News & Notes

A Publication of the Prince George's County Historical Society

XXXX Number 1 **January & February 2011**

A Century Celebration for PGCHS Library's "Angel"

A week after the Greenbelt Library and the Historical Society library re-opened following the completion of the building renovations, a special celebration was hosted at the Frederick S. DeMarr Library of County History on December 11, 2010, in honor of Louise DeMarr Tatspaugh's 100th birthday, which had occurred the day before on Friday, December 10. Nearly 100 of Louise's family and friends gathered for her celebration weekend and we were asked if those interested could have the chance to visit the library that her brother, Fred, had initiated some 40 years before. The PGCHS Library Committee was, of course, delighted to cooperate. Through the celebration planner, Louise's daughter Pat Tatspaugh, we invited any members of the DeMarr/Tatspaugh group to visit the library to see what Fred had started by spending many hours, week after week, sorting through and making accessible to researchers materials that are so important to County history. Louise, when acting as administratrix for her brother after his untimely death in 1997, legally conveyed to the Society in 1999 Fred's collection of "books, manuscripts, papers, and memorabilia" that at the time were located in the DeMarr library at Marietta Mansion. Louise and her brother, Robert DeMarr, have always been steady supporters of the Historical Society, and have maintained a strong interest in the library. Many of you will remember Louise and Robert cutting the cake when we moved the library from Marietta into the Greenbelt Branch in May 2008.

Louise DeMarr Tatspaugh and Robert DeMarr at the Grand Opening of the Frederick S. DeMarr Library of County History in May 2008

Louise herself did not come with the group on December 11. Although we really missed her, we agreed that she was wise to take it easy that morning in preparation for the main event – a huge dinner celebration that evening for the whole family. And what a wonderful group it was that gathered at our library that morning! Over coffee, tea, muffins, and cakes, we told about 25 visitors some of the recent history of the library, the organization of its holdings, and some of the more interesting projects that researchers have undertaken here. We learned wonderful stories about some of the members of the large DeMarr family, including, from one of Louise's granddaughters, that when she, as a child, visited Louise's house, she thought that the suave gentleman who served her refreshments must be Louise's butler, only to find out that he was in fact her great-uncle Fred. Other members were just excited to know that one of their family had a library named in his honor, and some of the youngest generation, now students, were inspired by Fred's passion for history. We, of course, were delighted to be able to thank personally the family for their ongoing interest and support. We told them that one of the most satisfying things about operating a library like this is that, almost without exception, researchers who come to use our collection leave it feeling very happy, and usually

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The Prince George's County Historical Society

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News & Notes is published six times a year. You are invited to submit a relevant article for print (subject to space limitations).

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If you would like to volunteer your time and talents to the Historical Society in any capacity, please call us.

Frederick S. DeMarr Library of County History

Greenbelt Library Building
11 Crescent Road, Greenbelt
301-220-0330
Hours: Saturday, 12-4 PM
By Appointment at Other Times

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The Society would like to thank our sponsors. Their generosity helps to fund the Society's activities, programs and newsletter, as well as the Frederick S. DeMarr Library of County History. We greatly appreciate your continuing support!

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2011 Membership Benefits

The Prince George's County Historical Society Board decided to raise the dues amounts for a few membership levels and create the Family category in response to increasing costs of its activities and programs. In addition, we have also established various benefits for each membership category as illustrated below. Each membership and sponsorship category will receive a membership card and will be acknowledged annually in the Prince George's County Historical Society's newsletter "News & Notes". A current membership card must be shown to receive photocopy and book discounts at the Frederick S. DeMarr Library.

Student - $10
For full-time students only
Subscription to the Society's newsletter "News & Notes"
Notification to educational and informational lectures and programs
Invitation to receptions and special events
All but $5 is tax deductible

Individual - $30
Family - $45
Corporate - $75
Subscription to the Society's newsletter "News & Notes"
Notification to educational and informational lectures and programs
Invitation to receptions and special events
Discounts to select PGCHS-sponsored events
10¢/photocopy for Frederick S. DeMarr Library research
Reduced rate for Maryland Historical Society membership
All but $5 is tax deductible

Life - $500
Same benefits as Individual/Family/Corporate, plus
10% off purchase of PGCHS books, except "Landmarks of Prince George's County"
All but $100 is tax deductible

Bronze - $100
Complimentary one-year Individual/Family/Corporate membership
Your name included in all PGCHS publications as a Sponsor
One complimentary ticket to our annual event at Mt. Calvert
All but $45 is tax deductible

Silver - $250
Complimentary one-year Individual/Family/Corporate membership
Your name included in all PGCHS publications as a Sponsor
One complimentary advertising opportunity in "News & Notes"
Two complimentary tickets to our annual event at Mt. Calvert
All but $85 is tax deductible

Gold - $500
Complimentary one-year Individual/Family/Corporate membership
Your name included in all PGCHS publications as a Sponsor
One complimentary advertising opportunity in "News & Notes"
10% off purchase of PGCHS books, except "Landmarks of Prince George's County"
Four complimentary tickets to our annual event at Mt. Calvert
All but $165 is tax deductible

Platinum - $1,000+
Complimentary one-year Individual/Family/Corporate membership
Your name included in all PGCHS publications as a Sponsor
Two complimentary advertising opportunities in "News & Notes"
10% off purchase of all PGCHS books, except "Landmarks of Prince George's County"
One complimentary copy of "Historic Prince George's County: A Confluence of Cultures"
Six complimentary tickets to our annual event at Mt. Calvert
All but $300 is tax deductible

The Joys of Reading Old Newspapers

One of my favorite pastimes, both during work time and spare time, is reading old newspapers. I find answers to many historical questions in newspaper articles, though of course, just as today, I am very careful not to believe everything I read . . . . . But coverage of specific events helps to pin down dates, such as the account of the destruction by fire of the Marlboro Academy (*Planters' Advocate*, 25 July 1855), and the renovations of the then century-old Kingston house (*Planters' Advocate*, 10 August 1859). Last spring, before celebrating St. George's Day at Trinity Church in Upper Marlboro, I was reading through *The Prince George's Enquirer* for 1896, looking for (and finding) newspaper accounts of the construction of the new bell tower and other improvements at Trinity (24 July and 2 October 1896) – and stumbled on this priceless filler:

***The Prince George's Enquirer*, 3 April 1896**

"When you put a postage stamp on an envelope," said a precise man to his son, "you should put it on square and true, in the upper right-hand corner, and as near as possible to the margin of the envelope. You put it on at the right-hand corner for the convenience of the stampers in the Post Office, so that it may be uniform in location with the stamps on other envelopes and so more conveniently and expeditiously stamped; you should study the comfort of others as well as yourself. You should put it as near as possible to the corner, so that the canceling stamp will be less likely to deface and so perhaps obscure the address on the envelope.

