pennsylvania and thence into the Midwest and South. The Scots-Irish, who knew of no such construction in their native Ulster, quickly adopted the log cabin as their own. With the Germans they took the technique of log construction to the interior of Pennsylvania and down the migration road to the Southern Piedmont frontier. Thus did the log cabin, a traditional form of shelter in Finland and Sweden, become for Americans the very symbol of the frontier experience.

Today most Americans bearing Swedish and Finnish surnames descend from immigrants of the late 19th and early 20th centuries rather than from the pioneers of New Sweden. The Swedes and Finns of the colonial era long ago Anglicized their names and assimilated into the general population. Ironically, hundreds of thousands of Americans of colonial stock descend from the Swedes and Finns of New Sweden, but most (save for those still residing on the Delaware) are unaware of it. The celebration of the 350th anniversary of the landing of the Kalmar Nyckel and Fogel Grip serves to remind Americans of the story of New Sweden. The 350th year was concluded in Washington with an exhibition in the fall of 1988, at the Smithsonian Institution which honored the pioneering efforts of the Swedes and Finns in America, documented the history of those who (according to a contemporary Swedish ballad) came to America "av Norden strant"---that is, from the Northern shore.

#### Sources

Federal Writers Project. Swedes and Finns in New Jersey. 1938.

From Northern Shore: The Swedish and Finnish Presence in Colonial Maryland (exhibition program) Maryland Historical Society, 1984.

Johnson, Amandus. The Swedish Settlements on the Delaware. 1911. Reprint: Burt Franklin. 1970.

Kremer, J. Bruce. John Hanson of Mulberry Grove. Albert and Charles Boni, 1938. (The case for John Hanson's Swedish ancestry.)

Walker, Lester. American Shelter. Overlook Press. 1981.

Westlager, C. A. The Log Cabin in America. Rutgers. 1969.

Wuorinen, John. Finns on the Delaware. Columbia University. 1938.

## ELECTION RESULTS

At the November meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society, the nominating committee presented to the membership the slate of officers for the coming year. These were unanimously voted in by the membership as reported in the December newsletter.

The editor wishes to apologize for failing to include a most important officer, Corresponding Secretary, Cheryl B. Adams.

## A WINNER

Marla Stripling of Greenbelt was the winner of the fine quilt, made \_\_\_\_\_ and donated by Julie Rhoads, which was raffled for the benefit of the Marietta furniture fund. [Fred DeMarr]

## BOOK AVAILABLE

Robert Ware Straus with Eleanor B. Straus have authored The Possible Dream. This book is the story of "saving George Washington's View." It speaks to the seemingly impossible problems associated with obtaining land in perpetuity to cause the view from Mount Vernon to remain much the same as it was in George Washington's time.

Certainly all of us can benefit from the experience gained by the Accokeek Foundation and many benefactors who worked together to gain a scenic easement across the river from Mount Vernon on our Maryland side of the Potomac. To obtain a copy of the book, write the Foundation at 3400 Bryan Point Rd., Accokeek, MD 20607.

## BILL XXII IS GONE

The title of the article in the December 15, 1988, Prince George's Journal read, "Bill XXII is dead; long live Bill XXVI." Is this history getting its facts wrong? Does XXIII follow XXII?

It seems that Bill XXII, an Angora goat that has been with the Naval Academy as its mascot since 1979, having reached a ripe old (goatly) age, passed away quietly in his sleep on December 13<sup>th</sup>. Young Bills XXIII, XXIV and XXV, however, couldn't do the job of goading Navy teams to victory on the football field. They suffered from a normal, ornery, goatly disposition and were replaced by Bill XXVI, another longhaired Angora of more equable temperament. He will spend his time on the sidelines during football games and his remaining time at the academy's dairy farm.

## FROM THE PEN OF R. LEE VAN HORN

[Submitted by Paul Lanham, from Out of the Past, by Judge Van Horn.]

"Sir Francis Nicholson (Governor) called the assembly into session in Anne Arundel Town, and at that session held Feb. 28, 1694 in the home of Major Edward Dorsey, it was decided to move the seat of government from St. Mary's to Anne Arundel Town to be renamed the town of Annapolis in honor of Princess Anne. ---The State House was first called the Stadt House as a compliment to the Dutch, William of Orange. [P. 30.]

"August 22, 1679---A proclamation by Nathaniell Balckiston, Captain General---'Divine Providence hath lately visited these parts by causing a most terrible and dreadful stroak [sic] of lightning and thunder to fall upon the State House which fired the roof and struck dead Mr. James Cradford and greviously [sic] wounded and hurt Lt.Col. Hanson, Mr. Thomas Hicks and Mr. George Ashman.' (August 27 was then proclaimed as a mandatory day of thanksgiving for deliverance and all church

parishioners were to abstain that day from all bodily labor or answer to the contrary at their peril)." [P. 41.]

"General Assembly session, Sept. 5 - Oct. 3, 1704--- (Prince George's County now having been 'erected' as of April 23, 1696) the General Assembly directed that each taxable therein was to be taxed 40 lbs. of tobacco annually to support the Church of England. Further, all freemen possessing 50 acres of land or 50 pounds in tangible property would assemble at Marlborough Town and elect Delegates to the General Assembly." [P. 44.]

"Sept. 30, 1707 --- Governor John Seymour proclaimed, 'Her Majesty's subjects of the Province suffer extremely by the Corruption, Ignorance and Extortion of severall [sic] attorneys without any qualification of Honesty, Experience, or Learning in the laws to the great scandall [sic] of justice ----- (An attorney qualification procedure was then-established and that afternoon, William Bladen, Wornell Hunt, Robert Goldsborough, and Richard Dallam were certified and thus formed the first official Bar of Maryland.)" [P. 49.1

"March 28, 1721, the Court adjourned at Charlestown, proceeded to Marlborough and at 3 PM reconveaned [sic] to establish Marlborough Town as the County Seat thereafter, the old courthouse to be sold to the highest bidder." [P. 56.]

### DELIGHTFUL

That is the word for our recent Christmas Party at Marietta. Thanks to the talents of many, Alice Skarda, Edith Bagot, Cheryl Adams, Fred DeMarr, Julie and "Dusty" Rhodes, Joyce McDonald and others, refreshments appeared, punches were prepared and the decoration of the old mansion was accomplished. It was a grand gathering of the membership and their friends.

### LIBRARY

In the Society's library at Marietta, Fred DeMarr has placed on bulletin-board screens the front pages of newspapers for many famous past election days. It is well worth a visit to see these.

Also in the library, Librarian DeMarr has assembled back issues of many county newsletters that are of considerable interest.

In fact, a visit to the library offers us a rich and varied treat. Assembled there, and well marked, are many fascinating items.

### GLENN DALE HOSPITAL

The House and Senate have passed legislation to transfer the Glenn Dale Hospital property to the District of Columbia. Use of the property is not an option open to the District government, the future use of the property will be determined by a citizen board appointed by the County Executive. Proceeds from any sale of the property will, however, go to the District of Columbia.

### MAD HATTER'S TEA PARTY

The Marietta House Committee will host its second annual Mad Hatter's Tea Party, March 4, a Saturday. This is a fancy affair for children accompanied by an adult.

Tea and refreshments will be served in the Dining Room and the Drawing Room at Marietta at 10 AM, 12 noon, 2 PM. Reservations may be obtained by calling 779-2011.



NEWS AND NOTES FROM  
**The Prince  
George's  
County  
Historical  
Society**

Admission is \$3 per person.  
Dolls are admitted without  
charge.

GAMES DAY SCHEDULED at Marietta for children and for the young-at-heart, April 29th. More details will be furnished later.

SOCIETY CONCERNS

Our President, Bud Dutton has relayed information for the News and Notes on concerns of the Prince George's County Historical Society. He would like information and suggestions from the membership on the following items:

- The newsletter, news items welcome, format.
- The Library needs and development.
- Marietta, its operation and special events.
- The St. George's Day dinner meeting.
- Field trips and outings.
- New projects.
- Membership objectives.

SPRING BUS TOUR PLANNED to places in Washington, D.C. that will interest Society members. For example, one stop will be the newly reopened home, Tudor Place, Georgetown, of Thomas and Martha Custis Peter. Our tour planner, "Dusty" Rhodes will give us full particulars and a sign-up sheet in the next News and Notes. You may wish to reserve this date for this unusual tour.

CALENDAR

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| March 4  | Childrens' Tea Party. At Marietta.   |
| March 11 | Society Meeting at County Administration Building, Upper Marlboro, MD, 2 PM. |
| April 8  | Spring Bus Tour. Washington, D.C. points of interest.                        |
| April 29 | Childrens' Games Day. At Marietta.   |

News and Notes From the  
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box #14, Riverdale, MD20737

President: Bud Dutton

Editor: Vera F. Rollo

Vol. XVII, No. 3

March 1989

The March meeting will be held on March 11th a Saturday, at the County Administration Building, Council Auditorium, Upper Marlboro, at 2:00 P.M. You may wish to enter from the lower level where there is parking on Gov. Oden Bowie Drive, then go up to next floor.

Our speaker is to be Don Creveling, Archeologist for the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. His subject will be "Recent Archeological Discoveries in Prince George's County."

Mr. Creveling brings to us a wide range of experience. He was formerly with the archeological program, Alexandria, Virginia; has done survey and excavation in Tennessee, D. C., Maryland, North Carolina and Delaware. He has worked in St. Mary's City and Annapolis. His particular interest is the archeological history and pre-history of the Middle Atlantic region. A graduate of the University of Maryland in anthropology, he is completing work on a Master's degree there in applied anthropology.

Bring a guest if you wish to this interesting lecture.

After the lecture, we hear from Joyce McDonald, we are invited to go the short distance across the street for refreshments at Darnell's Chance. This beautifully restored old mansion will be interesting to see and a very nice site indeed, for our social hour.

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY, APRIL 23.1696

## THE (NEW) ST. GEORGE'S DAY CELEBRATION

Spend a pleasant Sunday afternoon celebrating Saint George's Day, April 23.

Meet at the Marlboro Hunt Club for a dinner of a typical Maryland buffet with crab cakes, fried chicken and country ham.

Enjoy 19th Century music.

The afternoon will feature:

- 1:30 Cocktails and Music
- 2:00 Program
- 3:00 Dinner followed by music and Hall of Fame presentation.

Space will be limited, Sarah Bourne and the other organizers warn us, so watch the mail for your invitation and return it as soon as you can, please.

The St. George's Day gathering serves as our April meeting.

### FEBRUARY BOARD MEETING

Bud Dutton, Society President, held a meeting of the Board at Marietta on February 4th. He reports to the membership that the following items were discussed.

Two new life memberships have been received, 169 individual renewals, and 78 joint memberships, for a total of 351 members to date.

Mrs. Maxie Phillips has agreed to serve as Hospitality chairman for membership meetings.

John Mitchell reported that he was able to secure the Marlboro Hunt Club for the St. George's Day celebration. A discussion was held by Jack Bourne on past awards and the criteria for selection.

The fall fundraiser event was discussed by John Mitchell with Oden Bowie and Mr. Bowie has kindly agreed to allow Fairview to be used. Ann Ferguson will chair the event again.

Publications occupied a considerable amount of the Board's attention. Discussion ranged from expanding News and Notes, to a project of re-publishing some worthy past publications. Joyce McDonald is looking into this last possibility. Also in the publishing field, Bud Dutton, Joyce McDonald and Sarah Moseley will work on a revision of the Marietta brochure.

Ann Ferguson has asked that the Society send a letter of support for SB11 and HB508, bills to appropriate \$500,000 matching funds grant to fund Riversdale phase III. The matching funds are available.

