

January/February 2001

Our 49th Year

XXX Number 1

Preserving a Quality of Life

In November 2000, Governor Parris N. Glendening's Task Force on the Preservation and Enhancement of Maryland's Heritage Resources issued a report with important ramifications to us and other historical and cultural organizations. The Task Force, chaired by First Lady Frances Hughes Glendening, with assistance from state Budget and Management secretaries, undertook the study of public involvement and education, protection and preservation, and enhancement and sustainability of heritage resources. Historical Society members *Patricia E. Williams*, Chairman, Prince George's Heritage, Inc. and *Patricia E. Hayes Parker*, Executive Director, Anacostia Trails Heritage Area, Inc. served on the public involvement and education committee. To appreciate Maryland's Heritage the report recommends: getting information about Maryland's past, discovering community history, experiencing history, engaging primary and secondary school students, expanding opportunities in higher education, and enhancing lifetime learning. We believe that our historical society is a major contributor toward these goals. In proof thereof, let me point out the following.

Getting Information About Maryland's Past

The Society, and especially its Frederick DeMarr Memorial Library of County History, are continually involved in the acquisition of information about both Maryland's and our County's past; through the acquisition of books and accumulation of other manuscripts relating to past people, places and events; as well as the accumulation of oral histories and personal momentos and collections (such as the Hyattsville Hardware papers, the Slingluff papers, and the Francis Geary archives).

Discovering and Experiencing Community History

Again, through our recurring programs, the Society is dedicated to ensuring its members and the public at large have additional opportunities to discover the unique history of our County, State and Nation. We would point to the June 2000 event where First Lady Frances Hughes Glendening (a long-time member of the Society) spoke about the First Ladies of Maryland and her efforts as the current First Lady to bring greater public knowledge of the women who stood behind Maryland's governors. We also consider the October 2000 bus trip to York, Pennsylvania in this light. The many events involving Marietta Mansion (such as the recurring military re-enactments and the historic exhibits) and the restored mansion itself are part of our commitment to aiding our members and the public in discovering and experiencing history.

Engaging Primary and Secondary School Students

The Society, especially through the efforts of Susan and Jim Wolfe and Jane Eagen (among others) has spent many hours and quite a bit of our resources in developing programs, curricula, and other opportunities for the students in the County public and private schools to have a closer connection with the history of the County. Special projects such as the traveling trunk; teacher teas, and children's programs at Marietta have supplemented these efforts. I would point out that this is one area where we would like to see an expansion of programs, but that requires both a greater involvement of the leaders of the school system and access to the individual teachers involved.

Expanding Opportunities in Higher Education

The Society has hosted interns in the past and continues to maintain close working relations with the University of Maryland's Historic Preservation Certificate program and with other colleges and universities in the area. Internships have been used in the past and are certainly welcome in the future.

Enhancing Lifetime Learning

This is one area where I truly believe that we are doing an excellent job. By providing volunteer opportunities, and by supporting the research efforts of our citizens of all ages, we continue to nurture those who spend their time delving into the past - whether their family genealogy or the source of various geographic names they come across. In the past 12 months alone, we had 70 walk-in visitors and at least an equal number of telephone enquiries came into the Library and were served by Susan, Sharon, Sarah, Diane, and Bonnie - our stalwart crew of volunteers. Our efforts to expand the access to these services through electronic means continue to be "in development" but we have had some e-mail enquiries and will - with the help of volunteer professional web-meisters - remount the Society web site.

As you can readily see, the Society has taken Governor Glendening's report to heart. We would like to think that it was groups such as ours that the Committee was thinking about when it reached its recommendations. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I can assure our members and our readers that we shall continue these efforts as we reach our first half-century and move forward into the future.

REQUEST FOR ST. GEORGE'S DAY AWARD NOMINATIONS

Each year since 1974, the Society has marked the anniversary of the erection of Prince George's County by giving St. George's Day Awards to deserving people for their efforts to support, expand and enhance the knowledge of our members and the public at large about the history of Prince George's County. We have honored more than 200 organizations and individuals for their publications, restorations, salvation of threatened properties, or just being what we lovingly refer to as "Workers in the Vineyard."

This year we will again celebrate St. George's Day - with a dinner at Ascension Church in Bowie (further details in the next issue) and we are looking for nominations. So, if you know of a good book or other publication about the county or some aspect of its history (including church and family histories), a sensitive restoration of an historic landmark, a Committee or Organization that is celebrating a milestone in their history worthy of our celebration, or persons whose efforts to support and celebrate our history and our heritage are deserving of our recognition, please send a short description of your nominee and a means of contacting you. You should send nominations to Secretary James Wolfe, 5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale, MD 20769, by February 20, 2001. Thank you!

SOCIETY BOARD ELECTS NEWEST MEMBER

At the Board meeting on January 13, **Donna Schneider** was elected to fill the vacant position that resulted from the member's vote to expand the board, taken at the annual

meeting on November 6, 2000. This brings the Board to 12 Directors. However, the by-laws allow for up to 15 members, so if you are interested in joining the Board of the Society, please let us know or attend the next meeting of the Board of Directors - which will be at Marietta beginning at 6:30 PM, Wednesday, March 14, 2000.

MARIETTA HOUSE MUSEUM CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| Feb. 10-11 | Sweetheart's Tour
2 for 1 admission
Noon - 4p.m. \$3/A \$2/Sr. |
| Feb. 17-18 | Landsknecht Winter Camp
16th Century re-enactors
Sat. 9 - 5, Sun. 9 - 3 FREE |
| April 21-22 | Marching Through Time
11- 5 \$5/A, \$2/C |
| May 13 | Mother's Day Tea at 4PM
Reservations required - 301
464 5291 |
| June 9-10 | Roman Days
10 - 4 \$2 |

For further information call 301 464 5291

MILLENNIUM HOLIDAY PARTY

Members and friends who attended this celebration were impressed with the array of foods and explanation of their first description in print over the last 2000 years as researched by **Historian Susan Pearl**. Several suggested that we reprint them here and we happily oblige with the following:

RHUBARB

1st century A.D.

The crimson stalk we know as "rhubarb" was first described by Dioscorides, a Greek herbalist from Asia Minor, who in his first-century work *περὶ ὕλης ἰατρικῆς* (*Materia Medica*), indicated that this delicious root plant was native to Mongolia and Siberia.

LEMONS

2nd century A.D.

Native to India, these tangy citrus fruits had become well established in the Mediterranean area by the second century A.D., and in fact had appeared in Pompeian frescoes before 79 A.D.

ASPARAGUS

3rd century A.D.

A member of the lily family, asparagus first appeared in Persian texts as "asparag," meaning "sprout," and came into English as the euphonious "sparrow grass."

SPINACH

4th century A.D.

Cultivated in Persia by the 4th century A.D., and known as "aspanakh," this essential and quintessential green did not reach Europe until the 11th century A.D., brought in by Arab traders.

AUBERGINE (EGGPLANT)

5th century A.D.

Reference to this handsome and glossy "fruit" first appeared in a Chinese treatise on agriculture (by Ts'i Min Yao Shu) in the 5th century A.D. It came to Europe, known as "mala insana" (or "apple of madness"), which became "melanzana" in Italian, and μελιτζάνα in Greek.

GREEK CHEESE PASTRY (τυρόπιτες)

and

SPINACH AND CHEESE PASTRY

(σπανακόπιτες)

6th century A.D.

Pastry resembling these wonderful spinach and cheese pies, made with layer upon layer of the thinnest of pastry leaves, was described by the Roman writer Artemidorus in the 6th century A.D.

CHOCOLATE

7th century A.D.

This favorite first appeared in 7th Century A.D. Mayan inscriptions and in paintings on pots which showed the pouring of a (chocolate) drink to raise froth. The identification of the word "ka-ka-a" (cacao) in the inscriptions on these jars led to the breakthrough in the decipherment of Mayan phonetic writing. Linnaeus later referred to chocolate as "cacao theobroma" - "food of the gods."

BRIE

8th century A.D.

Charlemagne (8th century A.D.) praised the wonderful local cheese made by the monks of Meaux (France), by whom he was instructed to eat the entire cheese, rind and all.

MUSHROOMS

9th century A.D.

"Mushroom" was first recorded as an English word in the 9th century A.D., probably from the French "mousseron." (Later, in the *Grete Herbal* of 1526: "There be two maners of them, one maner is deedly and sleath them that eateth of them and be called tode stoles.")

COFFEE

10th century A.D.

The coffee plant originated in Ethiopia, and was first brought to Europe by traders through Venice. It was first mentioned in the work of Rhazes, a 10th-century A.D. Arabian physician; coffee berries were first eaten whole, and roasting of the beans began in the 13th century.

PIZZA, FOCACCIA

11th century A.D.

Descriptions of flat disks of bread dough, with various hearty toppings began to appear in the 11th century A.D.

SHERBET

12th century A.D.

The word "sherbet" comes from "sharab," the classical Arab term for a sweetened drink, usually alcoholic. By the 12th century A.D., the variant "sharbat" had come to mean the non-alcoholic type, often cooled by snow. The current meaning, implying a frozen fruit mix which one eats rather than drinks ("sorbetto" in Italian, "sorbet" in French) is fairly recent, i.e., 19th century.

FRUIT CAKE

13th century A.D.

This is a British invention, created after dried fruits began to be brought to England from Portugal and the Mediterranean in the 13th century A.D.

BULGHUR

14th century A.D.

This component of wheat was a staple in the Balkans by the 14th century A.D.; the wheat was parboiled, parched and ground coarsely, leaving the inner layers of bran. It is most commonly used now for a cold wheat salad known as "tabouli."

RAVIOLI

14th century A.D.

Francesco de Marco, of Prato, Italy, described in his letters (14th century A.D.) a dish which consisted of small cushions of pasta stuffed with cheese or meat.

PEANUTS

15th century A.D.

At the time of the travels of Christopher Columbus, Europeans first discovered "ground nuts," grown in Peru.

TOMATOES

16th century A.D.

Taking its name from the Aztec "tomatl," this New World fruit was brought to Seville early in the 16th century; it was at first thought by Europeans to be poisonous. Our own Dr. John H. Bayne (1804-1870), of Salubria in Prince George's County, is reputed to have introduced the tomato as an edible fruit in this area.

CASHEWS

16th century A.D.

These tasty nuts were first grown and harvested in Brazil, and described and taken by the Portuguese in the 16th century to the East Indies.

SCONES

16th century A.D.

The word "scones" was first seen in print in 1513 in a Scottish translation of a Dutch translation ("schoonbrot") of "*adorea liba*" in Vergil's *Aeneid*, Book VII, lines 109-110: "*instituuntque dapes et adorea liba per herbam subiciunt epulis . . . and they [Aeneas and his men] made ready for a feast with cakes of wheat set out along the grass . . .*"

CROISSANTS

17th century A.D.

There is a longstanding tradition that, when Vienna was seized by the Turks in 1683, a Viennese baker created a crescent-shaped pastry to symbolize the Turkish crescent, but the first real use of the word "croissant" was in Payen's *Des Substances Alimentaires* (1853).

CORNEBEEF

17th century A.D.

This term, describing beef preserved in brine, was first used by Robert Barton in his *Anatomy of Melancholy*, 1621 - "Beef, corned young, of an ox."

MERINGUE

17th century A.D.

This French term first appeared in print in Massiolot's *Le Cuisinier roial et bourgeois*, printed in Paris in 1691; instructions were given to beat egg whites with a whisk made of birch twigs. In England the delicacy came to be known as "snow," and was served with cream.

BROCCOLI

18th century A.D.

The term comes from the Italian for "little arms." It first appeared in English in Miller's *Garden Dictionary* in 1724.

HOLLANDAISE SAUCE

18th century A.D.

The term for this rich butter-and-egg sauce, presumably from a Netherlands tradition, first appeared in 1758 in Marin's *Dons de Comus*, in which instructions were given how to make the sauce.

COOKIES

18th century A.D.

Coming from the Dutch "koekje," the English word "cookie" first appeared in print in 1703. By the 19th century in England, "cookies" and "cherry bounce" were considered the correct fare to be served to visitors on New Year's Day (even though they might already have been surfeited "by plum cakes and outlandish liqueurs . . .")

EGGNOG

19th century A.D.

"Nogs" (usually containing ales) had been consumed long before this, and similar hearty beverages probably had the addition of eggs before the 19th century, but the earliest known use of the term "eggnog" came in *Brother Jonathan* (or *The New Englanders*) in 1825: "The eggnog had gone about rather freely . . ."

BROWNIES

19th century A.D.

The term "brownies," referring to this dense and luscious chocolate favorite, first appeared in the 1897 catalog of Sears, Roebuck and Company!

SPAM

20th century A.D.

This was a World War II era innovation, developed by the Hormel Company in 1937. At that time, Hormel announced a competition for suggestions of a catchy name, and a \$100 prize was given for the winning "SPAM," invented to connote "spiced ham."

Artillery Punch

1/4 lb. Green tea (in 2 quarts cold water)
1 c. lemon juice (bottled or fresh squeezed)
3 qt. Catawba wine
1 qt. Rum
1 qt. Brandy
1 qt. Rye whiskey
1 qt. Gin
1 lb. plus ½ c. brown sugar
1 can cherries (Queen Anne or dark pitted)
3 qt. Champagne

Mix tea and water; let stand over night. Strain if using loose tea. Add lemon juice, sugar, cherries, wine (except Champagne) and liquors. Let this stock rest for at least 2 weeks, stirring occasionally. When ready to serve, pour over block of ice and add champagne. The aging period is very important if the punch is to be smooth and mellow..

**Prince George's County Historical Society
Heritage Calendar 2001**

February

- 2&3 Concert- Newark Boys School Choir
Publick Playhouse 12 & 7 PM 301-277-1710 \$\$
- 3- Pride in North Brentwood Night/ North Brentwood Historical Society
North Brentwood community Center 8PM 301-864-0756 free
- 2- Hollywood Flyers *The Tuskegee Airmen*
College Park Aviation Museum 11 & 2 PM 301-864-6029 \$\$
- 4- Black History Month Reception
Montpelier Cultural Arts Center 2-4 PM 301-953-1993
- 4- An Afternoon with the Washington Dollologists
Beall-Dawson House 12:30-3:30 301-762-1492 \$\$
- 4- Candlelight Concert/ First Ladies of Maryland Exhibit
St. Barnabas Church-Leeland 4 PM offering
- 8-9- *Are You Ready My Sister?*
Publick Playhouse 10 & 12PM 301-277-1710 \$\$
- 9- Hollywood Flyers *The Great Waldo Pepper*
College Park Aviation Museum 11AM 301-864-6029 \$\$
- 9- African Story Teller- Malaya Rucker
Berwyn Heights Community Center 8PM 301-345-2080 free
- 10- Valentine Tea
Riversdale House Museum 1-4 6:30-8:30 301-864-0420 \$\$
- 11- Valentine Tea
Belair Mansion 4PM 301-809-3089 \$\$
- 11- Expressions of a People- Visual Art, Music, Theatre & Dance
Harmony Hall Regional Center 1-6 PM 301-203-6070 free
- 12- Historic Restoration in the Black Community - Hayden Blanc
Rollingcrest Community Center 12:30 pm 301-853-2005 free
- 13- Lecture "*Cameos & Estate Jewelry*"
Belair Mansion 7:30 PM 301-809-3089 \$\$
- 16- Valentine Tea
Montpelier Mansion 3PM 301-498-8486 \$\$
- 17&18- Winter Campaign Encampment
Marietta House Museum 301-464-5391 free
- 18- George Washington Musicales
Montpelier Mansion 2PM 301-953-1376 \$\$

- 18- Concert - Raymond Jackson & Salt of the Earth Strings
Newton White Mansion 3PM 301-454-1450 free
- 18- *The Living Legend of Benjamin Banneker*
Good luck Community Center 2 PM 301-582-1093 free
- 20&21- *Fourscore and Seven Years Ago*
Publick Playhouse 10 & 12 301-277-1710 \$\$
- 23- Hollywood Flyers *The Bridges of Toko-Ri*
College Park Aviation Museum 11AM 301-864-6029 \$\$
- 23- An Evening with Negro League Legends
William Beanes Community Center 7PM 301-568-7719 free
- 24- *Gospel Extravaganza*
Kettering/Largo community Center 7:30 PM 301-390-8390 \$\$
- 24- Cabin Fever Day
National Capital Trolley Museum 12-5 PM 301-384-6352 \$\$

JOIN THE SOCIETY BRING A FRIEND

The Prince George's County Historical Society is always interested in new members and offers a wide range of benefits to those who join us. Dues are modest, there are volunteer opportunities galore, and we give the satisfaction of a lifetime of learning about our County and its rich history. Join us, and bring a friend!