"You should put it on square and true because that is the methodical and proper way to do. Many persons are disturbed by the appearance of a stamp put on in a careless and slipshod manner. I can easily imagine that such a practice might work positive injury to you. You might have occasion to write to a man on a matter of business that was of importance to you. You might compose and write this letter with faithful care and set forth what you had to say with commendable clearness and precision, and yet upset it all by slapping on a stamp carelessly; the recipient might judge you by the one slight act done naturally, rather than by the studied work done with a purpose.

"My son, don't do it! Put the stamp on where it belongs, so that the little touch of color will grace the envelope and not deface it."

And here is another interesting and amusing notice, found in the *Local Brevities* of the 22 May 1896 *Enquirer*: *"We learn that Miss Sallie Clagett, daughter of Thomas Clagett of Keokuk* [northwest of Upper Marlboro on the west side of Ritchie-Marlboro Road], *has invented a device to hold down a lady's skirt while on a bicycle. She has sold the patent right, but retains a royalty, and we trust she may realize a handsome sum from her invention."*

-Susan G. Pearl

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Standing: Diane Stultz, Sarah Bourne, Betty Tatspaugh Funk, Dusty Rhoads, Donna Schneider, Robert DeMarr; In Front: Susan Pearl, Pat Tatspaugh

quite surprised at the amount of information that they have found.

As the group was beginning to leave, they met two researchers who arrived at the library to begin their search for information related to the youth in Prince George's County of their aunt, who will next month be celebrating her 100th birthday – a fitting way to close our part of Louise DeMarr Tatspaugh's celebration.

Louise must have recovered speedily from the great birthday celebrations, for she and Pat braved the very cold winds two days later to join the Historical Society for its holiday party at Belair, and we were delighted to see and thank her once more! The Historical Society is honored to have been a small part of a very special celebration!

Anacostia Trails Heritage Area, Inc.

Recently, one of our sister organizations in Prince George's County, ATHA, underwent some significant and exciting changes.

ATHA, which stands for the Anacostia Trails Heritage Area, Inc., is the organization tasked with managing and leading the heritage area that covers the northern portion of Prince George's County. A strategic planning process was conducted over the past year in order to establish what worked and what did not; and to plan for the future.

One of the most positive outcomes of this process has been the hiring of a new Executive Director, Aaron Marcavitch. The Prince George's County Historic Society board recently met with Aaron to talk about our common concerns and missions, and we were pleased to discover an enthusiastic, open-minded, and well-versed historian. Aaron has his bachelors in historic preservation, and a master of arts in history, with a concentration on public history.

ATHA Inc. enters 2011 looking forward to the hiring of a new Interpretive Programs Coordinator, taking the lead on the War of 1812/Battle of Bladensburg initiative, and the development of "tour routes" to connect the existing historical infrastructure within the heritage area. The five -year plan emphasizes the need for the organization to return to work on Target Investment Zones, stronger interpretive methods, and better coordination with existing stakeholders

ATHA Inc. thanks the Prince George's Historical Society for its support of the heritage area and looks forward to developing stronger relationships in the coming year.

If you are interested in learning more about any of ATHA's work, contact Aaron Marcavitch at aaron@anacostiatrails.org or 301-887-0777.

MHAA Matching Grants

There is Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA) Grant Workshop on Wednesday, January 19, 2011, at Montpelier Mansion from 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM. ATHA is receiving the applications for ranking. The current focus is on projects highlighting the War of 1812 or providing support for tour and way-finding systems. Contact Aaron Marcavitch at 301-887-0777 to register for the grant workshop. For more details, visit http://www.anacostiatrails.org/mhaa.html.

Welcome New Members

The Society would like to welcome the following new members:

David Kneipp
Thomas Lewis
W. Alton Lewis
Nancy Dixon Saxon
Anna Shea
David & Carol Tilch
Ray & Karen Tilch

We appreciate your support!

Thank You

Thank you to everyone who has donated yearbooks and annuals to the DeMarr Library and we welcome more!

If you have any yearbooks you would like to donate, please call Sarah Bourne at 301-277-5468 or email her at sarahbourne1@verizon.net

Calendar of Events – January and February 2011

January 10 – Brown Bag Lunch Lecture at Belair Mansion, 12 noon; topic to be announced, bring your lunch; free, call 301-809-3089 for more information

January 11 – "Digging Up The Past: The St. Mary's City Lead Coffin Project" at Belair Mansion, 7:30 PM; Dr. Timothy Riordan discusses the exhumation and examination of the lead coffins of some of Maryland's 17th century citizens; free

January 15 – Twelfth Night Ball at the Riversdale House Museum, 7 PM; come in period attire or black tie to celebrate the end of the holiday season at this Regency-style ball. Tickets $32; capacity is limited; advance payment required by December 30; for more details call 301-864-0420.

January 19 - Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Grant Workshop at Montpelier Mansion, 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM; call Aaron Marcavitch at 301-887-0777 to register (see page 5)

January 22 – Stitch 'n Time Textiles Club at National Colonial Farm Education Center, 1-4 PM; learn about cultivation of fleece, dyeing of wool and colonial textiles; card, spin and knit wool from the farm's heritage breed sheep; 301-282-2113

January 29 – Black History Hands-On Program: Winter on the Plantation at Montpelier Mansion, 1-3 PM; experience winter chores and pastimes of Montpelier's enslaved residents, games, preserving foods weaving, sewing, candle making and more; $5/participant, free/under 4, reservations required by calling 301-377-7817

February - "Put to Work in Making Tobacco" at Belair Mansion, 12-4 PM, Tuesday-Sunday; a look at the contributions of enslaved African's to Belair's history; free

February - "Heroes of the Turf" at Belair Stables, 12-4 PM, Tuesday-Sunday; features stories of America's first, most unheralded sports heroes, African American jockeys, outlines their contribution to American Thoroughbred racing; free

Fridays in February – One Woman's Lasting Legacy: Henrietta Lacks at Billingsley House Museum, 9 AM – 3 PM; exhibit honors Henrietta Lacks, a black tobacco farmer from southern Virginia who had cervical cancer when she was 30; free; call 301-627-0730 or 301-839-7782 for driving directions

Fridays in February – Enslaved Women of Darnall's Chance, 1 and 3 PM; tours focus on African American women who lived at Darnall's Chance with a special emphasis on the Bentley Family of Upper Marlborough; free

February 6— The Caton Sisters (Sunday Brunch and Performance) at Maryland Historical Society, 2 PM; $30/person, brunch additional charge; for registration and details http://www.mdhs.org/targetware/SundayBrunchSeries.pdf or call Dale Whitehead, 410-539-6914 x106.