### NEW MEMBERS ARE WELCOMED

A recent life member is Albert A. Bowker.

New members joining us since late fall are, Mrs. Cheryl Adams further notes:

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas L. Bass  
Ethel A. Belinky  
Sheila Breeden  
Dieter and Brigit Brill  
Robert and Rachel Brown  
Mr. and Mrs. Henry Cirbee  
James F. Clements  
Martha Lee Davis-Salime  
Mrs. Addison Gamble  
Cecelia Gentilini  
Marianne M. Gill  
Ellen N. Hart  
Dorothy A. King  
Mrs. Meta Lagerwerff  
F. Richard Malzone  
Mr. and Mrs. John Marshall  
Jean Peters  
Steve and Kenzie Raulin  
Hugh B. Robey  
Ogdenia M. Singletary  
Jeffrey D. Spalding  
Marla J. Stripling  
Amy R. Stuvén  
Clair D. Wilcoxon

We are delighted to welcome you to the Prince George's County Historical Society.

#### OUR SOCIETY IS REACHING OUT

One of the goals that the Board of Directors of this Society has undertaken, Cheryl Adams reports, is to establish one or more outreach programs in our schools. We have "brainstormed" ideas, for example, such as establishing a member speakers' list, starting a school essay contest about our County, and introducing new teachers to our County's history.

All of these ideas have merit and are possible, but only with the help of the membership.

We need people who are interested in school outreach to help us plan and present programs. The following ideas have been suggested by social studies teachers or Society board members:

Women in Prince George's County, past and present.  
The Political History of Our County.  
Early Family Life in Our County.  
Architectural Study - Our County's Buildings.

## Economic Changes in Our County.

We know that our membership is a knowledgeable one. We are calling upon you. If you would like to help plan any of these programs or one of your own; or if you have the time to make school presentations, please contact Cheryl Adams at 577-2339 (h) or 434-0700 (w).

It may be possible to make a video recording of a presentation, if a participating member is not available as a speaker during the school day.

### HOUSE AND GARDEN PILGRIMAGE

"Pilgrims" in 1989, to Maryland's unique and beautiful gardens and houses have eight tours awaiting them according to information received from Fred DeMarr. In addition to the traditional offering of fine houses and gardens, this year there will also be tours of five unique and small Maryland towns. Proceeds go toward restoration projects.

Tickets (\$12.00 for all the tours, or \$4.00 for a single house) are available at Pilgrimage Headquarters, 1105-A Providence Road, Towson, MD 21204. (301) 821-6933. Tour books are also to be available as of March 15th.

Tours begin April 23 and end on May 7<sup>th</sup>. Tours will include Anne Arundel, Charles, Cecil, Kent, Frederick, Washington Counties; Oxford and Dickeyville towns.

### FROM THE PEN OF R. LEE VAN HORN

[Submitted by Paul Lanham, from Out of the Past, by Judge Van Horn.]

"Marlborough had been originally laid out in the year 1706 but in 1744 the General Assembly found it necessary to redefine the boundary lines. Also, at that time, the Assembly required all houses therein to have brick or stone chimneys within twelve months to avoid a fine of five shillings per month for violation." [ p. 80. ]

"The Maryland Gazette of September 6, 1745 announced a fair to be held that month near Queen Anne Town in Prince George's County and horse racing in connection therewith. Prize money was thirty pounds on day one and twenty on day two; heats were two miles in length and riders limited to 110 pounds." [ p. 83. ]

"On September 25, 1745, Christopher Lowndes advertised a twenty shilling reward for the return of two horses and a thirty shilling reward for apprehension of the offenders. He cautioned that one horse was 'very much afraid of having his ears touched,' and that the offenders 'have with them a gun or two.' " [p. 83.]

Bostwick, built by Christopher Lowndes "is situated on 48th St. in Bladensburg and there it stands with calm dignity and that mien that is only acquired after overcoming all attacks by storms and decay and winning the contest with the greatest of all tyrants, time." [ p. 84.]

"The Provincial General Assembly in 1748 reported to petitioners in the lower part of Prince George's County by transferring land apparently north of the Rolling Road and south of Mattawoman Creek to become part of Charles County effective June 1, 1749. [ p. 85. ]

"Chapter 15 of the Acts of the General Assembly was entitled Van act to divide and erect a new county by the name of Frederick County.' " effective Dec. 10, 1748. [ p. 85.]

SPRING BUS TOUR SET to visit places in Washington, D.C. that are sure to interest Society members. For example, one stop will be the newly reopened home, Tudor Place, Georgetown, of Thomas and Martha Custis Peter. Our tour planner, Warren "Dusty" Rhodes has given us full particulars and a sign-up sheet in this News and Notes. It promises to be an unusual and delightful tour.

### MARIETTA RENOVATIONS CONTINUE

Sarah Mosley has noted that the Marietta House committee is busy with renovations and scheduled activities. A very small group of women are doing a great deal of work to carry out these endeavors. Additional helpers will be much appreciated. It is interesting and rewarding work.

### PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY POSTAL SERVICE

By Don D. Skarda

The News and Notes of the Prince George's County Historical Society of April 1973 contained an article, "On The Postal Service in Prince George's County," by Frederick S. DeMarr. As background, the article stated in part: "In 1704 the Maryland Legislators obliged the sheriff of each county to deliver all official government communications within his jurisdiction. Much later a Royal Post was established by the Crown and then, in 1775, the Second Continental Congress authorized the Continental Post under Benjamin Franklin as Postmaster General." Thus began what was to become the U. S. Postal Service.

Under the authorization cited above, in 1776 Bladensburg and Upper Marlboro became the first official Post Offices in Prince George's County. The first Postmasters were Christopher Lowndes and Stephen West respectively. The initial spelling was "Upper Marlborough," which was changed to the present spelling in 1893.

Both Post Offices continue in operation today but many of the subsequently authorized postal facilities in the County operated only briefly and the locations of some of them are no longer known. Since late in the 18th and 19th centuries, these postal facilities were located in general merchandise stores, at boat landings, and in travelers 'ordinaries,' not in well established communities. Others changed names or locations one or more times.

Any business establishment that could partition off a small corner for a postal facility was usually authorized to do so. Obviously, these early post offices did not make mail deliveries or pickups. Patrons came to the post offices to transact such business. Contracts were also awarded for the networking of the postal facilities; some by rail, some by boat, but most by horse drawn conveyance. Such contracts specified the frequency of service, the route to be taken, and even such specifics as "by four-horse post coach," or "by two-horse stage."

The following listing of 18th and 19th century postal facilities includes only those which are no longer active, those which have changed name, and those whose location is no longer known. Readers of this article are requested to contact the author if they can shed some light on the unknown locations. The source of the listing below is the Postal Service Archives.

<u>P.O. Name</u>	<u>Date Est.</u>	<u>Date Disc'd</u>	<u>1<sup>st</sup> P.M.</u>	<u>Notes</u>
------------------	------------------	--------------------	----------------------------	--------------

Agricultural College	10/15/1859	8/14/1890	John O. Wharton	
Bellevue	8/29/1878	1/10/1882	Joseph T. Boswell	
Birdlawn	11/21/1895	5/11/1896	George F. Kirby	
Blithewood	5/27/1875	10/11/1877	L.Mont.Magruder	
Buena Vista	4/7/1851	10/16/1877	Wm.T.Duvall	
Buxton's	4/15/1884	3/19/1891	John H. Buxton,	(Changed to Mistletoe Spring)
Cedars	7/10/1882	6/23/1883	Geo.W.Beall	
Central Inn	5/20/1823	11/10/1823	Benj. B. Myers	
Charlton Heights	11/17/1890	4/2/1896	M.E. Carrier	(Changed to Berwyn)
Contee's Station	2/15/1871	6/28/1880	Chas. S. Contee	
Fort Foote	1/3/1871	11/6/1893	James Quintin	(Changed to New Glatz)
Good Luck	10/8/1830	2/9/1852	R.M. Beall	(Changed from Magruder's)
Good Luck	6/19/1872	5/18/1876	John Welsh	(Changed to Glenn Dale)
Hicks Mill	9/9/1879	5/30/1900	John W. Hicks	
Horse Head	6/12/1819	9/9/1893	Rich. T. Hall	(Changed to Baden)
Huntington City	1/26/1871	2/18/1873	John C. Lang	(Changed to Bowie)
Laurel Factory	2/11/1837	6/14/1873	Edward Snowden	(Changed to Laurel)
Long Old Fields	1/25/1827	1/6/1864	Elisha Perry	
Magruder's	1/6/1817	10/8/1830	Henry Magruder	(Changed to Good Luck)
Meadows	4/24/1883	10/8/1884	Enos Pumphrey	
Mellwood	10/5/1869	1/13/1876	Wallace R. Hall	
Mistletoe Spring	3/19/1891	3/31/1892	John H. Buxton	(Changed from Buxton's)
Mount Welby	2/9/1853	10/5/1855	George S. Cox	
North Keys	7/30/1873	12/19/1894	Henry H. Sasscer	(Changed to Northkeys)
Oak Crest	3/29/1892	10/15/1896	Wm.I.M. Bowles	
Oak Grove	8/3/1866	1/22/1883	R.M. Magruder	(Changed to Leeland)
Palmer's Tavern	2/25/1829	6/9/1849	John Palmer	
Pine Grove	8/8/1871	3/4/1872	Jos. B. Sipe	(Changed to Lanham)
Queen Ann	3/1/1796	6/3/1865	Soloman Sparrow	
Robeystown	5/3/1865	10/10/1878	Andrew V. Robey	(Changed to Clinton)
Rosaryville	9/20/1869	10/20/1925	Henry W. Clagett	
Saint Ignatius	3/5/1852	9/2/1852	Thomas Cusak	
Silver Hill	6/6/1864	12/1895	Andrew Messer	
Suitsville	8/1867	2/17/1875	Geo. T. Suit	(Changed to Brightseat)
Surratt's	10/6/1854	5/3/1865	J. H. Surratt	(Changed to Robeystown)
Temples	10/6/1881	6/6/1887	Wm. F. Gardner	
Vansville	4/1804	9/28/1825	Edward Hall	(Changed to Beltsville)
Watson	11/26/1869	5/13/1872	John F. Watson	
Welby	12/27/1814	6/4/1823	John H. DeBritts	
Woodmoor	6/7/1877	7/23/1878	Lewis R. Wood	
Woodyards	6/20/1890	4/21/1891	M.V.P. Kidwell	
End				

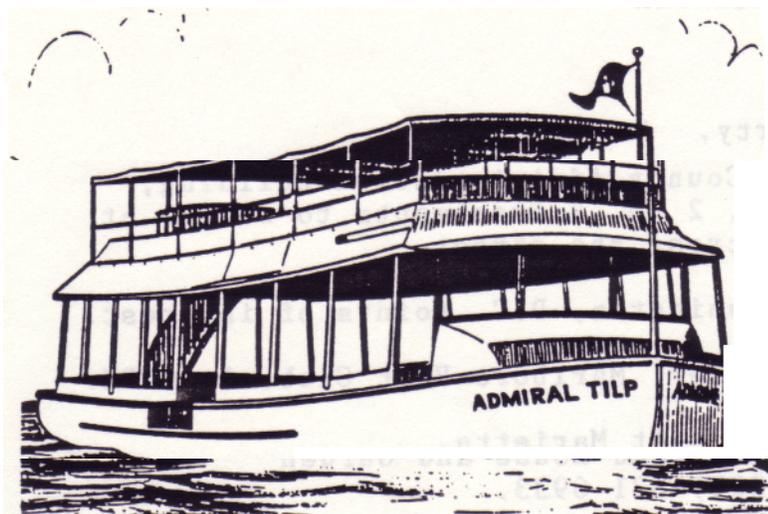
#### WOMEN'S LECTURE SERIES - MARCH

A Women's History Lecture Series, sponsored by Prince George's Community College will be held with lectures on the following dates. For more information please call 322-0797.