Member Category	Annual Dues
Member/Family	\$25
Sustaining	\$50
Institutional Member	\$50
Life Member	\$300
Additional Contribution _____	

Please provide the following information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Volunteer Interest: _____

THANK YOU

Please make checks payable to **PGCHS** and send to
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Riverdale, MD 20738-0014

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HOURS OF OPERATION

Library Saturdays 12 - 4 PM
and during special events

Call 301-464-0590

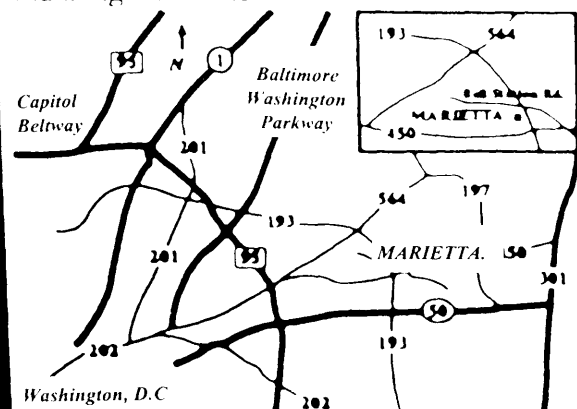
Marietta Tours -Friday, 11 - 3, Sunday,
12 - 4 - and by appointment -
Information 301-464-5291

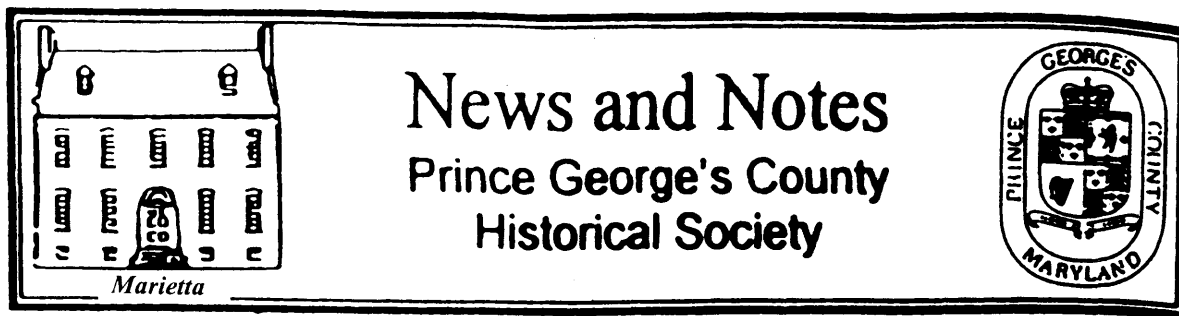
THE SOCIETY GIFT SHOP

Features a wide selection of books, gifts,
toys and small antiques Open Friday,
Saturday and Sunday, 12 -4 PM and
during special events. Call 301-464-
0590

LOCATION OF THE SOCIETY

The Society is located at Marietta, 5626
Bell Station Road, in Glenn Dale, MD, off
Route 193, near Route 450. This is a
facility of the Maryland National Park and
Planning Commission





March/April 2001

Our 49th Year

XXX Number 2

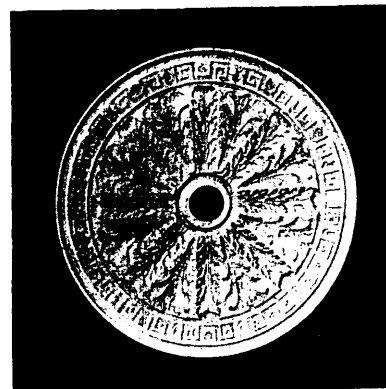
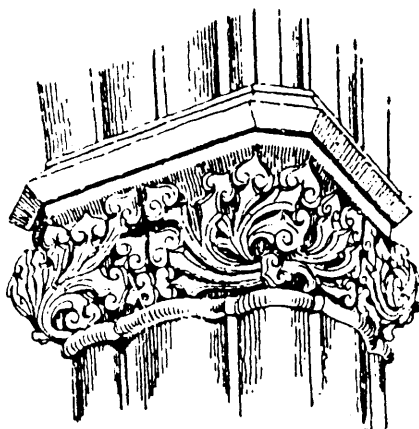
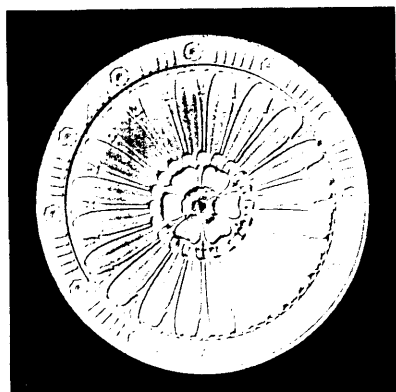
St. George's Day 2001 features

Giannetti's Studio

In 1981, Christopher Weeks wrote an article called "*Preserving An Old World Heritage*" for **Historic Preservation** magazine. He described the history of Giannetti's Studio and the creations of brothers John and Bob whose work will also be featured at our annual St. George's Day celebration to be held at Ascension Catholic Church in Bowie.

The following year the Hon. Steny H. Hoyer of Maryland included in the *Congressional Record* (September 28, 1982, p. E4453) remarks entitled: *The Giannetti Brothers Preserve the National's Past*. His remarks concluded with the following statement: "... artists such as John and Bob Giannetti deserve our praise, our support and our recognition. With their outstanding workmanship, we can remain confident that the artistry of the past remains with us, which can only bring continuity to our lives as we approach the new wonders of the 21st century."

And then in the Fall of 1997, **Leonardo Varone**, a young Italian from the Giannetti family's Tuscan hill town of Bagni di Lucca submitted his final paper for Prof. David Fogel's class in Historic Preservation at the University of Maryland. It was entitled: *Decorative Plasterwork in America and The Legacy of a Long-Standing Tradition of Craftsmanship: The Giannetti's Studio*. Although we were unable to obtain the author's permission, we hope he will not object to us sharing parts of this important study with our readers.



Legacy from a Tuscan village

The incredibly fervent activity in building construction during the first decades of the 20th century soon required the employment of thousands of artists and craftsmen, who were involved in frantic activities. Most of these 'new artisans of court' were recruited from the Old Continent: hundreds of crowded ferries left the shores of England and Italy carrying elders and young people full of hopes for the future and dreams of fortune. The job was plentiful, and sometimes entire families abandoned their houses and native towns to experience the American dream.

The story repeated several times. And the same story probably happened when the uncle of Gregory Giannetti came to Bagni di Lucca, a small town between the Tuscan hills near Lucca, recruiting young and old people for an 'American job.' Animated by dream of glory and prosperity, Gregory Giannetti left his family and his native places taking with him few samples of his youthful works and, above all, the precious lesson of several generations of craftsmen.

The two brothers, Bob and John, are the most recent recipients of a legacy of craftsmanship handed to them by their father, Gregory. Following Giannetti tradition, they learned the art 'at their father's knee.' Since the mid-18th century, the Giannetti family has passed the hand-worked tradition of molding and sculpting plaster, stucco, and wood into beautiful designs to succeeding generations. The details of the family legacy and its involvements in the art of working plaster are a bit 'unclear,' because Mr. Giannetti used to tell the old stories a little bit differently each time.

In 1910, when he was only 14, with his uncle he [Gregory L. Giannetti] immigrated to United States; he was imbued with the ancient skills, and was full of dreams and hopes for the future. Mr. Giannetti had 'a natural sense of how to use plaster,' their sons recall. 'Hidden in the Tuscan hills, his ancestors had been practicing the craft for centuries. It seems like the time has being stopped in these magic places. Hundreds of small workshops specialized in hand-made ornaments, stone and wood carving, and all kinds of craftsmanship can still be found there today. He brought with him the techniques and skills for making decorative plaster and sculpture.'

Plaster was considered in history a 'shortcut to grandeur:' its original function was to imitate stone and marble, eliminating the difficult quarrying and transport of heavy stone blocks. The plasterwork has always flourished in Washington, with all its grand public and government buildings, embassy mansions, hotels and wealthy houses; and now it seems to become stronger and popular then ever. When the barons of the Gilded Age built here their homes, they enriched their interiors with delicate and precious 'waves of molded plasterworks;' many details were richly painted, merbleized, and gilded, and a lot of this plasterwork still survives.

When he [Gregory Giannetti] went to New York, America was experiencing the age of ornament: the great movie theaters, palaces, wealthy houses, and government buildings built in the 1920s and 1930s gave him plenty of work. He worked with other *figuristi* modeling, casting, and selling religious figures. Then he went back to Italy during the World War I; when he was returned, he lived in New York and Philadelphia. For several years, Mr. Giannetti worked for firms and clients across the country. In 1926, he moved to Washington and remained here for the rest of his life; his first job in Washington was with Lombard & Ludwig, an enterprise that made architectural ornaments. In 1935, after the death of one of the partners of the company, he started his own business, Giannetti's Studio: it was the only firm of architectural sculptors in the Washington area at that time. In 1961, he expanded and moved the business to Brentwood, where it still is today. At that time, the Giannetti's studio was one of the only two enterprises on the East Coast in this business; today, several firms have been established.

Probably, the American eagle made him famous: he was nicknamed the "Eagle man" of Washington. Mr. Giannetti was considered an authority in sculpting and modeling eagles and United States seals, displayed in government buildings and US embassies all over the world: among these hundreds, the Presidential Seal and the largest sculptured federal eagle in the United States displayed in the lobby of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. on 17th Street NW, Washington, D.C. Nevertheless, going around through the Capital's streets, and from every corner, proud statues, elaborated friezes, and elegant cornices are the very witnesses of his noble draft. 'He did expert work,' as his son John Giannetti reminds, 'and always maintained the quality of it.' Mr. Giannetti made plaster models, moldings, and casts of sculptures, bas relief, ornaments, and architectural details; some of them later were translated in stone, bronze, or marble; sometimes, he would paint them. After more than 60 years of glorious career and achievements, Mr. Giannetti retired in the mid-1970s and since then the family company has been operated by his two sons Bob and John Giannetti.

The personalities of the two brothers are different, and complete their roles. Bob Giannetti is more the artist and designer; he has spent much of his spare time in formal study of sculpture and art, looking through old pattern books in search of the clues to the styles they recreate. John Giannetti is more the businessman and the finisher, directing and coordinating their crew in the installation of their products. He is fully involved in preservation: from the board of several preservation organizations (he is a Trustee of Maryland Historical Trust, of the Prince George's County Historical and Cultural Trust, and of the Prince George's County Historical Society), to the site of his 1840 historic home listed in the National Register of Historic Places; he has been working for several years removing layers of painting or wallpaper, restoring cornices, and adding medallions (consistent with the style of the house, naturally). They both have a business administration degree from the University of Maryland; and they both served for several years as officers in the Marine Corps. They have studied

architectural drawing, sculpturing casting and design at universities and have visited palaces and villas in Europe.

The father never encouraged his sons to follow him into the field of plasterwork: 'He didn't feel his work was prestigious enough for anyone who went to college,' Bob Giannetti recalls. But then, their father had to face an emergency: one of their most prestigious commissions, the restoration and extension of the East Wing of the US Capitol, had to be finished in time for the John F. Kennedy inauguration in 1961. The most reliable artisans were his sons, who had worked for years in the studio during the week ends or summer vacations: 'If we were going to school Monday, Wednesday and Friday,' John Giannetti recalls 'then we worked here on Tuesday and Thursday.' But it was only in 1964, when their father landed the task of restoring the Ford's Theater in Washington, DC, that the two brothers definitively decided to join the 'business.' John Giannetti recalls: 'Dad really needed help, and I was happy to help him.' Bob Giannetti says: 'Now, the more we do it, the more we enjoy it.'

The remarkable skills of the two brothers are witnesses of the deep pride they have in their work and the respect they have for the long tradition and continuity of their family craft. 'This is a craft, not an art. But among the craft, it is one of the more poetic,' they say. 'You can't teach someone how to do this. They have to know inside, then someone can bring it out. I am not saying you have to be Italian, but you do have to have a little bit of soul.' As committed craftsmen, 'We cherish,' both brothers say 'the feeling that we are part of the history that we are preserving. We are just keeping the ancient tradition alive... When you do the work, you often can feel the presence of the old craftsmen. It is fantastic to feel that we are there to save what they have done.'

The Giannetti brothers take very seriously their job; they seem to get a great pleasure especially from the excellent work done by their assistants and apprentices. They pride themselves on their ability to imitate another's hand, to recreate than make anew, to honor the artist long gone whose work has been remembered and revealed even if his name has been forgotten. The two brothers are so familiar with the plasterworks, especially of the area, that [they] often help the home owners to date their houses from the characteristics of the decorations. It is above all this 'sense of history and tradition' that makes Giannetti's studio one of the most charming and unique enterprise in their business.

Leonardo Varone goes on to describe the process which we are only excerpting here:

A very simple formula has produced thousands of fascinating artistic plasterworks: 'All it is, is plaster of Paris and water!' Bob Giannetti always remembers. 'It's an interesting, fun business: you start from nothing and work up to something and you can see what you've done. You get a lot of pleasure out of it.' According to what Mr. Giannetti used to say, materials and methods have changed no more than ten percent since the days of Michelangelo. The 'multi-step process' of plasterwork casting is almost remained the same over the centuries: from a model, based on a drawing, a flexible mold is taken; plaster is

**Prince George's County Historical Society
Heritage Calendar 2001**

April

- 1- Candlelight Concert "The Ashford Trio"
St. Barnabas Church 4PM 301-249-9671 \$\$

- 3- Lecture "C.B. Calvert and the Founding of the Maryland Agricultural College"
Riversdale Mansion 7 PM 301-864-0420 \$\$

- 10- Lecture "Slave Housing in Maryland: Life Beyond the Mansion"
Riversdale Mansion 7 PM 301-864-0420 \$\$

- 10- Lecture "Chatelaines"
Belair Mansion 7:30 PM 301-809-3088 \$\$

- 14- Country House Garden Party
Mount Airy 3-6 PM 301-856-9656 \$\$

- 17- Lecture "The House of Plummers"
Riversdale Mansion 7 PM 301-864-0420 \$\$

- 18- Living History "A Conversation with Francis Scott Key"
Montpelier Mansion 7:30 PM 301-953-1376 \$\$

- 21- Colonial Kids Archeology Day
St. Mary's City 301-862-0980 \$\$

- 21/22- Living History- "Marching Through Time"
Marietta House Museum 11-5 301-464-5291 \$\$

- 22- St. George's Day Dinner
Prince George's County Historical Society 1 PM 301-464-0590 \$\$

- 22- Lecture "The Wright Brothers and Early Aviation"
College Park Aviation Museum 2PM 301-864-6029 \$\$

- 22- Tour "18th Century Architecture"
Billingsley House Museum 12-4 PM 301-699-2544 \$\$

- 24- Lecture " Old World Master Paintings at Riversdale"
Riversdale Mansion 7 PM 301-864-0420 \$\$

- 27/29- Civil War Conference "Murder at Ford's Theatre, Act I"
Surratt House Museum 301-868-1121 \$\$

poured in, and after it dries, the mold is peeled and the cast is ready. Sometimes, these casts are made of particular materials that simulate natural stones; other times, they are used as a model for making stone or marble reproductions. The evolution of the old method, to which the Giannettis take inspiration, started from a clay mold; then, a carved wooden mold evolved into a temporary melted glue mold: this latter is the precedent of the flexible rubber mold used today.

Mr. Varone's description of the Giannetti's Studio related to the Ascension Catholic Church is particularly relevant to our current discussion.

Originally erected in 1893 in Bowie, the church was completely destroyed by a fire in 1977. It began its most recent transformation only during the last five years: the rebuilt church had polished, plain oak wood beams and large archways; stain glass windows were later added, along with paintings collected to decorate the plain walls. Then, in 1992, the pastor Januszkiewicz, in order to recreate a more traditional Catholic atmosphere, called the Giannettis and said: 'I want it to look like an old Gothic church.' Now, angels and cherubs are displayed onto the red walls; white plaster columns support a Gothic-like blue sky ceiling adorned by thousands of stars, cast ornaments, medallions, buttons and rosette.

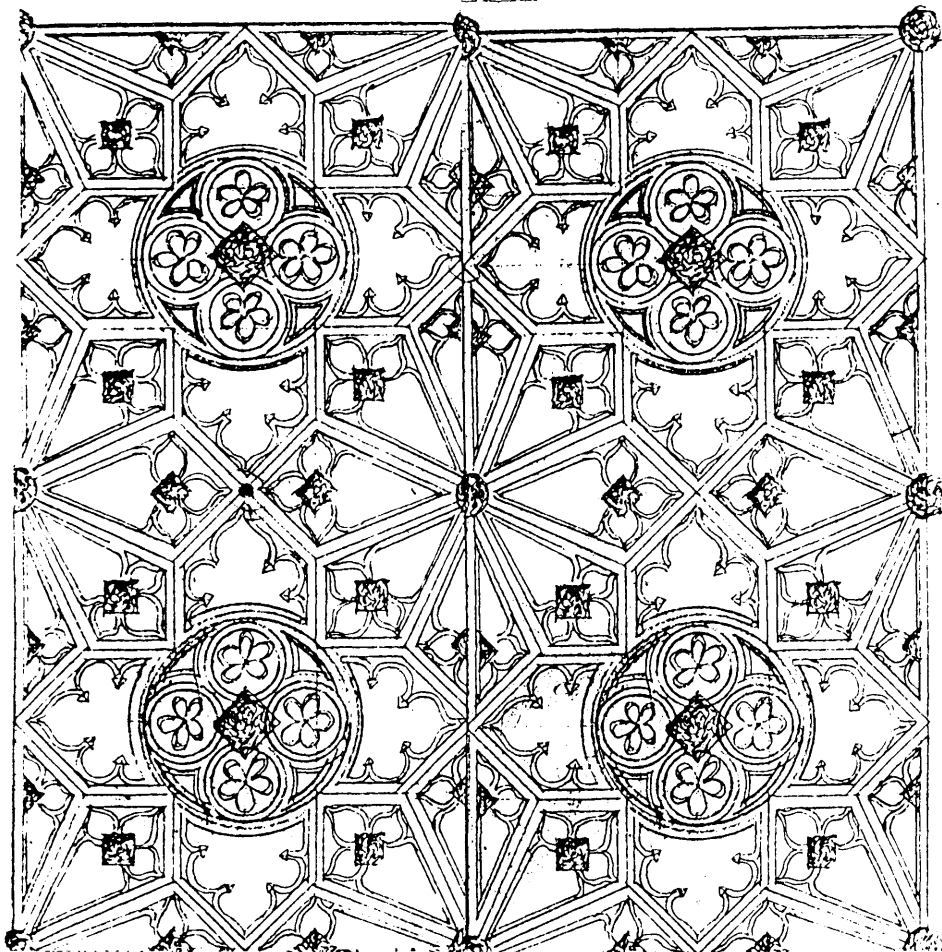
The ... restoration is part of the 2.3 million project of reconstruction after the fire; the work required an enormous amount of time, great dedication, and a never ending patience. According to John Giannetti, 'the hardest thing was to come up with the right design: it took two months to do it.' The design, with its gold-leaf wheat and grape moldings, represents the body and the blood of Christ; the golden dove about the altar signifies the Holy Spirit. 'There is no average time limit one can put on this kind of work: one gets out of the construction and into art.' This make-up work at large scale is something that really goes beyond the usual canons. The Giannettis, in what we can surely call a true teamwork, covered all the linear, plain, cold wooden beams of the structure with warm, artistic plaster shaped in a way that recalls the typical composed Gothic columns and ceiling ribs. The ceiling vaults are divided by plaster ribs into panels representing a night starry sky, in one section of the church, or a rich pattern of geometric floral ornaments in the other ones; the colors used are a deep blue for the sky, and a delicate light blue contrasting with the white plaster cornices and the gilding of the edges.