February 8 – *"Had on and Took With Her": African American Dress in the Federal Era* at Riversdale House Museum, 7:30 PM; costume historian Ann Wass presents this illustrated lecture; $5/person, $2.50/student; 301-864-0420

February 11-28 – Black History Exhibit: Our Mothers, Our Sisters, Our Stars at Prince George's Ballroom, 10 AM – 4 PM; exhibit honors notable African American women, their life, struggles and accomplishments; free; 301-341-7439

February 12 – Meet Mr. Frederick Douglass at Surratt House Museum, 1 PM; in a first-person presentation Bill Grimmette highlights the slave, author, noted speaker and stateman's achievements; free; 301-868-1121; www.surratt.org

February 12 – Friendship Tea at Montpelier Mansion, 2:30 PM; $25, reservations required by calling 301-377-7817

February 18 – Educating America: Black Hospitals, Strengths and Crisis at Oxon Hill Manor, 11 AM – 9 PM; exhibit highlights little known Black Hospitals in the metropolitan area and abroad; free, light refreshments; 301-839-7782

February 19 – Highland Tea at Darnall's Chance House Museum, 2 PM; celebrate Darnall's Chance's Scottish heritage and enjoy the tastes and sounds of Scotland; $20/resident, $24/non-resident, reservations required by calling 301-952-8010

February 19 – Dance Concert at the Riversdale House Museum, 2 PM; *Choregraphie Antique*, the dance history ensemble of Goucher College will bring history to life through reconstructions of dances popular in Federal-era Baltimore, Washington and Riversdale; tickets $20, call 301-864-0420 for details

February 26 - Stitch 'n Time Textiles Club at the National Colonial Farm Education Center, 1-4 PM; learn about cultivation of fleece, dyeing of wool and colonial textiles; card, spin and knit wool from the farm's heritage breed sheep; 301-282-2113

February 27 – The Plummer Kitchen at Riversdale House Museum, 12-3:30 PM; the Riversdale Kitchen Guild interprets 18th and 19th century African American foodways in the Dependency kitchen; $3/adult, $2/senior, $1/student, free/under 4, includes tour of house museum

February 27 – George Washington Musicale with Simple Gifts at Montpelier Mansion, 2 PM; Simple Gifts plays everything from lively Irish jigs to hard-driving Klezmer frailachs and haunting Gypsy melodies; $10/Friends members, $15/non-members, reservations required by calling 301-377-7817

March 6— Mistress at Riversdale (Sunday Brunch and Performance) at Garrett-Jacobs Mansion, 2 PM; $30/person, brunch additional charge; for registration and details http://www.mdhs.org/targetware/SundayBrunchSeries.pdf or call Dale Whitehead, 410-539-6914 x106.

January – February 25 – Fly Now! at College Park Aviation Museum, 10 AM – 5 PM; aviation posters from the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum; free with museum admission

January 13-December -- Maryland: A House Divided at Surratt House Museum; exhibit commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the American Civil War. Maryland's background as a slave economy and the issues that it faced as the great conflict drew near are explored; 301-868-1121; www.surratt.org

National Colonial Farm has additional classes and workshops; visit www.accokeek.org for more details.

Patuxent Research Refuge has many free public programs ranging from art exhibits, bird, nature and flower walks, to owl prowls and hands-on wildlife activities; visit http://patuxent.fws.gov for more information or call 301-497-5887

For details and additional events, visit: www.pgparks.com, www.accokeek.org, www.cityofbowie.org/LeisureActivities/Museum, http://www.nps.gov/fowa/, www.greenbeltmuseum.org, www.laurelhistoricalsociety.org, www.mdhs.org and http://patuxent.fws.gov

News & Notes

A Publication of the Prince George's County Historical Society

XXXX Number 2 *March & April 2011*

ST. GEORGE'S DAY 2011

The Prince George's County Historical Society will gather at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in College Park on Sunday, April 10, to celebrate the 315th anniversary of the establishment of Prince George's County. Although the actual anniversary falls on April 23, the date of this year's celebration will be somewhat earlier than in other years, in order not to conflict with Palm Sunday and Easter.

St. Andrew's was built in 1930. It is a large, stone church, Gothic Revival in style and cruciform in plan, based on the medieval precedents of English country churches; its dominant feature is a large square crenelated bell tower. The two large easterly additions, built in 1954 and 1968, comprise the parish house, and are built of similar materials. The building is situated on a deep lawn with mature shade trees and ornamental plantings; the fieldstone-and-brick Rectory building stands to the west of the church.

St. Andrew's is the home of the oldest religious institution in the late 19th-century suburb of College Park, which grew up around what was then known as the Maryland Agricultural College, today the University of Maryland at College Park. The congregation was established by John O. Johnson, the original developer of the College Park residential subdivision; this subdivision, platted in 1889 on the northerly part of the large Riversdale acreage, followed the growth of the Agricultural College which had been founded by Charles Benedict Calvert of Riversdale in 1856. Services began in 1890, and by 1894 were being held in the

St Andrew's Episcopal Church in College Park

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Anne and Ghiselin Sasscer
Donna Schneider
Judy and Ken Schneider
Andrew and Sondra Wallace
James and Susan Wolfe

TOUR OF GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER

As promised last fall, the Historical Society has scheduled a tour of the Goddard Space Flight Center, the chief science center of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). John Pearl - PGCHS member who has worked at Goddard since 1970, veteran of the Mariner and Voyager missions, and currently on the Cassini spacecraft team - has agreed to lead a small group from the Historical Society through parts of the Goddard campus. He needs to limit the size of the tour group to a maximum of 12, and will therefore offer two tour opportunities – **3:15 p.m. on Fridays, March 18th and 25th** – this will be on a "first come, first served" basis. Call John or Susan Pearl at 301-262-3367, or contact by e-mail susan.pearl@verizon.net to reserve a space on one of the tours. (You may indicate your preference of date, or let us know whether you could do either one.) We must have in advance the names of all participants in order to get an entry badge for each of you. On each of these Friday afternoons, we will meet at the Main Gate, 8800 Greenbelt Road (there is a small parking lot there), pick up our badges, and enter the Goddard complex from that point at 3:15.

We will visit the Integration and Test facility, where instruments for space flight projects are subjected to simulated launch and space environmental conditions: noise, vibration, vacuum, and intense heat and cold. Currently portions of the supporting and shielding structure of the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST: the follow-on mission to the Hubble Space Telescope) are in preparation here. After seeing the testing facilities, we will look down from the "catwalk" into the vast "clean room" where the JWST will be assembled. And, if the facility is not in use, we will also visit the large centrifuge where payload acceleration tests are conducted.