March 8 "Women of 18th Century Maryland," Shirley Baltz, 6:30-9:30 P.M. Marietta, Glenn Dale.

March 11, "The Changing Role of Women During the Civil War," Laurie Verge, 10:00 AM until Noon, Surratt House, Clinton.

March 29, "Rosalie Stier Calvert of Riversdale," Susan Pearl, 6:30 -9:30 PM, Darnall's Chance, Upper Marlboro.



#### STEAMER NAMED IN HONOR OF FREDERICK TILP

According to an article in the newsletter of the Alexandria Historical Society, for February 1989, brought to News and Notes by Fred DeMarr:

A new vessel on the Potomac River will offer narrated tours of Alexandria's waterfront in May. The Admiral Tilp is name in honor Frederick Tilp (1908-1988), Alexandria architect, author and maritime historian. Tilp received the honorary title of "Admiral of the Chesapeake Bay" from Maryland Gov. Harry Hughes in recognition of Tilp's support of Bay conservation through his books.

The open-air, double-decked vessel is owned by the Potomac Riverboat Co.

#### MARCH DATES OF INTEREST [From the Library, F.D.]

1874 March 1st Construction of the Washington City and Point Lookout Railroad was completed from Hyattsville to Marbury's Point (Shepherd Landing) opposite Alexandria.

1856 March 6th The charter of Maryland Agricultural College became law.

1987 March 17th A ribbon cutting was held at the Spalding's Branch Library in District Heights.

1910 March 17th The Laurel Library Association was organized at the Masonic Hall by Frank Hall Knowlton to provide a free public library

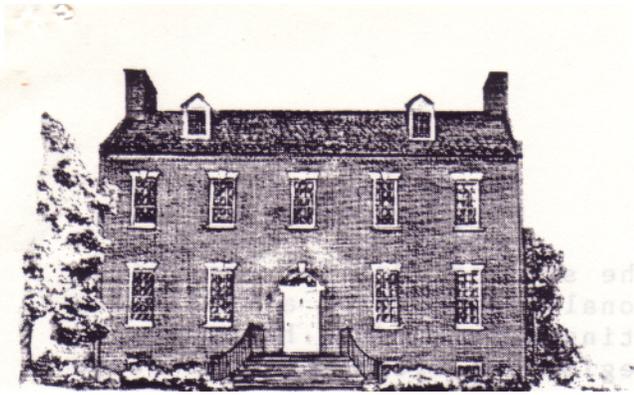
## MARIETTA GIFT SHOP DOING WELL

Joyce McDonald reported to the Board, for Sami Sharkey, that the gift shop is a success with 1988 being quite a profitable year.

### CALENDAR

- March 4        Childrens' Tea Party. At Marietta.  
March 11       Society Meeting at County Administration Building, Upper Marlboro, MD, 2 PM.  
Refreshments to follow at Darnell's Chance, across the street.  
April 8        Spring Bus Tour. Washington, D.C. points of interest.  
April 23       St. George's Day Dinner, Marlboro Hunt Club. 1:30 PM.  
April 29       Childrens' Games Day. At Marietta.  
April 23 -May 7    52d Annual Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage. Call (301) 821-6933.

News and Notes From the  
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY  
P.O. Box #14, Riverdale, MD20737  
President:    Bud Dutton    Editor: Vera F. Rollo  
464-0590



# Prince George's County Historical Society News and Notes

Spring TOUR

Hi

## Headquarters of the Prince George's County Historical Society

the Calvert connection to Washington society.

Leave Maryland Park & Planning Building, Kenilworth Ave., Riverdale at 9:00 a.m.

First stops

TUDOR PLACE (1801)

Family home of Thomas Peter and Martha Custis Peter. Martha was the daughter of Eleanor Calvert and John Parke Custis.

\*Tudor Place has just recently been opened **to the public** and can be seen only by appointment. LUNCHEON

At Blackies House of Beef, a Washington tradition. OCTAGON HOUSE (1801)

Built for Col. John Tayloe, a friend of Baron Henri Steir. Steir visited Octagon House and possibly got ideas for the house he was planning. SEWALL-BELMONT HOUSE (1799)

This house was built on land granted to Cecil Calvert by King Charles.

The cost of \$33.00 includes all entrance fees, transportation and luncheon. DEADLINE - MARCH 31st

Please make checks payable to: PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Mail to Warren Rhoads, 12501 Kimmerton La. Bowie, Md. 20715

Luncheon of Delmonico Steak --- Please check choice of  
Rare Medium Well done

**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND  
ERECTED ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY. APRIL 223, 1696**

Vol. XVII, No. 4 April 1989

The Saint George's Day dinner on April 23 at the Marlboro Hunt Club will also serve as our meeting for the month.

We hope that you have sent in your reservation cards for promises to be a very pleasant Sunday afternoon.

## THE MARCH MEETING

The Society meeting for March at the County Administration Building was well attended. President Bud Dutton presided over a brief business meeting.

Mr. Dutton accepted for the Society, the presentation of a document from Mr. Morris Warren. While screening papers at the Laurel home of the late Virginia Warren, Mr. Warren had come across a copy of the will of Samuel Snowden. Attending the March meeting with his mother-in-law, Mrs. Margaret M. Marshall, long a member of the Society, Mr. Warren deemed it appropriate to present the will to the Prince George's County Historical Society.

Mr. Warren mentioned to the membership that the Washington-Baltimore-Annapolis Railway, abandoned in 1935, was acquired for use by the Baltimore Gas and Electric Company. BG&E placed power lines on the right-of-way. This 6.1-mile right-of-way is possibly available, Mr. Warren said, and would be ideal for a recreational bike and hiking trail. Most of the bridges are still in place. He asked the support of Society for this project.

We were reminded by Mr. Dutton that our County's 300th anniversary is nearing, that plans and ideas will be needed in 1996.

President Dutton introduced the speaker, Mr. Don Creveling, Archaeologist for the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. Among the many fascinating bits of data he mentioned were the facts that there are 394 registered archaeological sites in Prince George's County. These range in age from those of prehistorical times, 12,000 to 17,000 years old, to 20th century sites.

He pointed out that many early Indian sites are now under water since the level of the sea is rising. He is the only archaeologist on the MNCP&P payroll at present, but looks forward to an expansion of archeological work in the area. Among the sites he mentioned is the Port America project. Developers are protecting several sites and cemeteries.

Following the lecture, the members strolled across the street in sunshine, to Darnall's Chance where Mrs. Maxie Phillips, Hospitality chairman, served with Warren Rhodes and others refreshments.

The members roamed through the beautifully restored old house. The Curator gave us insights into some of its features and mentioned that the place is used at present primarily for receptions. It was a pleasant, instructive and memorable day.

### CHILDREN'S GAMES DAY (April 29th)

[Mrs. Sara Moseley suggests that we read the following lines to our children or grandchildren]:

Imagine that you are living in the 1800s. You have some free time, away from your chores, and you are looking for something "fun to do."

What kinds of pastimes or playthings would you find? You are invited to come to Marietta on April 29th to find out.

You will be able to play with old-fashioned toys, watch craftspeople making things for children, and you can play on the lawns where the grandchildren of Justice Gabriel DuVall once ran and laughed.

A very special pastime for children long ago, was listening to, and learning to play, music. Musicologist Bill Jenkins will be describing early American musical traditions, playing early instruments --- and the most exciting part --- he will let you play his instruments --- all by yourself.

Games Day, Saturday, April 29th, starts at 1:00 PM and ends at 4:00 PM. If it rains we will meet on the lawn on May 6th.

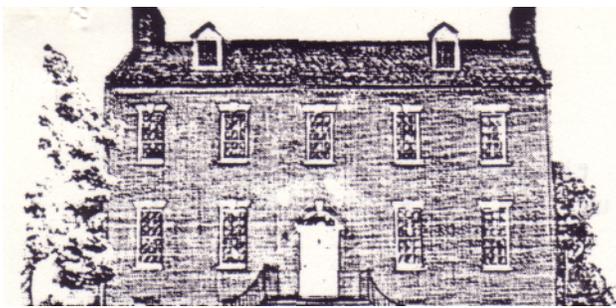
There is a \$3 admission fee and if you want to make things in the miniworkshops there will be a \$1 materials fee also. As most of the readers of this newsletter know, Marietta is located just off the new Glenn Dale Road, near the intersection with Route #450, at 5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale.

### MARIETTA GIFT SHOP IS A UNIQUE SHOP

Sami Sharkey, tells us that the gift shop is featuring some delightful handmade items now. Drop in and see for yourself. The shop is open on Sundays, 12:00 to 4:00, the same hours as Marietta is open for tours.

### DOCENTS NEEDED

Our many activities are only possible thanks to the dedication and interest of our volunteers. Docents are needed for the lively and varied tasks associated with Marietta and with the Gift Shop. If you like to meet new people and talk about County history, get in touch with Joyce McDonald to volunteer some time 779-5825.



# News and Notes

**Hist**

## MAD HATTER'S TEA PARTY - SOLD OUT!

The Childrens' Tea Party at Marietta on March 4th was a great success. Indeed all sittings were sold out. Thanks are certainly due to the Mad Hatter, the costumed servers, various Dormice.

## PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY WOMEN'S HALL OF FAME

Susanna Kyner Cristofane, Lona B. Hatter, Pauline H. Menes, Emma D. Everson and Bonnie F. Johns, were inducted into the Prince George's County Women's Hall of Fame recently. Inductees are honored for their unique and continuing contributions to the county and to history.

## HISTORIC CHAPEL MAY BE SAVED

Friends of Dorsey Chapel were told on March 14th that the historic black church may be saved. Long-abandoned, the little Glenn Dale chapel is seen as well worth saving by Councilman Floyd Wilson, Jr. who has committed himself to raising funds to restore the chapel. The church has been named a historic resource. The Glenn Dale Civic Association, too, has pledged its support to the Friends of Dorsey Chapel.

## CALENDAR

- April 8            Spring Bus Tour. Washington, D.C. points of interest.  
April 23          St. George's Day Dinner, Marlboro Hunt Club. 1:30 PM.  
April 29          Childrens' Games Day. At Marietta.  
April 23 - May 7    52d Annual Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage. Call (301) 821-6933.  
May 6            Regular MAY meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society at Marietta, 2 PM.  
Topic: "Collecting Antique Toys." (Please note the date change. This is the first Saturday.)

## HOURS, DAYS AND NUMBERS

We want to thank Society member Karen D. Miles for an excellent suggestion for the News and Notes. She suggests that we print the days and times that the Library is open and that Marietta is open on our last page each issue. So here they are:

Marietta Tours and Gift Shop            Open 12-4 on Sundays.

Prince George's Historical Society Library at Marietta Open 12-4 on Saturdays.

News and Notes From the  
**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
P.O. Box #14, Riverdale, MD            20737  
President:            Bud Dutton    Editor: Vera F. Rollo

EARLY MEETING - MAY 6TH

We will meet early in the month, this month, on Saturday, May 6th, 2 P.M., at Marietta.