Most of these cast panels and ornaments were refined and colored at the ground level on the site, then put in place onto the vaulting. The elements were then glued and nailed, and the joints between the panels patiently covered with plaster and colored: the final result is a perfect homogeneity, and also a close inspection cannot detect the presence of the small nails and of the joints. A lot of people come to the church just to appreciate this ornate Neo-Gothic masterpiece of artistic craftsmanship: Everything was hand-crafted and hand-painted, John Giannetti recalls, 'It was done the exact way the old cathedrals were built.' In fact, like the Gothic cathedral was the result of the work of an entire town, hundreds of congregation's parishioners helped priming and painting the walls

and ceilings of the church, also to keep the cost down; furthermore, they contributed financially, and organized fund-raising activities. As an individual of the community said: 'When one sees it, one thinks of the saint ... it sets an atmosphere for prayer,' within a familiar place built with the precious help of an entire community.

And lastly, John provided us with a list of Giannetti's Studio current projects including work on the Capitol Building (Senate), replacement of a missing capital at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, restoration of a ceiling in an 1872 historic house in Upper Marlboro, plaster crown moulding and special ceiling work at Merrywood, childhood home of Jacqueline Kennedy in McLean, and five custom fireplace mantels, in the early Renaissance style, for an eight million dollar residence in Middleburg, Virginia. And to perpetuate the *Legacy from a Tuscan village*, John proudly announces that his "son Gregory has joined the business and intends to carry it on "

Congratulations to all the Giannettis, past and present, and we look forward to sharing their legacy with our members at the St. George's Day award celebration on Sunday, April 22, 2001 at Ascension Catholic Church in Bowie. After dinner John Giannetti will lead a tour of the Church and point out and explain some of the details of its fine ornamental plasterwork.



*Prince George's County
Historical Society*

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Please indicate: ☐ New ☐ Renewal

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____ I am also interested in helping the Society as a volunteer. Please contact me regarding volunteer opportunities.

____ For membership in the **Maryland Historical Society**, include an additional \$30.00 for individual, or \$40.00 for family.

Our operating support comes from your dues and contributions. All contributions qualify for tax deduction. We appreciate your support.

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301-464-0590

12/99

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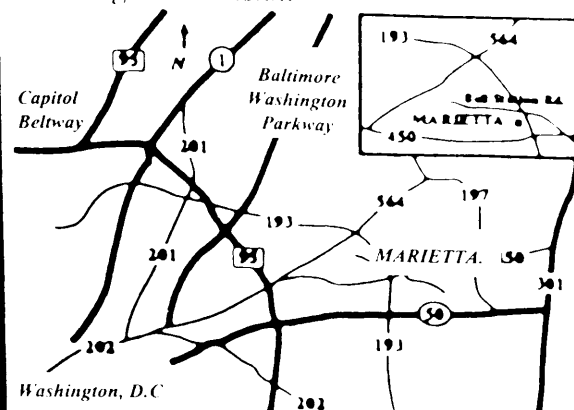
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Information 301-464-5291

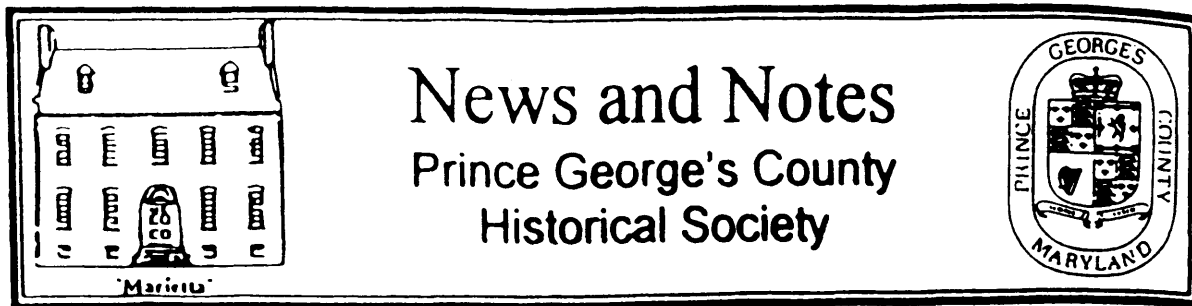
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LOCATION OF THE SOCIETY

The Society is located at Marietta, 5626
Bell Station Road, in Glenn Dale, MD, off
Route 193, near Route 450. This is a
facility of the Maryland National Park and
Planning Commission.





May/June 2001

Our 49th Year

XXX Number 3



BOOKS TO READ
and buy
and
PLACES TO VISIT

SEE DETAILS BELOW



So many books, magazines, and articles to read; so many places to visit and so little time! Nevertheless, we hereby add to your list.

We have just discovered ***You should have been here yesterday: A Guide to Cultural Documentation in Maryland*** by Elaine Eff. Produced by the Maryland Historical Trust Press in 1995, it is a charming and enlightened plea for cultural documentation. We interpret that to mean save and document everything or almost everything! This is particularly evident at the Library of the Prince George's County Historical Society where Fred DeMarr saved printed materials, photographs, videos, artifacts, portraits, etc. etc. etc. Ms. Eff expresses these ideas best in her introduction: "As part of a study of painted screens, a folk art unique to Baltimore, I conducted a rigorous block-by-block inventory each summer. The second year I returned to what I had previously noted as the apotheosis of screen art: a two-story Formstone-covered row house with every window and door outfitted in a full-length pastoral cottage scene painted on ancient, wood-framed screens. But no screens were visible. In fact, the house in question now sported new vinyl windows. Certain that I had made some error, I inquired of a gentleman who emerged from the house, 'Am I mistaken or had there recently been spectacular screens here?' To which he replied, 'You should have been here yesterday. We just threw those old things out with the trash.' " *Our plea to our members is to save those materials particularly related to Prince George's County.*

Another good read: *Under A Wing* by Reeve Lindbergh, youngest daughter of Charles and Anne Morrow Lindbergh. The *College Park Aviation Museum* hosted Reeve Lindbergh last May for a lecture and book signing. "We grew up as the children of celebrities, but because our parents worked so hard to remove themselves from celebrity life, our understanding of what that meant was fluid and imperfect. It remains uncertain and idiosyncratic even today. We Lindberghs still know ourselves best as a tribe: close knit, self-enclosed, and self-defining, always prepared to be besieged by invisible forces upwelling from the past: the famous flight, the kidnapping, the controversy over our father's isolationist stance just before the Second World War." Also, if you have not yet visited the Aviation Museum, you *must*.

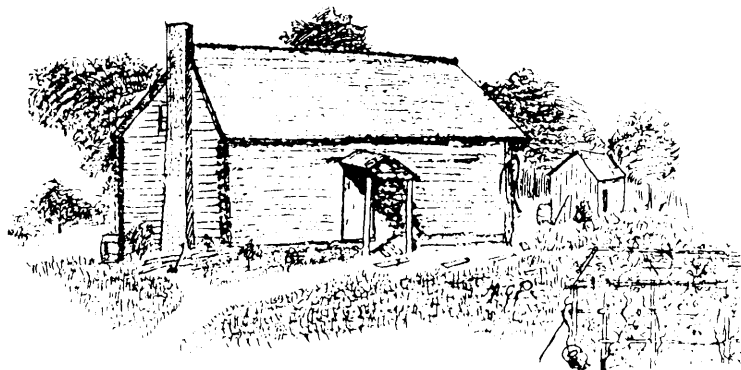
Recommended books issued by the National Trust for Historic Preservation include: *Gardens and Landscapes of the National Trust for Historic Preservation* and *Keeping Time: The History and Theory of Preservation in America* by William Murtagh. These and other preservation materials are available from the Historic Trust, 1785 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036 or better still *visit a National Trust property*.

Many important publications concerning Prince George's County are also available from the Historical Society as demonstrated by our new flier which appears in this publication. Also, our Gift Shop at Marietta includes still more books and treasures. Come and visit *and better still VOLUNTEER to assist in the shop by calling Stella Uber at 301-345-9797*. Come and visit and BUY at our *Book Sale on Saturday, June 16th*, from noon until 4:00pm. Jointly sponsored by the Prince George's County Genealogical Society and the Historical Society, we will sell new and gently used books from both organizations. Come and see us!!

Another read and visit combination is:

Out of the Depths or The Triumph of the Cross by Nellie Arnold Plummer

Born a slave in 1860, Nellie Arnold Plummer was the daughter of Adam Francis Plummer, a slave on the Riversdale plantation of Charles Benedict Calvert. Adam Plummer learned to read and write from a local preacher and passed these important skills to his children. This was unusual for this period, but it is the key to this remarkable document of family and community; the trials, hardships and triumphs of the Plummer family through slavery into freedom. This family lore was preserved in diaries and correspondence.



ADAM F. PLUMMER'S OWN HOME.

Built during the Summer and Fall of 1870. Logs were cut and hewed on the spot.

He named the place (10 acres) "Mount Rose" (1870-1888.)

Sketched by Dr. H. V. Q. Plummer.

In 1868, Adam Plummer bought ten acres of land near Riversdale and built a four room house where the family lived for many years. Nellie Arnold Plummer grew up to become an educator in Maryland and Washington, DC for forty-five years. **Out of the Depths** was originally self-published in 1927 and has been re-published as a part of the African - American Women Writers Project.

All who have lived in our county will find it a fascinating account of familiar names and places.

*And then visit: The **Riversdale Dependency** which was featured at the 2001 Prince George's County Historic Preservation Week Reception.*



Celebrate Flag Day on **Thursday, June 14** by first, displaying the flag to recognize that on June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress adopted the design for a new flag and then visiting **Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine.**

“This later 18th century star-shaped fort is world famous as the birthplace of the United States’ national anthem. The guardian of Baltimore’s harbor, it was the valiant defense of Fort McHenry by American forces during a British attack on September 13-14, 1814, that inspired 35 year old poet-lawyer, Francis Scott Key to write ‘the Star-Spangled Banner.’ ”

“Following the Battle of Baltimore during the War of 1812, the fort never again came under attack. However, it remained an active military post off and on for the next 100 years.”

"It became an area administered by the National Park Service in 1933, two years after Key's poem became this country's national anthem. Of all the areas in the National Park System, Fort McHenry is the only one designated a national monument and historic shrine." (From their website)

Field trip on Saturday, June 30 to Giannetti's Studio

We are still getting rave reviews about our recent St. George's Day program, and in particular the tour of Ascension Catholic Church led by John and Bob Giannetti. Many people have told us how much they enjoyed viewing the outstanding ornamental plaster work in the church, and listening to John and Bob tell the story of the project. Several have asked about visiting the Giannetti Studio to learn more about their ornamental plaster design. We are happy to announce that John and Bob have graciously invited the Historical Society to visit the studio (3806 38th Street in Brentwood) on **Saturday afternoon, June 30, beginning at 2:00**. Please call the Sweetings at 301-927-4514 to let us know whether you will be able to attend.

And yet another suggested visit: ***Within These Walls***, a new permanent exhibition at the National Museum of American History, 12th and Constitution, NW, Washington, D.C. The centerpiece of the exhibition is a 250-year-old house from Ipswich, Massachusetts, which was moved piece by piece to the Smithsonian facility as recommended by a local historical society. According to the May 17, Home section of *The Washington Post* "Visitors can peer through openings in the restored Georgian facade to glimpse period rooms representative of the 1700s, 1840s and 1940s, settings chosen to shed light on colonial America, slavery and abolitionism, immigration during the industrial age and World War II."

With all the previous suggestions, we feel we have enriched our own personal "***cultural documentation***" so fervently espoused by Elaine Eff.

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***Prince George's County:
A Pictorial History***

by Alan Virta

Revised 1991 Updated Edition.

Hardcover 308 pages. \$42.95

The history and essence of Prince George's County come alive in words and pictures in this beautiful collector's edition. Written in a fascinating narrative with more than 350 photographs, maps and illustrations many in full color and previously unpublished.

Calvert of Maryland

James Otis Kaler's 1910 publication.

Reprint 1991. Hardcover 166 pages.

Pen and ink illustrations. \$6.95

This fact-based novel shows the home life of the colonists from a child's viewpoint. This story is told in the first person by young George Calvert, godson of the first Lord Baltimore, George Calvert.



***Atlas of Prince George's
County, Maryland 1861***

Drawn and published by Simon J. Martenet

Reprint 1966. Soft-cover 32 pages. \$10.00

Atlas was adapted from Martenet's map of Prince George's County, Maryland. Indexed.

***Atlas of Fifteen Miles Around Washington
including the County of Prince George
Maryland***

by C. M. Hopkins Reprint 1975.

Soft-cover 47 pages. \$7.00

Compiled, drawn & published from actual surveys by C.M. Hopkins 1878. Indexed.

Out of the Past

Prince Georgians and their Land

by R. Lee Van Horn Reprint 1996.

Hardcover 422 pages. \$20.00

Chronicle of everyday life in Prince George's County from the time of it's founding in 1696 until the beginning of the Civil War from information gleaned from public records, newspapers and private papers.

Journey Through Time

***A Pictorial History of the Prince
George's County Police Department***

by Lt. Dennis Campbell Printed 1991.

Hardcover 304 pages. \$29.00

A history of the county police department covering over 200 years. Indexed.



***Prince George's County Maryland
Indexes of Church Registers 1686-1885***

*Volume 1 Protestant Episcopal Church,
King George's Parish & Queen Anne's
Parish.*

by Helen W. Brown Reprint 2000.

Soft-cover 200 pages. \$18.00



***Prince George's County Maryland
Indexes of Church Registers 1686-1885***

*Volume 2 Protestant Episcopal Church,
St. Paul's Parish & Prince George's Parish.*

by Helen W. Brown Reprint 2000.

Soft-cover 196 pages. \$18.00

Tricentennial Cook Book

Compiled & edited by Dorothy Rainwater and the Tricentennial Celebration Committee
Printed 1996. Soft-cover 150 pages spiral bound. \$10.00

Contains recipes collected from county residents as part of the tricentennial celebration.



Marietta

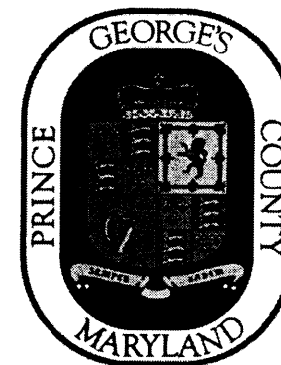
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Marietta

**PRINCE
GEORGE'S
COUNTY
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**



PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE

**P.O. Box 14
RIVERDALE
MARYLAND
20703-0014**

St. George's Day 2001 Selected Award Winners

Frances Hughes Glendening is a native Marylander. Although she was raised in Cumberland, she found her way to Prince George's County, where she earned undergraduate and graduate degrees at the University of Maryland, and a law degree from Catholic University in Washington. As first lady of Prince George's County, and later of the state of Maryland, Mrs. Glendening has continued to hold down a full-time job as chief legal advisor to the Federal Elections Commission, while working actively in such efforts as hospice, mental health and suicide prevention, women's issues and history, and most notably the arts. She chaired the planning committee for the publication in 1994 of *Women of Achievement in Prince George's County*, and has brought outstanding art exhibits to the State House and Government House in Annapolis.

It was Mrs. Glendening's project, assembling the premier collection of her predecessor's portraits ("The First Ladies of Maryland"), that inspired our own exhibit last year of "First Ladies of Maryland from Prince George's County," and we were delighted to welcome her as guest speaker at the opening of that exhibit last June. Also over the last two years, she has chaired the Governor's Task Force on the Preservation and Enhancement of Maryland's Heritage Resources. Five months ago the Task Force issued a report with important ramifications for historical and cultural organizations, all aimed at preserving and enhancing the historic properties and documentary resources that our Society itself has long worked to preserve. The PGCHS appreciates her significant work toward many of our common goals, and presents

this St. George's Day Award to Frances Hughes Glendening.

Susan Neff and Robert Hanisch bought a Victorian house in Glenn Dale in 1987. They soon discovered that this handsome little frame house had been built in the 1890s for Augusta Caroline DuVal, great-granddaughter of our own Justice Gabriel Duvall. Miss DuVal, who died unexpectedly in 1896 when her house was still brand new, had had a distinguished career in education in the District of Columbia.

Within a few years of their purchase, Susan and Bob began a series of repairs of their house, painstakingly removing the synthetic shingle to reveal the German wood siding underneath, patching both siding and porch trim where needed. Later, they began to plan a rear addition. Working with preservation staff and the Historic Preservation Commission, they designed this wing, which although not visible from the front of the property, added significant living space to their small home, but was completely compatible with the original structure in style and materials. Today their house, set back on a wooded lot, creates a very attractive feature at the north end of Bell Station Road, a nice balance to the older Marietta at the other end of the road. For their work in restoring and caring for this Duvall family house, the Prince George's County Historical Society is pleased to present to Susan Neff and Bob Hanisch this St. George's Day award.

