
2014

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.



Mount Calvert, Society Headquarters

To Our Members and Sponsors:

Welcome to the Prince George's County Historical Society's 2014 annual report. This report is designed to provide a recap of the events and activities of the Society's 62nd year.

The purpose of the Prince George's County Historical Society is to Collect, Preserve, Interpret, Share and Disseminate the Heritage, History, and Cultures of Prince George's County. To support our purpose we:

- ❖ Foster an understanding and appreciation of the history and heritage of Prince George's County;
- ❖ Collect, record, organize, restore and preserve historical data, artifacts and all associated materials relative to Prince George's County and the state of Maryland;
- ❖ Promote and encourage research into all aspects of Prince George's County history and heritage;
- ❖ Acquaint and make available to members and the general public historical data and all associated materials relating to Prince George's County through programs and publications arranged or sponsored by the Society; and
- ❖ Encourage and participate in the protection and preservation of historic sites and structures in Prince George's County.

This year we added an administrative assistant, John Peter Thompson, to assist us in our purpose.

We have a new mailing address: PO Box 1513, Upper Marlboro, MD 20773-5013 and a new email address too: pgchsmembers@gmail.com.

The Society has adopted the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 PM for its board meetings. The meeting will rotate to different locations within the county. All members and sponsors of the Society are welcome to attend these meetings. To find out where our monthly meeting is being held, please call 301-249-9000.

The Society is a non-profit body of five officers and up to 18 directors. The Board of Directors is a volunteer body and serves without compensation. The Society may accept gifts, bequests or endowments and solicit funds for its programs under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Board of Directors as of December 31, 2014

President - John J. Petro
Vice President – Joseph Plenzler
Secretary – Jane Taylor Thomas
Treasurer – Keith Gray
Historian - Susan G. Pearl

Directors (year term expires)

Kent Abraham (2017)
Michael Arnold (2017)
Elizabeth Beesley (2015)
John Brunner (2016)
George Denny, Jr. (2016)
Elizabeth Dougherty (2016)
Christine Garcia (2016)
Elizabeth Lingg (2015)

Justin McClain (2017)
Nathania Branch Miles (2017)
Joseph Plenzler (2015)
Ruth Davis-Rogers (2017)
Nancy Dixon Saxon (2015)
Patricia Skews (2015)
Mandi Solomon (2015)
Sealani Weiner (2016)

The Society's 2014 Activities

Frederick S. DeMarr Library of County History (DeMarr Library) is located on the lower level of the Greenbelt Public Library. The DeMarr Library was founded by Fred DeMarr, who served as President and Historian of the Society for a number of years. His collection was donated to the Society by the DeMarr family after his untimely death in 1997.

The DeMarr Library continues to be staffed by a dedicated team of volunteers including **Susan G. Pearl**, Historian, **Sarah Bourne**, **Dusty Rhoads**, and **Diane Stultz**, Genealogical Research Specialist. Topics of research this year have included immigration into the County during the second half of the 20th century, helping connect an ancestor with the labor force of one of the County's antebellum plantations, a little known but important architect that lived in the County after the Civil War, and the Peace Cross. A *Greenbelt News-Review* reporter made the library a subject of an article and brought us to the attention of quite a few Greenbelters. Several collections of papers, articles, books, and photographs have been received. We are always in search of yearbooks from schools in the county, so if you have any to donate, please let us know. Questions concerning aspects of the history of Prince George's County may be directed by telephone to 301-220-0330, by email at info@pghistory.org, or on the web message board. Volunteers **Dan Louck**, **Tom Simon**, and **Donna Schneider** are engaged in cataloging the collections of written materials, maps, obituaries and ephemera. Materials do not circulate, but may be used at the DeMarr Library. Photocopies of non-copyrighted materials are free for Society members and color copies or items scanned onto a CD are available for a modest fee.

The library's hours of operation are 12-4 PM on Saturdays and by appointment. Please contact us at 301-220-0330 or pgchslibrary@aol.com to schedule an appointment.

Membership and Sponsorship continued to evolve during 2014. We would like to say thank you to all those members who renewed as well as to our new members who joined us in 2014. The membership cycle is on a calendar year basis from January to December, with dues notices sent to members each December. A membership card is provided for each membership and sponsorship category and all members receive the Prince George's County Historical Society's newsletter "News & Notes." Program discounts will periodically be offered to members. All PGCHS members are able to receive a discounted membership with the Maryland Historical Society with payment of PGCHS dues annually or if you have a life membership. A current membership card must be shown to receive photocopy and book discounts at the Frederick S. DeMarr Library.