Headquarters of the **Prince George's County Historical Society**

Our speaker will be Phylis Salak, an authorized appraiser of antiques and an experienced antique dealer. Joyce McDonald tells us that our speaker specializes in antique toys and dolls. Ms. Salak travels extensively doing appraisals, attending doll shows and other exhibits. She has twenty years of experience to bring to her subject. Her topic will be "Antique Toys." She will show specimens of delightful old toys and is willing to answer questions following her talk.

If you would like to bring a (small) toy to the meeting for her to identify, she will be glad to look at it and tell you about its dates and history.

### SAINT GEORGE'S DAY DINNER

The Saint George's Day dinner on April 23 at the Marlboro Hunt Club served as our meeting for the month. It was a "sold out" event and a great success.

President Bud Dutton presided, greeting the 150 Society members gathered in the pleasant room. Windows on three sides of the dining area looked out over green Maryland trees and fields. The yellow and white color scheme was a cheerful one made up of crisp linen and flowers.

A "typical Maryland dinner" was served, a musical group entertained the membership, awards were made, and a Prince Georgian inducted into the Prince George's County Hall of Fame.

Awards were presented to:

The Committee for the Restoration of Surratt House, on the 25th anniversary of the restoration project, for achievement.

The award was given in recognition of the work of the dedicated group of men responsible for the rescue and restoration of the Mary Surratt house.

Francis McLellan, contractor, for the excellent restoration and preservations work done on a historic building, located in Upper Marlboro, known at one time as the "St. Mary's Beneficial Hall." It is now owned and

**Post Office Box 14 - Riverdale, Maryland 20737 -301/464-0590**

occupied by the law firm of Clagett, Haskell and Zimmerman.

Sandra Cross, south county historian and author, for her writing and for valuable work in Prince George's County in many historic preservation projects.

Robert Ware Straus for his work with, and as one of the organizers of, the Accokeek Foundation. Mr. Straus is currently President of the Foundation. He is also the author of a book on the long fight to develop Piscataway National Park, and was a principal player in this successful effort.

Jane Egan, an author, a teacher in Prince George's County, who has done a great deal over the years to acquaint teachers and students with the history of the county and state.

Friends of the Belair Estate, for the dedication and efforts of a group who "make it work" at the historic Belair mansion.  
The Friends have labored virtually alone over the years to raise matching funds for the restoration of the Belair Estate.

The City of Hyattsville Centennial (1986), for work involved in the celebration of Hyattsville's 100th anniversary and for the publication of a book on the history of the city.

Warren and Julie Rhoads, for their many, many hours of dedicated volunteer work for the Prince George's Historical Society. This husband and wife team, over the years have given assistance to virtually every Society event, to restoration projects, to organizing and conducting tours and to furthering Society goals.

Hall of Fame Inductee. Judge Ralph W. Powers, Chairman of the Prince George's County Hall of Fame and his directors, announced the 1989 inductee to the Hall of Fame to be General Leonard Covington. The General's portrait was unveiled in a ceremony at the St. George's Day Dinner. The portrait will join those of persons honored other years, in the foyer of the County Court House.

One of the Hall of Fame directors, Shirley Baltz, gave a biographical presentation, background of the inductee.

General Leonard Covington (1768-1813) was born in the Acqasco area of Prince George's County. He was a member of the 9th U.S. Congress, serving 1805-1807 and served also in the Maryland General Assembly. He joined the Army in 1792 and served for some time on the western frontier in Mississippi, Louisiana and other territories.

Several towns and counties have been named after General Covington. There is a Covington's Farm by the Patuxent River. He participated in the Canadian Campaign of the War of 1812 and was mortally wounded in the Battle of Chrysler's Field, in 1813. Two days after the battle, he died at French Mills, N.Y. and was buried at Sacket's Harbor, New York.

President Dutton closed the dinner meeting with thanks to the willing hands that planned the events, carried it out and made the memorable day possible.

MARLBORO DAY- is at hand, on May 13th. Darnall's Chance will be open all day. Festivities are planned.

JUNE MEETING of the Prince George's Historical Society will feature Harris Andrews, as speaker. He is an Editor of the Time-Life series on the Civil War, an expert on the uniforms and history of the Civil War. His topic will be "Prince George's County's Connections with the Army of Northern Virginia."

REMINDER --- NO MEETINGS of the Society during July and August. As usual, the Society will suspend meetings during these hot, vacation months, and resume meetings in September.

MOTHER'S DAY ALERT. Just a reminder that the Marietta Gift Shop is well stocked with gifts. Mother's Day is May 14th.

CHILDREN'S GAMES DAY was held as scheduled and was well attended. As Mrs. Sara Moseley predicted, we could imagine ourselves living in the 1800s for an afternoon. Games, crafts and music were enjoyed by the children and adults attending.

CORRECTION: In our April News and Notes announcement of Games Day, your editor mentioned the name of Justice Gabriel Duvall and in that announcement spelled his name "DuVall" for which we apologize and herewith publish a correction. Our informant, member Guy C. Barron noted that actually that DuVal High School uses an incorrect spelling. This would make an interesting item for News and Notes. An article on the name and its spellings will be welcome.

DOCENTS NEEDED. Docents are needed for the lively and varied tasks associated with Marietta and with the Gift Shop. If you like to meet new people and talk about County history, get in touch with Joyce McDonald to volunteer some time 779-5825.

HOPKINS ATLAS OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY is now available, President Dutton advises. The Atlas, first published in 1878, has been republished by the Prince George's Historical Society. This valuable book is available to members at \$3.00 each (for the first copy), and at Marietta on sale to the public at \$5.00 each.

MEMBERS TESTIFY. President Bud Dutton recently testified to the County Council of Prince George's County, as to the budget need for funds for a part-time facility manager for Marietta.

Warren Rhoads, former President of the Society, testified to the Council, speaking for the need of the Society for assistance in the recruitment of members. A new brochure is to be available soon. New members are seen as needed to keep the Society strong, vigorous and to expand our work.

THANK YOU TO Sarah Moseley, for the new design and graphic art work in our new News and Notes letterhead. And thank you also to Don Skarda for reminding me of her excellent work.

MEMBER MENTIONED at the Maryland Educational Media Organization. On Friday, April 14th, Vera Foster Rollo was recognized, along with other Maryland authors. She was mentioned for her work in writing textbooks on Maryland history, government, geography and biography. The occasion was MEMO's Author, Illustrator Luncheon at Timonium, Maryland.

SPRING TOUR MEMORABLE. The rain came down the day before the tour was scheduled. Then April 8th, the skies were clear. As tour leader Warren "Dusty" Rhoads said on the ride home, he had personally arranged this excellent weather.

The seats of the large bus were nearly filled. The first stop was Tudor Place (1801) set in spacious gardens in Georgetown, D. C. The bus practically filled the narrow streets there, but the driver did an excellent job.

After luncheon at "Blackies" we saw Octagon House (1801) another of the first houses in Washington, and then the Sewall-Belmont House (1799).

Once back at the Park and Planning Building in Riverdale and safe in our cars, rain showers arrived.

WHY "UPPER" ?

By Paul T. Lanham

Newcomers to Prince George's County quickly and painfully become aware of the name of our county seat, Upper Marlboro, as the complexities of modern living (such as deeds, mortgages, real-estate taxes, etc.) rear their ugly heads. Some even become aware of that town's great age, dating back to 1706 under the name of Marlborough in honor of the Duke of Marlborough of Blenheim.

However, many residents, old as well as new, are unaware of the reason for the descriptive adjective "upper" needed to be applied for accurate identification about 1925.

The answer is that, a scant twenty-four miles downstream on the Calvert County shore of the Patuxent River is the quaint little town of Lower Marlboro. It claims by virtue of its Indian village predecessor to be the second oldest town of Maryland.

There the old Custom House, as well as several other surviving houses built by early colonists before 1700, still stands. The town itself was forced to add the adjective "Lower" to its honored name after the establishment of our 1721 county seat, to preserve its identity. This may have been galling to the "Lower" citizens, since the terrain of all Prince George's County to the Pennsylvania line claimed by the Patuxent River had, until 1696, been a part of old Calvert County.

The seventeenth-century houses of today's Lower Marlboro are painstakingly preserved. Adding to the town's air of antiquity are numerous other very old houses moved to this spot by the late Perry B. van Vleck. These include the Ridgely House of 1784 and the Fred Wilson House of 1704, both moved from Upper Marlboro, as well as other picturesque buildings relocated here from the Tidewater area by Mr. van Vleck. The town's original docks, warehouses, a mill, a tannery and at least two taverns, however, have disappeared as river commerce declined.

References:

Out of the Past by R. Lee van Horn, 1976.

A History of Calvert County by Charles Francis Stein, 1976.

Upper Marlboro, 250th Anniversary by James Shreve, 1971.

Prince George's Heritage by Louise Joyner Hinton, 1972.

STUDY CLUB OF LANHAM celebrated its 75th anniversary Wednesday, April 19th, with a luncheon at the new Day's Inn, Lanham. President Gloria Raimond welcomed members and friends to the event.

The club was begun in 1914 by the wife of the Methodist minister, Mrs. George (Georgia) Rice. A few women gathered to read and study together at the parsonage. Since that date the Study Club of Lanham has participated in a great many community projects. One was the annual decoration of the Lanham Christmas tree from 1930 until in the early 1960s the tree succumbed to the inroads (pun?) of the Capital Beltway. Other Club activities included helping to bring an elementary school to Lanham, buying wheel chairs for hospitals and libraries, beginning the first lending library in the area.

The speaker at the luncheon, Mrs. Vera Foster Rollo, took members "Down Memory Lane at Lanham," with reminders of the days when women wore baggy hats, long skirts and long hair before World War I, then after the war the skirts rose and the long hair was bobbed mercilessly. She mentioned that, when the Club was founded, that Army aviators were flying strange contraptions at nearby College Park Airport. "It's a pleasure," she noted, "To talk about something older than I am!"

She reminded the Club members of the influences of the (now) Pennsy Railroad on the town, of the origin of the town name, and that the site now located by the Days Inn had been the old Lanham carriage house location, and that only recently the Lanham mansion had been razed. She found members who remembered when the (now Route 450) road had been a dirt track. She mentioned Mrs. Hilda Wiser, valiant Pennsy



THE JUNE PROGRAM will be held on June 10th, at Darnall's Chance, 2:00 PM. Our speaker will be Harris Andrews, an editor of the Time-Life Series on the Civil War. His topic is to be, "Prince George's County Volunteers in the Army of Northern Virginia."

Mr. Andrews is, Vice-President Mrs. Joyce McDonald notes, an expert on Civil War uniforms and on the history of the Civil War.

This meeting will be our final one for the summer. As usual, the Prince George's Historical Society, will not meet in July or August. Meetings will resume in September.

In Memoriam Donald D. Skarda 1918 -1989

We regret to inform our members of the death of Donald D. Skarda, Treasurer of the Prince George's Historical Society since 1987 and a member of the Society for many years. He had undergone surgery in late April and passed away in Doctor's Hospital, Lanham, on Sunday, May 21, 1989.

Born in Wisconsin, Donald Skarda was a retired employee of the Department of Defense. In 1979 he received the Society's Saint George's Day award for his Bicentennial publication, Berwyn Heights: History of a Small Maryland Town. His articles and news notes were a valuable addition to many issues of News and Notes.

A memorial service was held in Gasch's Funeral Home and private interment took place Thursday, May 25, in Arlington National Cemetery. The family requested that contributions be made to the Prince George's County Historical Society.

Don is survived by his wife Alice, a daughter and son-in-law, Carol Ann and Wiley Larson, and a grandson, Kiley E. G. Larson.

The Society extends sympathy to the family.