Andy and Sondra Wallace of Mount Lubentia. The Wallaces have already won a St. George's Day award for their restoration of Black Walnut Thicket, in the Baden area of southern Prince George's County - a wreck when they bought it, it was a showplace by the time they finished with it, and a real success story. But it was not

enough for the Wallaces. Not too long after Black Walnut Thicket was finished, they saw and fell in love with Mount Lubentia, which was then on the market. Mount Lubentia was a very different kind of building, an 18th-century brick plantation house with outstanding Federal-style decorative detail, which had passed down through many generations of the same family: the Magruders, Bealls and Bowies. Mount Lubentia was essentially in structurally sound condition, not drastically changed from its original form, but worn and gray with years. Andy and Sondra could see themselves devoting the rest of their lives to the restoration of this gem, and they simply **had** to have it! They were the perfect match, for the owner was at that time in search of that rare and unusual owner who was willing to take on the burdens of an old house, and shower it with hard work as well as infinite care and devotion.

Andy and Sondra have done just this - Andy has worked steadily, carefully removing and painstakingly restoring by hand many individual pieces of the trim, removing dozens of layers of paint to reveal glorious detail - and having plastering and painting done on the interior, as well as essential repairs, such as roof and chimney work, on the exterior. Although the work will probably never be finished, Mount Lubentia is now restored to magnificent and truly beautiful condition, and is eminently livable as well. Already it has been the scene of one of the Society's most delightful "*Prince of a County*" affairs. Congratulations, Andy and Sondra; you have contributed immeasurably to the heritage of Prince George's County.

John Walton. I first met John Walton as he peered over the edge of a trench - I was down in that trench working on the bicentennial archaeology project at

Belair (just down the road). John, as coordinator of Park & Planning's new History Division, was of course interested in work involving any of the County's historic sites. Just a few years out of college at that time, John had undertaken research on historic places in both Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, but had consistently promoted the cause of Prince George's, and had just gotten the go-ahead to establish a separate History Division for our county, as part of the bi-county Park and Planning Commission. Beginning with the preservation and dedication of the Surratt House in 1976, John's new History Division oversaw the historic structures reports on all the county-owned historic sites, provided research support for the development and establishment of the Historic Preservation Program, the establishment of the Black History program, the archaeology program, the first critical needs study, all the time providing support for the restoration and interpretation of the County's important Historic Sites. Although over a quarter century, the History Division has undergone several reorganizations, and its various elements now operate from several venues, their very visible success is in large part the result of John's early work.

John retired from the Park & Planning Commission late last year after 25 years, and will devote much of his time to the maintenance and interpretation of His Lordship's Kindness through the Walton Family Foundation. In appreciation for his devotion to Prince George's county history, and the long-term accomplishments of some of the work he initiated, the PGCHS gratefully presents this St. George's Day Award to John J. Walton, Jr.

*Editor's note: All of the remarks quoted above were prepared by **Historian Susan Pearl** and were delivered at the ceremony.*

Prince George's County
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Marietta House Museum
Calendar of Events
June-December, 2001

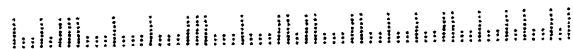
- June 9-10 *Roman Days.* Legionaries demonstrate armor, battle tactics, camp life. Educational activities, vendors. 10 am-4pm \$2
- July 22 & 29 *Sunday Summer Fun.* 19th c. activities and crafts for children K-6th grade. 2 pm.
- Aug. 5 & 12 Reservations required. \$2 per session.
(Activities will include: an ice cream social, household chores, African games, nature walk, crafts. Call for schedule of activities and to register for 1 or all 4 sessions.)
- Sept. 7 *Evening Candlelight Tour.* Guided tour of the mansion by soft candlelight and light refreshment. 8 pm. Reserv. req. \$3 /A
- Sept. 15-16 *Roman Legion XX.* Learn about Authentic Roman soldiers life, attire, battle tactics and weaponry.
10 am-4pm, \$2.
- Oct. 5 *Evening Candlelight Tour.* (As above)
- Oct. 13-14 *Hastings Medieval Faire.* Annual Markland reenactment of the Battle of Hastings and Stanford Bridge, living history camp, music, crafts, entertainment. Food and period vendors. 11 am-5pm \$5 /A, \$2/C
- Oct. 27 *Campfire and Storytelling.* Enjoy marshmallows, cookies, and cider, storytelling and scavenger hunt.
7 pm. \$2.
- Nov. 2 *Evening Candlelight Tour.* (As above.)
- Nov. 3-4 *17th Va. CSA Civil War Encampment.* Depicts camp life for the Civil War soldier.
12 noon-4pm. Free.
- Nov. 10-11 *"Under the Sea" Tea.* Enjoy tea while surrounded by creatures from the deep and characters from *Sign of the Seahorse*.
4 pm each day. Reserv. Req.
\$12/A \$8/C (ages 4-12).
- Dec. 7, 8, 9 *Candlelight Tours.* Sights and sounds of the season resonate throughout the Mansion. Federal, Civil War and Victorian era decorations. 6-8:30 pm \$4/A \$2/C

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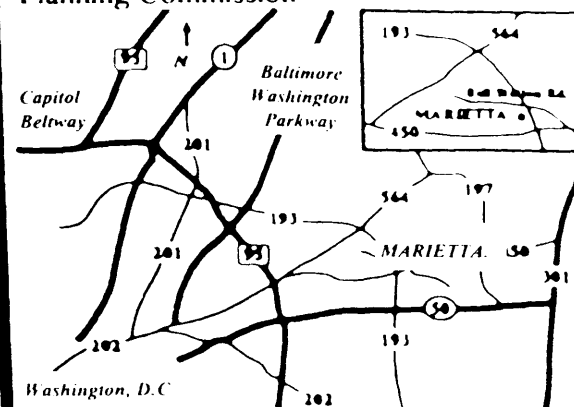
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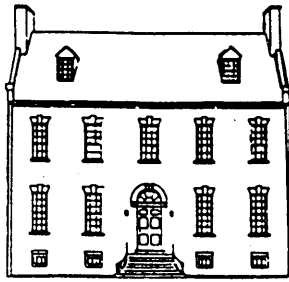
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Bell Station Road, in Glenn Dale, MD, off
Route 193, near Route 450 This is a
facility of the Maryland National Park and
Planning Commission





"Marietta"

News and Notes

Prince George's County Historical Society



July/August 2001

Our 49th Year

XXX Number 4

THE GLORIOUS FOURTH OF JULY

This year we celebrate the 225th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence - it seems impossible to believe that the bicentennial was 25 years ago!

It is also the 275th Anniversary of the death of two of America's greatest heroes and Presidents - John Adams and Thomas Jefferson who both died on July 4, 1826. Jefferson is, of course, the one most of us remember best - partially because of the Mt. Rushmore tribute and the Jefferson Memorial in the Nation's Capital. Adams is the lesser known. But there are those who would change that - and bring recognition to this Hero of America.

On Flag day (June 14) 2001, *The Wall Street Journal* included an article entitled "**Adams: Persistent, Principled, Patriotic and Unrecognized.**" We quote:

*The setting this week was perfect: With the east front of the House of Representatives in the background and two of the nation's most eminent historians present to pay homage, there sat huge portraits of the honorees: **John and Abigail Adams.***

The occasion was the formal launch of a move to appropriately honor and celebrate the country's second president, who was a crucial force behind the creation of America.

*The catalyst is David McCullough's magnificent new biography of Adams, following the superb work of fellow historian Joseph Ellis. They were both at the Capitol this week to talk about the inexplicably forgotten hero of the Founding Fathers or, as Prof. Ellis calls them, the **Founding Brothers.***

The recognition of these accomplishments is so meager that Rep. Tim Roemer (D-IN) is proposing a national memorial to honor the Adamses. There is a Washington Monument and a Jefferson Memorial, but no monument commemorating Adams. His likeness is not even on any currency. Currently, there is a stamp that features one of his many letters to Abigail.

The Roemer legislation, sponsored by Mr. Adams's fellow Bay Stater, Edward Kennedy in the Senate, has bipartisan support and the backing of the Bush administration. The historians

testified before a House committee Tuesday. "If this congressional committee were able to call George Washington and Thomas Jefferson as expert witnesses," noted Prof. Ellis, "they would almost surely express amazement that this hearing was occurring at all."

The goal is House passage of the legislation by July 4. It's a perfect target date. Not only was the Declaration signed on that day, but 50 years later both John Adams and Thomas Jefferson died on the half-century anniversary of that most extraordinary document.

For the reader's enjoyment in this issue we are pleased to present reviews of both Prof. McCullough's new book and Prof. Ellis' ***Founding Brothers***, as well as another new book that reports on how America celebrated that 50th anniversary.

We also discuss the particulars of the Roemer-Kennedy bill, and some of the reasons why the proposed memorial is not to one man - but to the Adams clan - which dominated American politics and political thought for nearly 150 years.

The Adams Family - an American Dynasty

From our school books we all remember the tales of Sam Adams and John Adams in Boston in the 1760s and 1770s urging their colonial brethren to throw off the yoke of oppression of the English crown. Their exploits, especially those of Sam - the more dashing of the two - are the stuff that made history so enjoyable for some of us.

Then came the Philadelphia story - the long hot June period when the Continental Congress debated in the hall in Philadelphia now known as Independence Hall. And John Adams was there too - again working mightily towards the goal of an independent America - but overshadowed by such personages as Benjamin Franklin, his fellow Bostonian John Hancock, and a youngster from Virginia with a way with words - Thomas Jefferson.

Adams was a farmer and a lawyer - a man of principle who in 1770 successfully defended the British troops in the so-called Boston Massacre. And he had one secret weapon that sustained him in his failures and guided him in his successes - his wife Abigail - who, more than any other spouse of the founding fathers,

proved her spirit and perspicacity in her letters to John during their long separations as the new nation was being born. If she had just done that, and John had just been the founding father and the second president of the United States - the one who kept us out of a potentially disastrous war with France, and who established the Presidency as a non-regal, but respected office after succeeding a man thought to be a deity by many Americans of the time - the Adams' would be deserving of a memorial. But, this couple also sired a son, John Quincy Adams, who served (from his 16th year) his nation as diplomatic secretary to Franklin, Jefferson and his Father, was ambassador to Russia and England at crucial periods in our early history, was the Secretary of State who formulated the Monroe Doctrine, served as our 7th President, and then was elected to the House of Representatives where his distinguished career ended with his death on the floor of that august body.

And John Quincy Adams also had children - one of whom served the United States in many ways throughout the latter part of the 19th century. Charles Francis Adams was a diplomat - perhaps the best of his day. He served in numerous foreign posts - including succeeding his father and his grand-

father as Ambassador to the Court of St. James' - where his skills exercised during the Civil War successfully kept the English neutral.

Charles' son, Henry Adams, was a "liberal Republican" journalist who detested the partisan bickering that followed Lincoln's death and was the scourge of Washington throughout Reconstruction. He also displayed courage and public spiritedness in exposing political corruption and numerous scandals that came to light in the last quarter of the 19th century. In 1918 he was awarded the Pulitzer prize for his autobiography *The Education of Henry Adams*.

Thus, Representative Roemer, Senator Kennedy and their co-sponsors are suggesting a memorial to the entire remarkable Adams clan. HR 1668 was introduced on May 1, 2001, has 19 co-sponsors (12 Democrat, 7 Republican) and is scheduled to move to a vote shortly. The bill, by the way, would create a Foundation to collect funds to pay for the memorial - which would be funded solely by contributions from the public.

Lester Sweeting

Book Reviews

Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation

Joseph Ellis¹

"No event in American history which was so improbable at the time has seemed so inevitable in retrospect as the American Revolution."

¹Ellis, Joseph, *Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 2000, 288 pp. Notes and index.

This first sentence sets the stage for this "modest-sized account of a massive historical subject" as its author, Professor Joseph Ellis, Ford Foundation Professor of History at Mt. Holyoke College, calls it in his acknowledgments.

Here we have six chapters covering specific events in the lives of seven men who were truly the leaders of the American Revolution - John Adams of Massachusetts, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison and George Washington of Virginia, Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania, Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr of New York. Each chapter deals with one or two of those men - how they came to be a band of brothers and how their actions helped forge a new nation.

We see Hamilton and Burr at the duel that robbed both - Hamilton of his life and Burr of his rightful place in history as a patriot.

We see Jefferson as host to a secret dinner bringing arch antagonists James Madison and Alexander Hamilton together to work out a compromise that would allow the nascent government of the United States to establish international credibility financially by assuming the debts of the 13 new states.

The chapter entitled "The Silence" is most intriguing - dealing as it does with a major debate that took place in Congress in 1790; that was managed with skill by Madison, but that resulted in a tacit understanding that the issue was not to be spoken of - and it was not until the few decades before the Civil War - the issue was slavery and the slave trade. Ellis' description of the men who framed the debate and the manipulations of Mr. Madison, as leader in the House, are most illuminating. All-in-all, this is a very well researched book and a good read.

John Adams

David McCullough²

Thomas Jefferson once called John Adams “the colossus of independence.” Close associates in the years up to the end of the 18th century, political rivalries drove these two apart for a decade or more in the early 19th century, but in retirement the Sage of Monticello and the “old oak” (as Abigail once called him) became close friends and avid correspondents. The irony of the era is, of course, that both died on the same day - July 4, 1826 - the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence both had worked so hard to produce.

McCullough, who won a Pulitzer for his excellent biography of Harry Truman, is one of our best known historians. He has recently been quoted as saying that this book began as a joint biography of Jefferson and Adams, but the more he got into the Adams history the more he wanted to limit his scope.

And, as much as it is a biography of our second president, this is also a biography of Abigail Smith Adams, the wife and soul mate who sustained John throughout their long marriage - that ended with Abigail's death in 1818.

Adams lived longer than any other president - 90 years (although Hoover nearly tied his record and Reagan may exceed it). He, like George Herbert Walker Bush, had the

pleasure of seeing his eldest son become President.

He was far more widely traveled than most presidents of the 19th century - having made diplomatic trips to and throughout Europe before becoming our first vice president.

And he sired a family that gave its eldest sons to the national good - from his son John Quincy, to his grandson Charles Francis, and his great-grandson Henry.

McCullough can write history in a way that invites the reader to listen to a story - and this is a good story.

American Jubilee: How in 1826 a Generation Remembered Fifty Years of Independence

By Andrew Burstein³

As we celebrate our 225th national birthday this July 4, 2001, it is interesting to speculate on what they were doing on July 4, 1826. The United States of America, that upstart that had the courage and tenacity to break from the English crown, that saw her population grow incredibly from 4 million as of the first census in 1790 to 11 million by the time John Quincy Adams entered the White House in 1824, that had fought and won not one but two wars with the mightiest empire on earth, and had started (with Jefferson's Louisiana Purchase) on the quest for manifest destiny that would continue throughout the rest of the 19th century - what was happening and what were people doing to celebrate the great day.

²McCullough, David, *John Adams*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 2001, 432 pp, index, illustrated.

³Burstein, Andrew, *American Jubilee*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 2001, 361 pp, index, illustrations

Burstein takes us on a visit to the nation and some of its leading notables, beginning with this:

“On Tuesday, July 4, 1826, cities and towns across America celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. There were elaborate parades and speeches, and dignified Revolutionary War veterans on display for awestruck youth. It is a moment that American history has forgotten, a moment when two critical generations reaffirmed their connections. The rising generation, having come into its political inheritance, stopped to acknowledge what had silently occurred some time earlier: it had separated from its constituting predecessor, it had taken the place in society of those who had given birth to the United States.”

Burstein begins in 1824, with the much heralded return of the great friend of the United States, General the Marquis de Lafayette. His triumphal tour took him to all corners of the United States as it was then, and involved many long and arduous trips, and many long and probably arduous dinners, balls and other festivities.

He then moves on to discuss the comings and goings of that son of Bladensburg in Prince George's County - William Wirt - who is described as follows:

“If the Americans of 1826 were a people of longings, underappreciated by later historians, no better symbol exists to warrant their resuscitation than William Wirt. A name known to very few by the twentieth century, he was once a nationally prominent figure—indeed a virtuoso. Author of fiction and biography, a famed trial attorney who argued several of the most significant Supreme Court cases of his era, he holds a

record for government service that remains unbroken, as U.S. Attorney General for twelve successive years, through the administrations of James Monroe and John Quincy Adams.

“Wirt arguably did more than anyone else of his generation to link the Romantic movement in America with the Revolutionary spirit. When all is said and done, it was Wirt whom the city of Washington selected to cap off the season of observances in 1826 with a masterful oration in the U. S. Capitol—Wirt, who had devoted his public life to furthering the work of the founders; Wirt, who admitted to having wept ‘like a child’ on reading newspaper accounts of Lafayette’s welcome in 1824; Wirt, whose serialized essays *Letters of the British Spy*, had much earlier established for him a reputation as a patriot susceptible to outbursts of emotion in defense of the national heart. But it was his *Life of Patrick Henry*, first published in 1817 (the same year that he received his appointment to the cabinet), that delivered the pathos and poignancy which gave him the credentials for conveying the general spectacle of the national jubilee.”

We recommend this book - it is another good read.



AND THEN THERE WAS ABIGAIL

Linda Myer, "founder and artistic director of History Making Productions, a professional non-profit national touring theatre company dedicated to bringing history alive for contemporary audiences" is featured in the most recent edition of Maryland Humanities⁴. Ms. Myer won the *Yankee Magazine* Editor's Pick in 2000 as one of the outstanding reasons to visit New England, for her portrayal of Abigail Adams in a three hour walking tour of Boston. She has the following to say about Abigail Adams in her article:

Abigail Adams never published a poem, an article, a book, or a broadside. She never spoke in public. She never voted. Her distinct New England voice was confined by the conventions of her day to conversation and correspondence. But within those conventions, she shared her views and vision with everyone she could. She wrote to her husband, children, relatives, friends, statesmen, presidents, and ex-presidents. Her correspondents included Thomas Jefferson, Mercy Otis Warren, Congressmen James Lovell and Elbridge Gerry, British intellectual Catherine Macauley, and many others. Through correspondence she lobbied men in power about the great issues of her day. In the process, she has left us a rich legacy - a vibrant comprehensive opinionated record of a crucial period of American history through the eyes of a remarkable woman.