Preservation of the county's historic properties has always been an interest of ours. During 2014, we continued to monitor Fairmount Heights High School, Wilmer's Park in Brandywine, the Old Marlboro High School/Elementary School in Upper Marlboro, Peace Cross in Bladensburg, and other properties throughout the county.

Public Relations activities are through our website, www.pghistory.org, and Facebook page. Due to the resignation of our webmaster, we have been unable to keep our website current. We are in the process of updating the website and expect to bring the site current early in 2015. Our newsletter, "News & Notes" continues to be our primary source to impart news and information to our members and we are working on adding the newsletter to our website. In 2015 we will be changing the issuance of the newsletter to quarterly and adding email blasts to inform members of upcoming events and other relevant information. We are expanding our outreach by attending community days, such as the one in College Park in September and the Maryland Archives event in October.

Programs and Activities:

The annual St. George's Day awards and luncheon was held on April 27, 2014, at St. Thomas' Church in Croom. St. George's Awardees were: Anacostia Watershed Society for the restoration, opening and celebration of the Anacostia Watershed Trail; Brian Jay Jones for *Jim Henson-The Biography*; Debra Naylor, Ruth Naylor, Brenda Ramsey, Franklin Robinson, Jr., and Joseph Y. Rowe for *The Naylor's of Woodborough*; Nathania Branch Miles, Monday Miles and Ryan Quick for *Prince George's County in the Civil War: Life on the Border*; Holy Redeemer Catholic Church for their 100th anniversary; and Bob and Anne Clark for recognition of their many years of volunteer service at various historic sites. In addition, the Prince George's County Hall of Fame inducted Gwendolyn T. Britt, a Maryland State Senator who championed civil and equal rights and was an advocate for civic literacy. This year the Society has absorbed the Hall of Fame into its fold and will continue its mission of recognizing superior achievement, extraordinary creativity and natural talent of distinguished Prince Georgians of the past.

John Brunner and **Sealani Weiner** were involved in the Prince George's County History Day on March 15, 2014, at Dr. Henry A. Wise, Jr. High School. They judged students presentations on the theme "Rights and Responsibilities in History." The Society partnered with Maryland Milestones to award prizes for a project or paper directly related to the history of Prince George's County. Congratulations go to Jordan Glenn and Dione Jacobs who created a diorama of the Ridgeley Rosenwald School.

Jack Thompson, Jr. coordinated the Prince George's County portion of the 2014 Maryland House & Garden Pilgrimage held on April 26, 2014. The tour traveled part of the Star Spangled Banner National Historic Trail and Byway that "connects the places, people and events that led to the birth of the National Anthem." A big thank you is extended to The Town of Upper Marlboro Historic Committee for its assistance, as well as to all the property owners who participated. Proceeds of the tour will be used to build ghost structures at Mount Calvert.

Susan Pearl arranged for us to partner with the City of Bowie to host another lecture at Belair Mansion on May 19, 2014. Dr. Paul Kreisa, archeologist for Stantec, presented "What Lies Beneath – The History of Waterford Estates." The lecture discussed what happens when developers decide to build on sensitive land.

The Society led the annual Historic Preservation Week reception held on May 8, 2014, at Bostwick in Bladensburg. We partnered with the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, ATHA/Maryland Milestones, the Prince George's County Historical & Cultural Trust, the University of Maryland, the Aman Memorial Trust and other county organizations and businesses to host the event.

Jane Taylor Thomas and **Nathania Branch Miles**, as the Society's representatives, joined with the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society, Inc. Prince George's County Chapter to host the annual Juneteenth Celebration at the Nature Center, Watkins Regional Park on June 14, 2014. The annual event commemorates the end of slavery. This year's observance titled "Footprints and Roots," had a series of workshops on such topics as beginning genealogy, the Woodlawn cemetery, the "Dover Eight," how to access and research Afro-American newspaper archives, along with guest speakers, games, arts and crafts, ethnic and regional food, and children's activities. We partnered again in November for Maryland Legacy Day to "Celebrate 150 Years of Freedom."

Donna Schneider, Sarah Bourne, and John Peter Thompson, represented the Society at the very rainy Undaunted Weekend on August 24 that celebrated the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Bladensburg. There were a week of activities leading up to the battle including a lecture and book signing, a War of 1812 Night at the Bowie Baysox, and a John Bull Roast. The weekend included the dedication of the Undaunted Monument, battle re-enactment, an 1814 surgeon at work and other trades demonstrations, music, and food, and concluded with historic building open houses in Bladensburg and an archeological dig.