MAY MEETING AND GAMES DAY, due to rain on the originally scheduled Games Day, overlapped on May 6th. Marietta was a busy mansion and persons, young and slightly older, peopled every corner of the house and garden.

A Copy of SAMUEL SNOWDEN'S WILL, recently presented to the Prince George's Historical Society, was acknowledged by President Bud Dutton in a letter of thanks to Morris Warren.

MARIETTA LEASE is under study by the Society's Board of Directors, President Bud Dutton notes. In a meeting at Marietta, the Society's headquarters, on May 15th, the Board of Directors discussed the lease the Society now has with the Maryland National Park and Planning Commission and future plans.

DOCENTS NEEDED. Docents are needed for the lively and varied tasks associated with Marietta and with the Gift Shop. If you like to meet new people and talk about County history, get in touch with Joyce McDonald to volunteer some time 779-5825.

HOPKINS ATLAS OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY is now available, President Dutton advises. The Atlas, first published in 1878, has been republished by the Prince George's Historical Society. This valuable book is available to members (first copy) at \$3.00 each; and at Marietta on sale to the public at \$5.00 each.

FUTURE PLANS of the Prince George's County Historical Society include, President Dutton notes, not only current work with preservation and library projects, but the development of an oral history project, an expansion of library hours and the development of a capsule history of the County.

Sarah Moseley is at work on an attractive brochure for the Society. These brochures will be used to disseminate information about our work and to introduce potential members to the Society. About 5,000 copies will be printed.

21ST ANTIQUE SHOW HELD. A quite unique "happening" took place at Horn Point near Cambridge, Maryland, Saturday May 19th. The event was sponsored by the Dorchester Heritage Museum, located on the Horn Point Aerodrome, and by the Potomac Antique Aero Squadron, in cooperation with the University of Maryland. It was the "21st Annual Antique Fly-In," Society member Vera Rollo reports.

Scores of aircraft flew out of the past and onto the grassy runways of the former du Pont estate airfield. There were biplanes and mono-planes. There were tiny ultra-light "vehicles," as they are called, and even one twin-engined aircraft.

The weather was perfect for the event. Indeed, so many aircraft arrived that the perspiring gentlemen in charge of directing traffic were hard put to find enough parking spaces for them. They did an excellent job, however, and scores of aircraft, hundreds of on-lookers were accommodated. Among the audience were many small, awed, children and friendly dogs.

Many persons aged around 60 and over, avidly roamed the flight lines. You could see their eyes light up as they recognized their old aircraft types --- a Piper Cub, a Stinson Voyager, Stearman PT-17s used in World War II training, Wacos, and more.

THE HISTORY OF HORN POINT AERODROME in Cambridge, Maryland, is linked with that of the du Pont family. In 1937, Francis du Pont bought a Stinson Reliant and had an airport constructed with hangars and a pilot's residence adjacent to the three runways.

To create a constant hard landing surface, excavation and tile drainage assured the best sod strip in the area. During World War II, the airport was used by student pilots for landing practice.

The University of Maryland's Center for Environmental and Estuarine Studies now operates the estate. The du Pont family made the estate available to the University. The building that was once Mr. du Pont's hangar is now the Dorchester Heritage Museum.

JOHNS HOPKINS HOSPITAL celebrates its 100th birthday this year. The festivities will honor the institution's founders--pathologist William Welch, surgeon William Stewart Halsted, gynecologist Howard Kelly, and internist and teacher William Osler.

The physicians and scientists who served in East Baltimore pioneered the use of rubber gloves and X-rays in surgery; discovered the vitamin D and B complexes, adrenalin, and the anti-clotting drug heparin; developed the "blue baby" heart surgery, the radical mastectomy, and CPR, among hundreds of other medical advances.

With 2,440 doctors on the faculty at the School of Medicine and more than half a million patient visits to the hospital each year, Hopkins has come a long way from its original 220-bed facility and its 36 faculty and students. A private room one hundred years ago cost \$3 a day. Today, the average cost is \$326, over 100 times as much.

Source: February 1989 Warfield's, p. 86.

HISTORIC FARM IN BOWIE is said to be slated for development. According to an article in the Prince George's Journal, March 3, 1989, page one, Eugene Roberts, Jr., owner of Fairwood Turf Farm has agreed to develop the 1,100-acre farm with the Rouse Company.

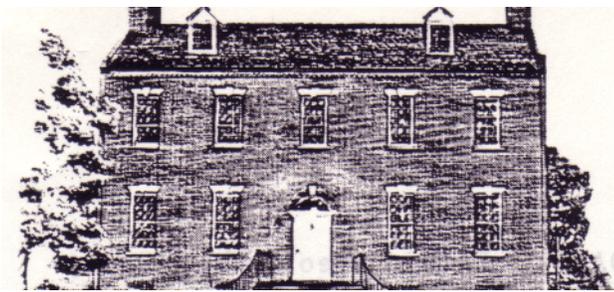
A planned community is slated for the Route 50 site. "Because it's increasingly difficult to farm in a suburban area, we really have to face the future," Mr. Roberts said.

HIGHER EDUCATION IN COLONIAL MARYLAND, contributed by Paul Lanham.

"The people of Prince George's County were liberal in their support of St. John's College, the college for the Western Shore of Maryland, authorized by the General Assembly at its session in November, 1784. When the vote was cast for the location of the college, however, Upper Marlborough received two votes and Annapolis, nine. These nine voters were no doubt influenced by the fact that the General Assembly offered the unfinished governor's palace, known as 'Bladen's Folly,' and the four acres upon which it stood, for the use of the school, if Annapolis were selected."

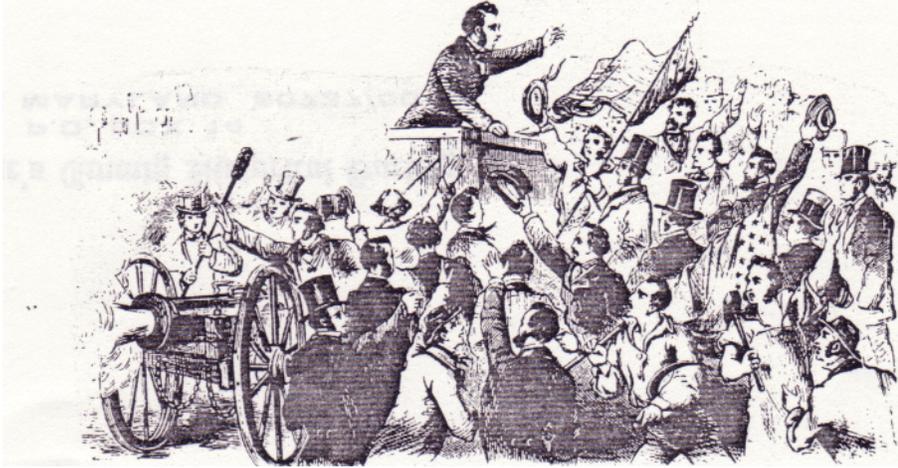
The college opened on November 11, 1789 with sixteen students. On November 28, 1793, Bachelor of Arts degrees were conferred upon two students, one of whom was John Addison Carr of Prince George's County. One year later, five degrees were awarded, one going to John Bowie Duckett, and it was regretted that Alexander Contee Magruder had been precluded by sickness from being included in the listing of County graduates at that time.

----- Prince George's Heritage by Louise Joyner Hinton, 1972, p. 205.



## NEWS AND NOTES

Historic Marietta at Glenn Dale, Maryland



**ACTING TREASURER.** John D. Bourne, a member of the Board of Directors, has been designated as Acting Treasurer of the Society.

He may be reached at 7011 Chansory Lane, Hyattsville, MD 20782. Telephone 927-1065.

### CALENDAR

June 10 - June meeting of the Prince George's Historical Society, Darnall's Chance, Upper Marlboro, MD. 2PM.

### DAYS AND HOURS OPEN

Marietta Mansion Tours and Gift Shop      Open 12-4 on Sundays.

Prince George's Historical Society Library at Marietta Open 12-4 on Saturdays. Librarian Fred DeMarr.

News and Notes From the  
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

P.O. Box #14, Riverdale, MD 20737

President: Bud Dutton Editor: Vera F. Rollo

Vol. XVII, No. 7 & 8 July - August 1989

THE SEPTEMBER MEETING will be held September 9th, 2 PM, at the Bladensburg Town Hall, 4229 Edmonston Ave. Ms. Shirley Baltz will speak on the "Battle of Bladensburg on its 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary."

Headquarters of the **Prince George's County Historical Society**

Oddly enough, there doesn't seem to be much going on in the County to commemorate the occasion. We can learn more about the event from Ms. Baltz's talk. She will discuss the preludes to the Battle, the Battle itself and its after effects.

As usual the Prince George's Historical Society does not meet in July or August. Meetings resume in September with this interesting historical subject.

#### FUND-RAISER COMING

On September 16th, 2 to 5 PM, we will gather for our second annual Prince George's County Historical Society Fund-Raiser event. It is to be held on the beautiful Oden Bowie estate, Fairview. The home circa 1785, is now located on 350 acres, much reduced from the original boundaries.

This annual event is a most enjoyable one. It is an excellent time to support Society goals and to introduce a friend to our membership. It is a good opportunity to enjoy beautiful surroundings, talk with our friends, listen to music and enjoy refreshments. Your invitation will soon be in the mail.

Our host, Oden Bowie is, as you know, descended from that Governor Oden Bowie (1869-1872) for whom the Governor Oden Bowie Drive is named in Upper Marlboro.

MORE COMING EVENTS. In October, on the 14th, our speaker is to be County Executive Parris Glendening. More information on his talk and on the place and time are to be announced shortly.

**Post Office Box 14 Riverdale, Maryland 20737 -301/464-0590**

SOCIETY IS NOW \$5,000 NEARER ITS GOALS. Prince George's County has given the Prince George's County Historical Society \$5,000 to use to promote Society goals of education and preservation.

In a brief ceremony at Upper Marlboro, Society President, Bud Dutton and members of the Society accepted a check from County Executive Parris Glendening late in July.

DOCENTS NEEDED. Docents are needed for the lively and varied tasks associated with Marietta and with the Gift Shop. If you like to meet new people and talk about County history, get in touch with Joyce McDonald to volunteer some time 779-5825.

HOPKINS ATLAS OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY is now available, President Dutton advises. The Atlas, first published in 1878, has been republished by the Prince George's Historical Society. This valuable book is available to members (first copy) at \$3.00 each; and at Marietta on sale to the public at \$5.00 each.

NEW MEMBERS welcomed to the Prince George's County Historical Society recently are:

August M. Tolzman, III  
Lorraine and Robert Levan  
Albert C. Wagner  
Julia F. Phipps  
Dean and Clara Pantazes  
Sharon and Walter Starling

OLD BONES were found, well really old bones turned into stone, recently near Oxon Hill. According to the Washington Post, June 25, 1989, Peter Kranz was leading a dinosaur-hunting expedition to help celebrate the birthday of a seven-year-old, friends, and parents.

Just as Kranz was explaining to the children what a fossilized dinosaur bone looks like --- he found one! The birthday outing had stumbled on the most complete fossilized skeleton of the Dinosaur Age found in the Washington area for at least 30 years, possibly this century. The dark fragments are parts of a 20-foot long mosasaur, a large seagoing predatory lizard of the Late Cretaceous period around 70 million years ago.

After the June 10th discovery, Kranz hurried to call the Smithsonian experts in to excavate and preserve the find.

Kranz has just published a book, Dinosaurs in Maryland, via the Maryland Geological Survey.