Those who wish to may visit the Goddard Visitor Center before the tour (it is accessible from ICE Sat Road, formerly Soil Conservation Road, just off Greenbelt Road, and it closes at 3:00 p.m.). Featured there are spaceflight instruments and descriptive displays of science and engineering results from various projects. There is also a "rocket garden" displaying several launch vehicles, as well as a gift shop that contains books, toys, games, and space "ice cream." If you do visit the Visitor Center before the tour, you still have to meet the rest of the tour group at the Main Gate by 3:15.

URGENT NEED FOR VOLUNTEERS

The Historical Society is asking for volunteers to assist us on Sunday, May 22, 2011, during the Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage. We are looking for individuals who are willing to contribute a few hours of their time by being a greeter and ticket taker at the tour homes in the morning or afternoon. Also, if anyone is interested in making flower arrangements to be displayed in the featured homes, that would also be appreciated. If you are available to assist us, please contact Lynn Roberts at antiquelynn@aol.com or 301-627-8622. Thank you.

DISCOVER FOODWAYS THIS MARCH

In March the National Colonial Farm will premiere its newly developed Foodways program. Over the years this successful program has fascinated visitors as they witness firsthand what our colonial ancestors ate and how it was prepared. This year we plan on taking the program and the visiting public even further into the culinary traditions of Maryland.

While we will still be cooking over the fire and using all the gizmos and gadgets of years past, the format will be drastically different this year! Each program will be presented much like a modern day cooking show, where a seated audience (along with a few special guests tasters) will watch presenters prepare a meal and discuss what makes each of these meals unique to the Tidewater area. From Maryland Fried Chicken to Southern Maryland Stuffed Ham, we want to explore and celebrate the rich, culinary tradition that Maryland offers!

BUT WE NEED HELP!!!

Mrs. Parker in the Kitchen

Volunteers are needed to help with the prep work and assist during the actual "performance." If you are a "foodie" at heart, love history, and would love to be a part of this program please contact the volunteer coordinator, Anjela Barnes at abarnes@accokeek.org or call 301-283-2113, for further details. In addition to prep and set up, we'd also like to arrange times to test out many of the recipes we plan on doing during the season. We hope this turns out to be an enjoyable, hectic, and educational experience for everyone involved!

-Matt Mattingly, Manager
National Colonial Farm and Historic

MARTIN LUTHER KING CELEBRATION

A celebration of Dr. King's life will be held at the Christian Community Presbyterian Church in Bowie on Sunday, May 1, 2011 starting at 3:30 PM. The program includes "The Meeting" a dramatic production about a meeting between Dr. King and Malcolm X by the Pin Points Theater, a slide show from Lauren Glover, director of the County Library's Art in Public Places Project, local elected officials, media celebrities and a guest speaker will bring greetings and remembrances of Dr. King, young musicians and step dancers will perform, and awards will be presented to residents for outstanding community services. The program will be followed by a fellowship dinner. The event is free, but donations are welcome.

MARIETTA TO REOPEN

In our September/October 2010 issue of *News & Notes*, we printed an article about Marietta, and the history of the Historical Society's long and close association with the Marietta House Museum. We announced that the Marietta House Museum would be closing by the beginning of September, and that its rooms would be converted into offices for the Natural and Historical Resources Division (NHRD), staff of which maintains and operates the historic house museums owned by the M-NCPPC. Since that time the situation has changed. After a series of meetings and discussions with the local community, it has been decided that Marietta will reopen as a house museum, and that only limited staff, specific to Marietta, will have offices in the 1968 wing. There will be another public meeting on the subject, and restoration work, now in process on the building, will be completed before Marietta reopens. We will let you know as soon as these details are announced.

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brick building (originally built as a barn) that is known as the College Park Woman's Club. In 1930, with the help of the Phillips Foundation which assisted with the construction of churches in college communities, the present church was built, designed by Washington, D.C., architect Howard W. Cutler. Bishop James Freeman of the Washington Archdiocese laid the cornerstone in February 1930, and dedicated the finished church in October of that year. St. Andrew's became an independent parish in 1953.

St. George's Day 2011 will begin with tours of St. Andrew's Church. We will then move to the Parish Hall for our annual St. George's Day dinner and program. St. Andrew's will be a wonderful place to celebrate! You will receive your invitations soon and we look forward to seeing you there.

Calendar of Events – March and April 2011

March 4 – Hands-on History: The Architect's Apprentice at the Riversdale House Museum, 10 AM; children ages 8-12 will sculpt, draw and sketch Riversdale as they learn the trade of the architect; resident $15, non-resident $18, registration required by calling 301-864-0420

March 5 - "To a bole of lemonade for your wife..." Female Patrons and the Peons Who Served Them at the Accokeek Library, 12 noon; Rod Cofield, director at Historic London Town and Gardens, will examine how women participated in colonial-era taverns through accounts of ordinary innkeepers in Prince George's County; free

March 5 – Rebel Heels and Northern Scum: Maryland's Role in the Civil War lecture by historian Thomas Clements at Surratt House Museum, 1 PM; free; 301-868-1121; www.surratt.org

March 5— Rosie the Riveter at College Park Aviation Museum, 2 PM; learn the fascinating story of Rose Monroe who in WWII worked at the largest factory in the world, Willow Run in Michigan; free with museum admission, 301-864-6029

March 6— Mistress at Riversdale (Sunday Brunch and Performance) at Garrett-Jacobs Mansion, 2 PM; $30/person, brunch additional charge; registration and details http://www.mdhs.org/targetware/SundayBrunchSeries.pdf or Dale Whitehead, 410-539-6914 x106.

March 12 – Hands-On History Day: Be a Woodturner's Apprentice at Montpelier Mansion, 1-4 PM; help make chairs the old-fashioned way by learning how to lathe legs and spindles and weave seats; $5/participant, reservations recommended by calling 301-377-7817

March 12 – Tavern Night at the Riversdale House Museum, 8 PM; Ship's Company Chanteymen will entertain, partake in tavern-style food and beverage; ages 21 & up, resident $20, non-resident $24, call 301-864-0420 for reservation

March 18 - Goddard Space Flight Center tour, 3:15 PM, free, see article on page 3 for details

March 18-20 – Twelfth Annual Lincoln Assassination Conference at Surratt House Museum; call 301-868-1121 or visit www.surratt.org for details

March 19 - Foodways at the National Colonial Farm, 12-1 PM; Jo Mimms and Brenda McKelvin will discuss and present foodways traditions; free, call 301-282-2113 for details

March 19 – Colonial Tavern Dinner at Darnall's Chance House Museum, 7-9 PM; enjoy colonial food and wine and listen to period sea chanties and tavern songs from Ship's Company Chanteymen; $55 resident, $65 non-resident, reservations required by calling 301-952-8010

March 25 - Goddard Space Flight Center tour, 3:15 PM, free, see article on page 3 for details

