

Prince George's County Historical Society News and Notes

XXXII Number I

OUR 50th YEAR

JAN-FEB 2003

In Celebration of the 250th Anniversary of the Birth of Gabriel Duvall

On December 6, 1752, at the northwest corner of Darnall's Grove, Susannah Duvall, wife of Benjamin Duvall, gave birth to Gabriel, her sixth child and second son. His older sisters Elizabeth, Susannah, Delilah and Sarah along with his brother Benjamin and other relatives welcomed the newest member of the family.

Gabriel's great-grandfather Mareen had immigrated from England. Mareen Duvall was born in France but moved to England when his religious beliefs made life in France intolerable. He was a Protestant in a country with a Catholic "Sun" King who ruled by "divine right." Sometime around 1660 while in England, he indentured himself to get to America. Once there he completed his period of servitude and set out to acquire enough money and property to join the landed gentry. Mareen married three times and had twelve children. Remarkably for the 17th century, all twelve survived to adulthood, married and produced children. Gabriel was linked to the Immigrant through Benjamin, the youngest of the twelve. Gabriel's own parents while not wealthy were educated and owned properties. Gabriel was schooled in the classics under tutors Alexander Irwin and Samuel Duvall Beck. While his father and grandfather had been tobacco planters, that was not the path that Gabriel was to follow. In 1771, he left the family farm in Prince George's County and moved to Annapolis. There he began what would turn in to a more than sixty year career of public service. The family motto, *Pro Patria (for his Country)* was embodied in Gabriel Duvall.

His years of public service covered various positions that began with an appointed position as Clerk of the House of Delegates in 1773, in 1774 and again in 1777. He was elected to the Council of Safety of Annapolis serving from 1775 to 1777 as well as holding an appointment as Musterman and Commissary of Stores for the Maryland Militia. In 1781, he was elected Clerk of the Commission to Preserve and Sell Confiscated British Property and then elected Commissioner of the aforementioned five months later. He served as chairman of this commission until 1785. At the same time Duvall was appointed Prosecutor of the Mayor's Court

from 1781-85, then elected Recorder of the Mayor's Court in 1787, reelected in 1789, 1790-94, 1797-1799 and again in 1802. Gabriel was also elected, in 1782, to the Governor's Council during the term of William Paca. He was reelected for the 1783-84 term but resigned over a law giving the Governor too much power. He served on the Council for another term in 1785-86 during the tenure of William Smallwood, resigning in 1786.

In 1787 he was elected to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia but declined the position along with the other four persons elected with him. New elections were held and another group of five were elected, three of whom would sign the Constitution. In October 1787, Duvall ran for and won a seat in the Maryland House of Delegates, a position to which he would be elected four times. Concurrently with the above, he served as recorder for the Annapolis Corporation and was appointed Major in the Militia of Anne Arundel County. Duvall expressed his civic mindedness by agreeing to act as one of the Managers of a lottery to raise funds to build St. Anne's Church on Church Circle and pledged paid funds to support the building of St. Johns' College. *(The tradition of supporting education and the church was carried on in other generations. His great grandson Gabriel DuVal served as Trustee for the Glenn Dale School and hired its first teacher, Miss Edna Rude. The family donated the land on which St. George's Chapel in Glenn Dale was built in 1873 and donated the money to rebuild the church when it was destroyed by a cyclone in 1890.)*

The year 1787 brought another important change in Duvall's life. At age 34, he would marry Miss Mary Brice of Annapolis. But his happiness in marriage would not last

long. Three short years later, at 29 years of age, Mary would die just two months after the birth of their first child, a son Edmund Brice. Gabriel took the infant to the family farm in Prince George's County and left him in the care of his parents and unmarried sisters, Delilah and Sarah. He returned to Annapolis and threw himself into his work to ease the pain of her loss. In a letter to his father after her death, Gabriel says: "But so great was my affection for her, and I had so uniformly experienced the goodness of her heart, that were she now living and single and I had my choice of all the world, I would prefer her."

Duvall's diverse positions gave him great experience to carry out his duties when elected to the U.S. Congress to fill the term of John Mercer during the Third Congress in 1794. He was reelected to a full term and served in the Fourth Congress until 1796 when he resigned to accept an appointment as Judge of the Maryland General Court.

While in Philadelphia he met the daughter of the owner of the boarding house where he stayed. Miss Jane Gibbon was "neither young nor taciturn" but she won Gabriel's heart. After a brief courtship they were married on May 25, 1795. Returning to Annapolis, along with his bride, he involved himself in the 1796 elections by declaring himself an elector for Thomas Jefferson. Duvall won but Jefferson did not. Again in 1800 he ardently supported Jefferson and ran as an elector. This time Duvall was able to cast his vote for the winning candidate, Thomas Jefferson. He remained a supporter of Jefferson who honored their friendship with the gift of a campechi chair that is on display in the Judge's bedroom at Marietta. Both Jefferson and Madison relied on Duvall for gauging the political pulse of Maryland. Jefferson also offered his friend

the position of Chief Judge of the District of Columbia, which he declined.

He did, however, serve as elector for the selection of Maryland Senator Wright to the U.S. Senate and when the electors convened in September of 1801, he was elected President of the panel. He was also named one of three Commissioners to ascertain Maryland's western and southern boundaries with Virginia. In December 1802, he accepted an appointment to the position of Comptroller of the U.S. Treasury by President Jefferson.

The Duvalls moved from Annapolis to Washington and became active participants in the social scene there. In 1805 while continuing to support his interest in education, he was elected as one of twelve Trustees of "Permanent Institution for the Education of the Youth in the City of Washington," called the Washington Academy. After declining appointments as Chancellor and Judge of the Land Office, Judge of the 1st District Court of Maryland and Judge of the Court of Appeals, in November 1811, at the age of 59, he accepted the appointment as Associate Judge of the U.S. Supreme Court by President James Madison. It was a position he would hold for the next 23 years.

Although Duvall owned property in Prince George's County purchased over a period of ten years (1785-1795), starting with his father's 150 acre farm, he did not live there or build a permanent dwelling until after his appointment to the Supreme Court. Since the Court only met from the first week of February and adjourned in the second week of March so the Justices could return home to fulfill their U.S. Circuit Judge duties, the Judge had about eight months of the year with no judicial responsibilities. Between

1812 and 1813, he began the building of Marietta. Tax records show that Gabriel owned slaves and tobacco was grown on his farm at this time. The house may have been built with the labor of enslaved people on his farm or hired from neighboring plantations. The bricks were probably made on the property during construction. By 1815 or 1816, the Duvalls had taken up residency in their new "country" home. After the move to Marietta, Gabriel stayed at boarding houses in the City, frequently with the other Justices, when the Court was in session.

In 1818 the Judge, who did not imagine that his house would be the home to small children, became the guardian for his sister's orphaned grandson, Gabriel Duvall Clark, age 5. In January of 1818, his only son Edmund Brice married Augusta Caroline McCausland, daughter of a well-to-do businessman, Marcus McCausland, who owned a successful brewery in Baltimore. When Edmund Duvall asked his father to lend him money to enter into a business venture with Mr. McCausland, Gabriel admonished him: "If you wish to make something of yourself you will come home and devote yourself to public service."

Edmund and Augusta did "come home;" they settled in a house on the Marietta plantation. Edmund and Augusta's marriage was plagued with tragedy almost from the beginning. Between the summer of 1818 and the summer of 1825, Augusta bore six children and lost five of them. The family Book of Prayer notes "a son was born, premature, he lived but a few minutes." Less than a year later in July 1819, another son would die after six days. A daughter born in 1820 died in June 1825 along with her two year old brother Gabriel who was born in 1823. Another daughter Augusta,

born in 1821, lived just two months. In 1824 a son Marcus was born and lived to adulthood. Another son was born in 1826, and named Edmund Bryce DuVal. (The new baby's father had changed the spelling of the family name from the English Duvall back to the original French DuVal and had changed the "i" in Brice to a "y"). A daughter, Mary Frances, born in 1827 was named after another girl lost in 1825. Edmund in the meantime followed his father's advice and served in the Maryland House of Delegates for several terms. However, by 1828 it is apparent that Edmund was ill with an affliction that affected his mind. In a prayer that Gabriel wrote, he beseeches God to "cure his son of his insanity." Edmund was committed to a Sanitarium in Philadelphia but was released too soon in the opinion of his father. By 1831 Edmund was back in Philadelphia and died there in a boarding house. Five months later, Augusta gave birth to their fourth surviving child, a daughter Gabriella Augusta. After Edmund's death and the birth of Gabriella, Augusta's health faltered. In the summer of 1832, she took the girls to Norfolk to visit her sister perhaps to prepare them to live there after she was gone. She returned to Prince George's County at the end of the summer and "resigned to her fate," died in October 1832. At her request, Gabriel became guardian for the boys, Marcus, age 8 and Edmund, age 6 and sent them to boarding school – Mr. Austin's in Baltimore. He also became guardian for the baby Gabriella, just 15 months old as Augusta's brother-in-law, Mr. Southgate, "declined to take Gabriella." He did however, agree to take the older girl, Mary Frances, age 5. Marietta's north addition was built at this time to accommodate the grandchildren. During this time Gabriel kept a meticulous journal listing the expenses of the children. The slaves, inherited from the

children's parents, were all hired by Gabriel except for Rachel, a young enslaved woman who was not hired, but "cared for Gabriella constantly." In April 1834, just eighteen months after the death of his daughter-in-law, Gabriel's beloved wife Jane also died.

In the 1820s the Judge's hearing became impaired but he did not feel he could resign from the bench and let Andrew Jackson have the opportunity to appoint someone to the Court. His plan to wait to resign until after the next presidential election did not work since Jackson was reelected. A deal was finally struck in 1834 when Duvall agreed to step down and Jackson agreed to appoint Roger B. Taney to take Duvall's Maryland seat. In January 1835 Gabriel finally resigned from the Court. In a letter dated Jan 16, 1835, Chief Justice John Marshall says, "We cannot review the cordiality with which we have proceeded together in the performance of our official duties and the fidelity with which you have discharged the part which has devolved on you without feeling deep regret at the separation which has taken place and a sincere wish that you may long enjoy in retirement that unalloyed happiness to which your private virtues and the purity of your public life give you much just claims."

Gabriel Duvall continued to be healthy and active after his retirement. He continued to ride his horse into Washington to attend horse races, a pastime that he enjoyed all of his life. In his earlier days he raised racing horses and was successful in training winners. He was considered an expert on Colonial thoroughbred horses and wrote letters to magazines correcting lineages inaccurately printed in their pages.

Only in his last years did the old Judge become infirm and unable to receive visitors. On March 6, 1844, he drew his last breath and departed this earth at age 91.

An exhibit is now on display at Marietta commemorating the 250th anniversary of the birth of this extraordinary man. He was also a man of paradox. He was considered an honest, fair and genial man by his peers, supported his church and educational establishments, and raised the children of his relations while at the same time was comfortable owning other human beings.

Duval descendants have generously shared with Marietta many artifacts that belonged to the Judge, among them: pieces of the vest that Gabriel Duwall wore at his marriage to Mary Brice in 1787, wedding presents to Gabriel and Jane Gibbon, candlesticks he ordered from England and an original Saint-Memin portrait. The story of Marietta is not just the story of Gabriel Duwall but also of the generations who followed him. On loan is a lovely oil portrait of his son Edmund. Photographs of his grandson and granddaughter-in-law, Edmund Bryce Du Val II and Caroline Lansdale Du Val are on display along with some of their furnishings that were used when they lived here. There are over 150 items in this new display on the Duvalls of Marietta. The exhibit will run through the first week of March and is open Friday, Saturday and Sunday at regular house tour hours or by appointment.