GOOD ENOUGH TO, that's correct, to eat. We are speaking of the gourmet foods served now at Mount Airy Plantation near Upper Marlboro which is now open. It is under the management of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

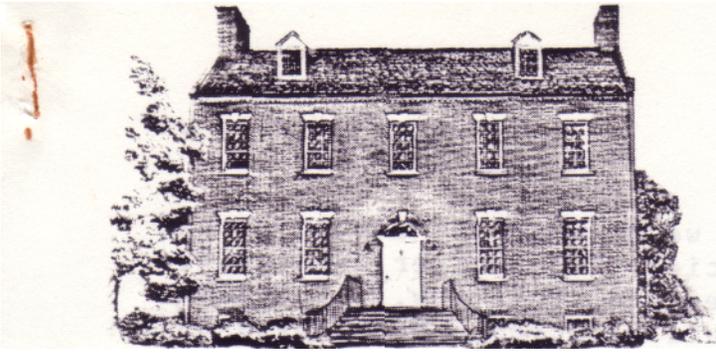
The restaurant occupies one of the most historic properties in Maryland. Contact Mount Airy at 856-1860 for reservations.

#### CALENDAR

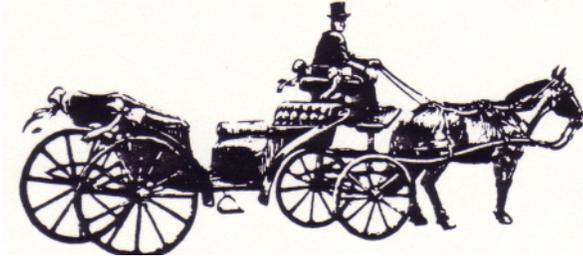
Sept. 9 Prince George's Co. Historical Society Meeting. Bladensburg Town Hall, 2 PM.

Sept. Annual Fund Raiser Event. Bowie estate.

Oct. 14 Society Meeting.



**Historic Marietta at Glenn Dale, Maryland**



**DAYS AND HOURS OPEN**

Marietta Mansion Tours and Gift Shop      Open 12-4 on Sundays.

Prince George's Historical Society Library at Marietta Open 12-4 on Saturdays. Librarian Fred DeMarr.

News and Notes From the  
**PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

P.O. Box #14, Riverdale, MD 20737  
President: Bud Dutton Editor: Vera F. Rollo

Vol. XVII, No. 9 & 10 September - October 1989,

THE OCTOBER MEETING will be held October 14th, 1:00 PM, at the County Administration Building, in the County Council's Hearing Room. Please note the correct time for the meeting. It is 1 : 00 PM.

Parris Glendening will speak on the subject of history-in-the-making today in the County, and changes that he has

Headquarters of the **Prince George's County**  
**Historical Society**

seen in the County.

IN NOVEMBER Sandra Cross will discuss Margaret Cook and her contributions to the preservation of history in the County. The meeting will be held at the County Administration building at Upper Marlboro, at 2:00 PM.

IN SEPTEMBER. The September meeting, held in Bladensburg, was well attended by members of the Society. Ms. Shirley Baltz gave a most interesting and lively talk on events prior to the Battle of Bladensburg, on the Battle itself and mentioned some of the aftereffects of the events.

The talk was made quite realistic by being in Bladensburg on the site of the battle and by the humid, hot weather we went through to attend the event. We sat in the comfortable, air conditioned city hall, and could well imagine the British and American troops suffering in the hellish August heat, in 1814, 175 years ago. They carried arms, wore wool, and many dropped from exhaustion. Ms. Baltz's talk was full of research and facts yet presented by a master story-teller. History is not dry when she talks about it!

Nor were Society members dry, after drinking iced lemonade provided by refreshments chair, Maxie Phillips. We also enjoyed the refreshments and the attractive table she arranged for us.

The Society appreciated the kind assistance of Ms. Marion Hoffman, Council member for Ward #1, who gave us some remarks on historical sites in the town and who made us comfortable before she had to leave for another event, and to Mayor of Bladensburg, William Seymour for the use of the meeting room.

**Post Office Box 14 - Riverdale, Maryland 20737 -301/464-0590**

ALSO IN SEPTEMBER, on the 16th, we enjoyed our second annual Prince George's County Historical Society Fund-Raiser event. Oden Bowie made available to us his estate, Fairview, circa 1785, which is located on 350 rolling, beautiful acres. Oden Bowie and his two daughters greeted the many Society members and made them welcome.

This annual event, in spite of warm showers, was a most enjoyable one. Ann Ferguson coordinated arrangements for the afternoon working with Eugene Roberts and John Mitchell. President Bud Dutton presented the program for the afternoon, after members had toured Fairview and had enjoyed the delightful refreshments.

MARY SUSAN KENNEDY McLEISH was noted in our last newsletter. She passed away August 29th at her retirement development at Collington. We'd like to add just a few comments to that paragraph. She was a retired administrative assistant with the Interstate Commerce Commission. She worked for the commission 38 years before retiring in 1957. Her husband of 37 years, George G. McLeish, died in 1967.

Memorial services were held at St. Paul's United Church of Christ, 9721 Good Luck Road, Seabrook Maryland near her former home, Saturday, September 9th. The church was filled with her friends, neighbors of all ages and associates from the many organizations for which she volunteered and assisted.

#### OCTOBER EVENT PLANNED

Warren Rhoads is planning a beautiful outing for us again. The spring trip into Washington, D.C. was most enjoyable. Now "Dusty" Rhoads, 464-0819, has another treat set up for us.

Save the date October 21st. If you would like to take part in the fall tour, a trip over to beautiful Queen Anne's County with luncheon in Centreville see the last page of this newsletter for details.

TASK FORCE. Ann Ferguson and Bud Dutton will represent the Society on a task-force to develop coordination with other county groups in planning for the tri-centennial.

NOMINATING committee is forming under the leadership of Sarah Bourne, chairperson. This report will be presented at the October meeting.



CHRISTMAS PARTY Yes, we know that you have only just turned off the air conditioners after a warm September, but we would like for you to save December 9th. The Society Christmas Party will be at Marietta for members and guests. Members are asked to bring their holiday treats to share.

CANDLELIGHT TOURS of Marietta will be held on December 1-2 and 8-9. The gift shop will be open then, for a bit of Christmas shopping.

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT. At the Board of Director's meeting, August 12, Joyce McDonald and Sarah Moseley reported that they have been investigating ways to start our Society's Oral History project. Mr. Tim Ayers has agreed to involve the County Cable Public Access Organization in the technical and filming aspects

of the interviews. Three interviews are planned initially. Mrs. McDonald will identify the candidates and also arrange for student participation.

MEMBERSHIP BROCHURE. An attractive brochure on the Prince George's County Historical Society will soon be available. This will be offered to prospective members as a means of giving something of the history of the Society, its goals and achievements.

MARIETTA MANSION. Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission Historian, John Walton, Jr., has been supportive of the PGCH Society's request for more space at Marietta. In particular, it would help the Society to be able to use the kitchen at times. Other space might be useful for library materials and possibly for meetings.

COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE. On September 23 the College of Architecture at the University of Maryland, under the direction of David Fogle, will host a conference on Historic Preservation, focusing on the work at Riversdale. The PGCH Society has agreed to sponsor the coffee and doughnuts during the registration hour. Dusty Rhoads, Mrs. Joyce McDonald and Mrs. Sarah Bourne will coordinate this activity. This conference is one of three occurring over the next eighteen months.

#### NEW COUNTY SERVICE AVAILABLE

A new service is now being offered by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission's History Division. Manager of the History Division, John M. Walton, Jr., advised Society President W. C. Dutton, in a letter dated June 15th.

This service is to be called the Local History and Historic Preservation Clearinghouse. It was created, Walton said, in response to the many and diverse questions that the Commission's History Division receives about the County's history, preservation projects and information resources. It was also created in recognition of the fact that the organizations and agencies which deal with local history and historic preservation within the County are many and diverse. There exists a need to link them together in an active communications network.

Walton believes that the Clearinghouse will serve the county through constant contact with resource groups such the PGCH Society. Program manager of the Clearinghouse is Bob Schnabel. If you have questions or suggestions please call him at 779-4074, the Clearinghouse telephone number. Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. -3:00 p.m. Messages can be left on the recorder at other times.

HAMBURGER'S 104TH. There are several persons vying for the credit for having invented the hamburger. Raw ground beef has been eaten by the residents of Hamburg, Germany, since the Middle Ages. Texans venerate Fletcher David (1864-1941) who served hamburger sandwiches at the St. Louis World's Fair.

Another contender is German-American Frank Menches who opened a food stall at the Summit, N. Y. county fair in 1892. Louis Lassen of New Haven, Conn. is another candidate for the honor.

Still, it is Charlie Nagreen with old newspaper clippings and eyewitnesses to attest to his creation, who is credited with inventing our American hamburger. He came to Seymour, Wisconsin in an ox-drawn wagon to set up a food stand at the first fair in that frontier town. He gave his customers cooked ground beef patties to munch on as they strolled the fairgrounds. He became known as Hamburger Charlie in the area and settled in rural Wisconsin.

Charlie operated the Dew Drop Inn in Seymour for many years with his wife, Mary. They made ice cream. Charlie trained horses, peddled Christmas trees, popcorn, fireworks and costumes. He even played in an orchestra. When this man died in 1951, "the whole county went into mourning." On August 4, 1989, the town of Seymour cooked the world's largest hamburger in his memory.

Source: Prince George's Journal, Aug.2, 1989, pp. B1, B5.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOMED. The Prince George's County Historical Society is pleased to welcome the following new members (names provided the newsletter by Mrs. Cheryl Adams):

Howard Robert Adams  
Sallie L. Holder  
William R. Davis  
David Allen Hallock  
Mrs. Joshua Worthington Dorsey, III

BIOGRAPHIES NEEDED. The Society is working toward gathering biographies of past presentations of the St. George's Day awards in order to complete a file of these worthy persons and organizations.

DON SKARDA, our long-time Board Member and member of the PGCH Society, is being remembered by the Skarda family by naming the Society as recipient of memorial funds. Don counted many friends among Society members and is remembered gratefully for his many services and dedicated services and writings. John Giannetti and Joyce McDonald were named to study possible use of these funds.

Also, Don's widow, Mrs. Alice Skarda, has kindly donated a beautiful, hand-made quilt to be used as a raffle piece to raise funds for the Society. Mrs. Edith Bagot will coordinate the sale of tickets to run from the 1989 fall fundraiser event until the 1990 Christmas Party.

#### FROM THE PEN OF R. LEE VAN HORN

(Quotations from Judge Van Horn's work, Out of the Past, on Prince George's County. Items submitted by Col. Paul T. Lanham, AUS, Ret'd.)

"Representatives of nine colonies met in October 1765 [in New York City] to formulate a unified protest against the newly enacted stamp tax on all legal documents. William Murdock of Prince George's County, one of Maryland's three representatives, formulated a proposed course of action and, as a result, was charged with drafting a letter of protest to the King of England.

Born in 1700, this William Murdock was one of the county's most distinguished citizens, owning 2662 acres of land, having served as Sheriff in 1740 and as Burgess for the county from 1749 until his demise [in 1769]." P. 122.

"On December 8, 1769, by direction of Lord Baltimore, an election for county burgess to the General Assembly was held. Qualification to vote was ownership of fifty acres of land or assets of four pounds sterling. (This qualification concept was ultimately at the time of ratification of the Constitution, to be a subject of strong controversy before being abolished.) P.126.