March 26 – Stitch 'n Time Textiles Club at National Colonial Farm Education Center, 1-4 PM; learn about cultivation of fleece, dyeing of wool and colonial textiles; card, spin and knit wool from the farm's heritage breed sheep; 301-282-2113

March 30 – Remember the Ladies: The Lives of Early American Women Symposium at Show Place Arena, 9 AM-4 PM; explore different facets of the changing role of women in 18th and 19th century America; $75, includes lunch, $10 discount for museum and historical society volunteers; registration required by calling 301-952-8010

April 2 – Park Day at Fort Foote Park, 10 AM-12 PM; volunteers will be cleaning up the Civil War earthen work fort, debris and weed removal and trail repair; hand tools, gloves and bags available; call 301-763-4600 for details

April 3 – Load...Ready...Fire! at Fort Washington, 1, 2 and 3 PM; Fort Washington Guard will interpret Civil War artillery; call 301-763-4600 for details

April 9 – Potomac River Watershed Cleanup at Fort Washington Lighthouse, 9 AM-12 PM; help clean up the Nation's River; call 301-763-4600 for details

April 9 – Tasting the Past: Heirloom Grains at Riversdale House Museum, 2 PM; a short talk and guided tasting of historic recipes made from heirloom grain varietals; $12 resident, $15 non-resident, call 301-864-0420 for reservation

April 10 - St. George's Day Awards and Luncheon at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in College Park; $40/person, reservations payable to PGCHS, 4701 Colonel Ewell Ct., Upper Marlboro, MD 20772; for details contact Susan Pearl at 301-262-3677

April 16 - Chicken and the Egg at the National Colonial Farm barnyard, 10-11:30AM and 12:30-2 PM; tour the barnyard, learn about heritage breed chickens, hands-on interaction with chicks and dye eggs; $10 non-member child, $7 member child; www.accokeek.org for online registration or call 301-282-2113

April 16 - Foodways at the National Colonial Farm, 12-1 PM; learn about "Bristles and Feathers" featuring how to corn ham, country sausages, ham and egg pudding and "Maryland Fryed Chicken"; free, call 301-282-2113 for details

April 17 – The Civil War Has Begun at Fort Washington, 11 AM-2 PM; 1st US Artillery, Company D, commanded by Major Joseph Haskins, defends the river approach to the Capital City from the Confederacy; call 301-763-4600 for details

April 20 – History Lecture - Maryland on the Verge of the Civil War at Montpelier Mansion, 7:30 PM; Charles Mitchell will speak about Maryland on the edge or war, including the political and socio-economic dynamics as war approached; free

April 23 - Stitch 'n Time Textiles Club at the National Colonial Farm Education Center, 1-4 PM; learn about cultivation of fleece, dyeing of wool and colonial textiles; card, spin and knit wool from the farm's heritage breed sheep; 301-282-2113

April 30 – Montpelier Festival of Herbs, Tea and the Arts at Montpelier Mansion, 10 AM-4 PM; stroll among a variety of vendors, hear live music, enjoy tea and scones, visit art exhibits, lectures, games and more

April 30 - Spring Colonial Frolic at the National Colonial Farm, 10 AM-3 PM; step back in time and see colonial textile artists in action; 301-282-2113

April 30 – Life of the Civil War Soldier at Surratt House Museum, 12-4 PM; the 3rd US Regular Infantry encampment and demonstrations; call 301-868-1121 for details

May 1—Martin Luther King Celebration at Christian Community Presbyterian Church in Bowie, 3;30 PM; dramatic productions, speakers, young musicians and dancers will celebrate Dr. King's legacy, a fellowship dinner will follow; free, but donations are welcome

March 1-31 - Chesapeake Woodturners Exhibit at Montpelier Mansion, 11 AM-4 PM; weekend demonstrations, weather permitting, call 301-377-7817 to verify, free

March-December -- Maryland: A House Divided at Surratt House Museum; exhibit commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the American Civil War. Maryland's background as a slave economy and the issues that it faced as the great conflict drew near are explored; 301-868-1121; www.surratt.org

National Colonial Farm has additional classes and workshops; visit www.accokeek.org for more details.

Patuxent Research Refuge has many free public programs ranging from art exhibits, bird, nature and flower walks, to owl prowls and hands-on wildlife activities; visit http://patuxent.fws.gov for more information or call 301-497-5887

For details and additional events, visit: www.pgparks.com, www.accokeek.org, www.cityofbowie.org/LeisureActivities/Museum, http://www.nps.gov/fcwa/, www.greenbeltmuseum.org, www.laurelhistoricalsociety.org, www.mdhs.org, http://pgcm.aahgs.org and http://patuxent.fws.gov

News & Notes

A Publication of the Prince George's County Historical Society

XXXX Number 3 ***May & June 2011***

MARYLAND HOUSE & GARDEN PILGRIMAGE 2011

The Prince George's County Historical Society is sponsoring the County's portion of this year's annual Maryland House & Garden Pilgrimage on Sunday, May 22, 2011, from 10 AM to 5 PM. Homes and gardens from Fort Washington to Accokeek will be featured with several of them in the Moyaone Reserve, on the Potomac River, or with spectacular water views.

Potomac River view from Corum House

Pine Road Gardens

The properties featured are the Corum House, Potomac Valley Farm, the gardens of Piscataway Hills and on Pine Road, the Kutzleb House, Christ Church, Hard Bargain Farm, Solstice House, and Thistle Dew. Christ Church will also be hosting a Southern Maryland buffet lunch for $15 per person. For groups of 4 or more, it is requested that you call for reservations before May 12, 2011, at 301-292-5633.

Tickets for the pilgrimage are $30 per person if purchased in advance on-line at http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/156193. Tickets are available the day of the tour for $35 at the first house visited or $15 per house. The Pilgrimage asks that no children under the age of 10 attend, no high heels be worn and no photographs be taken. The tour is rain or shine.

Proceeds from the tour revenues will be used for various Society projects including the Frederick S. DeMarr Library of County History, for display cabinets at our headquarters at Mount Calvert and for ghost structures and informational signs on the grounds of Mount Calvert that will interpret two buildings that were recently discovered during an archeological investigation.

Preceding the Prince George's County tour are pilgrimages to five other counties: the Mount Vernon section of Baltimore City on May 1, Calvert County on May 7, Kent County on May 14, the Worthington Valley, Mantua Mill Road area of Baltimore County on May 15, and southern Anne Arundel County on May 21. For more information about these and our tour, please visit www.mhgp.org.

The Historical Society would like to express our appreciation to the home and garden owners and volunteers for assisting us in presenting the tour. Thank you!!

The Prince George's County Historical Society

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News & Notes is published six times a year. You are invited to submit a relevant article for print (subject to space limitations).