Submitted by Jim Wolfe, Vice-President, Historical Society



G. Duwall

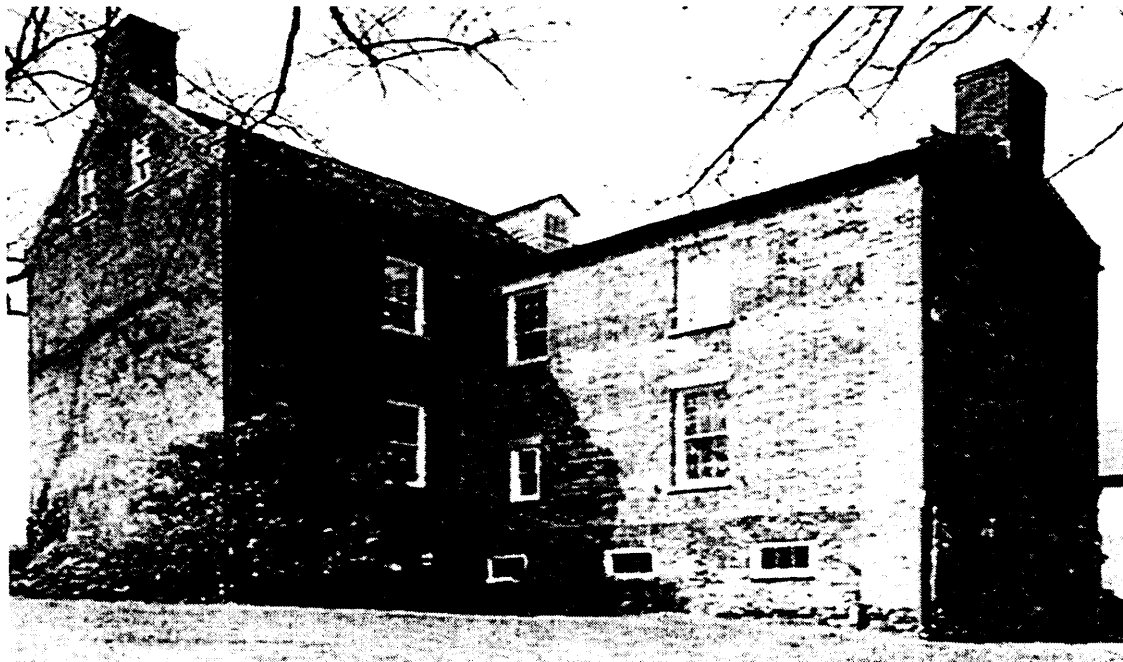
Death Notice

Harry L. Durity, Esq. Attorney, Upper Marlboro Town Commissioner, and long-time Prince George's County Historical Society member died on January 9, 2003, at age 85. In addition to his membership to the Maryland Historical Society, the *Prince George's Journal* reported that he belonged to the County Bar Association and had served as a past president of the Lions Club of Upper Marlboro. He also served as chairman of the Prince George's County Bicentennial Commission. His son **Richard P. Durity** of Denver, Colorado, donated his father's collection of materials related to Maryland and Prince George's County to our library.

Memorial donations in his memory are also being received by the Historical Society at P.O. Box 14, Riverdale Park, MD 20738

Our most sincere sympathy is extended to his entire family and we thank them for their donations and generosity.

**Historical American Buildings Survey Photographs
MARIETTA**



View of Southeast and Northeast Elevations from East



**Law Office, Northeast Front,
View from East**



**Law Office Interior
Southeast Wall**

**Prince George's County Historical Society
Heritage Calendar
February & March 2003**

- 1- Hollywood Flyers - *The Spirit of St. Louis*
College Park Aviation Museum 2pm 301-864-6029 \$\$
- 4- Negro Leagues Baseball Memorabilia
Sports & Learning Complex 5:30-7:30pm 301-583-2670 free
- 7- Hollywood Flyers- *Fly Girls- the Story of the WASPs*
College Park Aviation Museum 11am 301-864-6029
- 8- First Ladies Tea
Marietta House Museum 3pm 301-464-5291 \$\$
- 8- Valentine Tea
His Lordship's Kindness 11am & 2pm 301-856-0358 \$\$
- 11- Lecture- *Archeology of Native American Life on the Potomac*
Belair Mansion 7:30pm 301-809-3089 \$\$
- 12- Love Lines, Poetry, Dessert- poets read romantic poetry while you enjoy scrumptious desserts
Riversdale House Museum 7pm 301-864-0420 \$\$
- 14- Hollywood Flyers *The Tuskegee Airmen*
College Park Aviation Museum 11am 301-864-6029 \$\$
- 14- Sweetheart Tea
Belair Mansion 4pm 301-809-3089 \$\$
- 14- Valentine's Day Wedding Reception
Darnall's Chance House Museum 301-952-8010
- 15&16- Landsknecht Winter Camp 16th C Holy Roman Empire Re-enactors
Marietta House Museum 9am-3pm 301- 464-5291 free
- 16- George Washington Musicales with the Colonial Ringers
Montpelier Mansion 2pm 301-953-1376 free
- 16- Valentine "Sweet" Tea
Billingsley House Museum 1-3pm 3-1627-0730 \$\$
- 17- Presidents' Day Shoreline Walk
National Colonial Farm 301-283-2113 free
- 21- Hollywood Flyers *The Great Waldo Pepper*
College Park Aviation Museum 11am 301-864-6029 \$\$

March

- 4&18- Lecture- *Life at Riversdale: Legacies & Links to the University of Maryland*
Riversdale House Museum 7pm 301-864-0420 \$\$

- 11- Lecture *Dressing 18th Century Style with Sally Queen*
Belair Mansion 7:30pm 301-809-3089 \$\$

- 15- Mad Hatter's Tea
Marietta House Museum 1&4pm 301-464-5291 \$\$

- 15- Centennial Celebration of the National Wildlife Refuge System
National Wildlife Visitors Center 10am-3pm 301-497-5761

- 19- Lecture *Charles L'Enfant & his contributions to Washington DC*
Montpelier Mansion 7:30pm 301-953-1376 free

- 23- Spring Equinox Tea
Billingsley House Museum 1-3pm 301-627-0730 \$\$

- 28-30- The Lincoln Assassination- Those Nagging Little Questions
Surratt House Museum 301-868-1121 \$\$

- 29- Colonial Tavern Dinner
Darnalls' Chance House Museum 7-9:30pm 301-952-8010

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 SHIPPING \$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 SHIPPING \$3.00*
A history of the county police department coving over 200 years. Indexed.

Landmarks of Prince George's County

125 black and white photographs of the rich architectural legacy of Prince George's County by Jack E. Boucher.
Arranged chronologically, the photographs and captions offer a panoramic overview of the County's architectural and historical development. Indexed. Hardcover 144 pages. Price \$18.00 SHIPPING \$3.00*

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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.

Please make checks payable to **PGCHS**

Mail checks and form to: Prince George's County Historical Society

PO Box 14, Riverdale, MD 20738-0014

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

We're on the web!
www.pghistory.org

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Saturday 12 pm—4pm
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A facility of the Maryland National
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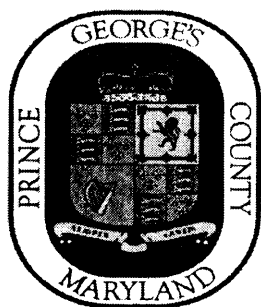
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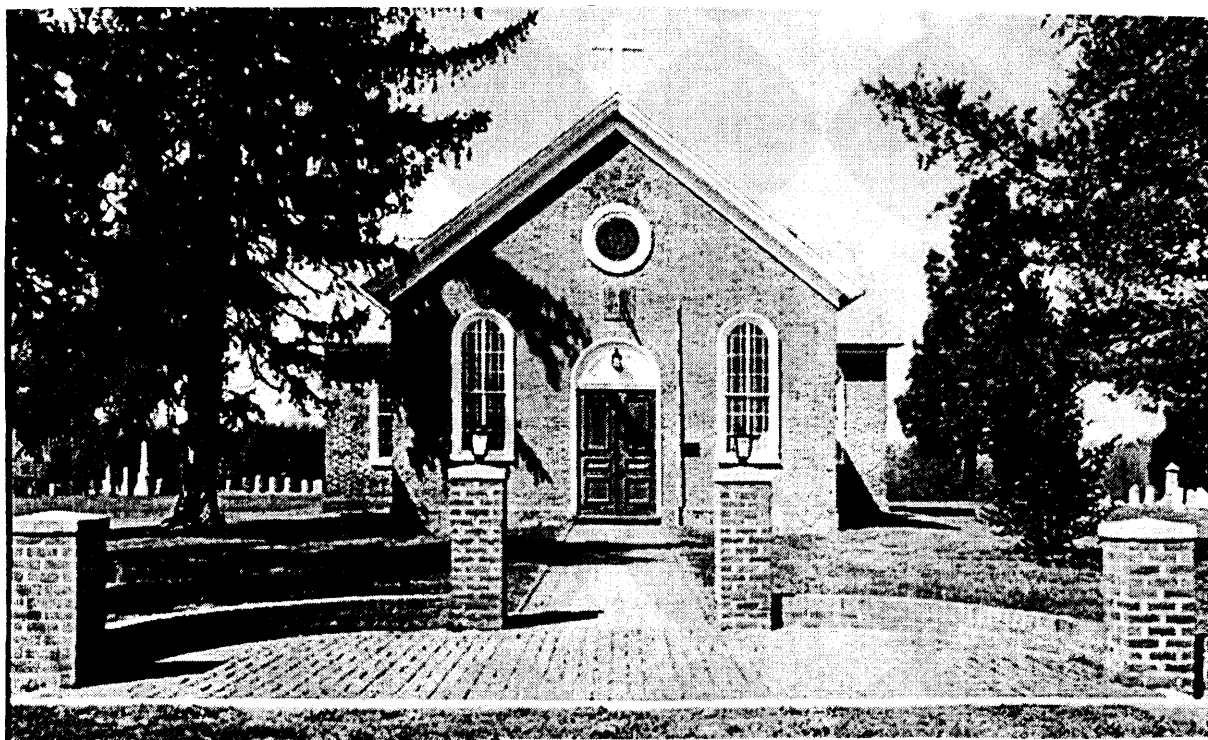


Prince George's County Historical Society News and Notes

XXXII Number 2

OUR 51st YEAR

MAR-APR 2003



ST. GEORGE'S DAY, 2003

or

"THREE SAINTS IN 2003: AFTER ST. THOMAS', ST. GEORGE'S AT ST. PAUL'S"

Last year we celebrated St. George's Day at St. Thomas' Church in Croom, and this year we are going a little further back in history - to St. Paul's in Baden. St. Paul's was the parish church for one of the original Anglican parishes established in the Maryland colony, and St. Thomas' was originally its chapel-of-ease. St. Paul's, the church that we will visit on April 27th, is the oldest surviving church building in Prince George's County.

In 1692, four years before the establishment of Prince George's County, the Church of England became the established church of the Maryland colony through an Act of the General Assembly. By this time, 10 counties had been established in the colony, and those counties were divided into 30 parishes. When Prince George's County came into being in 1696, two of these parishes had already been established within its boundaries: St. Paul's Parish in the area which had been part of Calvert County, and King George's Parish in the area which had been part of Charles County. In King George's Parish, the first church was built in 1696 on the site of the present St. John's Church at Broad Creek. In St. Paul's Parish, near the Patuxent River, a rural chapel had been built by 1693.

In 1731 and 1732, St. Paul's Parish petitioned for an annual levy, in the form of tobacco, to finance the building of a new church. Property was acquired in 1733 in the area that is now known as Baden, and plans for the church were initiated under the Reverend John Eversfield. A contract was drawn up, calling for a brick structure 50 by 27 feet, with gabled roof, a small square "porch" projecting from each of the long north and south walls, and the principal double door in the west gable front. A parish church was to be built first, and then a chapel, using the same plans. The articles of agreement with the contractor, Joshua Doyne, survive, complete with all the details and specifications for the new church building. The new St. Paul's Church was completed in 1735.