"The Maryland Gazette of July 29, 1765 carried the following advertisement: 'Dr. Hill's Balsam of Honey for consumption [tuberculosis], Tincture of Valerium for the nerves, Tincture of Golden Rod for gravel, Essence

of Water Dock for scurvey, Elixor of Bardana for Gout,' also, 'Red Pills,' 'Dropsey Powder,' 'Fistula Paste' and 'Eau de Luce'." P. 127.

"The December 3, 1717 issue of the Gazette reports the November 30th wedding of Thomas Addison, Jr. of Potowmack to Miss Rebecca Dulany of Annapolis, 'an agreeable young lady possessed of many amiable qualifications.' P. 128.

#### CALENDAR

Sept. 23                   Historic Preservation Conference, U. of MD, School of Architecture.  
Sept. 30 and Oct. 1 Farm Heritage Days at the Equestrian Center.  
Oct. 14                   Society Board Meeting. 11AM. Darnall's Chance.  
Oct. 14                   Prince George's Historical Society Meeting, 1 PM, ONE PM. County Admin. Bldg., Upper Marlboro.  
Oct. 21                   Society's Fall Tour to Queen Anne's County.  
Nov. 11                   Meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society. 2 PM, County Admin. Bldg., Upper Marlboro.

#### DAYS AND HOURS OPEN

Marietta Mansion Tours and Gift Shop      Open 12-4 on Sundays.

Prince George's Historical Society Library at Marietta Open 12-4 on Saturdays. Librarian Fred DeMarr.

News and Notes From the  
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
P.O. Box #14, Riverdale, MD 20737  
President: Bud Dutton           Editor: Vera F. Rollo



## FALL TOUR

Come join us for a pleasant journey to the Eastern Shore on Saturday October 21st 1989 Leave Maryland Park & Planning Building 6600 Kenilworth Ave. at 9:00 A.M.

Historic Marietta at Glenn Dale, Maryland

Headquarters of the **Prince George's County Historical Society**

Visit:

WRIGHTS CHANCE (1744) & TUCKER HOUSE (1794)

Headquarters & Museum of Queen Anne,s  
County Historical Society

Luncheon-Court Square (See selections below)

ST.LUKES CHURCH (Founded in 1732)

PRATT MANSION (1780) Private Home

Price of \$28:00 per person includes bus  
transportation-luncheon-all fees

-----  
DEADLINE OCTOBER 12th

Please make checks payable to

PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mail to Warren Rhoads,12501 Kemmerton Lane

Bowie,Maryland 20715

LUNCHEON CHOICE: BREAST OF CHICKEN ----- CRAB CAKE -----

- -- -----  
For information: Warren Rhoads - 464-0819

Vol. XVII, No. 11 November 1939

THE NOVEMBER MEETING will be held November 11th, 2: PM, at the County Administration Building, in the County Council's Hearing Room.

THE SPEAKER for the meeting will be Ben Miles, Curator, College Park Air Museum on the history of this remarkable old airport. It is, as you know, the oldest airport in continuous operation in the United States. Orville and Wilber Wright flew there in the first years of powered flight.

This is an excellent way to spend Armistice Day, hearing Ben Miles speak, and meeting with your friends.

Sandra Cross was scheduled to speak to our Society this fall, but her doctor has given her strict orders to slow down, take life a bit easier. We hope to hear her talk on Margaret Cook and Mrs. Cook's many contributions to the County's historical record next year.

The membership enjoyed hearing Parris Glendenning speak at the October meeting. Subjects ranged from education to preservation of trees, to demographics, to historical preservation---all, however, to do with our fair County. Dr. Glendenning gave us much fascinating information, yet the talk was leavened with much fascinating information, humour and anecdote. The Society members offered him their thanks for the talk, for his attendance at previous meetings and fundraisers, and for his continuing support of Society goals in the past months and years.

Warren 'Rhoads' fall tour to the Eastern Shore was a "sell-out" and a Success. The members taking the tour saw wonderful old places steeped in Maryland history and enjoyed luncheon

CHRISTMAS PARTY! We would like to remind you to save December 9th. The Society Christmas Party will be at Marietta for members and guests. Members are asked to bring holiday treats to share.

## DONALD D. SKARDA MEMORIAL HISTORY AWARD ESTABLISHED

The Donald D. Skarda Memorial History Award has been established by the Society in memory of Don who died this past spring. Don was an active member who was treasurer of the Society at the time of his death. Donations to the Society made in his name plus money being raised through the raffle of a quilt made by his wife, Alice, will be used to fund this annual award.

Don wrote a proposal and rules for an essay contest that he wanted the Society to sponsor. Unfortunately, Don died before the Board could act on his proposal. Joyce McDonald and John Giannetti were assigned the task of how best to use the money donated to the Society in Don's memory. The essay contest was deemed an appropriate use for the money donated to the Society in Don's name.

The essay contest is open to students in grades 4-8 in the Prince George's County public schools. Students are being asked to research a historical site in our County and present their research in an essay or project that combines writing with visuals. Members of our Society will be needed to judge entries in the spring. Information will be published in the newsletter about how members may volunteer to be judges for this new annual award.

The award has the flexibility to change from year to year including the topic, age groups eligible, and awards given. This year \$50.00 and \$25.00 will be given to first and second place winners respectively. As more money is raised with the raffle, the Award could be expanded to a scholarship for a senior who has demonstrated knowledge of County history. By sponsoring the Donald D. Skarda Memorial History Award, the Society is expanding its programs into the larger community and remembering a dedicated member.

Cheryl Adams

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to Dr. Paul E. Garber, noted aviation pioneer and first Curator of the National Air and Space Museum. Dr. Garber celebrated his ninetieth birthday on August 31st, 1989. Some 120 people, representing 15 organizations, attended a special ceremony in Washington, D. C.

NOMINATIONS for office and Board of Directors 1989 -- 1990:

President	Bud Dutton
Vice-President	Joyce McDonald
Treasurer	Jack Bourne
Recording Secretary	Sarah Bourne
Corresponding Secretary	Virginia Reinhart
Historian/Librarian	Fred DeMarr
Board of Directors:	
Edith Bagot	
Ann Ferguson	
William Haskell	
John Mitchell	
Cheryl Adams	
Eugene Roberts	
(Past Presidents - not elected)	
John Giannetti	
Paul Lanham	
Warren Rhoads	
Fred DeMarr	

Election of officers and board at the November meeting.

(1899 - 1989)

Kent Roberts Mullikin who would have been ninety years of age this November, died October 14. Funeral services were held at the Holy Trinity Church.

Mr. Mullikin was a founding member of the Prince George's Historical Society. He was a native Prince Georgian and lived for 15 years in Annapolis prior to moving to the retirement community, Collington Manor, near Largo, Maryland.

He served in the Maryland House of Delegates from 1927 to 1939. He was also the first Chairman of the Maryland Historical Trust.

He is survived by his wife the former Winifred Cary Allen, a son, step-son, step-daughter; and by his younger sister, Society member, Mrs. Margaret Mullikin Marshall of Laurel.

Fred DeMarr

CANDLELIGHT TOURS of Marietta will be held on December 1-2 and 8-9. The gift shop will be open then, for a bit of Christmas shopping.

MEMBERSHIP BROCHURE. An attractive brochure on the Prince George's County Historical Society is now available. This is an excellent way to acquaint prospective members with the history of the Society, its goals and achievements.

CLEARINGHOUSE. John M. Walton, Jr., Manager of the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission, History Division, reminds us that the program manager of the Clearinghouse is Bob Schnabel. If you need information, have questions or suggestions please call him at 779-4074, the Clearinghouse telephone number. Normal office hours are Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Messages can also be left on the recorder at other times.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME! The Prince George's County Historical Society is pleased to welcome the following new members (names provided the newsletter by Mrs. Cheryl Adams)

Alice Bowie Arnot  
Mr. & Mrs. Nathaniel duBois Arnot  
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph A. Behun, Jr.  
Mr. & Mrs. Bruce H. Beveridge  
Thomas Parran Bond  
Katherine Budner  
E. Wallis Hall Cain  
Steven T. Cain  
Letitia & Thomas S. Gwynn, Jr.  
Mrs. Louis B. Hays  
Marion and Warren Hoffman  
Josephine Hall Kelly  
Mrs. George E. Lovell  
Elizabeth Mays  
Frank & Shirley Nicolai  
Mrs. R. Wilson Oster  
J. Matthew Phelps  
Ruth L. Prendable  
James K. Queen

Michael J. Sampson  
Beverly B. Seeley  
Mr. & Mrs. Lester Sweeting  
Julie R. Talbot  
Laurie Verge  
Peter S. Wyrrough

Welcome to you all. (An unexpected and happy outcome of our annual Fundraiser is the fact that we gain many new members.)

Maryland Movie Reviews: Hairspray

By Alan Virta

John Waters, the Baltimore film director, is Maryland's most notorious movie maker. His films are outrageous; they rarely play in suburban theaters; they're often rated X; and they're never reviewed in News and Notes. Waters' latest film, however, is an exception to the rule. Hairspray, a comedy set in the Baltimore of 1962-63, is rated PG. The movie tells the story of a group of teenagers who appear on an after school TV dance show, similar in format to Dick Clark's American Bandstand (or the Milt Grant Show of Washington television). Waters authentically recreates the teen culture of the pre-Beatle, pre-Hippie era. Anyone who was a teenager during that period (or the parent of one) will recognize it at once. Unlike most Hollywood movies, the teens in Hairspray don't all look like movie stars. The leads in this film include the plain, the skinny, and the dumpy as well as the good-looking, and the movie nostalgically chronicles their typical teenage problems: boyfriends, girlfriends, parents, teachers, and the never-ending struggle to be part of the in-crowd. Hairspray is a good-natured film, with little (if any) profanity, sex, or violence, fully deserving of its mild PG rating.

Hairspray was filmed on location in Baltimore. One short scene even takes place in a high school Maryland history class. The comedy is of an old fashioned, flamboyant, madcap variety. In one scene, a frantic mother pursues her daughter into a black music store on North Avenue, where the girl and her friends have illicitly been learning "Negro dancing, to take back to their school hops. The tensions of integration and segregation in Baltimore of that era are an element of the movie, but the subject is handled lightly and comedically, not in a heavy-handed manner.

Many of John Waters' films have been vehicles for his leading actor and childhood friend, Harris Glen Milstead, known professionally as "Divine." Milstead, who died last year does indeed appear in Hairspray, but the movie does not revolve around his ample form. Those who have never seen Divine in a movie may take this opportunity to see him in his tamest role, without fear of offense. Sonny Bono, former husband of Cher and now mayor of Palm Springs, Calif., also has a small part in the film.

Hairspray received "Two Thumbs Up" from the critics Siskel and Ebert. After a short run in the movie theaters, it is now available at the video store. Hairspray is a hilarious farce and an authentic piece of Marylandia, right down to the old blue and white license plates on the automobiles.

-- Alan Virta

PRINCE GEORGE'S Historical Society now numbers 503 members, Mrs. Cheryl Adams reported to the Board of Directors at their meeting October 14th.

The fundraiser in September was a great success, Ann Ferguson and Gene Roberts reported. Ann Ferguson and John Mitchell were congratulated on the enjoyable event. Thanks were tendered to Mr. Roberts, Mr. Oden Bowie, Ms Joyce Rumburg and to Mr. Robey for the use of the tent.

These and other topics were discussed: the Don Skarda Memorial History Award, uses of the Marietta mansion, Marietta gift shop operation, a request for highway signs near Marietta. President Bud Dutton discussed his recent visit to the Montgomery County Historical Society and their interesting plans. One of these is the establishment of a County museum.