All Prince George's County Historical Society members are invited and welcome to attend Society Board meetings. We meet each month. Dates and locations vary. Please call 301-249-9000 for meeting details.

If you would like to volunteer your time and talents to the Historical Society in any capacity, please call us.

Frederick S. DeMarr Library of County History

Greenbelt Library Building
11 Crescent Road, Greenbelt
301-220-0330
Hours: Saturday, 12-4 PM
By Appointment at Other Times

2011 SOCIETY SPONSORS

The Society would like to say thank you to our generous sponsors. Their donations help to fund the Society's programs and newsletter, as well as the Frederick S. DeMarr Library of County History. We greatly appreciate the continuous support!

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Judy and Ken Schneider
Andrew and Sondra Wallace
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Many thanks to Beth Lingg and Diane Stultz for cataloging 5,749 of the more than 6,000 books at the DeMarr Library.

MARYLAND'S LARGEST CIVIL WAR EXHIBIT

The Maryland Historical Society's (MdHS) Museum opened Maryland's largest and most comprehensive Civil War exhibit on April 16. The impact of the war on the people of Maryland will be told in personal terms in "Divided Voices: Maryland in the Civil War." The largest Civil War exhibit in the museum's 167-year history will occupy over 5,000 square feet and tell the story of a tragedy in three acts: the romantic war, the real war and the long reunion.

The exhibit will take visitors back in time with 3-D videos that will lead them back to 1861. There will also be interactive exhibits designed for children and adults as well as storyteller guides in period costumes. On Saturdays and Sundays the Maryland Historical Society Players will perform short vignettes of major events that took place in Maryland.

The romantic war was the first year or so of the conflict, when both sides saw the war as an adventure and patriotic duty. The real war over the next three years of bloodshed left hundreds of thousands of young men dead. The long reunion focuses on the reuniting of the country, which some say is not complete to this day.

Maryland sent 60,000 men to serve in the Union Army. Over 20,000 more served in the Confederacy. The first bloodshed of the war took place in Baltimore. The human stories of these men and women are told by bringing letters to life with today's technology, as well as the display of hundreds of rare objects, many of which have not been shown publicly since the 19th century. Museum visitors will see Robert E. Lee's camp chair, John Brown's carbine, Abraham Lincoln memorabilia as well as compelling and heartbreaking photographs of the period.

Visitors will learn of Maryland's major battles like Antietam and of lesser-known battles like the Battles of Monocacy and Silver Spring. They will come to understand how the soldiers suffered. More than 600,000 men died in the Civil War, compared to 400,000 American deaths in World War II. It was the deadliest war in American history.

Museum goers will discover why the first widely-used bullet made this one of history's bloodiest wars and how this spurred advances in medical care. Triage, the ambulance corps, field hospitals and many significant surgical advances all began during the Civil War.

The war's impact on Maryland's citizens will be revealed. Baltimore, for example, was under martial law and occupied by Union troops for the entire war. Lincoln's suspension of the writ of habeas corpus (people can't be jailed without trial or a hearing) was famously used against John Merryman of Cockeysville, Maryland. Lincoln was willing to break the law to keep Maryland from joining the Confederacy and cutting the capital off from the North. The State legislature moved from Annapolis to Frederick to keep Maryland from joining the Confederacy.

Three Union soldiers are stationed on Federal Hill overlooking what is now the Inner Harbor of Baltimore (1862 photo). Their cannon is trained on the city as Baltimore was under martial law throughout the Civil War. Lincoln was afraid that Maryland would secede from the Union, cutting Washington D.C. off from the North. The background is a contemporary photo of Baltimore from the same angle.

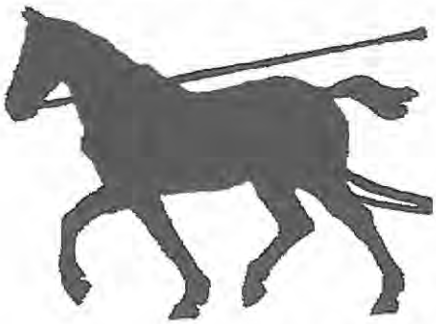
Visitors also will learn the important role that African Americans played in the war. Over 10,000 African Americans served in the Union Army. Harriet Tubman served as a spy for the Union Army. Black soldiers such as Christian Fleetwood of Baltimore led African American troops into battle and earned America's highest military honor.

Women's growing role in society during those years will be revealed. They began serving as nurses for the first time. Women on the home front mourned their dead, creating the "Vacant Chair" tradition at dinner tables in Maryland and elsewhere.

The Civil War exhibit will run for the next four years with annual updates. Visitors to the museum will also find major exhibits of famous Maryland paintings, silver, furniture, maritime history and children's toys from the last 300 years.

LAUREL MUSEUM CELEBRATES 15TH ANNIVERSARY

Laurel Maryland...Sunday, May 15, 2011, from 1:30-3:30 PM. The Laurel Museum will be featuring a Make-a-Memory Book, horseshoes, horse stick races and birthday cake as part of its 15th Anniversary Celebration: *Fifteen on the 15th.: The Laurel Museum 1996-2011.* Adding to the Laurel Historical Society's (LHS) collection of scrap books detailing the organization's own history, visitors will be given the opportunity to leave a message and photo in a new "2011 Memory Book" created just for the occasion. The children-themed activities of horseshoes and stick horse races reflect the Museum's current exhibit: "And They're Off: Laurel Park at 100." In addition, the Laurel Museum is planning a birthday cake with candle lighting with representatives of the LHS and City of Laurel from 1996 and 2011. The event is free, and will be held rain or shine at the Laurel Museum, 817 Main Street and the adjoining Pool Club House. For more information visit www.laurelhistoricalsociety.org or call 301-725-7975.



MARY SURRATT MAKES THE MOVIES

On July 7, 1865, Mary Surratt was executed by the federal government for her alleged role in the conspiracy to assassinate President Abraham Lincoln. For the past 146 years, historians have debated her guilt/innocence. However, most agree that this native of Prince George's County (as well as others convicted of the crime) were denied their constitutional rights by being subjected to a military court – despite the fact that all of the accused were civilians.

It is this question of legality and the questionable practices of that court at the end of the Civil War that is examined in the recently released movie, The Conspirator, directed by Robert Redford. Filmed in Savannah, Georgia (in order to best recreate Washington City of 1865), the movie stars Robin Wright as Mary Surratt and James McAvoy as her reluctant attorney, Frederick Aiken (who later became the first city editor of *The Washington Post*). Both give excellent performances. Movie-goers will also recognize many longtime character actors, including Kevin Kline as Secretary of War Stanton.

The director and research librarian at Surratt House Museum in Clinton, Maryland, have worked with The American Film Company producers, the screenwriter, and a number of researchers on this project during the past three years. They were wonderful to work with and eager to give a factual production while still keeping the subject enjoyable and educational for the average American to whom the movie is targeted.