The same plans were used very soon afterward to build a chapel for "ye remote inhabitants" some 6 miles to the north in an area now known as Croom. St. Thomas' at Croom was finished in 1745, and it was there that we celebrated St. George's Day last year. In some ways, St. Thomas' shows more clearly the original plans for these church buildings, for although it now has a Victorian entry/bell tower and Victorian apse, it still retains both side porches, and its orientation has not been changed. In the case of St. Paul's, later additions changed both the shape and the orientation of the church, and at first glance it is difficult to believe that the two churches originally looked very much alike. The Vestry records tell the story of the evolution of St. Paul's.

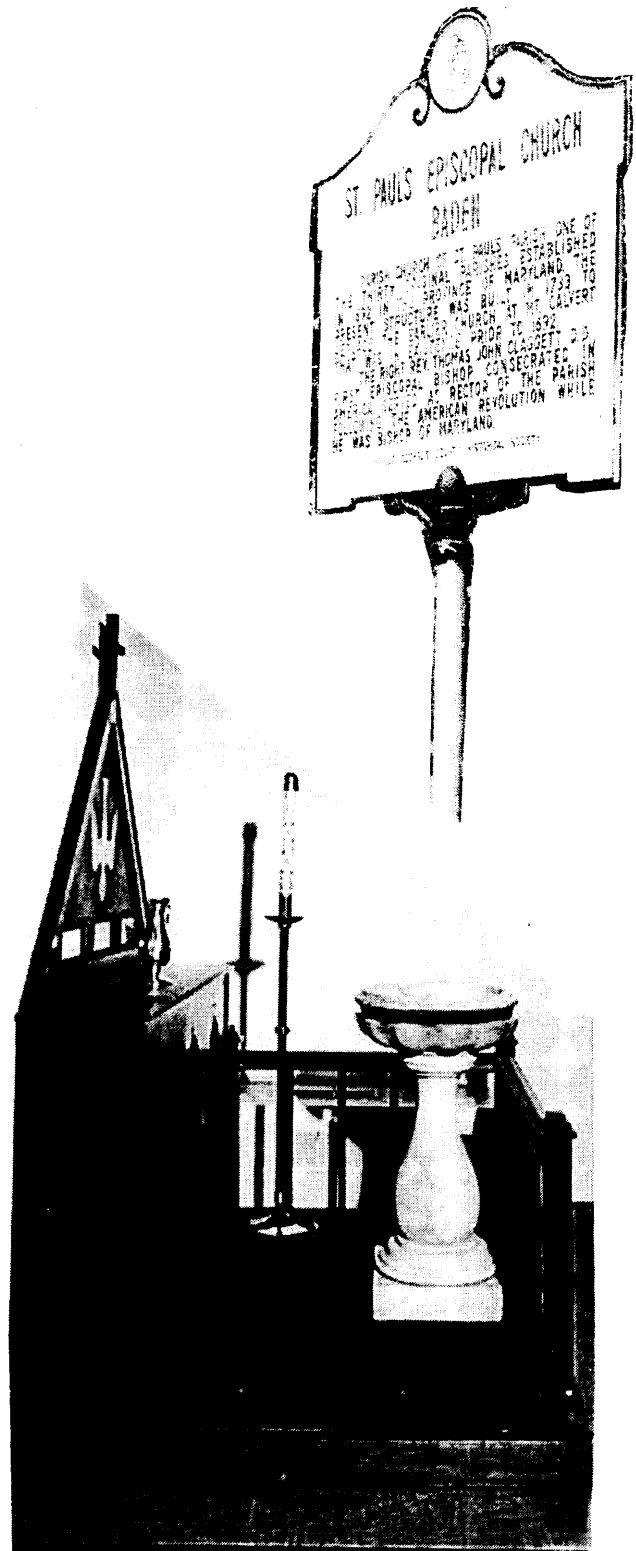
At the end of the Revolutionary War, it was decided that St. Paul's was in need of repair and enlargement. The south porch was taken down and replaced by a larger wing, which became the principal entrance, and the original entrance in the west gable was rebuilt as a three-part window. A sundial, which had been ordered from England when the church was new, was reinstalled over the new south entrance. The renovations to St. Paul's Church were completed by the end of 1794. For the better part of three decades spanning the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, Reverend Thomas John Claggett, the first Episcopal bishop to be consecrated in the United States, presided over services at both St. Paul's Church and its mission chapel. (The chapel formed its own parish in 1850, and came to be known as St. Thomas' Church, Croom.)

As was the case with all of the surviving eighteenth-century churches in the County, St. Paul's underwent some Victorianization in the years just before the Civil War, and then in 1882, the north porch was removed and replaced with a wider rectangular apse, enclosing the altar. It is basically this late-nineteenth-century church that we see today at St. Paul's.

This year, our St. George's Day Dinner will be served in St. Paul's parish hall by the Women of St. Paul's, and will be followed by our traditional presentation of St. George's Day awards and a presentation by the Prince George's County Hall of Fame. After the program, tours of the church will be led by church historian Cecelia Wiedemann.

Submitted by Historian Susan G. Pearl who poses the following Quiz:

Can you tell us what time it is at St. Paul's in this wonderful image by Historic American Buildings Survey photographer Jack E. Boucher!



Cover photograph and two details by Jack E. Boucher. The marker is a detail taken by HABS photographer John O. Brostrup in 1936. Both were recipients of St. George's Day awards in 2002.

Billingsley



This year's *Historic Preservation Week Reception* will be held on Sunday, May 4, 2003. It will be held from 2 to 5 pm at Billingsley House Museum, 6900 Green Landing Road, Upper Marlboro vicinity. Our *Illustrated Inventory of Historic Sites* describes the property:

"Built circa 1695, rebuilt in 1931 – Billingsley is a 1-1/2-story house of Tidewater style, with steeply pitched gable roof, and brick walls laid in Flemish bond with glazed headers. It was built, probably at the end of the seventeenth century, as a home of Colonel Thomas Hollyday, first Chief Justice of Prince George's County court; during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it was the home of the Weems family. Billingsley was renovated in the mid-nineteenth century as evidenced by the mature Greek Revival-style interior trim. In 1931, owner Arthur Meloy constructed the steeply pitched cross gables which dominate the north and south elevations. Although substantially altered, Billingsley is significant for the example it offers of very early architecture, as well as for its spectacular riverfront location."

Photograph by Historic American Buildings Survey Photographer John O. Brostrup, 1936.

Jubilee News

April 2003

The Prince George's County Historical Society is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary this year. The first organizational meeting was held at Riversdale on September 15, 1952. In November, we recognized this event by holding our Annual Meeting in the same Music Room at Riversdale. A number of events are planned throughout the year to commemorate the anniversary.

Mark your calendars now for the **Gala Garden Party** at Mount Airy on **Sunday, June 8th**. Invitations to this event will be in the mail in early May. Sunday, **April 27** will be the annual **St. George's Day Dinner** at St. Paul's Church in Baden. April 23rd, St. George's Day is the anniversary of the founding of Prince George's County in 1696. In 1974 the society began the tradition of giving St. George's Day Awards to recognize outstanding efforts to preserve and exhibit the rich cultural heritage of the County. More than 260 individuals and groups have been recognized. These contributions range from celebrations of our history, preservation/restoration of historic sites, publications of research about families and institutions and outstanding volunteer efforts that enhance the sense of our county history. Your invitation to this dinner should already have been received.

May 24th will kick off the PGCHS/Boy Scout project designed to increase an awareness of the many military monuments and memorials. Scouts will visit these sites, photograph and describe them and write a summary of the significance of the event commemorated. This project will end on September 6. Prizes will be awarded to the best entries.

One of the Jubilee Committee's recommendations was that a collection be developed on the history of businesses and organizations in the County. This would be a valuable research tool for the Frederick S. DeMarr Library of County History. However, this project will require more manpower than the Board of Directors can provide. Anyone interested in helping to bring this project to fruition is urged to contact the Library staff or any Board member.

The Board of Directors is making a concerted effort to place a copy of **A Pictorial History of Prince George's County** by Alan Virta in every elementary school during this Jubilee year. Each member of the Society is urged to support this project as an individual way to celebrate. *(See verso for a sample page from the Virta book)*

Finding a permanent home has been a high priority goal of the Society since the Tricentennial Celebration. We hope to make progress toward this goal before the Jubilee year is over.

Submitted by Sarah Bourne for the Jubilee Committee

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY IS SETTLED

The first settlers came to Prince George's County from the south, leaving the older settlements of Southern Maryland behind to move to new lands farther up the Patuxent and Potomac rivers. These pioneers of the 1660s, 1670s, and 1680s came up the rivers by boat and canoe and built simple frame cottages and houses when they arrived. For the first generation, life was not easy. Their plantations were not the elegant country seats of legend; their tobacco fields were little more than tiny clearings in the forest. There were no doctors, churches, clubs, or markets; no newspapers, schools, or theaters; and there was little organized community life. Their landings, on the riverbanks, were their only links to the outside world. There they met the ships from England which came to collect their tobacco and sell them goods from home.

Year by year more settlers came, and in a generation's time the banks of the Patuxent and Potomac were lined with homes, farms, and families. In establishing Prince George's County, the General Assembly followed the practice of "erecting" new counties when new areas of Maryland were settled and populous enough to support a county government. Originally, there had been but one county, Saint Mary's, when all of the colonists lived close to the original settlement. By the time Prince George's County was established, there were already ten other counties in Maryland, five on each shore of the bay.

The counties were the most important units of local government in colonial Maryland, and the county court was the central agency of county government. The county court, in those days, exercised both executive and judicial powers. It levied taxes, built roads and bridges, issued business licenses, granted relief for the poor, and found guardians for orphans, besides hearing civil and criminal cases. Each justice was an important figure in his neighborhood, for, acting alone, he could settle minor disputes, mete out punishment for lesser offenses, and transact certain county business. The sheriff was an important county official, too. His was the single most powerful—and lucrative—position in each county, for he acted as the agent of both the county court and the provincial government. His many and varied duties included making arrests, serving legal papers, keeping the jail, collecting taxes, disbursing government funds, conducting elections, and delivering the orders of the governor and council. The county court, the sheriff, and a number of lesser officeholders constituted the county government, the level of government closest to the people and the one which touched their daily lives. The conduct of county business

was an important responsibility, and counties were not created until the area in question could support a county government and fill its many offices.

Prince George's County was erected on Saint George's Day, April 23, 1696, out of land that had previously been part of Charles and Calvert counties. The population then was probably no more than 2,000. Those settlers who lived along the Potomac River had been part of Charles County, while those along the Patuxent had been part of Calvert. The interior of the county was unsettled, and few had ventured north of the Anacostia River. Prince George's County was still Maryland's frontier, and, compared to the older counties, it was a land of small planters and farmers. A census in 1706, just ten years after the county's founding, revealed that there were 406 households in the county, but only thirty-seven men who owned more than 1,000 acres of land. Because there were few large plantations, there were few African slaves. Indentured servants—men and women from Great Britain who surrendered their freedom for a few years in return for passage to the New World—still satisfied most of the need for additional labor. Slaves would not be brought here in large numbers until the eighteenth century.

In 1696 the white residents of the new Prince George's County shared their county with the Piscataway Indians, most of whom then lived in reserved lands along Piscataway Creek. Once these Indians had lived all over Southern Maryland, but as the region filled with white settlers, they withdrew to the Piscataway-Accokeek area. By the time Prince George's County was created, white settlement had leapfrogged beyond them. They could no longer hunt freely and were expected to observe the white man's property rights. For fifty years they had lived peacefully with the settlers, but by 1696 they decided to move on. Despite the entreaties of the Marylanders, who genuinely wanted them to stay, the Piscataways left the province in 1697. Thus, only one year after the founding of the county, Prince George's Piscataway Indians were gone. After some wandering, they eventually settled in Pennsylvania, where they were absorbed by other tribes.

Sample page from **A Pictorial History of Prince George's County** by Alan Virta to remind everyone what a superb document it is and how important it is to develop a historical sense and interest in our young students.

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 SHIPPING \$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.