ARCHIVES. The University of Maryland has been working for two years to bring an Archives II project into being. The extensive research facility is scheduled to be completed in 1993, at a cost of over \$200 million. The Archives II will house all Archives' collections of photographs, films, newsreels, maps, charts and aerial photos. The Headquarters and displays will remain in Washington, D. C.

#### CALENDAR

Nov. 11 Meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society. 2 PM, County Admin. Bldg., Upper Marlboro.

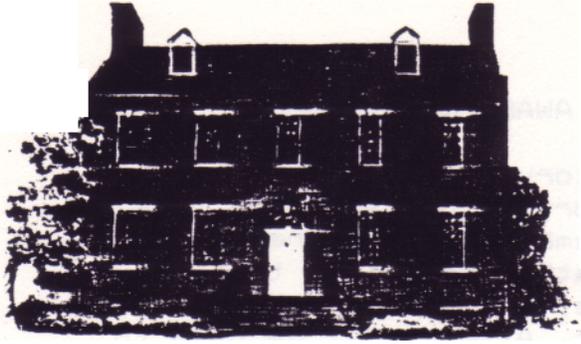
Dec. 9 Christmas Party at the Marietta mansion.

#### DAYS AND HOURS OPEN

Marietta Mansion Tours and Gift Shop Open 12-4 on Sundays  
Prince George's Historical Society Library at Marietta Open 12-4 on Saturdays. Librarian Fred DeMarr.

News and Notes From the  
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
P.O. Box #14, Riverdale, MD20737  
President: Bud Dutton Editor: Vera F. Rollo

Vol. XVII, No. 11 November 1989



Headquarters of the **Prince George's County Historical Society**

THE NOVEMBER MEETING will be held November 11th, 2: PM, at the County Administration Building, in the County Council's Hearing Room.

Historic Marietta at Glenn Dale, Maryland

THE SPEAKER for the meeting will be Ben Miles, Curator, College Park Air Museum on the history of this remarkable old airport. It is, as you know, the oldest airport in continuous operation in the United States. Orville and Wilber Wright flew there in the first years of powered flight.

This is an excellent way to spend Armistice Day, hearing Ben Miles speak, and meeting with your friends.

Sandra Cross was scheduled to speak to our Society this fall, but her doctor has given her strict orders to slow down, take life a bit easier. We hope to hear her talk on Margaret Cook and Mrs. Cook's many contributions to the County's historical record next year.

The membership enjoyed hearing Parris Glendenning speak at the October meeting. Subjects ranged from education to preservation of trees, to demographics, to historical preservation---all, however, to do with our fair County. Dr. Glendenning gave us much fascinating information, yet the talk was leavened with much fascinating information, humour and anecdote. The Society members offered him their thanks for the talk, for his attendance at previous meetings and fundraisers, and for his continuing support of Society goals in the past months and years.

Warren 'Rhoads' fall tour to the Eastern Shore was a "sell-out" and a Success. The members taking the tour saw wonderful old places steeped in Maryland history and enjoyed luncheon.

CHRISTMAS PARTY! We would like to remind you to save December 9th. The Society Christmas Party will be at Marietta for members and guests. Members are asked to bring holiday treats to share.

## DONALD D. SKARDA MEMORIAL HISTORY AWARD ESTABLISHED

The Donald D. Skarda Memorial History Award has been established by the Society in memory of Don who died this past spring. Don was an active member who was treasurer of the Society at the time of his death. Donations to the Society made in his name plus money being raised through the raffle of a quilt made by his wife, Alice, will be used to fund this annual award.

Don wrote a proposal and rules for an essay contest that he wanted the Society to sponsor. Unfortunately, Don died before the Board could act on his proposal. Joyce McDonald and John Giannetti were assigned the task of how best to use the money donated to the Society in Don's memory. The essay contest was deemed an appropriate use for the money donated to the Society in Don's name.

The essay contest is open to students in grades 4-8 in the Prince George's County public schools. Students are being asked to research a historical site in our County and present their research in an essay or project that combines writing with visuals. Members of our Society will be needed to judge entries in the spring. Information will be published in the newsletter about how members may volunteer to be judges for this new annual award.

The award has the flexibility to change from year to year including the topic, age groups eligible, and awards given. This year \$50.00 and \$25.00 will be given to first and second place winners respectively. As more money is raised with the raffle, the Award could be expanded to a scholarship for a senior who has demonstrated knowledge of County history. By sponsoring the Donald D. Skarda Memorial History Award, the Society is expanding its programs into the larger community and remembering a dedicated member.

Cheryl Adams

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to Dr. Paul E. Garber, noted aviation pioneer and first Curator of the National Air and Space Museum. Dr. Garber celebrated his ninetieth birthday on August 31st, 1989. Some 120 people, representing 15 organizations, attended a special ceremony in Washington, D. C.

NOMINATIONS for office and Board of Directors 1989 -- 1990:

President	Bud Dutton
Vice-President	Joyce McDonald
Treasurer	Jack Bourne
Recording Secretary	Sarah Bourne
Corresponding Secretary	Virginia Reinhart
Historian/Librarian	Fred DeMarr

Board of Directors:

Edith Bagot  
Ann Ferguson  
William Haskell  
John Mitchell  
Cheryl Adams  
Eugene Roberts

(Past Presidents - not elected)

John Giannetti  
Paul Lanham  
Warren Rhoads  
Fred DeMarr

Election of officers and board at the November meeting.

Kent Roberts Mullikin

(1899 - 1989)

Kent Roberts Mullikin who would have been ninety years of age this November, died October 14. Funeral services were held at the Holy Trinity Church.

Mr. Mullikin was a founding member of the Prince George's Historical Society. He was a native Prince Georgian and lived for 15 years in Annapolis prior to moving to the retirement community, Collington Manor, near Largo, Maryland.

He served in the Maryland House of Delegates from 1927 to 1939. He was also the first Chairman of the Maryland Historical Trust.

He is survived by his wife the former Winifred Cary Allen, a son, step-son, step-daughter; and by his younger sister, Society member, Mrs. Margaret Mullikin Marshall of Laurel.

Fred DeMarr

CANDLELIGHT TOURS of Marietta will be held on December 1-2 and 8-9. The gift shop will be open then, for a bit of Christmas shopping.

MEMBERSHIP BROCHURE. An attractive brochure on the Prince George's County Historical Society is now available. This is an excellent way to acquaint prospective members with the history of the Society, its goals and achievements.

CLEARINGHOUSE. John M. Walton, Jr., Manager of the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission, History Division, reminds us that the program manager of the Clearinghouse is Bob Schnabel. If you need information, have questions or suggestions please call him at 779-4074, the Clearinghouse telephone number. Normal office hours are Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Messages can also be left on the recorder at other times.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME! The Prince George's County Historical Society is pleased to welcome the following new members (names provided the newsletter by Mrs. Cheryl Adams)

Alice Bowie Arnot  
Mr. & Mrs. Nathaniel duBois Arnot  
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph A. Behun, Jr.  
Mr. & Mrs. Bruce H. Beveridge  
Thomas Parran Bond  
Katherine Budner  
E. Wallis Hall Cain  
Steven T. Cain  
Letitia & Thomas S. Gwynn, Jr.  
Mrs. Louis B. Hays  
Marion and Warren Hoffman  
Josephine Hall Kelly  
Mrs. George E. Lovell  
Elizabeth Mays  
Frank & Shirley Nicolai

Mrs. R. Wilson Oster  
J. Matthew Phelps  
Ruth L. Prendable  
James K. Queen  
Mr. & Mrs. Raymond L. Rowe  
Michael J. Sampson  
Beverly B. Seeley  
Mr. & Mrs. Lester Sweeting  
Julie R. Talbot  
Laurie Verge  
Peter S. Wyrrough

Welcome to you all. (An unexpected and happy outcome of our annual Fundraiser is the fact that we gain many new members.)

Maryland Movie Reviews: Hairspray

By Alan Virta

John Waters, the Baltimore film director, is Maryland's most notorious movie maker. His films are outrageous; they rarely play in suburban theaters; they're often rated X; and they're never reviewed in News and Notes. Waters' latest film, however, is an exception to the rule. Hairspray, a comedy set in the Baltimore of 1962-63, is rated PG. The movie tells the story of a group of teenagers who appear on an after school TV dance show, similar in format to Dick Clark's American Bandstand (or the Milt Grant Show of Washington television). Waters authentically recreates the teen culture of the pre-Beatle, pre-Hippie era. Anyone who was a teenager during that period (or the parent of one) will recognize it at once. Unlike most Hollywood movies, the teens in Hairspray don't all look like movie stars. The leads in this film include the plain, the skinny, and the dumpy as well as the good-looking, and the movie nostalgically chronicles their typical teenage problems: boyfriends, girlfriends, parents, teachers, and the never-ending struggle to be part of the in-crowd. Hairspray is a good-natured film, with little (if any) profanity, sex, or violence, fully deserving of its mild PG rating.

Hairspray was filmed on location in Baltimore. One short scene even takes place in a high school Maryland history class. The comedy is of an old fashioned, flamboyant, madcap variety. In one scene, a frantic mother pursues her daughter into a black music store on North Avenue, where the girl and her friends have illicitly been learning "Negro dancing, to take back to their school hops. The tensions of integration and segregation in Baltimore of that era are an element of the movie, but the subject is handled lightly and comedically, not in a heavy-handed manner.

Many of John Waters' films have been vehicles for his leading actor and childhood friend, Harris Glen Milstead, known professionally as "Divine." Milstead, who died last year does indeed appear in Hairspray, but the movie does not revolve around his ample form. Those who have never seen Divine in a movie may take this opportunity to see him in his tamest role, without fear of offense. Sonny Bono, former husband of Cher and now mayor of Palm Springs, Calif., also has a small part in the film.

Hairspray received "Two Thumbs Up" from the critics Siskel and Ebert. After a short run in the movie theaters, it is now available at the video store. Hairspray is a hilarious farce and an authentic piece of Marylandia, right down to the old blue and white license plates on the automobiles.

-- Alan Virta

PRINCE GEORGE'S Historical Society now numbers 503 members, Mrs. Cheryl Adams reported to the Board of Directors at their meeting October 14th.

The fundraiser in September was a great success, Ann Ferguson and Gene Roberts reported. Ann Ferguson and John Mitchell were congratulated on the enjoyable event. Thanks were tendered to Mr. Roberts, Mr. Oden Bowie, Ms Joyce Rumburg and to Mr. Robey for the use of the tent.

These and other topics were discussed: the Don Skarda Memorial History Award, uses of the Marietta mansion, Marietta gift shop operation, a request for highway signs near Marietta. President Bud Dutton discussed his recent visit to the Montgomery County Historical Society and their interesting plans. One of these is the establishment of a County museum.

ARCHIVES. The University of Maryland has been working for two years to bring an Archives II project into being. The extensive research facility is scheduled to be completed in 1993, at a cost of over \$200 million. The Archives II will house all Archives' collections of photographs, films, newsreels, maps, charts and aerial photos. The Headquarters and displays will remain in Washington, D. C.

#### CALENDAR

Nov. 11 Meeting of the Prince George's County Historical Society. 2 PM, County Admin. Bldg., Upper Marlboro.

Dec. 9 Christmas Party at the Marietta mansion.

#### DAYS AND HOURS OPEN

Marietta Mansion Tours and Gift Shop Open 12-4 on Sundays

Prince George's Historical Society Library at Marietta Open 12-4 on Saturdays. Librarian Fred DeMarr.

News and Notes From the  
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
P.O. Box #14, Riverdale, MD20737  
President: Bud Dutton Editor: Vera F. Rollo