Laurie Verge, director of Surratt House Museum, was invited to a pre-screening in January, in which she participated in a Q&A session. She also attended the gala performance at Ford's Theatre on the evening of April 10, where she chatted with Mr. Redford and several of the cast members as well as dignitaries such as former Senator Fred Thompson and former Secretary of State Madeline Albright, who were enthusiastic about the film and ongoing projects.

Purist historians will find fault with certain things, but the movie is not aimed at the historian who already knows the story. It is produced to fill the gap in the average person's knowledge of the history of their own country. The American Film Company will only be doing these types of history movies and are already working on a film about Paul Revere and his forgotten assistant on the midnight ride. There is also a proposal for a third film on John Brown's Raid.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION WEEK RECEPTION TO BE HELD AT MOUNT LUBENTIA ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 2011 AT 6 PM

This year's annual Preservation Week Reception will be held on Wednesday, May 18 at 6 PM at Mount Lubentia, the 18th century historic home of Andrew and Sondra Wallace located at 603 Largo Road, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774.

This year will mark the first time that the Preservation Reception will be held at a private, non-county owned property. There are a couple of reasons that Prince George's Heritage, Inc., the primary sponsor of the event, decided to depart from past precedent. First, for the next four years the reception will focus on the commemorations of the bicentennial of the War of 1812 and the sesquicentennial of the emancipation of slaves in Prince George's County by featuring sites that played a role in these landmark historical events. This year we recognize the little-known fact that County and State records were brought to Mount Lubentia for safekeeping as the British approached Washington, D.C., after landing at Nottingham during the summer of 1814. Second, this year the organization seeks to highlight the fact that private individuals and non-profit organizations are responsible for a large percentage of preservation activities in the county, as illustrated by this extraordinary site.

Mount Lubentia probably dates to the 1760s. It was built by Enoch Magruder, a wealthy factor who also constructed Harmony Hall on the Potomac around the same time. It was rented to the Loyalist Anglican clergyman, Jonathan Boucher, in the early 1770s. Boucher tutored George Washington's stepson, Jackie Custis, who lived at the house and dubbed it Castle Magruder. Washington visited and stayed at the house on several occasions. Enoch Magruder deeded the house to his eldest son, Dennis, who lived there for almost fifty years, marrying four times and having numerous children. After his death, the house was sold to Otho Berry Beall, but stayed in the family when his son, Washington J. Beall, married Dennis's youngest daughter, Mary Ann Magruder. Otho Beall lived at Mount Lubentia into the 1850s and left it to his eldest son who lived with Mary Ann at Woodlawn, just up the road. Their daughter Rosalie married William Bowie in the 1880s and then took up residence at Mount Lubentia. It then passed to Washington Beall Bowie, and upon his death, to his son, Forrest. His widow, Frances Stevenson Bowie, sold the property to the Wallaces in 1996, marking the end of two and a half centuries of ownership by the Magruder/Beall/Bowie families.

Mount Lubentia is one of the finest late Georgian/Federal houses in Prince George's County. It contains a remarkable amount of fine woodwork and detailing dating to the late 18th and early 19th centuries. But it is a complex structure, and contains architectural elements from every period of its long occupancy. The gardens contain plantings dating back almost one hundred years. The setting has radically changed in recent years as the Highlands subdivision wrapped around the rear of the property. The Wallaces have spent the past fifteen years restoring the house and surrounding grounds.

The Historic Preservation week reception is co-sponsored by the Prince George's County Historical Society, and the Prince George's Historical and Cultural Trust, among others.

All Society members are invited to the reception, but must reserve a space. Please call the **Riversdale House Museum at (301) 864-0420** to RSVP, or you may notify Pam Cooper of Prince George's Heritage by email at **pamelakcooper@verizon.net** by Monday, May 16th, 2011.

Directions to Mount Lubentia:

The property is located on Largo Road (Route 202), just past the stoplight at Kettering Drive, going towards Upper Marlboro from the Beltway. However, parking for the reception will be on Dennis Magruder Drive where the entrance to the grounds will be.

From the Beltway, take a right turn on Kettering Drive, and then the first left onto Dennis Magruder. A little ways down on the left will be Mount Lubentia. If you're coming on Route 202 from Upper Marlboro, then you will take a left onto Kettering Drive.

BRINGING HISTORY TO LIFE IN UNIVERSITY PARK

Seventy-five years after University Park's incorporation, current and past residents of the town have voiced an enthusiastic desire to celebrate and document their town history. Anniversary celebrations began April 9 at 8:00 AM with a thrilling program by the Northwestern High School Marching Band. A stirring fanfare marked the dedication by of the town clock by current Mayor John Rogard Tabori and former Mayor John Brunner in front of the University Park Elementary School. The ninth annual Azalea Classic 5K Walk/Run followed the clock dedication. The day ended with an Azalea Classic victory party complete with DJ, family dancing and two cakes.

Later in the summer, University Park will sponsor its annual July 4th parade, this year with a nod toward its first 75 years. Over the next months, town residents will work toward producing a walking tour brochure, a town history, and a 9/11 memorial. All the work and festivities lead up to a very special 75th birthday weekend of events October 8-10.

The gala weekend in October will include the first ever Inside-Out Parade with stationary floats marking past decades and lining both sides of Queen's Chapel Road. The weekend will also feature a tribute to Jim Henson with the official dedication and naming of "Henson Green" in the center of town. Those interested in more details about University Park's 75th will find updates on the town website, www.upmd.org, and in the Riverdale University Park Patch http://riverdalepark.patch.com.

Former Mayor of University Park, John Brunner, and Former Council Member, Lynn Dudinsky, await the signal to tug the ribbon to officially dedicate the Town Clock to all the volunteers who have given so much of their time to make the town a special place.

Photo by S. Moseley

GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER TOURS

Many thanks to Historical Society member, John Pearl, for organizing two behind-the-scenes tours for members on March 18 and 25. John started the tour by sharing the background of NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center. He took us to the Space Environment Simulator (SES) Facility 290, which is capable of achieving a high vacuum while simulating a wide range of thermal conditions. He discussed the James Webb Space Telescope, a successor to the Hubble Space Telescope, and how it is designed to see farther back in space and time. A model was available for viewing, which includes a primary mirror composed of 18 smaller hexagonal mirrors, each weighing 46 pounds and when assembled will be over 21 feet across. Finally we visited the huge centrifuge, which is used for various and extreme tests, such as whether items can withstand the shaking and pressure of a launch.

For more information about Goddard and its activities, visit http://www.nasa.gov/home/index.html.