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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 SHIPPING \$3.00*
A history of the county police department coving over 200 years. Indexed.

Landmarks of Prince George's County

125 black and white photographs of the rich architectural legacy of Prince George's County by Jack E. Boucher.
Arranged chronologically, the photographs and captions offer a panoramic overview of the County's architectural and historical development. Indexed. Hardcover 144 pages. Price \$18.00 SHIPPING \$3.00*

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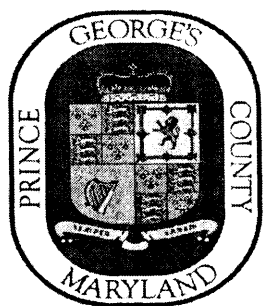
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Prince George's County Historical Society News and Notes

XXXII Number 3

OUR 51st YEAR

July 2003



Summer Fling

*21 July 2003 at 7:30 pm
Beer Tasting at local brew pub
with hors d'oeuvres
at Franklin's Restaurant and
Deli
5123 Baltimore Avenue,
Hyattsville*

*Space is limited; for
reservations
please call 301-927-4514*

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HABS photograph by Jack Boucher

From the Editor's Desk

The theme of this issue is *The Things of Summer*; things/places to visit, things to eat/drink, and things/books to read. Our first selection is a visit to the Historic Hyattsville Hardware to see the latest adaptive reuse of a building which was originally used as a blacksmith shop, wagon and carriage manufacturer, then became a vintage hardware store and is now Franklin's General Store and Deli with a new restaurant addition featuring a brew pub. The Society will host a beer tasting or for non-beer drinkers, a root beer tasting, on Monday, July 21st at 7:30pm. The Brewmaster will discuss the brewing process. (See the front cover for more details.) Much of the hardware's original interior remains including the pressed-tin ceiling, shelving, cases and nail bins now holding "penny" candies. This space is currently used as Franklin's General Store specializing in novelty goods such as rubber chickens, toys and wine. The glass and steel structure attached to it is the County's only Brew Pub opened in 2002.

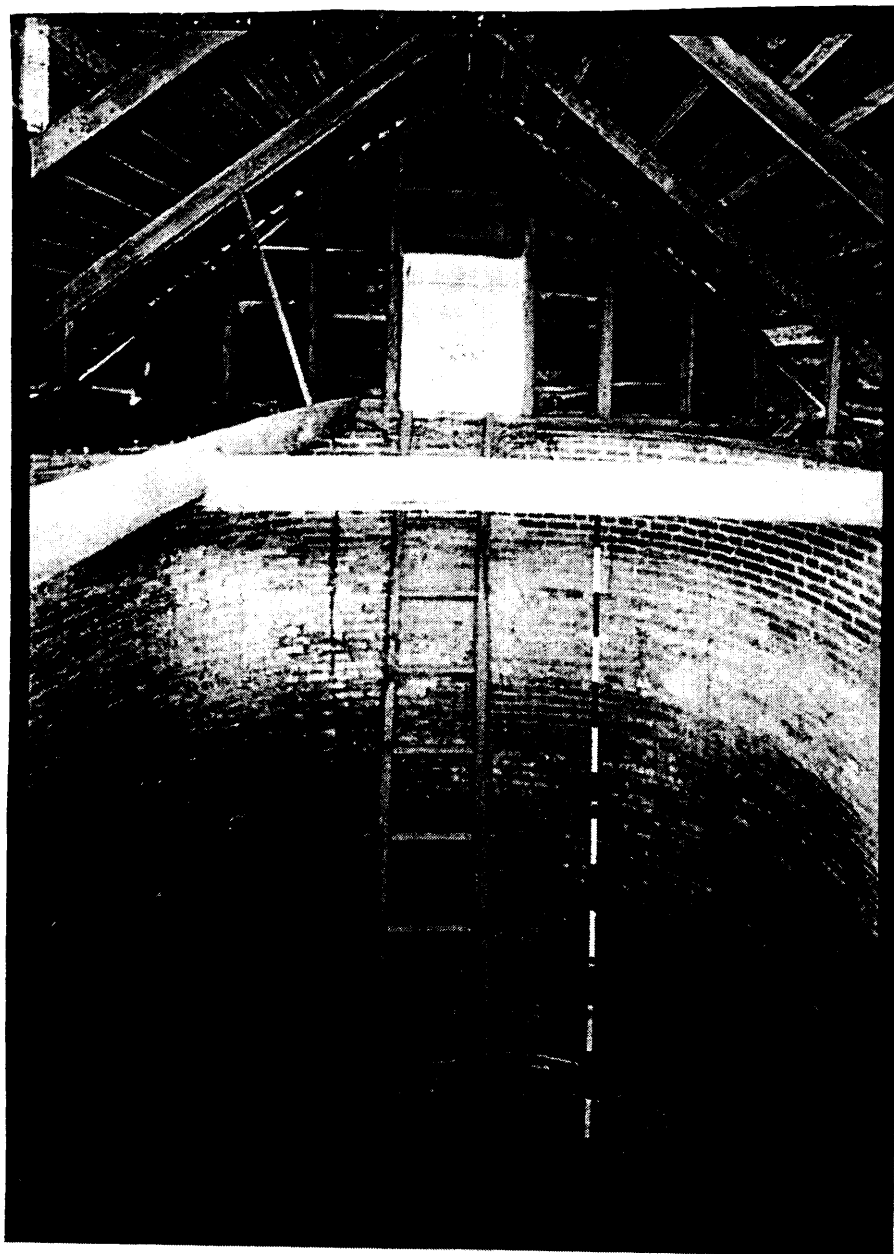
"In 1977, in Sonoma, California (a famous wine producing region in the U.S.) the first micro brewery, *The New Albion Brewing* company began with an annual production of 200 barrels of British style ales and stouts. . . . Today, we are experiencing a boom in hand-crafted beer tailored to local and regional tastes. Many restaurants now feature "beer menus" (like wine menus) and are concentrating on pairing food with beer. (Matching flavor components of beer with those of foods)."

"The oldest proven records of brewing are about 6,000 years old and refer to the Sumerians. Sumeria lay between the Tigris

and Euphrates rivers including Southern Mesopotamia and the ancient cities of Babylon and Ur. [modern day Iraq] It is said that the Sumerians discovered the fermentation process by chance. No one knows today exactly how this occurred, but it could be that a piece of bread or grain became wet and a short time later, it began to ferment and a[n] inebriating pulp resulted."

"The Egyptians carried on the tradition of beer brewing. They also used unbaked bread dough for making beer and added dates to the brew to improve the taste. The importance of beer brewing in ancient Egypt can be seen from the fact that the scribes created an extra hieroglyph for 'brewer.'" [from: www.alabev.com/amerhis.htm]

Following the tasting, we suggest dining on a fine rendition of the English classic fish and chips. The next *thing of summer* for your consideration is a cool pictorial representation of an Ice House located at The Cottage on Old Marlboro Pike near Upper Marlboro. Again the photographs are by Jack Boucher for HABS. These photos are included in *Landmarks of Prince George's County* published by Johns Hopkins University Press. The book is on sale at our gift shop at Marietta. The article on The History of Ice Cream is by Jules Older and was forwarded to us by Membership Chair and Treasurer **Donna Schneider**. For cool summer reading, we suggest Michael J. Gelb's *How to think like Leonardo da Vinci: Seven Steps to Genius Every Day*. A book review is included in addition to a flier for our historic tour of Fredericksburg, Virginia, scheduled for Saturday, October 18, 2003. Sign up immediately!! Happy summer.



The History of Ice Cream

Almost two thousand years ago, the Roman emperor Nero sent men with strong backs to the Apennines mountains to haul snow to Rome so he could enjoy some honey ice and fruit ice and maybe some wine ice in the hot Roman summers.

The great thirteenth-century traveler, Marco Polo, returned to Italy with recipes for "water ices". Asians had been making these ices for thousands of years.

No one's sure who first put cream in ice cream. Marco Polo may have brought back a concoction that used yak's milk from China. Between 1300 and 1600, either the French or Italians began adding cow's milk to the water ices.

Until around 1660, ice cream was a treat reserved for the rich and famous. Then an Italian named Francesco Procopio dei Coltelli opened the Café Procope in Paris, where he started making big batches of ice cream for the public.

In 1744, William Black described a banquet prepared by the governor of Maryland, Thomas Bladen. He wrote, "Among the rarities of which it was compos'd, was some fine Ice Cream which, with the Strawberries and Milk, eat most Deliciously!"

Thomas Jefferson may have been the first to bring vanilla ice cream to the United States after he visited France. His recipe for Vanilla Ice Cream consisted of 2 bottles of good cream, 6 egg yolks, ½ lb. sugar and 1 stick of vanilla.

Augustus Jackson was probably America's first black ice cream manufacturer. He made ice cream in the White House for Dolly Madison. After he retired as a White House chef, he made ice cream in Philadelphia in the 1820s.

In 1843, an American named Nancy Johnson invented the hand-operated freezer. Now, instead of turning and scraping a pot, all you did was spin a crank until your arm fell off.

Five years later, the United States had its first ice cream factory. It was opened by a milkman named Jacob Fussell in Pennsylvania. He moved it to Baltimore, Maryland two years later.

Here's the history of famous ice cream concoctions.

Baked Alaska, first named omelette surprise, was invented by an American scientist

named Benjamin Thompson in the late 1700s. Thomas Jefferson loved eating it. It got its name in 1867, in honor of the American purchase of Alaska. Charles Ranhofer, the chef at Delmonico's restaurant in New York City named it.

The Ice Cream Soda was born in 1874. Robert Green was selling a mixture of syrup, cream and carbonated water in Philadelphia. One day he ran out of cream and tossed in ice cream instead. Two years later, the ice cream soda was introduced at the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia.

The Ice Cream Sundae got its name in 1881 because Ed Berners of Two Rivers, Wisconsin made them only on Sundays. Why was it spelled sundae instead of Sunday? The story goes that the pious people of Two Rivers found the word Sunday offensive when applied to something as sinfully rich as ice cream. His sundae was ice cream topped with chocolate syrup.

In 1896, Italian-American Italo Marchiony sold ice cream from a pushcart in New York. One day he ran out of bowls and molded a warm waffle into a cup. The first waffle cone was made by Ernest A. Hamwi at the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis. Mr. Hamwi was selling zalabia, a skinny Persian waffle. Next door, a man was selling ice cream in dishes. One afternoon he ran out of dishes. Mr. Hamwi wrapped the zalabia around a scoop of ice cream, and the waffle cone was born.

The Banana Split was invented by David Strickler at Tassell Pharmacy in Latrobe, Pennsylvania in 1904. He placed a split in half banana, flat side down along the sides of a dish. Added three scoops of ice cream. Topped each scoop of ice cream with a different topping, added whipped cream and tossed in a few more pieces of fruit.

Between 1920-1923, the Popsicle, the Eskimo Pie and the Good Humor bar were all invented. The commissioner of Ellis Island invited all the immigrants to the United States who stopped off there to have ice cream for dessert at their first American meal.

The United States is the top ice-cream-eating country in the world. Our consumption is about fifteen quarts per American per year. In Utah, people eat more ice cream than any other state and our favorite flavor is vanilla.

Article taken from "Ice Cream" by Jules Older; submitted by Donna Schneider

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Book Review

Ice Cream Factory in Historic Building

Watch this space in our next issue for the announcement of the opening of a new ice cream café in yet another historic building. Cool.

NEW SOCIETY MEMBERS

We cordially welcome the following new members:

*Dorothy L. Barnes
Jack Carson
Thomas Clay and Kathleen O'Day
Paul Dougherty
Teresa O. Green
Constance Grund
Shirley Smith Hagans
Faith Jackson
Jill Kent
Cliff Layman
Arthur Longacre
Dean F. Morehouse
Luis Ortega
Prince George's County Historical
and Cultural Trust
Dawn C. Reeves
Judith Robinson
William and Barbara Simmons
Charles Wagner
David Wallace
Cheryl and Dave Watts
William Wood*

We look forward to your active participation in our quest to Preserve the Past, Enrich the Present, and Inspire the Future.