Ms. Tyler may be seen re-creating her Abigail Adams at the Maryland Chautauqua 2001 on the following dates and places:

Sun. July 8, 7PM - Garret Community College, McHenry, MD

Mon. July 9, 7 PM, Cecil Community College, North East, MD

Wed. July 11, 7 PM, Chesapeake College, Wye Mills, MD.

Thu. July 12, 7 PM College of Southern Maryland, LaPlata, MD.

Fri. July 13, 7 PM, Montgomery College, Germantown, MD

All performances are **free** and open to the public. Further details may be obtained from Maryland Humanities Council, 410 771 0650.

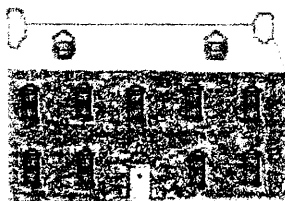
FROM THE PRESIDENT'S KEYBOARD

SOCIETY ON THE INTERNET

Some time ago, I rather foolishly mentioned that I was trying to create a web site for the Society. I used my generally inadequate skills and over-active desires to create one at www.princegeorgeshistory.org. That was a valiant effort - but it came to naught because I immediately began to have technical problems beyond my abilities to resolve. Thus, the site lay dormant. But the idea had, as they say in the political game, "legs." That means that someone else thought it was good - good enough to follow up on. Enter Joyce and Race Dowling - two computer professionals who have a love of history, are members of the Society, and who offered their services to rebuild the web site.

We discussed the particulars - I'd like to say over a nice lunch at Rips - but over email (since I was who knows where in eastern Europe) and I managed to sign us up for a new domain name and to actually transmit some of









⁴ *Maryland HUMANITIES*, Summer 2001,
Maryland Humanities Council

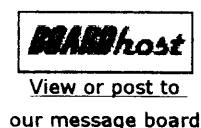


Prince George's County Historical Society



Welcome to Prince George's County Historical Society

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Since June 4, 2001

The objectives of the Prince George's County Historical Society are:

- To foster an understanding and appreciation of the history and heritage of Prince George's County.
- 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.
- To promote and encourage research into all aspects of Prince George's County history and heritage.
- 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.
- To encourage and participate in the protection and preservation of historic sites and structures in Prince George's County.

The Society is headquartered in the historic Marietta Mansion where it maintains the Frederick DeMarr Historical Library. The Library is open for research on Saturdays noon to 4 PM and by appointment.









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For problems or questions regarding this web site contact webmaster@pghistory.org
For more information about PGCHS, contact info@pghistory.org

Web site development and maintenance by [Dowling Web Design](#).



The Frederick S. DeMarr Library of County History

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our message board

The Frederick S. DeMarr Library of County History was founded by Fred DeMarr, who was President and Historian of the Society for a number of years. Mr. DeMarr was a life-long resident of the County and had an abiding interest in all aspects of County History. His collection was donated to the Society by the DeMarr family after his untimely death in 1997.

The Library is open to researchers, both amateur and professional, from 12:00 noon until 4:00 PM every Saturday, and by appointment. It is located in the back of the [Marietta Mansion](#).

The Library is staffed by a dedicated team of volunteers including Sharon Sweeting, Librarian and Editor, Susan Pearl, Historian, Sarah Bourne, Bonnie Kryzek, and Diane Stultz, Genealogical Research Specialist. Specific questions concerning aspects of the history of Prince George's County may be directed by telephone to 301 464 0590, or by email to info@pghistory.org.

The Society is currently engaged in cataloging the collections of written materials, maps and ephemera, and has a [partial listing here](#). Materials do not circulate but may be used at the Library. Copies of non-copyrighted materials may be secured for a modest copying fee. Request for copies of materials should be directed to info@pghistory.org

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my prior work to Joyce so that she could add it to the site.

In this issue you will find two pages - the "home" page and one about the Library - and these will give you a flavor of what we are trying to build - and I can also tell those of you who have access to the Internet - whether at home on your own computer, at work, or at the Library or an Internet Café, how to get to the site and how to explore it.

Getting to PGHistory.org is easy - once you are on the net. You just highlight the search bar near the top of the screen (or any search box on your home page) and type in the following- www.pghistory.org-- and then hit "go", "search" or whatever you do to find a web site on your particular Internet Service Provider (ISP).

This should bring you to our home page - the one that says "Welcome to Prince George's County Historical Society."

Navigating on the Site. There are two different ways to navigate to the other pages on the site. Note the boxes along the left side of the page. Each of those is a separate page on the web site. So if you move your cursor over the one that says Library and click on it you will be brought to the Library page - that tells about the Frederick S. DeMarr Memorial Library of County History - our volunteer staff, hours and other stuff. If you then want to return to the Home page, just click on Home on the side, or on home at the bottom.

You should also click on the "BOARDhost" block below the boxes - that takes you to our message board - where you can read the messages that have been posted, respond to any that you care to, or post your own message - be it just a greeting, a question, some historic tidbit of possible interest to the

membership - whatever you wish within the bounds of propriety and decency. Please include your e-mail address so we can contact you if necessary.

This is your web site - and we want to make it work for you - so if you have any suggestions, criticisms (constructive please), observations, additional materials, etc., may we suggest that you write to webmaster@pghistory.org, to the Society by mail or e-mail to info@pghistory.org, or directly to me at lessweeting@cs.com.

Enjoy the web site - tell all your friends and bookmark it as one of your favorites. Keep visiting because we do hope to add continually to the site.

SOCIETY DOINGS

The Society has had to do without yours truly for most of the past few months, although I was able to attend and preside over the very successful St. George's Day Dinner in April. Last issue contained a few of the write-ups and I am told by our esteemed Editor to expect more in the next issue.

Our next event was rather impromptu but is likely to become a fixture. On Saturday, June 16, we joined with the Prince George's County Genealogical Society for a book sale - to benefit the libraries of the two Societies. I am pleased to report that more than \$120 was raised for our own library (and more than eight feet of empty space was temporarily gained on my own book shelves). Because this was considered a success, we will be arranging for another next year - probably at an indoor location however.

Speaking of the Library, Chair of the Library Committee, Sharon Sweeting, advises me that the Society has received an award of \$ 511.86

from the Maryland Small Museums Association to defray the cost of purchase of a micro-film - microfiche reader - which we hope to have delivered in the next couple of months. Well Done to the Committee!

By the time we go to press, we will have had the June event - a visit to the Giannetti studios in Brentwood.

Our most important event of the summer almost coincides with the autumnal equinox - that is the Prince of a County fund raiser to be held at the Overseer's House, hosted by the Kanellos family in September. Invitations will be going out in early August.

In October, Bill Uber and Dusty Rhoads have planned another fun-filled bus tour. Scheduled for October 27, at 8AM beginning at Marietta, the tour will visit Stratford Hall, historic home of the Lees (Richard Henry and Robert Edward - to name but two) of Virginia, where, in addition to a tour of this working plantation, a Plantation Dinner will be served. The tour will then go to Popes Creek Plantation - birthplace of George Washington - and another working plantation. As usual, seating is limited. To sign up, please send a check payable to PGCHS in the amount of \$ 44 per person, to Bill Uber, 2A Southway, Greenbelt, MD 20770. If you have questions, call Bill at 301 345 9797.

GENERAL/ADMIRAL SEMMES

by Robert Crawley

Given its location, and the presence of such installations as Fort Meade and Andrews, it is no surprise to learn that men who achieved the highest ranks in the armed forces actually lived for a time in Prince George's County. One remembers that General Hap Arnold lived for a time in College Park and General

Dwight D. Eisenhower and his then bride Mamie lived in Laurel early on in his career.

But few remember that the only person in our history to hold commissions as a General and as an Admiral concurrently spent much of his boyhood here in Prince George's County. Said by some to have been the inspiration for Margaret Mitchell's hero, Rhett Butler, in "Gone with the Wind", Raphael Semmes was born in Nanjemoy, Charles County in 1809. His mother died when he was quite young, and his father's demise in 1823 left him an orphan at the age of 14. Raphael's father, Richard Semmes, had named as guardian of Raphael and his younger brother (unnamed), Dr. Benedict Semmes - brother to Richard. Dr. Semmes had a medical practice in the Village of Piscataway, and it was to that location that the boys moved. However, due to his other duties as a member of the House of Delegates and later (beginning in 1821) as a Member of Congress, Dr. Semmes had his charges board for much of the year with their Uncle Raphael at his home at 3257 N Street in Georgetown. Of course, in the summer recesses the boys spent their time at the Piscataway home - enjoying the country air and the life of youngsters along Piscataway Creek and the Potomac River.

With some political backing from Uncle Benedict, Raphael received his commission as an ensign in the United States Navy from the hand of President John Quincy Adams in 1826. He had a distinguished career that included service in the Seminole War of 1836 and the Mexican War of 1846. In addition, however, he studied law and developed a fairly lucrative private practice. By 1860 he was married with 6 children and residing in Washington, DC, where he served on the Lighthouse Board.

January 11, 1861, was a date that changed the

fortunes of many a military officer - because that was the day that South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida and Alabama seceded from the Union. On February 15, 1861, Raphael turned in his commission and joined the Navy of the Confederate States of America, then forming in Alabama.

At the opening of hostilities in April 1861, Captain Raphael Semmes had been given command of the *C.S.S. Sumter* - a privateer. Roaming the Atlantic, between July 1861 and January 1862, Semmes and his men captured eighteen union vessels - which was a significant loss to the American navy. While in Gibraltar for repairs and provisioning (one expects), the *Sumter* was blockaded by the U. S. Navy. Seeing no chance of running the blockade, Semmes sold the ship to the British and proceeded to England overland to take possession and command of a new ship being built in England - the *C. S. S. Alabama*.

From the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean, to the South China Sea, to the Bay of Bengal, the *Alabama* roamed and raged - capturing 65 Union merchant ships and destroying the U. S. *Hatteras*. She was at sea for 534 days out of 657 days - on a journey of 75,000 miles from September 1862 until April 1864. In June of 1864, the *U.S.S. Kearsage* caught up with the *Alabama* outside Cherbourg on the coast of France. The battle was short - the *Alabama* was sunk, but the crew, led by her intrepid captain, escaped and returned to the State of Alabama.

February of 1865 saw the cause of the Confederacy gasping its last. Semmes came to Richmond to be greeted as a conquering hero - and to receive his promotion to Rear Admiral "for gallant and meritorious conduct in command of the stem-sloop *Alabama*." In rank he was second only to Admiral Buchanan, another son of Maryland.

Semmes was given command of the James River Squadron, which patrolled and protected the confederate army positions in Virginia - but which was in such dire straits by April 1865 that, to avoid their capture, Semmes and his sailors effected a scuttling of all vessels. Left with no navy to command, Semmes took his sailors to join in the gallant defense of Richmond. He was immediately commissioned Brigadier General and formed two regiments from his navy men.

After Appomattox, Semmes and his men were paroled at Greensboro, North Carolina, and he returned to Mobile - a 900 mile trek on foot. Semmes remained with his family in Mobile until his death at the age of 67 on August 29, 1877.

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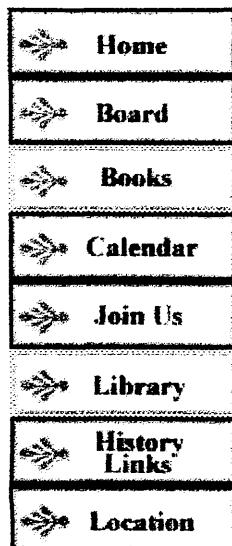
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A Pictorial History of Prince George's County - by Alan Virta - \$42.95 + \$4.00 s&a

Calvert of Maryland - \$ 6.95 + \$ 2.50 s&a

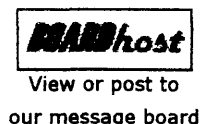
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In addition, through special arrangement with the Historic Preservation Section of the MNCPPC Planning Department we offer:



Landmarks of Prince George's County - by Jack Boucher, the noted HABS photographer. Price is \$18.00 plus 4.00 s/a

To order, include complete information as above and your mailing information, make check payable to PGCHS and mail to:

Prince George's County Historical Society
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Historical Society*

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Please indicate: ☐ New ☐ Renewal

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____ I am also interested in helping the Society as a volunteer. Please contact me regarding volunteer opportunities.

____ For membership in the **Maryland Historical Society**, include an additional \$30.00 for individual, or \$40.00 for family.

Our operating support comes from your dues and contributions. All contributions qualify for tax deduction. We appreciate your support.

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**Marietta House Museum
Calendar of Events
June-December, 2001**

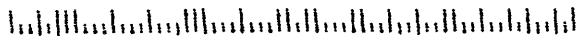
- June 9-10 *Roman Days.* Legionaries demonstrate armor, battle tactics, camp life. Educational activities, vendors. 10 am-4pm \$2
- July 22 & 29 *Sunday Summer Fun.* 19th c. activities and crafts for children K-6th grade. 2 pm.
- Aug. 5 & 12 Reservations required. \$2 per session.
(Activities will include: an ice cream social, household chores, African games, nature walk, crafts. Call for schedule of activities and to register for 1 or all 4 sessions.)
- Sept. 7 *Evening Candlelight Tour.* Guided tour of the mansion by soft candlelight and light refreshment. 8 pm. Reserv. req. \$3 /A
- Sept. 15-16 *Roman Legion XX.* Learn about Authentic Roman soldiers life, attire, battle tactics and weaponry.
10 am-4pm, \$2.
- Oct. 5 *Evening Candlelight Tour.* (As above)
- Oct. 13-14 *Hastings Medieval Faire.* Annual Markland reenactment of the Battle of Hastings and Stanford Bridge, living history camp, music, crafts, entertainment. Food and period vendors. 11 am-5pm \$5 /A, \$2/C
- Oct. 27 *Campfire and Storytelling.* Enjoy marshmallows, cookies, and cider, storytelling and scavenger hunt.
7 pm. \$2.
- Nov. 2 *Evening Candlelight Tour.* (As above.)
- Nov. 3-4 *17th Va. CSA Civil War Encampment.* Depicts camp life for the Civil War soldier.
12 noon-4pm. Free.
- Nov. 10-11 *"Under the Sea" Tea.* Enjoy tea while surrounded by creatures from the deep and characters from *Sign of the Seahorse*.
4 pm each day. Reserv. Req.
\$12/A \$8/C (ages 4-12).
- Dec. 7, 8, 9 *Candlelight Tours.* Sights and sounds of the season resonate throughout the Mansion. Federal, Civil War and Victorian era decorations. 6-8:30 pm \$4/A \$2/C

Prince George's County Historical Society
Post Office Box 14
Riverdale, Maryland 20738-0014

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Mr. & Mrs. John J. Petro
PO Box 1668
Mitchellville, MD 20717-

20717-1668



HOURS OF OPERATION

Library Saturdays 12 - 4 PM
and during special events

Call 301-464-0590

Marietta Tours -Friday, 11 - 3, Sunday,
12 - 4 - and by appointment -

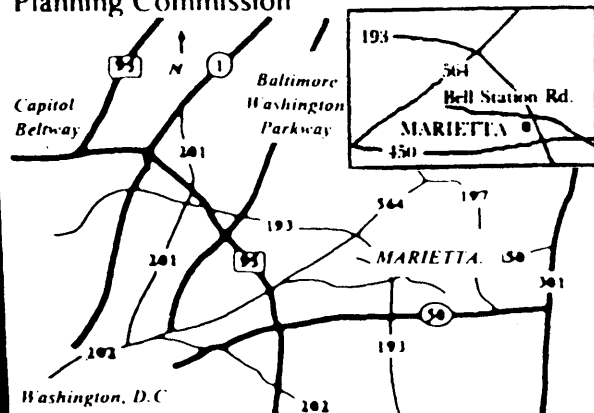
Information 301-464-5291

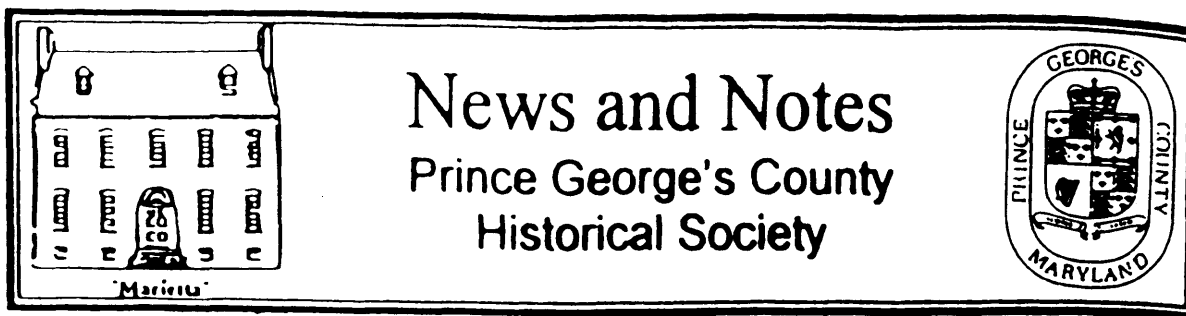
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Features a wide selection of books, gifts,
toys and small antiques Open Friday,
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during special events Call 301-464-
0590

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The Society is located at Marietta, 5626
Bell Station Road, in Glenn Dale, MD, off
Route 193, near Route 450 This is a
facility of the Maryland National Park and
Planning Commission