Our annual Prince of a County fundraiser was held at Kingston in Upper Marlboro on September 21, 2014. In keeping with the year's War of 1812 theme, the house was chosen because the Craufurd family that resided in the home were eyewitnesses to the British troops as they marched into Upper Marlborough on August 22, 1814. The next morning they marched on to Bladensburg, and then into our National Capital where they burned many of the public buildings. (The British troops returned to Upper Marlborough on the 26th with memorable consequences involving Dr. William Beanes.)

The Society attended College Park Day in September and the Maryland State Archives Family History Festival in October. Both events were opportunities to make connections with the public as well as other history, heritage, cultural and genealogical organizations and to introduce them to the Society and the DeMarr Library

The Society's Historian, **Susan Pearl**, worked with Prince George's Heritage to present "Beyond the Battle: Bladensburg's History in Context" on October 11, 2014, at the University of Maryland's Hornbake Library. The day-long symposium, funded by grants from Star Spangled 200 and ATHA, Inc., focused on the area of Bladensburg in the period leading up to and immediately following the Battle of Bladensburg on August 24, 1814. Following the symposium, attendees were invited to attend "Musical Parallels," a War of 1812 concert by the Prince George's Philharmonic.

Christine Garcia arranged for a living history presentation of Frida Kahlo on October 12, 2014, at the Hornbake Library at the University of Maryland. Colleen Webster portrayed the colorful life of the 20th century Mexican artist. The presentation was co-sponsored by the Maryland Humanities Council.

We partnered with the Maryland Milestones and M-NCPPC for our annual holiday party at the College Park Aviation Museum on December 8, 2014. We recapped the events of the 200th Anniversary of the War of 1812 and held our annual elections.

During 2014 the Historical Society lost two of its long-standing members – **Oden Bowie** and **John "Jack" Bourne**. Oden Bowie was one of the founding members of the Society and Jack was a long-time board member and treasurer.

Welcome aboard to new board members **George Denny, Jr., Michael Arnold, Justin McClain, and Mandi Solomon** and thank you to **Dan Louck, Donna Schneider, Edward Scott, Jack Thompson, Jr., and Andy Wallace** for their service.

As always, we would like to thank our valued volunteers, members and sponsors for their support and participation. Your continued interest in our programs and activities is greatly appreciated. We could not continue to operate without your involvement.

Profit and Loss Report – FY13 and FY14

	<u>FY 2013</u>	<u>FY 2014</u>
Income		
ATHA Grant	\$ -	\$ 750.00
Book Sales	\$ 1,683.71	\$ 1,405.30
Donations Received	\$ 350.00	\$ 2,211.25
Hall of Fame	\$ -	\$ 3,652.19
Insurance Premium Refund	\$ 336.00	\$ -
Interest Income	\$ 58.60	\$ 53.84
Library Income	\$ 1,165.95	\$ 1,684.97
MDHS Dues Received	\$ 1,770.00	\$ 2,130.00
Newsletter Income	\$ 100.00	\$ 275.00
PGCHS Dues Received	\$ 4,750.00	\$ 5,548.60
Program/Activity Income	\$ 7,905.00	\$ 25,442.25
Sponsorships Received	\$ 3,600.00	\$ 5,750.00
Total Income	\$ 21,719.26	\$ 48,903.40
Expenses		
Book Sales Postage/Taxes/Fees	\$ 413.14	\$ 148.27
Conference Expenses	\$ -	\$ -
Donations & Gifts Paid	\$ -	\$ 226.87
Dues & Subscriptions Paid	\$ 10.00	\$ 138.50
General Operations Expenses	\$ 975.28	\$ 3,988.28
History Day Awards	\$ -	\$ 150.00
Insurance Paid	\$ 1,301.00	\$ 1,317.00
Library Expenses	\$ 1,428.35	\$ 2,524.76
MDHS Dues Paid	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 1,860.00
Membership Expenses	\$ 940.26	\$ 1,584.85
News & Notes Expenses	\$ 2,284.17	\$ 2,502.52
Program/Activity Expenses	\$ 14,436.54	\$ 19,182.02
Strategic Planning Expenses	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -
Total Expenses	\$ 28,388.74	\$ 33,623.07
Profit/(Loss)	\$ (6,669.48)	\$ 15,280.33
Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2014		
Checking	\$ 40,219.23	
Savings	\$ -	closed account
Fixed Assets	\$ 12,478.27	
Total Assets	\$ 52,697.50	