Ted Hughes wrote for the New York Times that *How to Think like Leonardo da Vinci* is "a brilliant, practical guide to awakening and training our vast, unused resources of intelligence and ability."

We believe that the description on the back cover of this volume describes it best:

"Genius is made, not born. And human beings are gifted with an almost unlimited potential for learning and creativity. Now you can uncover your own hidden abilities, sharpen your senses, and liberate your unique intelligence-by following the example of the greatest genius of all time, Leonardo da Vinci. Acclaimed author Michael J. Gelb, who has helped thousands of people expand their minds to accomplish more than they ever thought possible, shows you how. Drawing on Da Vinci's notebooks, inventions, and legendary works of art, Gelb introduces Seven Da Vincian Principles--the essential elements of genius--from *curiosita*, the insatiably curious approach to life to *connesione*, the appreciation for the interconnectedness of all things. With Da Vinci as your inspiration, you will discover an exhilarating new way of thinking. And step-by-step, through exercises and provocative lessons, you will harness the power--and awesome wonder--of your own genius, mastering such life-changing abilities as:

- problem solving
- creative thinking
- self-expression
- enjoying the world around you
- goal setting and life balance
- harmonizing body and mind."

Editor's Note: A very good read.

ST. GEORGE'S DAY, 2003

On April 27, a perfect spring day, the Society celebrated its annual St. George's Day at St. Paul's Church in Baden. More than 80 people gathered to celebrate the 307th anniversary of the founding of the County, to enjoy one another's company, and to recognize individuals and organizations that have made contributions to the preservation and promotion of the County's long and diverse history.

After a delicious dinner prepared by the Women of St. Paul's, members of the Society's Board of Directors presented this year's St. George's Day awards to:

Deaver J. Cover - for his outstanding craftsmanship in interior plaster work on several of Prince George's County's historic sites.

Andrew and Sarah Duley - for their fine work on historic Waverly, and their hospitality in sharing their beautiful house at last year's *Prince of a County* reception.

Elise Greenup Jourdan - for her research, recording and publication of Prince George's County records, including six volumes of abstracts of early eighteenth-century land records.

The ***Laurel Volunteer Rescue Squad*** - for the publication of the history of the Rescue Squad in celebration of its 50th anniversary.

Audrey Scott - for her clear and constant support for historic places, efforts, and events throughout her public office career.

Helen Smith and the ***Marietta Junior Docents*** - for their faithful and essential hard work and support at Marietta's many special events.

Henry, Nora, Ross and Craig Wixon for their courage, imagination and hard work in bringing about the preservation of historic Buena Vista by relocation to their farm property.

Finally, an additional special award was presented to ***Sharon and Lester Sweeting*** for their extraordinary efforts in support of preservation and County history. The Sweetings were honored for their years of activity in Hyattsville, and in particular for their consistent hard work and generous support of the objectives of the Historical Society.

The program ended with the induction of ***Alice and Henry Ferguson*** into the Hall of Fame of Prince George's County, and the unveiling of a new portrait of the couple. Staff of the Alice Ferguson Foundation spoke on the contributions of the Fergusons to the knowledge and appreciation of prehistoric archaeology of the Potomac.

This most enjoyable afternoon came to a close with tours of historic St. Paul's Church, the oldest surviving Anglican church in Prince George's County.

Submitted by Susan Pearl

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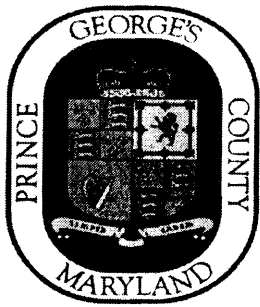
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Prince George's County Historical Society News and Notes

XXXII Number 4

OUR 51st YEAR

AUGUST 2003

2003 Prince of a County Reception



Invitation design from the
*Illustrated Inventory of
Historic Sites*, Prince
George's County,
Maryland, June 1990
edition by MNCPPC.

OAKLAND

On *Sunday, September 21, 2003, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.*, we will be fortunate to celebrate our annual *Prince of a County* event at a beautiful private home not generally known to our membership. This year it is *Oakland*, also known as *Good Luck*, one of the beautiful homes that belonged to members of the Clagett family of Upper Marlboro. (We celebrated *Prince of a County* at *Weston*, the principal Clagett family seat, in 1992.)

Oakland is a fine example of a mid-19th-century Greek Revival style plantation house which has been expanded by "telescoping." It stands on part of a tract called *Good Luck*, on a 180-acre farm acquired in 1841 by Thomas William Clagett, the oldest son of Thomas Clagett VI of Weston, one of the wealthiest landowner/planters in the Marlboro area. The younger Clagett had married in 1833 at a very young age, against his father's wishes; family tradition maintains that he had to prove himself before his father offered him any support. Young Thomas W. Clagett farmed near Marlboro, studied law, and was elected to the State Legislature in 1845 and 1847. When he bought the 180-acre *Good Luck* farm, there was already a small house on the property, and it was probably in that building (the central part of the house today) that his young family lived for several years. In 1842, the elder Clagett deeded to his son an adjoining part of *Good Luck*, perhaps indicating that he considered his son properly established. In any case, within a few years, the larger main block was completed, and assessed at the very high (for that period) value of \$3000. During the 1840s young Clagett referred to his plantation as *Cream and Butter* - the agricultural schedule of the Federal Census indicates that he produced far more butter than average, and it is no doubt because of his successful dairy operations that this descriptive name came about.

In 1850, Thomas William Clagett sold his farm to his father, and moved his family west to Keokuk, Iowa, relinquishing all of his claim to his father's substantial real estate (being the oldest surviving son, he would have inherited the family homestead, *Weston*). He was to spend the rest of his life as journalist, Congressman and Judge in Iowa. Only one of his sons would

eventually return to Prince George's County (hence the name of that son's nearby farm "Keokuk"). The handsome house at *Cream and Butter* became the home of Thomas William's younger brother, Robert A. Clagett, who had married in 1849. As Robert Clagett's homestead, the farm gained the name by which it was to be most commonly known: *Oakland*.

Information about Robert Clagett's *Oakland* plantation comes from several sources in the 1850s - letters written by a governess in the household of Thomas Clagett VI of Weston during these years describe the various members of the extended family. Sarah Hagar, who instructed the children at Weston from 1853 to 1861, became very friendly with Emily Clagett (wife of Robert), and wrote many letters to her Vermont relatives about her visits to *Oakland*. In one letter, she described the accidental shooting of one of Emily Clagett's slaves in the kitchen space beneath the parlor, and of her subsequent nursing of the patient in the cellar room. This description confirms the existence of a kitchen in the cellar of the older section.

Thomas Clagett VI did not actually convey the plantation to his son, Robert, until 1860, although the deed makes it clear that the younger Clagett had been living there for some time. Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, *Oakland* was one of seven large farms in the immediate area owned and farmed by members of the Clagett family. After Robert Clagett's death in 1896, the farm was divided among his heirs, and the handsome house and its immediate grounds remained in the possession of one of his daughters until 1914.

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The property changed hands several times during the twentieth century, being for many years the home of the Brooke and later the Howard families. It has been the home for nearly two years of Helen and Joe Milby, and they have done a wonderful job of restoring the large and very beautiful interior spaces. And the grounds around the house are particularly delightful! *Oakland*, or *Good Luck* as it is now once again known, will be an outstanding site for this year's *Prince of a County* reception. The Historical Society thanks the Milbys for their hospitality, and we look forward to a very special day on September 21!

Submitted by: Susan G. Pearl, PGCHS Historian

From the Editor's Desk

In response to Donna Schneider's article on the history of ice cream, published in the July 2003 issue of News and Notes, long-time PGCHS member ***Sallie Holder*** wrote: "I enjoyed reading Donna's article and thought a good follow-up would be some information about ice cream in Prince George's County." Sallie provided the following excerpt from *The Washington Post Magazine*, dated May 16, 1982:

"Wendell S. Arbuckle, emeritus professor of dairy science at the University of Maryland, is probably this country's foremost ice cream expert. He created dozens of exotic flavors long before Baskin-Robbins did --- ever try sweet potato ice cream or grapefruit grenadine sherbert? Some of them such as devil's food ice cream are still for sale at the university's dairy sales store. (Manager Nettie Ford says the ice cream is made on the premises, has no artificial ingredients and 'is probably high in calories'). Arbuckle has included many of his recipes

in a small hardback tome he has published called the *Little Ice Cream Book*. Along with recipes are dollops of history and directions for giving ice cream socials."

"Wendell Arbuckle has passed away ... but his wife Ruth still resides in the Washington Metropolitan area. He was also responsible for developing the multi-berry ripple ice cream for the Prince George's County tricentennial." Open 11 am to 4 pm at 079, Turner Hall on the Boulevard, College Park.

Ice Crème Factory & Café Open

Dave and Cheryl Watts have opened their Café in the historic Marlow-Huntt Store at ***13700 Old Brandywine Road, Brandywine.***

Built circa 1867, the Wattses "mission was to rehabilitate the old building and to introduce an ice crème parlor & café ambience in this historic setting that would enhance the community and offer a friendly and family oriented atmosphere." The store was built by A.W. Marlow for whom Marlow Heights is named and was originally known as *The People's Store*. In 1876 it was purchased by Joseph Eli Huntt, a merchant, farmer, landowner & businessman who came from Charles County. The Marlow-Huntt Store offered general merchandise for sale, served as a Post Office, and was a popular stop-over for travelers commuting from DC to southern Maryland. The 1 ½ -story frame building with a front gable roof, German siding & decorative cornice brackets is an example of 19th century rural commercial architecture. The Ice Crème Factory & Café is open daily from 11 am to 10 pm. (301) 372-1990. See our next issue for photographs and additional historical information. ***Best wishes and thanks to Dave and Cheryl for preserving yet another historic building.***

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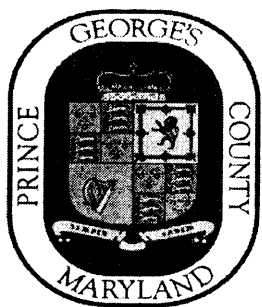
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Prince George's County Historical Society News and Notes