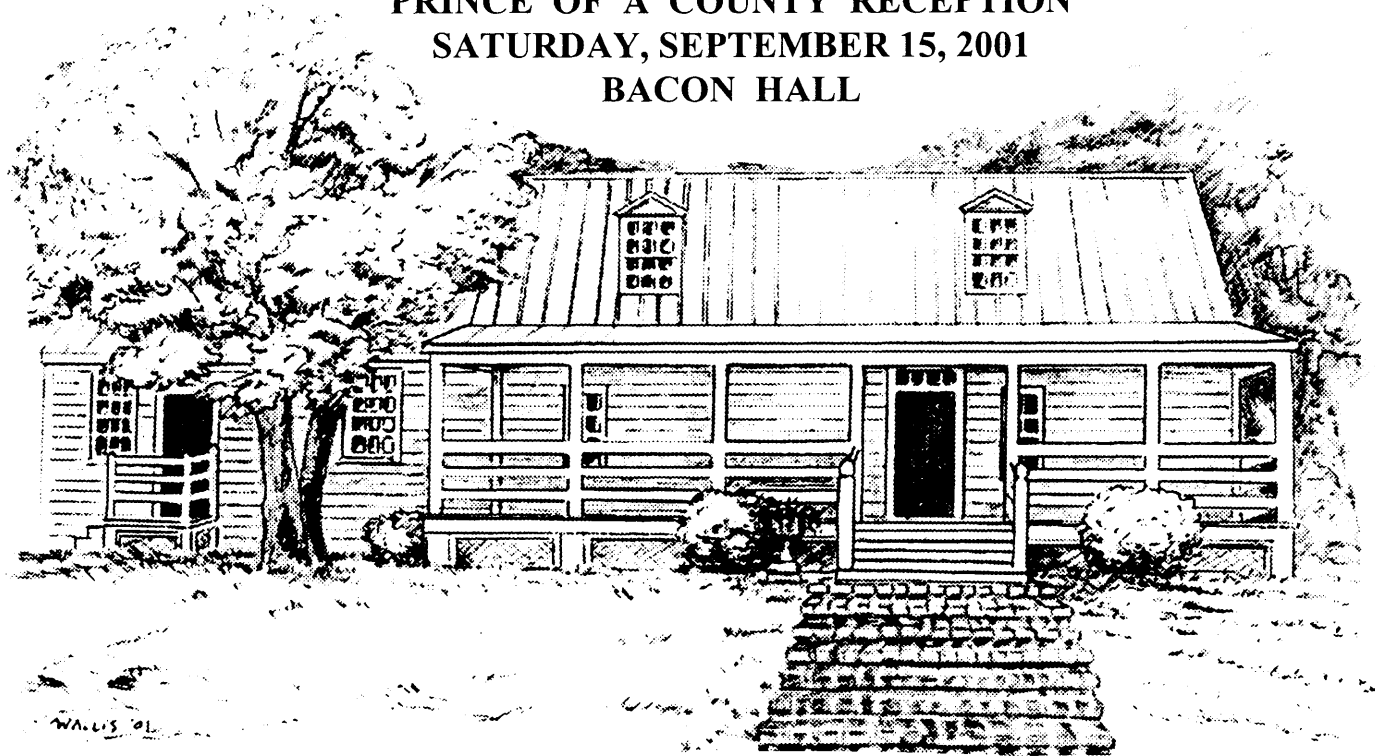


September/October 2001

Our 49th Year

XXX Number 5

**PRINCE OF A COUNTY RECEPTION
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2001
BACON HALL**



The oldest part of this building was built circa 1745 on the Craufurd family's *Bacon Hall* plantation at the west edge of the Town of Upper Marlboro. It was a 1-1/2-story frame building of post-and-beam construction, with steeply pitched roof and riven board siding; it was enlarged around 1800, and a one-story wing was added about a century later. This building served as the farm overseer's dwelling, and later as a tenant house. By the early 1990s it was in seriously deteriorating condition, but was recognized as possibly the oldest surviving frame building in Prince George's County and a unique example of an early domestic farm structure. Through the efforts of the Sasscer-Kanellos family, it was moved from its site and relocated on South Osborne Road in April 1993. Since that time, George and Molly Kanellos have worked devotedly on the structural rehabilitation of the building, and the result is a model of restoration and architectural rebirth. The Historical Society expresses its admiration and thanks, and is delighted to hold this year's *Prince of a County* reception at this relocated and beautifully restored historic house.

*Drawing by
Wallis Cain*

*Text by
Susan Pearl*

The Restoration of the Overseer's House: A Progress Report

by George Kanellos



On April 24, 1993, the Bacon Hall Overseer's House moved from a hilltop near the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue and Old Crain Highway in Upper Marlboro to a wooded portion of "Solitude Farm" about 5 miles away on South Osborne Road. Jerry Matyko of Expert House Movers orchestrated the move. Once moved, although saved from further deterioration, the house still required restoration.

Back in 1993, the house was lifted from its modest foundations and brought in one piece to South Osborne Road. Once positioned at the new site, iron beams and large timbers served as temporary supports for the house. The first major task in the restoration was the construction of a permanent foundation. This was accomplished by digging footings, by hand, below the house and building a concrete block wall up to just below the sills. Amazingly, the sills of the oldest section of the house were in very good condition, but the sills of the Victorian wing (on the left side) had to be replaced. The services of Jerry Matyko

of Expert House Movers were called upon once again to remove the wood and steel supports and to lower the house onto its new foundation.

Repairs to the roofing and siding of the house were completed by Amish craftsman from St. Mary's County. Benuel Yoder and his construction crew removed the old tin roof and installed a new one. Again, very little new material was needed for sheathing. The siding was ordered from the lumber yard of Sam Stoltzfus. It was milled poplar, planed to 1" x 8" and air-dried under an open barn. The old siding of the house was left in place as sheathing for the new siding. The new poplar was held in place with new galvanized rosehead nails closely replicating the hand-wrought nails originally used.

After being vacant for many years, very few windows remained in the house. The few in place were much later replacements. It is the marks left on the wood that tell the architectural history of the house--for example, the height of the doors and window size and placement. After researching the correct window type for both the eighteenth- and late-nineteenth-century parts of the house, new windows with wide muntins were special ordered and installed along with the new siding.

Although the interior lacked woodwork such as doors and trim, the essence of the house was completely intact including floor joists, studs, corner posts, ceiling joints and rafters. These timbers were both hand-hewn and pit-sawn; mortise and tenon and dove-tail joints were used, as were handmade rosehead nails. A whole section of original riven (hand-split) siding remained in one of the end gables.

The floor of the old hall in the "hall-parlor" plan was covered in twentieth-century narrow

flooring which was removed to reveal a worn but wonderful heart pine floor. The floor joists were logs that needed additional support. The floor boards were numbered and carefully removed. New timbers were sistered onto the old logs, a plywood underlayment was installed, and the old floor was laid exactly as it had been.

The reconstruction of the front porch on the main block of the house followed. The porch was built using hand-hewn rafters from the Newel Post, the County's architectural salvage depot, an invaluable resource for porch rafters, doors, mantels, and woodwork. A back porch was also built at this time.

By August 1995, many of the major work items on the building's exterior and necessary structural repairs have been completed, allowing interior work to continue uninterrupted through the winter months. Upcoming projects include the framing for the new bathrooms, closets, and the kitchen. Following that will be the installation of the house's mechanical systems: electricity, plumbing, heat and air conditioning and appliances. Final tasks include the installation of plaster and drywall and a multitude of small things necessary to bring on old house up to modern standards while maintaining its historic integrity.

Note: This article, written by the homeowner, appeared in the Fall 1995 issue of *FOP (Friends of Preservation) Newsletter*.



**ARCHITECTURAL
PHOTOGRAPHER
JACK E. BOUCHER
comes to Dorsey Chapel**

“Jack E. Boucher, of Silver Spring, Maryland, is the Supervisor of Architectural Photographic Documentation of the Historic American Buildings Survey, HABS-HAER Division of the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. He has held this position since 1958, except for a nearly four year period when he served as Chief of Historic Sites for the State of New Jersey, his only major non-photographic experience.”

“His responsibilities include not only extensive large format (5x7) field photographs throughout the nation and possessions, but laboratory processing and printing of fine-art quality, setting and maintaining the national photographic standards of HABS, lecturing, conducting multi-day seminars dealing with the architectural photography of historic structures, exhibits and discussing his work for and with the media including television appearances.”

“Boucher has produced an estimated 65,000 photographs of more than 8,000 structures [as of November 1997] in 49 states (Alaska excepted so far), Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. He has photographed architecture extensively for various national and international publications. ...”

“Photographing historic structures exclusively, the major thrust of his responsibilities with the National Park Service has been with the Historic American Buildings Survey, the Nation’s (and possibly world’s) oldest architectural survey of its type. (HABS is a Federal program sponsored under a tripartite agreement between the Government, the

American Institute of Architects and the Library of Congress.)”

Jack was the HABS photographer who documented many important structures in Prince George’s County from 1988 to 1990 and examples of his work were published by Johns Hopkins University Press as *Landmarks of Prince George’s County*. Join us on October 6, 2001 when Jack discusses his work and talks about photographic techniques. The meeting will be held at Dorsey’s Chapel, which is behind the Goddard Corporate Park - turn onto Mission Drive (second right north of 564 on Rte 193) - drive to the farthest parking lot in the back of the office park. You will see a macadam path that leads to the Chapel - which is actually on the next street over - but parking there is limited. The meeting will begin at 1 PM. Seating in Dorsey Hall is limited - so please call 301 927 4514 and leave a message if you are coming - with the number attending. Thank you!

Editor’s note: I have quoted liberally from Jack’s Biographical Resume and I know from personal experience what a thrill it is to see him work. I also recommend a visit to the HABS-HAER web site for many important examples of his work nationwide. The site is at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/habshaer>.



HABS photographer Jack E. Boucher loads a film holder into his monorail camera with tripod.

Prince George's County Historical Society
Heritage Calendar
September 2001

- 1- Music & Dancing Under the Stars Peabody Ragtime Ensemble
Darnall's Chance House Museum 7-9 PM 301-952-3010 \$\$

- 1- John Wilkes Booth Escape Route Tour
Surratt House Museum 7:30-7:30 301-868-1121 \$\$

- 2- Moonlight Canoe Tour
Bladensburg Waterfront Park 7-9 PM 301-779-0371 \$\$

- 6/9- Prince George's county Fair
Equestrian Center (hours vary) 301-579-2598 \$\$

- 7- Sunset Boat Tour
Patuxent River Park 6-8 301-627-6074 \$\$

- 7- Evening Candlelight Tour
Marietta House Museum 8PM 301-464-5291 \$\$

- 8- Restoration Shop Open House
College Park Aviation Museum 12-4 301-864-6029 \$\$

- 9- Journey into Jug Bay's Past
Billingsley House Museum 1-3 301-627-0730 \$\$

- 14- Afternoon Tea
Montpelier Mansion 3 PM 301-498-8486 \$\$

- 14- *Buck Hill Quartet-Jazz*
Montpelier Mansion 8PM 301-498-8486 \$\$

- 15- John Wilkes Booth Escape Route Tour
(see September 1)

- 15/16- Roman Legion XX
Marietta House Museum 10-4 301-464-5291 \$\$

- 16- Opening Day- New Exhibit & Demonstrations
W.H.Duvall Tool Museum 9-4 301-627-6074 Free

- 19- History Lecture Series TBA
Montpelier Mansion 7:30 301-953-1376 Free

- 21- *Richie Havens- Jazz*
Montpelier Mansion 8 & 10 PM 301-490-2329 \$\$
- 22- Port Town Days 7-6
Bladensburg Waterfront Park 301-779-0371 Free
- 22- Air Fair 2001
College Park Airport & Aviation Museum 9-5 301-864-6029 \$\$
- 22/23- Civil War Re-enactment
His Lordship's Kindness 10-3 (battle at 1) 301-856-0358 \$\$
- 22/23- Autumn Festival
Airy Mansion 10-5 301-856-9656 Free
- 23- Bluebird Blues Festival 1-6
PGCC Free
- 28- Afternoon Tea
Montpelier Mansion 3 PM 301-498-8486 \$\$
- 28- *Chuck Reid Jazz*
Montpelier Mansion 8PM 301-953-1993 \$\$
- 29- Friends of Montpelier Auction
Montpelier Mansion 3PM 301-953-1376 \$\$
- 30- Open House
Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center U of MD 301-405-2787 Free

ROMAN LEGION XX
Living History Encampment
the Roman Legion returns!

Saturday & Sunday
September 15th & 16th , 2001
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
\$2 per person

Marietta House Museum
5626 Bell Station road
Glenn Dale, MD 20769
301-464-5291; TTY: 301-699-2544

Small Museums Association Grant Received

The Society is pleased to announce that we have received a grant from the Small Museum Association that enabled the Library Committee to acquire a microfiche/microfilm reader. This will be used in the library so that researchers can access the Society's collections of newspapers and other materials on microfiche or microfilm. While there is no printing capability on this machine - we are pleased nonetheless that this additional service can be brought to our growing band of patrons.

From the President's Keyboard

Well summer is upon us and those of us who have too many things to do are spending it working or addressing the needs. But Fall is too fast approaching. Surprisingly your President has been stateside since mid-June with no scheduled travel outside our borders until September at the earliest - It is Nice to be Home!

It has been a somewhat quiet summer - watching the grass grow and trying to catch up on reading - still I have not finished John Adams and now I have to read Kathryn Graham's Pulitzer Prize winning autobiography - well there will be a plane ride soon I expect.

We have been working with Joyce Dowling to polish up the Website - some of our readers have been visiting it and I am most gratified about that. The Board and the Electronic Communications Committee will be discussing expansion of the site soon and we recommend that you visit it and the sites that you can connect to from ours. The site is www.pghistory.org - drop in.

We have several things planned for the Fall - the Prince of a County Fundraiser at Bacon Hall is first - on 15 September. Then we have the Jack Boucher lecture on 6 October. We think that one may be a significant event and hope you will call the Society to tell us if you can come - or send an email to pgchslibrary@aol.com, or to lessweeting@cs.com. You might also call 301 927 4514 and leave a message - the number of attendees is important/

On October 27 we will have the bus tour - see the flyer and sign up now!

November 5 is the Annual Meeting - at the Calvert Inn in Riverdale - requests for reservations will be in the next edition. And December brings our holiday party as always.

So join in and bring a friend - to join the Society or just to enjoy!!

Finally, let me say that the Nominating Committee is working on a slate of officers and new directors at this time, to be finalized late in September. If you wish to volunteer for any position on the Board or as a director please call Sarah Bourne at 301 277 5468, or Dusty Rhoads at 301 464 0819. We especially need a Membership Chair, and a Secretary.

Les Sweeting

**Prince George's County
Historical Society**

Annual Membership Application

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone - Home: _____

Business: _____

Please indicate: ☐ New ☐ Renewal

Check below the category you select:

Dues categories:

Member / Family\$25.00

Sustaining Member\$50.00

Institutional Member\$50.00

Life Membership\$300.00

Additional Contribution _____

____ I am also interested in helping the Society as a volunteer. Please contact me regarding volunteer opportunities.

____ For membership in the **Maryland Historical Society**, include an additional \$30.00 for individual, or \$40.00 for family.