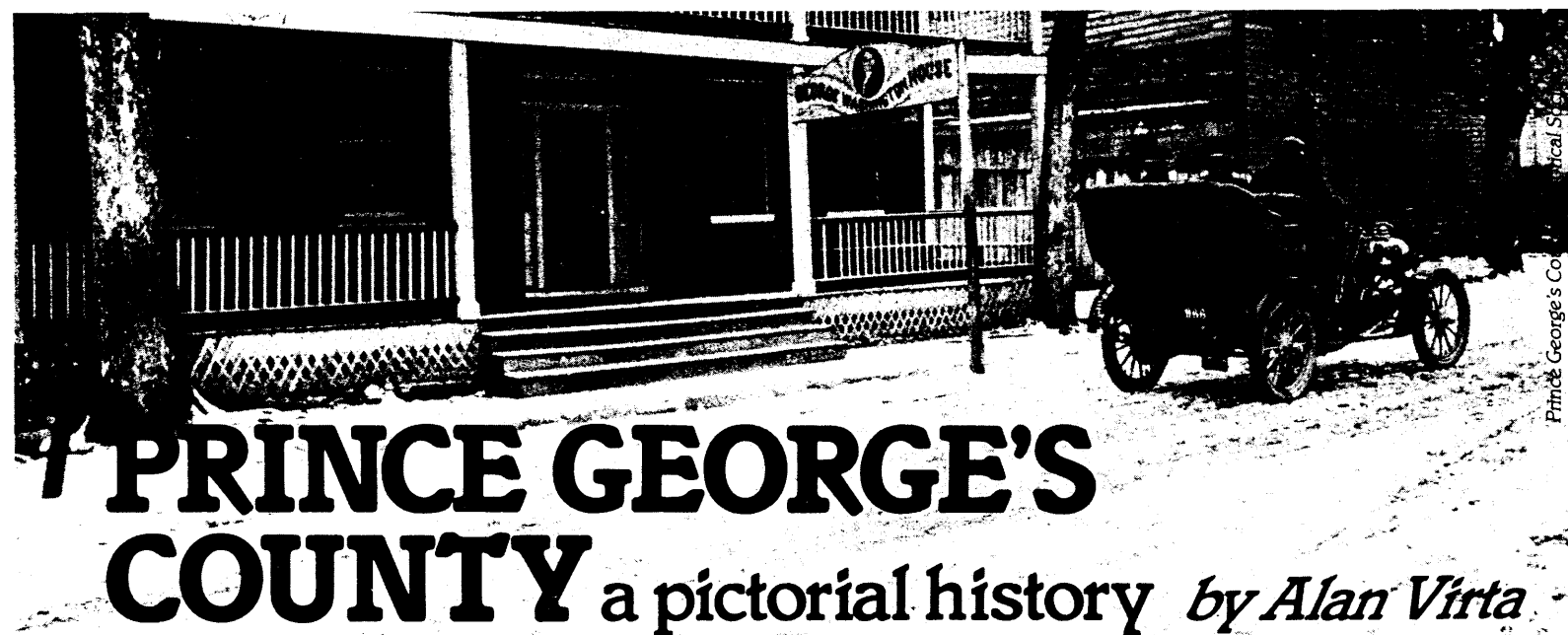
XXXII Number 5

OUR 51st YEAR

SEP-OCT 2003

Author and Archivist Returns to Prince George's County

Alan Virta, author of *Prince George's County: a pictorial history*, now in its third edition, will be the keynote speaker for the Annual meeting in celebration of our Jubilee year. (See enclosed flier for further details of this important meeting.) In December 1984, *Prince George's Journal* writer Cindy Lindsey described the first edition of the pictorial history – it was sponsored by the county Chamber of Commerce and was published by Donning Publishing Company of Norfolk, Virginia. The initial print run of 1500 copies was written by Alan Virta, a 32-year-old resident of Greenbelt, serving as Vice-President of the County Historical Society. The author collected the documentary photographs by placing notices in the Historical Society newsletter and by visiting libraries, museums and archives in the metropolitan area. Alan's "day job" at the time was as a Cataloguer for the Library of Congress's National Union Catalogue of Manuscript Collections.



PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

a pictorial history by Alan Virta

Your editor went to the Historical Society's file on Alan Virta, and found documentation of many more of Alan's contributions. Regarding the first edition of his pictorial history, a *Washington Post* Maryland Weekly review (January 17, 1985) was entitled "*The Delightful Land*" and quotes Alan as saying "I spent about two years digging through archives, museums and the historical society, and talked to countless county residents." The review begins: "When Captain John Smith first sailed up the Chesapeake Bay in 1605, he discovered lush terrain, with bountiful resources that could support human habitation. In 1696, that territory, which he described as a 'delightful land,' was named Prince George's County, after Prince George of Denmark." Winsome color illustrations showed Prince George of Denmark, working tobacco farms, downtown Hyattsville about 1905, and a 1935 photo of a boy scout troop surrounding their leader, Robert Ennis, studying a map. The *Prince George's Post-Sentinel* reported in their June 20-26, 1985, edition that Alan Virta had received a St. George's Day award at the 289th anniversary celebration for his pictorial history; he was pictured surrounded by his family. Another 1985 event was held on May 16th when County Executive Parris Glendening hosted a reception at Riversdale (Calvert) Mansion, honoring Alan for his book.

From the August-September 1986 issue of the *Friends of Preservation Newsletter*, we learn that "Alan Virta, Chairman of the Prince George's County Historic Preservation Commission, has resigned to accept an academic fellowship from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. He will take a sabbatical from his position at the Library of Congress to study for a year at the University of Southern Mississippi. Mr. Virta, who serves as the

Commissioner representing the field of history, was appointed by County Executive Glendening in 1982, as the first Chairman of the newly created Historic Preservation Commission. Mr. Virta is the author of Prince George's County, a Pictorial History. Published in 1984, this limited edition volume was highly commended for its scholarship and sensitivity to Prince George's County history. Among his many activities, Mr. Virta edits the county Historical Society newsletter, is on the Board of Directors of that body, and is a member of the Historical and Cultural Trust. He holds a Bachelor's degree in history and a Master's degree in library science from the University of Maryland."

From his Hattiesburg venue, we find a copy of a letter Alan wrote to Mr. Pete Pichaske concerning his article in the November 21, 1986, issue of the *Prince George's Journal*. Mr. Pichaske had compared Alan's book with Effie Gwynn Bowie's *Across the Years in Prince George's County*. He called Mrs. Bowie's book dense, dreary and incomprehensible, to which Alan took great exception. In the letter dated December 2, 1986, Alan thanked Mr. Pichaske for his kind remarks related to his book but went on to say "... your review of Mrs. Bowie's book was a severe one, and undeservedly so. Comparing my book to hers is like comparing apples to oranges. My book is a pictorial history for the general reader, while hers is an encyclopedic county genealogy for the specialist ... Mrs. Bowie's book is indispensable for the serious study of our county's early history, and genealogically speaking, Prince George's is the envy of every other county in Maryland." There is no record of a response from Mr. Pichaske.

In the Spring of 1987, James D. Munson wrote an article called *A Pair of Firsts* for

Washington Works: Reviews of Recent Literature published by the Center for Washington Area Studies at George Washington University. He compares two local pictorial histories, one of Fairfax County, Virginia, and the other of Prince George's County. In a mixed review, Munson attributes what is lacking in the *Virta* to the notion that "there has never been a general history of Prince George's County, pictorial or otherwise, aside from a handful of short pieces. Three earlier book-length works are not all histories, and only one goes as far as the end of the Civil War." [Van Horn] However, Munson concludes his criticism with the following: "he [Virta] has done something signal: presented a richly detailed county history sweeping to the present. For the Prince Georgians and the rest of us, it is both excellent and a portentous debut of the full, 350-year (sic) story."

News and Notes (Vol. XV, no. 12, December 1987) bid Alan a fond farewell as he took up his duties as Head of Special Collections and University Archivist at Boise State University in early 1988. The editor's comment at the time was: "Alan is not the first person from Prince George's County to roam the wilds of Idaho. William Horace Clagett, who served as the Montana Territory's Delegate to Congress, was the President of Idaho's State Constitutional Convention in 1889." And there Alan has remained.

Two additional articles referring to the publication appear in Alan's file. The March 1996 issue of *The Finnish American Reporter*, refers to the second edition of ***Prince George's County, A Pictorial History***, published in 1991. "It has been

accepted as the primary single reference on the fascinating chronicle of county life and development over almost three centuries . . . The author reminds us that counties are in large part a reflection of the quality and success of their economic and cultural institutions and the people who manage them."

And lastly, Robert W. Barnes, in the *Maryland Historical Magazine* Vol. 94, No. 2 (Summer 1999), pages 225-226, reviewed the third edition of ***Prince George's County: A Pictorial History***. We thank the Maryland Historical Society for allowing us to reprint that review in total:

The images presented in this volume, the third edition, recall the people, places and events in the three-hundred-year history of Prince George's County. Portraits of the planters, preachers, and patriots and their women and children cover the period of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Informative captions not only identify the subjects and give a brief biography, but sometimes quote from letters and diaries, illuminating their thoughts and opinions. Some of these pictures are poignant reminders of tragedy. Benjamin Lewis Lanham, scion of an old county family, went to fight for the Confederacy and was killed at Gettysburg one month short of his nineteenth birthday. The accompanying poem recalls the grief of the roll call following that battle.

The book recalls not only the well-born but ordinary people as well. These are pictures of slave auctions, slaves walking in chains, and black troops at Fort Lincoln. We see Washingtonians riding the roller

coasters at an amusement park in the 1890s, an early football team at the Maryland Agricultural College, a group of farm workers riding in an oxcart, and citizens gathered outside Casey's blacksmith's shop in Bladensburg.

Many historic structures, some no longer standing, are pictured. Only one house, known as Mount Calvert, probably built in the early years of the nineteenth century, remains on the site of Charles Town, the first county seat of Prince George's County. Dunblane, home of many of the early generations of Magruders, was destroyed by a gas explosion in 1969. The Bladensburg Academy, a private school built early in the nineteenth century, has been torn down.

Not all of the buildings depicted are the imposing mansions often associated with colonial times. Bladensburg has the Market Master's House, a stone house built by Christopher Lowndes in 1760. Several mills, an octagon house, a row of residences converted by black families from an abandoned farm building, an ice cream parlor, and a gas plant help to recreate the scenes Prince Georgians saw as they went about their lives. A number of maps illustrate the settlement and growth and development of the county. Pictures illustrate the changes in travel, from seventeenth-century sailing vessels, oxcarts, and stagecoaches to trolley cars, railroads, automobiles, and the Washington, D.C., Metro.

Several "firsts" are illustrated. Thomas John Clagett was the first Episcopal bishop consecrated in this country. The Beggar's Opera, by John Gay, was the first opera in America known to have been performed with an orchestra; it was

presented in Upper Marlboro in 1752. The Last Supper, an important colonial painting by Gustavus Hesselius, hangs in Saint Barnabas Church. The first documented balloon ascension took place near Bladensburg in 1784.

The compiler, who grew up in Prince George's County and was the first chairman of the county's Historic Preservation Commission, from 1982 to 1986, has selected pictures and compiled text that traces the history of the county down to the 1990s. The final chapter includes color photographs of many activities, from scientific research at Goddard Space Flight Center, to road construction and county roads clogged by commuter traffic. Quilts, parades, and reenactments commemorating the county's tercentennial are also included.

This is a delightful book to look at and informative to read, with many interesting nuggets. The reviewer was excited to learn of a seven-hundred-page ledger kept by Reverend John Eversfield. The ledger, a copy of which is on microfilm at the Maryland State Archives, contains, among other things, notes on the Eversfield family in England.

Alan Virta has struck a balance between the past and present, the county's old families and less well known folk, between the rural life of a hundred years ago and the urbanized life of today. The book is highly recommended, and the author is to be commended for a job well done.

In addition to the writing of his prize book, Alan has contributed to our Society in many ways, serving as vice-president, and for many years writing for and editing *News and Notes*. In his address to the membership on November 10, he will review a few specially interesting research projects that he has undertaken for the Society during its half-century history, and will share stories of other Prince Georgians who, like himself, went West! Alan's return visit will be a happy culmination to a grand 50th anniversary year!

.....

Special thanks to Helen and Joe Milby for hosting the outstanding *Prince of a County* fund raiser at Oakland. Their highly polished silver, brilliant family pieces including a boat, auction finds, "acquired" ancestors, lack of power, and 49 man-hours of yard work/tree cleanup (after Hurricane Isabel) all attest to their delightful sense of humor and warm welcome. Lynn Roberts and Wallis Cain assisted the caterer by finding friends and relations with electricity to house the amazing edibles. It was a splendid event!

Slate of Officers and Board for 2004

The Nominating Committee has offered the following slate of officers for your approval at the annual meeting:

OFFICERS:

President:	John Petro
V. President:	James Wolfe
Secretary:	Dusty Rhoads
Treasurer:	Donna Schneider
Historian:	Susan Pearl
Editor:	Sharon Sweeting
Membership:	Donna Schneider Anna Holmes

DIRECTORS:

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Anna Homes
Lynn Roberts
Andrew Wallace

Wallis Cain
Robert Crawley
Joyce Dowling
Diane Stultz

Mildred Gray
Iris McConnell
Joyce Uber
William Uber

Gift Shop Manager *Stella Uber*
Marietta House *Susan Wolfe*

Editor: We are grateful for those who continue to serve and endorse the slate. Is that proper?