Our operating support comes from your dues and contributions. All contributions qualify for tax deduction. We appreciate your support

Please make checks payable to **PGCHS**

Mail checks and form to:

Prince George's County
Historical Society
Post Office Box 14
Riverdale, Maryland 20738-0014
301-464-0590

12/99

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Lester Sweeting
Vice President	John Petro
Secretary	James Wolfe
Editor	Sharon Howe
	Sweeting
Historian	Susan Pearl
Treasurer	Joyce Uber
Membership	Phyllis Herndon
Gift Shop	Stella Uber

Directors

Mildred Ridgley Gray	Iris McConnell
Anna Holmes	Andy Wallace
Eugene B. Roberts, Jr.	Lynn Roberts
Sarah Bourne	Wallis Cain
Robert Crawley	Donna Schneider
Bill Uber	John Mitchell

Past Presidents

John Giannetti	W.C. (Bud) Dutton
Paul T. Lanham	Warren Rhoads
Joyce McDonald	Jane Eagen Dodd





TAKE THE BUS TO STRATFORD
ENJOY A DAY AT THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE FATHER OF
OUR COUNTRY
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.
FALL 2001 BUS TRIP

27 OCTOBER 2001
DEPART 08:00 AM FROM MARIETTA
RETUNR 6:00 PM
LUNCH IS INCLUDED
PRICE PER PERSON IS \$44
RESERVATIONS

NAME _____
TELEPHONE _____
NUMBER OF SEATS DESIRED _____

RETURN THIS PAGE TOGETHER WITH A CHECK
PAYABLE TO PGCHS TO BILL UBER, 2 SOUTHWAY,
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Prince George's County Historical Society
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HOURS OF OPERATION

Library Saturdays 12 - 4 PM
and during special events

Call 301-464-0590

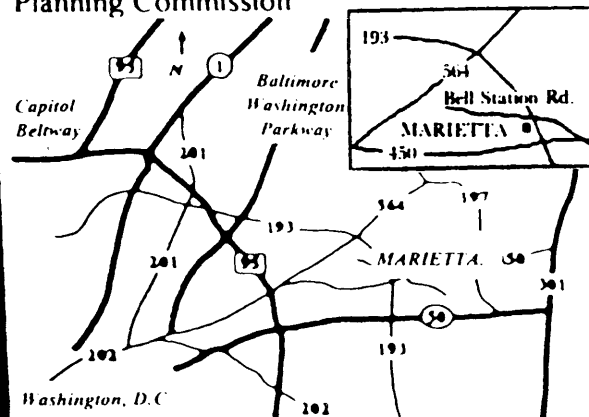
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Information 301-464-5291

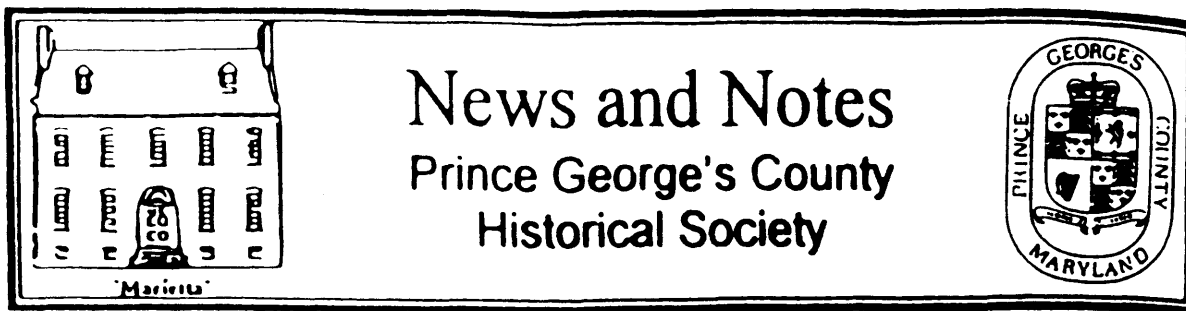
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News and Notes

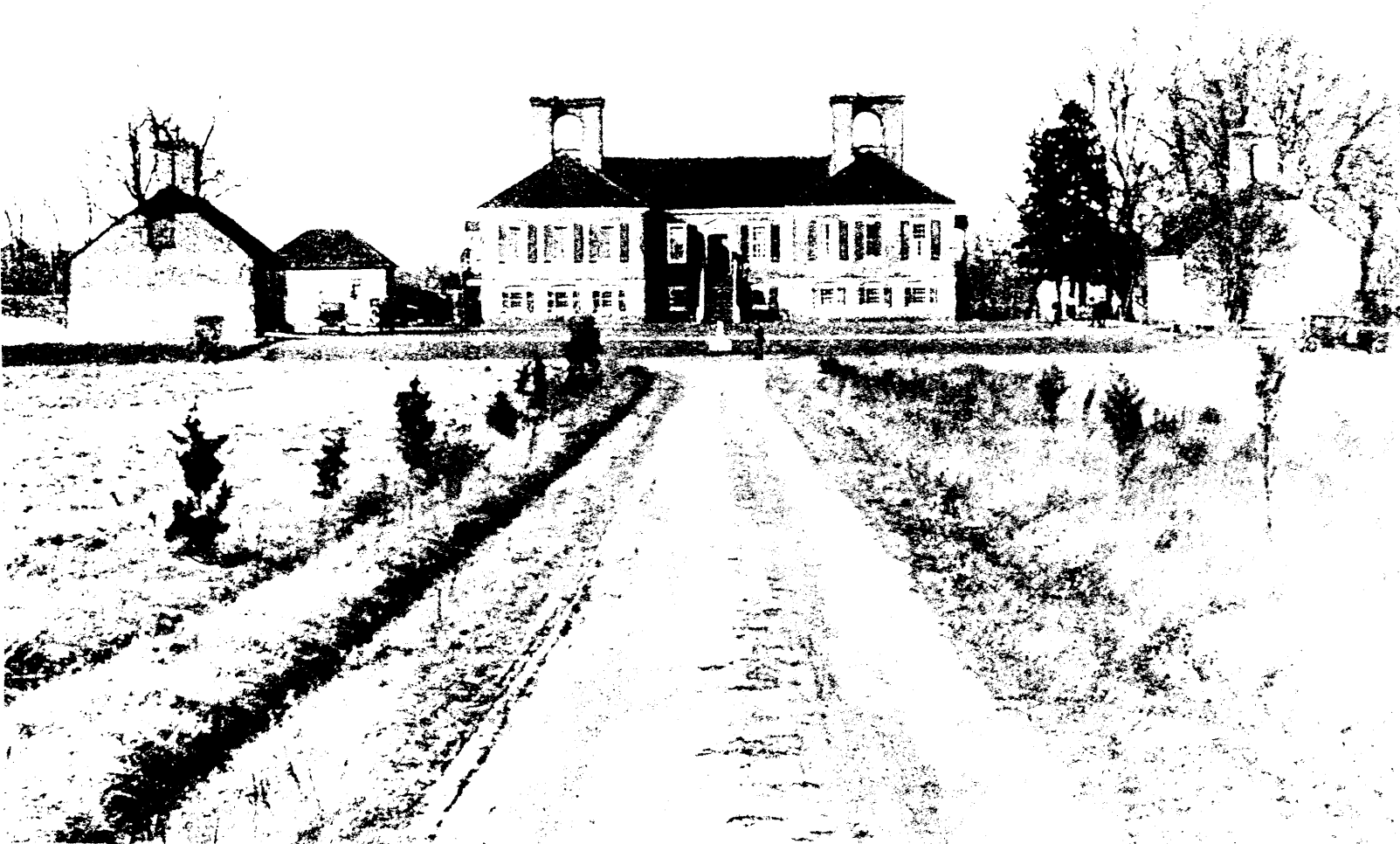
Prince George's County Historical Society

November 2001

Our 49th Year

XXX Number 6

BUS TOUR TO STRATFORD HALL, WESTMORLAND COUNTY, VIRGINIA SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2001



"DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE OF TIDEWATER VIRGINIA" DOVER, 1932

From the President's Keyboard

This will be my last column, because I am off again to Eastern Europe to bring technical assistance to another struggling and emerging government. I have enjoyed the two terms I have served as the President of the Society, and I will keep in touch with its events and you through the Editor of this publication, as well as my other contacts on and off the Board.

This is an official announcement, as required by the Bylaws of the Society, that there will be an annual meeting of the Society on Monday, November 5, at the Calvert Inn, Route 1 in Riverdale. The purpose of the meeting, other than to have a nice meal and to get together as a Society, is to elect officers and 5 members of the Board. I am advised of no other business on the agenda that evening, except that we will have a special speaker - and I shall leave that as a surprise for the evening.

In November we will begin our 50th year - a milestone that has not gone unnoticed by the Board. Over the next year, we shall hear about numerous things that will be proposed and developed to celebrate this milestone.

I know the Board would welcome suggestions from any members as to suitable means of acknowledging our golden jubilee. More importantly I call on members who have mementos of those 50 years, be they programs, pictures, letters, or other memorabilia, that you would lend or donate to the Society to please call Sarah Bourne at 301 277 5468 and let her know what you wish to share.

Speaking of Donations -- I want to congratulate the committee (Susan, Susan, Jim, Sarah, Wallis, Joyce, Dusty, John and Lynn) for the **Prince of a County Reception** that was held on Saturday, September 15, at Bacon Hall in Upper Marlboro.

Members who were unable to make this event missed a treat -- Bacon Hall, you may remember, was moved to this site from its original setting as the Overseer's House on the other side of Route 4. George and Molly Kanellos are to be admired and thanked for the sensitive way they have reclaimed this treasure of the 18th century. The event was also very successful as a fund raiser -- the Society garnered a net of \$2,500 in donations and ticket sales for the event.

On a similar theme -- and as a parting gesture --I want to mention the little-known fact that the Society has an Endowment Fund -- that is generally funded by life memberships and outright designated donations. In my tenure as President I have attempted to make this a formal Fund, with a view to developing a much greater financial capacity for the Society -- one that would allow us to have our own staff and own our own home. We are perhaps the only Historical Society in the State that is all volunteer and that owns no historic real property and I would like to see that change. Therefore, in this 50th year of the Society, and in honor of our first half century milestone in November 2002, I am calling for pledges of support for this endowment. I personally pledge \$1,000 (and my check is on its way to the Treasurer) and call upon all

members who can to pledge some amount as well -- whether it is \$100, \$1,000 or more. The funds will be segregated from General Receipts to be used solely to build an endowment so that we can continue to bring programs, new publications, and other benefits to you and so that we can, if the opportunity arises, acquire a permanent home of our own and eventually perhaps hire an Executive Director and staff to do all those things that are done now by your volunteer Board of Directors and a few friends. Please give and give generously.

Thank You and Thank God for
Sharon
Les Sweeting

Election 2001

As mentioned by President Sweeting, on November 5, 2001, at the Calvert House Inn, Route 1, Riverdale Park, beginning at 6:30, the Society will hold its 49th annual meeting. The sole item on the agenda is to elect 5 members of the Board of Directors and the 7 officers of the Society. The nomination committee has proposed the following slate:

For Directorships with terms expiring at the end of 2004:

Diane Stultz
Joyce Dowling
Wallis Cain
Robert Crawley
Phyllis Herndon

For the Offices of:

President	John Petro
Vice President	James Wolfe
Secretary	Warren (Dusty) Rhoads
Treasurer	Joyce Uber
Historian	Susan Pearl
Editor	Sharon Sweeting
Membership	Donna Schneider

Current Directors Bill Uber, Eugene B Roberts, Jr, Mildred Gray, and Iris McConnell have another year on their term, and Anna Holmes, Lynn Roberts, Andy Wallace, John Mitchell, and Sarah Bourne have 2 years remaining.

Past Presidents are life members of the Board -- although they (like Dusty Rhoads) may be elected to another office. The past presidents are Jane Eagen Dodd, Joyce McDonald, Bud Dutton, John Giannetti, and Paul Lanham, who will be joined by Les Sweeting when his term ends on December 31.

The slate will be put before the membership at the annual meeting on November 5. Of course, nominations from the floor for any office up for election may be made (and are encouraged, we might add) so be there and exercise your rights as members. It is your responsibility.

Jack Boucher - Photographer

Reminder -- Saturday October 6 at 1:00 PM at Dorsey Chapel, HABS
Photographer Jack Boucher will describe (with plentiful illustrations) his fascinating profession. Call Susan at 301 464 5291 for details and reservation (free).

BUS TOUR SPONSORED BY
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OCTOBER 27 (SATURDAY) 8:00 AM.



Leaving from Marietta, the tour will visit Stratford Hall, historic home of the Lees (Richard Henry and Robert Edward, to name but two) of Virginia, where, in addition to a tour of this working plantation, a Plantation Dinner will be served. The Tour will then go to Pope's Creek Plantation -- birthplace of George Washington -- another working plantation. Returning by 6:00 P.M. If you have questions, please call Bill Uber at 301 345 9797

PRICE PER PERSON IS \$44, ALL INCLUSIVE

RESERVATIONS

NAME

TELEPHONE

NUMBER OF SEATS DESIRED @ \$44

RETURN THIS PAGE TOGETHER WITH A CHECK PAYABLE
TO PGCHS TO BILL UBER, 2A SOUTHWAY, GREENBELT, MD
20770-1732 [PHONE - 301 345 9797]

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

ANNUAL MEETING RESERVATION FORM

The annual meeting will be held at the Calvert House Inn on Route One in Riverdale Park -- immediately south of East West Highway on the left as you head toward Hyattsville. Parking and the main entrance are in the rear of the building, off Queensbury Road. The cash bar will be open at 6:00 PM and dinner will be served at about 6:30 PM. There will be a business meeting and a speaker.

The cost per person is \$25, there are four choices of entree for dinner, and paid reservations must be received by Monday, October 30. The entrées on the buffet will include Prime Rib, Chicken, Shrimp and Scallops, and Vegetarian Pasta.

Name _____
Number attending _____
Telephone _____

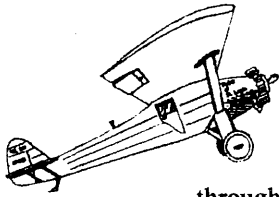
Enclose a check for \$25 per person payable to PGCHS and mail to Joyce Uber, 9010 Normal School Road, Bowie, MD 2071. Questions -- Call Sarah Bourne at 301 277 5468.
Thank you

College Park Aviation Museum

in association with the Smithsonian Institution presents

HOLLYWOOD FLYERS

Join the College Park Aviation Museum for our third annual Hollywood Flyers film series. The following is the schedule of historical and dramatic, sometimes funny and often serious, aviation movies. Movies are shown Friday mornings at 11:00 and some Saturday afternoons at 2:00 and are free with regular museum admission: adults \$4.00, seniors \$3.00, and children \$2.00. Popcorn and discount coupons for lunch at the 94th Aero Squadron Restaurant are also included.



November 2, 11 AM; November 3, 2 PM

***Dreams of Flight* (Smithsonian series) 53 minutes, 48 minutes, 55 minutes**

This three-part series was produced by the National Air and Space Museum. The viewer moves through aviation history from Otto Lilienthal's first glider flights to the launching of the Space Shuttle.

November 9, 11 AM

***The Dawn Patrol* (1938) 102 minutes**

Errol Flynn, David Niven, and Basil Rathbone star in this exciting story of Royal Flying Corps pilots in France. The film is a remake of the 1930 film of the same name starring Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. Much of the aerial footage from the first film was re-used. *Aircraft used: Nieuport 28s, Travelair 4000s as Fokkers, Thomas-Morse S.4C, and Pfalz D.XII.*

November 16, 11 AM; November 17, 2 PM

***The Blue Max* (1968) 155 minutes**

George Peppard stars as a German pilot in World War I. A commoner among aristocrats, he will do anything to get his 20 victories and the *Pour le Mérite*, the Blue Max. Lots of good flying scenes. *Aircraft used: Pfalz D.III, Moraine 230, Albatross D.II, British SE.5A, Caudron 272 Fokker Dr.I, Fokker D.VIII, all replicas; and British Tiger Moths as Fokkers.*

December 7, 11 AM

***The Wright Stuff* (1996) (documentary) 60 minutes**

Garrison Keillor narrates the story of (as the subtitle states) the Wright Brothers and the invention of the airplane. This film is part of the series *The American Experience*, hosted by David McCullough.

January 11, 11 AM

***The Great Waldo Pepper* (1975) 109 minutes**

Robert Redford is a pilot who had missed flying in World War I. He becomes a barnstormer and later a movie stunt pilot, where he gets to test his skills against a German ace. *The aerial scenes were staged by Frank Tallman.*

January 18, 11 AM; January 19, 2 PM

***Battle of Britain* (1969) 132 minutes**

This film tells the story of "the few" who battled the German *Luftwaffe* over Britain in 1940. The film features a large cast of renowned actors, including: Michael Caine, Trevor Howard, Curt Jurgens, Laurence Olivier, Christopher Plummer, Michael Redgrave, Ralph Richardson, and Robert Shaw. *Aircraft used: Spanish built He 111H-16s, Bf 109Es, and Ju 52/3ms; British Spitfires and Hurricanes.*



**Prince George's County Historical Society
Heritage Calendar
October 2001**

- 5- Jazz Concert- Davy Yarborough
Montpelier Cultural Arts Center 8PM 301-953-1993 \$\$

- 5- Candlelight Tour
Marietta House Museum 8 PM 301-464-5291 \$\$

- 6- Lecture "*Photographing Historic Sites*" Jack Boucher
PGCHS at Dorsey Chapel 1 PM 301-464-9251 Free

- 6&13- John Wilkes Booth Escape Route Tour
Surratt House Museum 7:30-7:30 301-868-1121 \$\$

- 5&13- Journey into Jug Bay's Past
Patuxent River Park 301-627-6074 \$\$

- 7- Candlelight Concert
St Barnabas Church 4 PM 301-249-9671

- 12- Lecture "*A Flight Over the North Pole*" Gus McLeod
College Park Aviation Museum 7PM 301-864-6029 \$\$

- 12- Jazz Concert-*Ronnie Wells & Ron Ellison*
Montpelier Cultural Arts Center 8PM 301-953-1993 \$\$

- 12&26 Afternoon Tea
Montpelier Mansion 3PM 301-498-8486 \$\$

- 13- Cemetery Preservation Workshop
Darnall's Chance 9-3 301-952-8010 \$\$

- 13&14-Hastings Medieval Faire
Marietta House Museum 11-5 301-464-5291 \$\$

- 13- Tea on the Train
Riversdale House Museum 2-4 301-864-0420 \$\$

- 17- Lecture "*Buildout Around the Chesapeake Bay*" Dr. Kent Mountford
Montpelier Mansion 7:30 301-953-1376 Free

- 19- Jazz Concert - *Carl Grubbs Quintet*
Montpelier Cultural Arts Center 8PM 301-953-1993 \$\$

- 20- WW II Big Band Dance
Newton White Mansion 8-11 301-952-8010 \$\$
- 21- Dessert Tea
Billingsley House Museum 1-3 301-627-0730 \$\$
- 21- Lecture *Larry Suid talks about Aviation Films*
College Park Aviation Museum 2PM 301-864-6029 \$\$
- 26&27-Mayhem in Marlboro-Walking Ghost Tour
Darnall's Chance 7-9:30 301-952-952-8010 \$\$
- 27- Book Signing Edward Steers *Blood on the Moon*
Surratt House Museum 12-4 301-868-1121 Free
- 27- Campfire and Storytelling
Marietta House Museum 7PM 301-464-5291 \$\$
- 27- Flight Night Halloween Fun
College Park Aviation Museum 7-9 301-864-6029 \$\$
- 27- Jazz Concert- *Stanley Cowell & the Heath Brothers*
Harmony Hall 8PM 301-203-6070 \$\$
- 28- Colonial Days for All Ages
Montpelier Mansion 11-4 301-699-2544 Free

Month of October- Registration for 2nd Annual Gingerbread House Contest
Darnall's Chance House Museum 301-952-8010

**Prince George's County
Historical Society**

Annual Membership Application

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone - Home: _____

Business: _____

Please indicate: ☐ New ☐ Renewal

Check below the category you select:

Dues categories:

Member / Family.....\$25.00

Sustaining Member.....\$50.00

Institutional Member.....\$50.00

Life Membership.....\$300.00

Additional Contribution _____

____ I am also interested in helping the Society as a volunteer. Please contact me regarding volunteer opportunities.

____ For membership in the **Maryland Historical Society**, include an additional \$30.00 for individual, or \$40.00 for family.

Our operating support comes from your dues and contributions. All contributions qualify for tax deduction. We appreciate your support.

Please make checks payable to **PGCHS**

Mail checks and form to:

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Historical Society
Post Office Box 14
Riverdale, Maryland 20738-0014
301-464-0590

12/99

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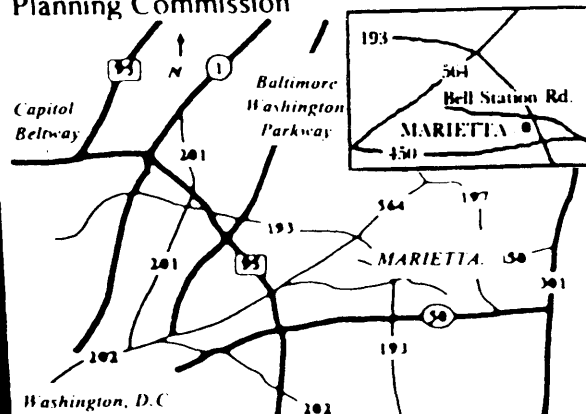
Information 301-464-5291

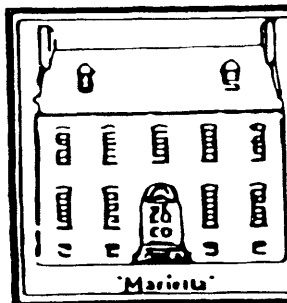
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News and Notes

Prince George's County Historical Society



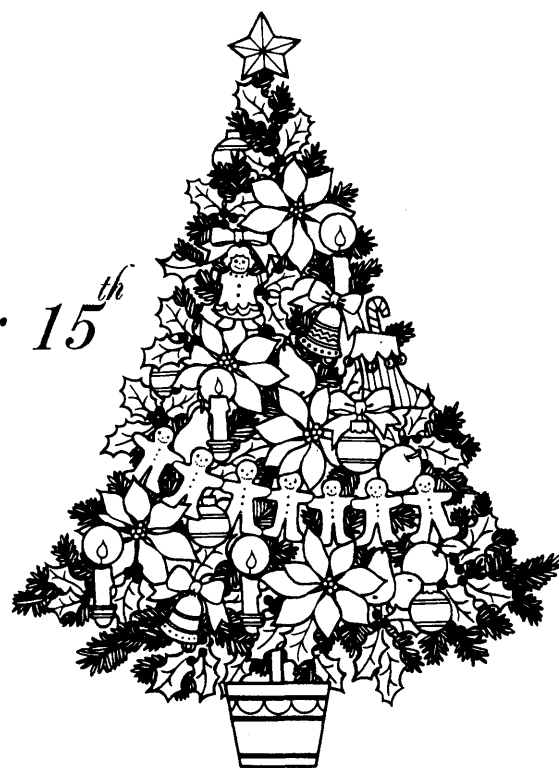
December 2001

Our 49th Year

XXX Number 7



*Holiday Party
Celebrating
America's Food
Saturday, December 15th
2-4 pm*



Holiday Celebration for 2001

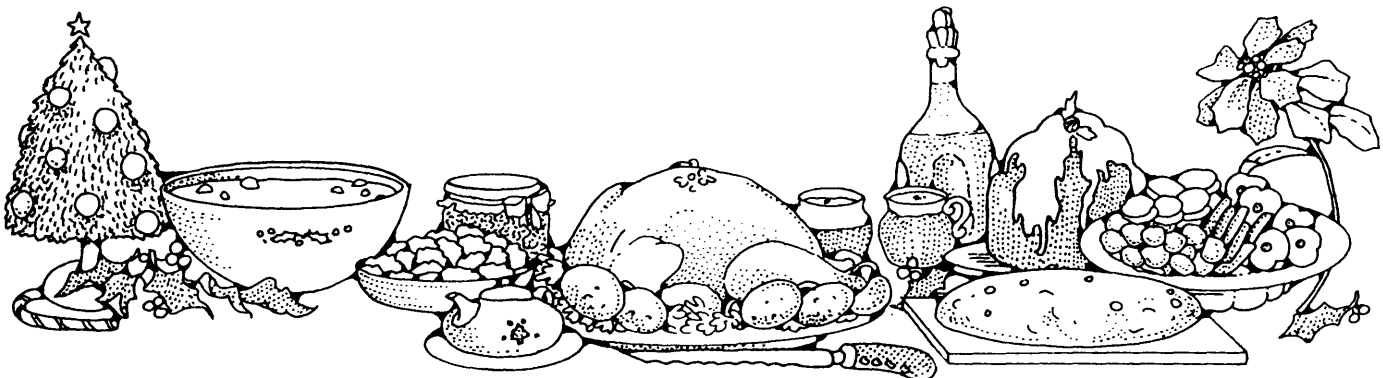
Last year our Holiday Millennium party featured a thousand years of foodstuffs dating from their introduction into the vocabularies of various nations. This year we hope to celebrate **the history of American foods**. In Reay Tannahill's book *Food in History*, she states:

"When Columbus first sighted America, its inhabitants had already developed more than 200 types of maize - one of the most remarkable plant breeding achievements in history. On his early visits to Cuba Columbus noted that it was 'most tasty boiled, roasted or ground into flour'. When he arrived back in Spain, his most popular exhibits from the New World were a few specimen 'Indians' and some handfuls of old dust, but he seems also to have carried maize seeds in his baggage. Soon afterwards the Spaniards began distributing maize around the Mediterranean, although it was the Venetians who took it to the Near East, from which it travelled up to the Balkans and also back to France, Britain and Holland. ... When, in 1519, Magellan set out on a new Spanish attempt to reach the Spice Islands by a westward route, he took maize with him. It was known in the Philippines soon after, and by 1555 was sufficiently important in some parts of China to rate a mention in a regional history of the province of Henan (Honan). In the seventeenth century it was to transform agricultural life in Yunnan and Sichuan (Szechuan) and became a life-saving crop for migrants forced out into the hills from the overpopulated Yangtze delta."

Later, in the section called *The Expanding World 1492-1789*, Ms Tannahill discusses *The Settling of North America*.

*"The potato, the tomato, maize, avocados, pineapples, haricot, kidney and butter beans, lima beans, scarlet runners, 'French' beans, chocolate, peanuts, vanilla, red peppers and green peppers, tapioca and the turkey, not to mention gold and silver, tobacco, rubber, chewing gum and quinine - what the Americas contributed to Europe added up to a formidable list. * Most of it came from the south, however; from the north, there was nothing new, only fish, furs and timber. All were valuable."*

More "American" foods were discussed in the Wednesday, November 14th edition of the *New York Times*. An article on descendants of the Plymouth feast mentions that cranberries were a native fruit while another article offers that "in Colonial America hard cider was as common as beer." And here, we have our proposed list of American foodstuffs to honor at our December 15th celebration. Or just bring your favorite hors d'oeuvre. See you there.



THE HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

THE VIEW FROM PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

The October 2001 program of the Historical Society was a special one: our speaker was Jack E. Boucher, senior architectural photographer for the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) of the National Park Service. The Historic American Buildings Survey was established in 1933 as part of the Works Progress Administration, hiring unemployed architects, historians and photographers to record America's historic architecture. HABS continues today and, in the more than 65 years of its existence, has produced 175,000 large-format photographs, 50,000 measured drawings, and written histories of 32,000 structures.

It was Jack Boucher whose outstanding photographs of historic places appear in the 1993 publication *Landmarks of Prince George's County*, and, having worked with him on the *Landmarks* project, I was eager to have him address the Society. For about a year, three of us (Jack, HABS historian Catherine Lavoie, and I) traveled to every corner of the County to record more than 60 sites for the book. We learned a great deal just observing him at work, and had lots of fun too! Jack's methods of lighting were surprising and instructive - for example, he would occasionally set up floodlights out of doors to produce just the right shadows. And occasionally he would pose Catherine and me in an historic parlor and take a double exposure, mischievously creating images of us as transparent "ghosts" in an historic setting.

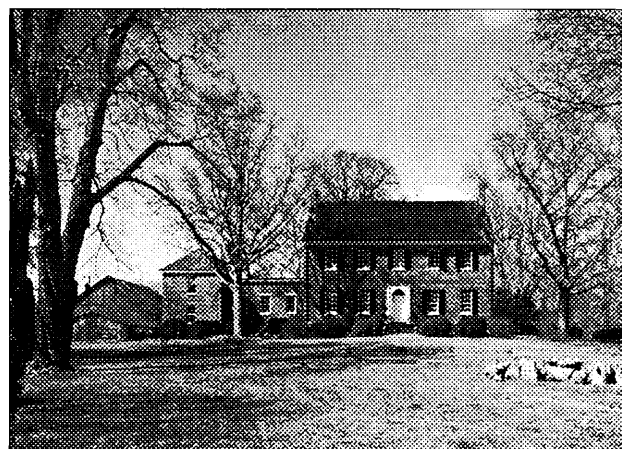
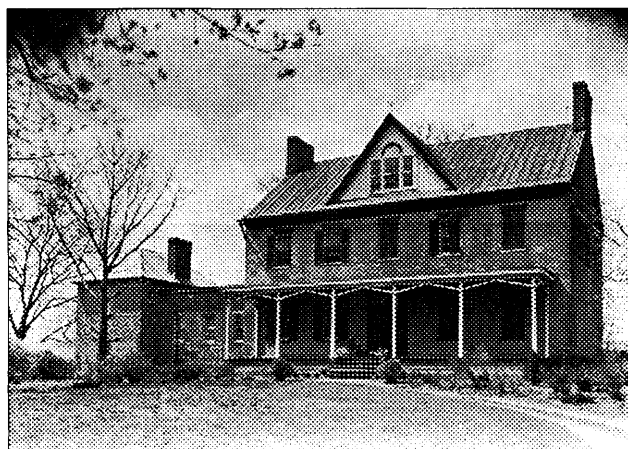
At his October talk, Jack told us of the mischief he had made at Stratford Hall, the Lee home in Virginia, by creating a similar "ghost." He told us also of special techniques like "painting with light" - for example, taking long time exposures while sequentially setting up lights at different parts of a long pitch-dark tunnel. The importance of his work became very clear when he showed us his documentation of unique landscapes subsequently obliterated by development.

The HABS photographs have been extremely important to me in my 25 years of research and study of Prince George's County history and historic architecture. One of the first things I do when beginning research on a property is to seek out early images, and quite often the earliest image I can find is from the first HABS campaign in the 1930s. During the years 1935 to 1937, 97 Prince George's County buildings were photographed - only 65 of them still stand. For the 32 that have been destroyed, the HABS photograph is often the best, and sometimes the only, record of the building. The preservation of these images, sometimes accompanied by measured drawings, is a great help in understanding the architectural context of our County's history.

Regarding my work with HABS, this year has brought an unexpected and quite wonderful bonus! The name "John O. Brostrup, photographer" is attached to almost all of the 1936/37 HABS photographs of Prince George's County properties. As I have used his photographs, indeed depended upon them to determine the early construction, alterations, and evolution of our historic buildings, his name has come to exemplify for me the early HABS collection. His work of 65 years ago has contributed immensely to my work, but it never occurred to me that I would

collection. His work of 65 years ago has contributed immensely to my work, but it never occurred to me that I would get a chance to talk to him about it. But this past spring, quite serendipitously, we made contact, through a colleague/friend of mine who happened to meet Mr. Brostrup, now in his late eighties, at his retirement home in upstate New York. My friend, learning of Mr. Brostrup's work and knowing about my use of it, gave me his address, and Mr. Brostrup called me the minute he received my letter.

It has been a delight to talk to John Brostrup about his work with HABS in those early years: his arrival in Washington as a young photographer in the depths of the Depression; his response to an article about the beginning HABS program; and his travels around Prince George's County in the '30s, often accompanied by Forrest Bowie who knew where to find all of the interesting old buildings. Mr. Brostrup asked me about several of the buildings that he had found most interesting and remembered well; he was distressed to learn that one third of the buildings that he photographed here are now gone, but grateful that we have learned so much about them from the photographs that he left us. And it was wonderful to be able to reassure him that his negatives are archivally preserved at the Library of Congress, where prints of all the negatives are available for public study.



The photographs shown in this article were taken by John O. Brostrup in 1936 and by Jack E. Boucher in 1989 and 1990. In some cases, such as **Pleasant Prospect**, we can see a very substantial change in the removal of the Victorian crossgable and porch, and the restoration of this handsome brick plantation house to its original 1790s appearance. In other cases, such as **Melford**, Mr. Brostrup's photo gives us information about the Victorian porch which was replaced in the 1950s by the present gabled entry porch. The Historical Society at Marietta has a



selection of 1930's HABS photographs which we invite you to look at - you will find it interesting to compare them with Jack Boucher's photographs in *Landmarks of Prince George's County*. And you can view most of Prince George's County's HABS photographs on the web, by going to

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/hhhtml/hhGeographics30.html#top>

and working your way through the various Prince George's County listings.

Happy "Site Seeing"!

Susan G. Pearl
November 2001

Congratulations to Officers and Board Elected at Annual Meeting November 5, 2001

President	John Petro
Vice President	Jim Wolfe
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Treasurer	Joyce Uber
Historian	Susan Pearl
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Past presidents

John Giannetti	Bud Dutton	Lester Sweeting
Paul Lanham	Jane Eagen Dodd	Joyce McDonald

The positions of Facility Manager and Gift Shop Manager are automatic members of the Board

**Prince George's County Historical Society
Heritage Calendar
December 2001**

December

- 1- Cletic Holiday Celebration
Harmony Hall 8PM 301-203-6070 \$\$

- 1-9 Gingerbread House Show
Darnall's Chance House Museum 12-4PM 301-952-8010 \$\$

- 2- Candlelight Concert
St. Barnabas Church 4PM 301-249-5000

- 5-8 Christmas Candlelight Tours
Montpelier Mansion 6-9 PM 301-953-1376 \$\$

- 7-9 Holiday Candlelight Tours
Marietta House Museum 6-8PM 301-464-5291 \$\$

- 8- Winter Solstice
National Colonial Farm at Accokeek 5-8 PM 301-283-2113 Free

- 8- Santa Fly-in
College Park Aviation Museum 12-4PM 301-864-6029 \$\$

- 8-9 Belair Christmas by Candlelight
Belair Mansion & Stable 6-9 4-7 301-809-3089 \$\$

- 9- Old Town Bowie Holiday Show
Huntington Center 12N 301-464-3725 Free

- 9- Colonial Handbell Ringers
His Lordship's Kindness 2PM 301-856-0358 \$\$

- 8-10 Holiday Candlelight Tours
His Lordship's Kindness 5-8 PM 301-856-0358 \$\$

- 10-21 Group Candlelight Tours
Marietta House Museum 301-464-5291 \$\$

- 15- A Christmas Feast
Billingsley House Museum 6PM 301-627-0730 \$\$

- 15-17 Victorian Yuletide by Candlelight
Surratt House Museum 6-9PM 301-868-1121 \$\$

- 26&28 Holidays at Riversdale
Riversdale House Museum 12-4 301-864-0420 \$\$

- 27-27 Winter Evenings
Riversdale House Museum 7-9PM 301-864-0420 \$\$

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

Prince George's County: A Pictorial History

by Alan Virta Revised 1998 Updated Edition. Hardcover 308 pages. Price \$42.95 S&H \$3.00*

The history and essence of Prince George's County come alive in words and pictures in this beautiful collector's edition. Written in a fascinating narrative with more than 350 photographs, maps and illustrations, many in full color and previously unpublished.

Calvert of Maryland

Reprint of James Otis Kaler's 1910 publication. Hardcover 166 pages, pen and ink illustrations. Price \$6.95

This fact-based novel shows the home life of the colonists from a child's viewpoint. This story is told in the first person by young George Calvert, godson of the first Lord Baltimore, George Calvert.

Atlas of fifteen Miles around Washington including the County of Prince George Maryland

Reprint 1975. Softcover 47 pages. Price \$10.00

Compiled, Drawn & Published from Actual Surveys by G.M. Hopkins 1878 including "historical" sketches. Indexed.

Atlas of Prince George's County, Maryland 1861

Reprint 1996. Softcover 32 pages. Price \$10.00

Atlas was adapted from Martenet's Map of Prince George's County Maryland, with information from 1860 federal census for each Election District. Indexed.

Prince George's County, Maryland Indexes of Church Registers 1686-1885

Volume 1 Protestant Episcopal Church, King George's Parish & Queen Anne's Parish

by Helen W. Brown Reprint 2000 Softcover 200 pages. Price \$18.00

Prince George's County, Maryland Indexes of Church Registers 1686-1885

Volume 2 Protestant Episcopal Church, St. Paul's Parish and Prince George's Parish

by Helen W. Brown Reprint 2000 Softcover 196 pages. Price \$18.00

Out of the Past - Prince Georgians and their Land

by R. Lee Van Horn Reprint 1996 Hardcover 422 pages. Price \$20.00

Chronicle of everyday life in Prince George's County, Maryland from the time of its founding in 1696 until the beginning of the Civil War from information gleaned from public records, newspapers and private papers.

Tricentennial Cook Book

Compiled & Edited by Dorothy Rainwater & Tricentennial Celebration Committee

Printed 1996. Softcover, spiral bound 150 pages. Price \$10.00

Contains recipes collected from county residents as part of the tricentennial celebration.

Journey Through Time - A Pictorial History of the Prince George's County Police Department

by Lt. Dennis Campbell Printed 1991. Hardcover 304 pages. Price \$40.00 S&H \$3.00*

A history of the county police department coving over 200 years. Indexed.

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*** P.G. Pictorial History, * Journey Through Time & * Landmarks of Prince George's County**

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