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

Landmarks of Prince George's County

125 black and white photographs of the rich architectural legacy of Prince George's County by Jack E. Boucher. Arranged chronologically, the photographs and captions offer a panoramic overview of the County's architectural and historical development. Indexed. Hardcover 144 pages. Price \$18.00 Shipping \$3.00*

Prince George's County: A Pictorial History

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

Calvert of Maryland

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

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

Compiled, Drawn & Published from Actual Surveys by G.M. Hopkins 1878 including "historical" sketches. Indexed. Reprint 1975. Soft cover 47 pages. Price \$10.00

Atlas of Prince George's County, Maryland 1861

Atlas was adapted from Martenet's Map of Prince George's County Maryland, with information from 1860 federal census for each Election District. Indexed. Reprint 1996. Soft cover 32 pages. Price \$10.00

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. 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 Soft cover 196 pages. Price \$18.00

Out of the Past - Prince Georgians and their Land

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

Tricentennial Cook Book

Contains recipes collected from county residents as part of the tricentennial celebration. Compiled & Edited by Dorothy Rainwater & Tricentennial Celebration Committee. Printed 1996. Soft cover, spiral bound 150 pages. Price \$10.00

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

A history of the county police department covering over 200 years. Indexed.
by Lt. Dennis Campbell Printed 1991. Hardcover 304 pages. Price \$40.00 Shipping \$3.00*

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

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51st Annual Society Meeting and Dinner

Monday November 10, 2003



at

Mama Stella's Pasta House

7918 Old Branch Avenue, Clinton, MD

Speaker - Alan Virta



Price \$30.00 per person

6:00 - 7:00 pm Social Hour (cash bar) - Dinner served at 7:00 pm

Annual Meeting

Election of Officers & Board Members

Salad - Bread & Butter

Choice of: Filet Mignon

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Vegetarian selection:

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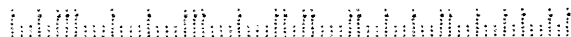
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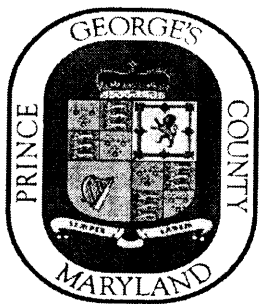
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Prince George's County Historical Society News and Notes

XXXII Number 6

OUR 51st YEAR

NOV-DEC 2003

Holiday Party Returns to Its Original Venue



Photograph by Historic American Buildings Survey

On Saturday, December 20th, 1 - 4 pm, we will celebrate our 50 years as the County's Historical Society with our annual Holiday celebration at the historic Montpelier Mansion, 9401 Muirkirk Road, Laurel (See enclosed flier for further details).

Between 1973 and 1983, our Christmas celebrations were held at Montpelier described in the *Illustrated Inventory of Historic Sites* as: "Built circa 1783 – Montpelier is a five-part Georgian mansion with 2-1/2-story hip-roof center block and lower semi-octagonal wings. The interior detail includes particularly fine wood work and uses agricultural motifs in the cornice moldings. Montpelier was built for Major Thomas Snowden and in the twentieth century was the home of Assistant Secretary of State Breckinridge Long. On the grounds is a rare surviving eighteenth-century summer house, as well as burial sites of Snowden family members."

History of Historical Society Christmases Past

To celebrate our 50th anniversary, Dusty Rhodes collected information about the Society's past Holiday celebrations.

Venues: **Montpelier**, 1973-1983;
Riversdale (Montpelier closed for Restoration), 1984;
Montpelier, December 21, 1985;
Marietta, December 22, 1985;
Open House at New Headquarters;
Riversdale, 1986;
Marietta, 1987-1991;
Darnall's Chance, 1992;
Riversdale, 1993-1994;
Marietta, 1995-2002;
Montpelier, 2003.

Collected Notes from *News and Notes:*

Vol. 1, no. 10, December 1973:

DECEMBER MEETING

"On Saturday, December 8, 1973 at 2 PM the traditional Christmas Party will be held at Montpelier Mansion, Laurel (Rt. 197). There will be no formal meeting. Please come and bring your friends to help us inaugurate the Christmas Season at lovely Montpelier, as Major Thomas Snowden did in the 19th century."

"As 1973 draws to a close, we would like to share with you this greeting from *The Virginia Almanack for the Year of our Lord God 1771*:

*We wish you health and good fires;
victuals, drink and good stomachs;
innocent diversion and good company;
honest trading and good success;
loving courtship and good wives;
and lastly, a merry CHRISTMAS
and a happy NEW YEAR.*

Vol. II, No. 11, November 1974 again invited members to Montpelier on December 14. The invitation requested that members "who have a particular Christmas food speciality share a sample with us." No formal business meeting was promised.

Vol III, no. 11, December 1975 set the Christmas Party date as Saturday, December 6 at Montpelier Mansion in Laurel. Also promised no formal business meeting. A Holiday Message was also enclosed:

The Christmas season was always the happiest in colonial Maryland, for all found time to put aside their normal routines to visit with friends and celebrate the most joyous of holidays. The joy the colonist felt at the coming of the Christmas season is reflected in the following poem which was published in the Virginia Almanack in the eighteenth century.

*Christmas is come, lang on the pot,
Let spits turn round, and ovens be hot
Beef, pork, and poultry, now provide
To feast thy neighbours at this tide
Then wash all down with good wine and
beer
And so with mirth conclude the YEAR.*

Vol. IV, no. 12, December 1976 announced the traditional Christmas Party at Montpelier Mansion on Saturday, December 11, at 2 p.m. By this time, the entrance to the parking lot had been moved!

The Christmas Message follows: The officers of the Prince George's County Historical Society wish a joyous Christmas season to all. The wonderful message of Christmas has brought joy to Marylanders since the earliest years, and it has always been the most joyous holiday. While never forgetting the true meaning of the holiday, let us take heed of the advice offered by the Virginia Almanack for 1766:

*Now Christmas comes, 'tis fit that we
Should feast and sing, and merry be:
Keep open house, let fiddlers [sic] play,
A fig for cold, sing care away;
And may they who thereat repine,
On brown bread and on small beer dine.*

Historical Society Holiday celebrations for 2000 and 2001, held at Marietta Mansion in Glenn Dale, emphasized foodstuffs from around the world and the Americas respectively. We have celebrated the centuries various foodstuffs were introduced into the vocabularies of various countries in addition to identifying north American products such as potatoes, maize, avocados, Pineapples, haricot and other types of beans, peppers, turkey and tapioca. This year we are returning to our original request to share a favorite holiday treat with your Historical Society friends. Happy Holidays and thanks to Dusty for his research.

ANNUAL MEETING 2003

The Prince George's County Historical Society Annual Meeting was held this year at Mama Stella's Pasta House in Clinton on November 10. Fifty-five members and friends gathered for a very enjoyable evening. The highlight was a most interesting talk by Alan Virta, past Vice-President and *News & Notes* editor, and now Boise State University Archivist, who came from Idaho to speak about Prince Georgians in the Old West. He recounted the adventures and significant accomplishments of William Horace Clagett of the Upper Marlborough family, Thomas Boyne who served in the Buffalo Soldiers, Gustavo Finotti of Oxon Hill, and Dr. Walter H. Wells of Hyattsville. It was a wonderful talk, and we hope to include excerpts from it in upcoming issues of *News & Notes*.

The election of officers and directors also took place at the annual dinner. The current officers were reelected for another term: John Petro, President; James Wolfe, Vice-President; Dusty Rhoads, Secretary; Donna Schneider, Treasurer; Susan G. Pearl, Historian; Sharon H. Sweeting, Editor, *News & Notes*; Donna Schneider and Anna Holmes, Membership. Anna Holmes, Lynn Roberts and Andy Wallace were re-elected to the Board of Directors to serve until November 2006. Other Directors, serving until 2004 and 2005, continue their terms: Wallis Cain, Robert Crawley, Joyce Dowling, Diane Stultz, Mildred Gray, Iris McConnell, Joyce Uber and William Uber. Susan Wolfe continues as Marietta House manager, and Stella Uber as Marietta Gift Shop manager.

HOLIDAY TIME IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

As we enter the holiday season, it is interesting to look back at records of these holidays in the County's past. Some of the writings of Prince Georgians give us poignant pictures, both of sorrow and joy, at Thanksgiving and Christmas time. We will look at three sets of writings, reflecting the holiday experiences of three individuals and their families.

Sarah Hagar, a young woman from Burlington, Vermont, came south to serve as a governess, and in 1853, began teaching the children of Thomas Clagett at Weston, just south of Upper Marlborough. She continued teaching the Clagett children until just before the outbreak of the Civil War. Her letters to her family in Burlington over these seven years reflect her general unhappiness with her situation and surroundings, but occasionally she had happy things to write about. Thanksgiving of 1859 was one such time: "I expected a very dull Thanksgiving day . . . but dear good Emily¹ was kind enough to remember me and take me home with her in her carriage from church.² . . . her husband's sister, Mrs. Berry, and her family were there, two of hers are grown and very lively and pleasant.³ . . . [also] Mrs. Charles Clagett and Lizzie Mullikin and all that family.⁴ Mr. Kershaw⁵ and our boys, and four other young gentlemen [were there too], quite a party, . . . I had to leave at dark just as people began to get sociable and enjoy themselves . . . Emily wanted me to stay all night and I wanted to, but I had to come away to teach on Friday . . . I only wished I had two days holiday . . ."

Sarah Hagar continued in other letters to her sisters, describing the dinner parties that she attended: ". . . the gents stay in another room, and quietly tipple a little, and talk crops and politics - after dinner the ladies return into the parlor, but the gents stay in the dining room and tipple some more; as the sun sets, the carriages are brought to the door and the ladies depart, arriving at home about dusk . . ." and ". . . the gents here all chew tobacco at church, spit in the parlors, [and] the best of them will drink. The ladies all powder their faces, till they look like flour bags turned inside out and not shaken, or else lay on white and red till their faces crack to

¹ Wife of Robert Clagett, one of Thomas Clagett's older sons

² Robert and Emily Clagett's home was Oakland, where we celebrated this year's *Prince of a County*.

³ Robert Clagett's sister, Eliza, had married William J. Berry, and lived at Bowieville.

⁴ Charles, Eliza and Robert Clagett were the children of Thomas Clagett's first wife; Sarah Hagar's students were the five children of his second wife. Charles Clagett and his family lived at The Cottage (now the Environmental Education Center of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation), just west of Upper Marlborough. Lizzie Mullikin was the younger sister of Mrs. Charles Clagett.

⁵ Henry Kershaw had recently become rector at Trinity Church in Upper Marlborough; see later.

ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

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at

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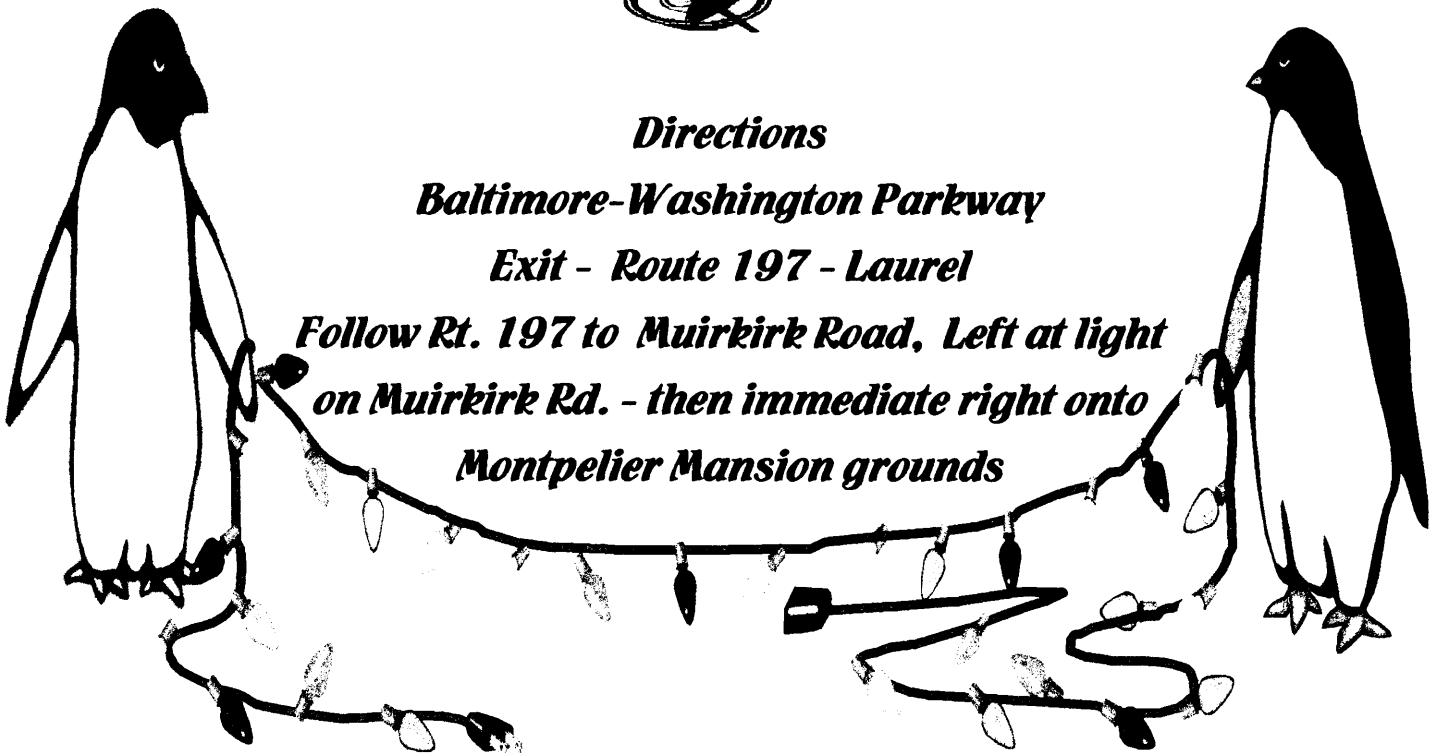


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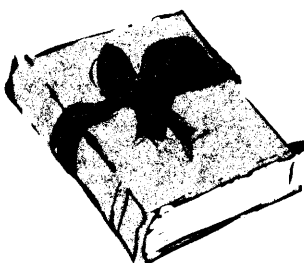
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pieces when they laugh.”⁶

We get a very different perspective from the writings of the Plummer family. We are fortunate indeed that these writings have survived, for they give us a unique glimpse into the lives of this family both as slaves and as freedmen. Adam Francis Plummer, who was part of the Riversdale slave force, had learned to read and write, and kept a journal from the date of his marriage in 1841 until his death in 1905. Part of this journal has recently been found, and was presented just this past summer to the Smithsonian’s Anacostia Museum of African-American History and Culture. The journal was incorporated into and enlarged upon by his daughter, Nellie Arnold Plummer, in her 1927 publication *Out of the Depths*, and from this source we learn of the family’s sorrows and joys.

Adam Plummer’s wife, Emily, and their children lived and worked at the Hilleary family plantation, “Three Sisters,” nearly six miles southeast of Riversdale (the Three Sisters plantation house is no longer standing). Every weekend, Adam would walk from Riversdale to Three Sisters to spend at least one day with his wife and children. For the Plummers, Thanksgiving must have long held bittersweet memories, for it was on Thanksgiving in 1851 that Adam’s wife, Emily, and four of their children were sold by the Hillearys, and moved to a new workplace at Meridian Hill in the District of Columbia. Thanksgiving Day 1851 was the last time that Adam Plummer’s family spent all together for the next 15 years, for although Adam was able to visit Emily and the four younger children fairly regularly over the next years, their two oldest children were often separated from them. A few days after the Thanksgiving Day sale, after Adam Plummer drove his family to Meridian Hill in a wagon lent by Charles Calvert of Riversdale, he wrote in his journal “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me?”

The Plummer family was not fully reunited until 1866, when the oldest daughter was returned from New Orleans. It appears, however, from Nellie Plummer’s narrative that Adam Plummer did manage to spend every Christmas during those years with his wife and younger children. One can imagine the anticipation and joy of those Christmases, and the much needed relief they brought to long years of toil and hopelessness.

Christmas was different for Sarah Hagar at Weston, providing periods of enjoyment with her young students, in the midst of desperate homesickness for her family in Vermont. Just after Christmas 1858, she wrote: “We began keeping Christmas the day before . . . the children seemed so much more in the spirit of it than last year . . . So we dismissed school early, they got some molasses, made candy, and pressed me into service - I pulled candy for them from dark until quite late, though I felt very little in the mood and would not consent until after manifold entreaties. . .”

The following year, 1859, Sarah had a much more eventful Christmas week, and she wrote about it in detail: “The children came to me the night before [Christmas] and insisted on having my stocking to hang up with theirs, the first time they ever have thought of such a thing, but alas for their expectations, theirs were empty the next morning, and I believe I lost my

⁶ Sarah Hagar to sister Kate, 8 March 1858, 16 December 1860.

stocking . . . for I have not seen it since . . . But though thus unpropitiously for me dawned the beginning of Christmas festivities, they smiled upon me before their close . . . [Christmas] morning came out bright and pleasant, I came out bright and cheerful too, I have not felt so bright for a long time, and we actually got to church . . . though there was one bad place in the road near the church, where we had to get out of the carriage and walk . . . I felt so grateful for the prospect of going to church Christmas, that I bestowed my silver a good deal more freely on all the servants who said "Christmas gift" to me, and gave more readily to the collection for the missionaries . . . Mr. Clagett's sons and their wives and families came home to dine with us. As Emily C. was going to say goodbye, she suddenly asked me to accompany her home⁷ for the holidays. I jumped at the chance, pitched on my things in a great hurry, not to keep her waiting, and started. She persuaded Mrs. C. C.'s⁸ sister Lizzie Mullikin, a young lady not long out of school, to accompany me, so we three were seated sociably round her fire that night, eating nuts and fruit. The next day we went to church, came back to Mrs. C. C.'s and dined. Monday we had that family, our rector (a good-looking scholarly bachelor⁹) and one or two other gentlemen there to dinner. Tuesday Mrs. R. Mullikin¹⁰ spent the afternoon there. Wednesday we had ten visitors to dine. . . . They were all going home early to dress for a large dancing party that night given by a young gentleman in the neighborhood. We were all invited, but nothing would tempt me to go. Lizzie however, was very anxious to go and was persuaded to send for her sister's permission and her dress. Her party *fixins* came but with such a note from her sister, as effectually prevented her going. Great was her disappointment for she dearly loves beaux and dancing . . . Thursday we had promised to dine at Mrs. C.C.'s; we broke that engagement to accept one from our visitors of Wednesday, who were to tell us all about the party; but it rained and the roads were so bad that we gave up the thought. . . . Friday morn, it rained harder than ever, but I thought it would not do to delay longer our visit to Mrs. C.C.'s as I had promised the last half of the week to her. We all dined there . . . I stayed the rest of the week there. Emily called for us, and took us to church Sunday. I came back Monday morn, in time to resume my duties here, and have been plodding on in the daily round ever since in the usual way."

Sarah Hagar's letters give us a detailed picture of the busy week of socializing between close family and neighbors during the Christmas holidays. One can imagine similar social activities, on a somewhat more elegant level, a generation or so earlier, when Rosalie Stier Calvert was chatelaine at Riversdale. In 1794, Rosalie had come to this country with her family from Antwerp (now Belgium). She married George Calvert in 1799, and, after the rest of her

⁷ to Oakland

⁸ Mrs. Charles Clagett of The Cottage

⁹ Mr. Kershaw had just begun his tenure at Trinity Church at the end of 1858. This "good-looking scholarly bachelor" courted Lizzie Mullikin for a time, but 15 years later married Adeline Clagett, one of Sarah Hagar's students at Weston; Adeline was only 13 when Mr. Kershaw first came to Trinity.

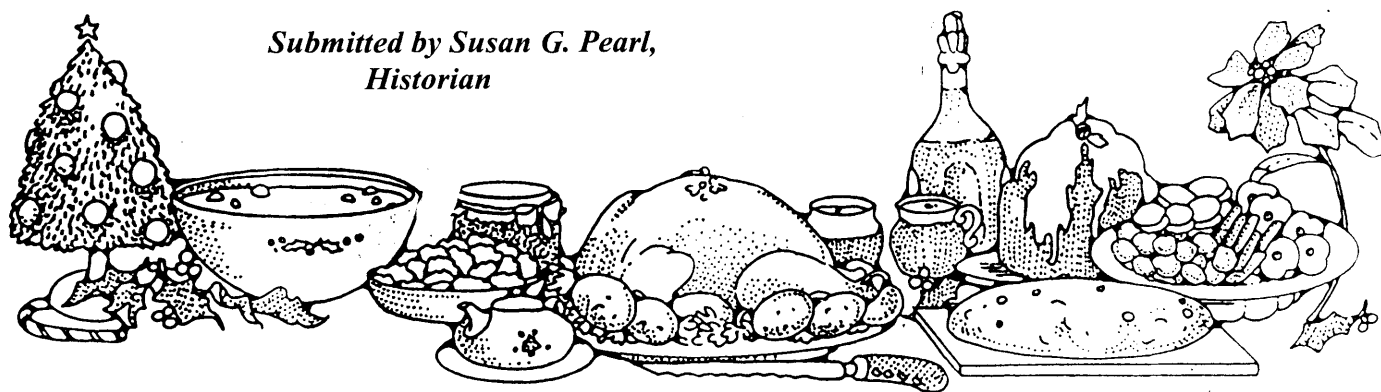
¹⁰ Sister-in-law of Mrs. Charles Clagett; the Mullikins lived near the Woodyard, in the then-brand-new house now known as Mount Clare.

family had returned to Europe, took up residence at her father's not-quite-finished plantation house, Riversdale. We get a glimpse of holiday excitement at Riversdale in 1815 in Rosalie's description of the gifts sent to her children by her sister in Antwerp¹¹: "I cannot understand, not even knowing the personalities of my children, how you were able to guess what would please them most. My little Julia had for more than a week been chattering about a dog, and played all the time at hiding under the tables and behind the chairs, laughing and shouting that a wild dog was chasing her. When I opened the largest package, the first object that appeared was the little dog. I gave it to Julia, pretending to make it bark at her. She was in ecstasy, and the three other children danced around her in delight at a gift that suited her so well. Now she cannot bear to part with it, and we have to let her sleep with it. The next things we found were two toy rifles, which Charles and Henry seized immediately, jumping for joy . . . they fired them 20 times in one minute until they had used up the flints, and we had to get more. Right now they are marching in formation with their muskets on their shoulders. Upon finding in the second box the little pocketbook, it was unanimously decided it should be for George, who, being in Philadelphia, couldn't share the pleasure that his brothers and sisters had in seeing all these pretty things. The little painted inkpots were too delicate and pretty for the boys so I gave one to Caroline and one to Eugenia. How beautifully the little scenes are painted on them! As for the little toilette-sets with looking glasses, I have given one to Eugenia and the other to Julia, to be kept for her until she is old enough to take care of it herself. The little boxes we assigned to Caroline and George, as well as the little prayer books."¹²

"You must have had quite a job of packing the cases - I have never seen anything so well packed! They would have survived ten trips from China without a scratch. Not a bit of damage! Please accept our thanks for your wonderful presents!"

So, as you prepare for and enjoy the holidays with family and friends, think for a moment of Prince George's County's holidays past. Pack your gift packages carefully, don't lose your stockings, and rejoice in having your families safely together. Happy Holidays!

*Submitted by Susan G. Pearl,
Historian*



¹¹ Letter, Rosalie Stier Calvert to her sister Isabelle Stier van Havre, 17 December 1815.

¹² Caroline (15) and George (12) were away at school; Eugenia was 9, Charles 7, Henry 5, and Julia nearly 2.

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