ST. GEORGE'S DAY AWARDS

On April 10, 2011, the Prince George's County Historical Society presented St. George's Day awards to honor those that have made a difference in Prince George's County. This year's awardees are:

- **Beltsville Agricultural Research Center** - in honor of its 100th Anniversary;
- **CASA de Maryland** - for the restoration of Langley Park (McCormick-Goodhart Mansion);
- **Hargrove, Inc**. - in honor of its 65th Anniversary;
- **Mount Rainier** - in honor of its 100th Anniversary and publication of *Mount Rainier, Maryland—Centennial of a Streetcar Suburb;*
- **Paul E. Sluby, Sr.** - for publication of *Bury Me Deep, Burial Ledger of St. Elizabeths Hospital* and *Graceland Cemetery;* and
- **Ann B. Wass** and **Michelle Webb Fandrich** - for publication of *Clothing through American History: the Federal Era through Antebellum, 1786-1860*

Special recognition was given to **Gail Rothrock** and **Christopher Wagnon** for their meritorious efforts in the preservation of Prince George's County's heritage.

Also during the ceremony, **James R. Cousins, Jr.,** (1906-1975) was inducted into the Prince George's County Hall of Fame. Mr. Cousins served the residents of Glenarden for more than 41 years. He was the City's first Chief of Police, was mayor for over 28 years, and was a driving force in the town's incorporation efforts in 1939. He was also responsible for encouraging many African Americans to seek positions of leadership within the County and beyond. His portrait will be displayed at the courthouse in Upper Marlboro.

STILL LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS

We are still in need of volunteers to assist us on Sunday, May 22, 2011, during the Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage. We are looking for individuals who are willing to contribute a few hours of their time by being a greeter and ticket taker at the tour homes in the morning or afternoon. Volunteers will receive a reduced rate ticket - $15 instead of $30 - so they can see the other sites on the tour. If you are available to assist us, please contact Lynn Roberts at antiquelynn@hotmail.com or 301-627-8622. Thank you.

Calendar of Events – May and June 2011

May 1—Martin Luther King Celebration at Christian Community Presbyterian Church in Bowie, 3;30 PM; dramatic productions, speakers, young musicians and dancers, a fellowship dinner will follow ($12); free, but donations are welcome

May 3 – "The Homes of Lords Baltimore" by David Fogle at Riversdale House Museum, 7:30 PM; learn about the estates of Maryland's founding family, including the ancestor of George Calvert, master of Rivesdale; $5/person, $2.50/student

May 5 – The Election of 1860 at Maryland Historical Society, 6 PM reception, 6:30 PM lecture; Charles W. Mitchell, author of *Maryland Voices of the Civil War*, will discuss the history of the most important election in American history; $15/person, $10/MdHS member, free/student, reservations requested at 410-865-3750, x 337 or estafford@mdhs.org

May 7 – "The Colder Side of Global Warming" at College Park Aviation Museum, 2 PM; Tom Wysmuller speaks about the science behind global warming; free with museum admission

May 7 – An 18th Century Masterpiece: The Gardens of Eyre Hall at Maryland Historical Society; 2-4 PM; Laura Klingel, Head Gardner at Eyre Hall will explore these inspiring gardens while enjoying a light reception; $40/person, $35/MdHS member, reservations requested at 410-865-3750, x 337 or estafford@mdhs.org

May 7 – Mother's Day Tea at Belair Mansion, 4 PM; $24/person, call 301-809-3089 for reservations

May 8 – Mother's Day Tours at Darnall's Chance House Museum, 12-4 PM; free, call 301-952-8010 for details

May 8 – Mother's Day Tours at Riversdale House Museum, 12:15-3:15 PM; free tour with each paid admission

May 9 – Brown Bag Lecture – Horsin' Around at Belair at Belair Mansion, 12 PM; discussion about some of Belair's famous Thoroughbreds as Maryland prepares for the Preakness; free, bring your lunch, coffee and tea provided

May 10 - Sustainable Table at National Colonial Farm Education Center, 6-7:30 PM; cooking course that demonstrates how to use in-season fruits, vegetables and herbs; free, reservations required by calling 301-283-2113 or www.accokeek.org

May 14 & 15 – Rome at Riversdale at Riversdale House Museum, 10 AM Saturday, 12 PM, Sunday; celebrate ancient Rome by participating in activities, watch battle demonstrations by Legion XX and enjoy neoclassical pastimes; $5/person, $3/student

May 14 – Pirate Fest at Darnall's Chance House Museum, 11 AM – 4 PM; $5/person; call 301-952-8010 for details

May 14 – "How Things Were Made: Colonial Apprentice" at National Colonial Farm, 11 AM – 4 PM; children will get hands-on experience in woodworking, blacksmithing, sewing, spinning, butter making, cooking, gardening or hillmaking; $5/person, free/members; for more information call 301-283-2113

May 14 – Discovering Your Past – A Genealogy Workshop at Belair Mansion, 12-4 PM; sponsored by the Prince George's Genealogical Library; call 301-262-2063 for details

May 15 – 43rd Annual Bowie Heritage Day at Belair Stable and Mansion, 12-4 PM; enjoy music, activities and Bowie history; free

May 17 – Kids Kaboose at Bowie Railroad Museum, 10:30 AM – 12 PM; stories, fun and trainspotting for ages 1-11; free

May 18 – Historic Preservation Reception at Mount Lubentia, 6PM; see article on page 5; call 301-864-0420 for details

May 21 – Monthly Foodways: Where's the Beef? at National Colonial Farm, 12-1 PM; learn about Curing beef, a pretty dish of a breast of venison, National Museum of the American Indian will present some of their Nation's culinary traditions and Muskrat Love; free; for more information call 301-283-2113

May 21 – Outdoor Movie Night at Darnall's Chance House Museum, 9 PM; see "*How to Train Your Dragon*"; free

May 22 – Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage, Prince George's County, 10 AM – 5 PM; tour homes and gardens from Fort Washington to Accokeek, tickets are $30 ordered on-line or $35 on day of tour, see article on page 1 for more details

May 24 – Film Series: The Last Boat Out at National Colonial Farm's Education Center, 6:30 – 9 PM; a film about the tales of a battered Chesapeake Bay and family of watermen struggling to preserve their way of life; free

June 4 – Anacostia Trails Heritage Area "Heritage Bike Ride" at 5240 Paint Branch Parkway in College Park (94th Aero Squadron parking lot), 8:30 AM; registration at www.anacostiatrails.org

June 4 – National Trails Day at Accokeek Visitor Center, 11 AM – 2 PM; take a hike or volunteer to help clear and maintain trails; free for more information call 301-283-2113

June 4 – Birds and Planes at College Park Aviation Museum, 2 PM; the Wright Brothers studied how birds flew and used these observations when building their airplane. A Watkins Nature Center naturalist displays and discusses how birds fly; free with admission

June 5 – Garden Day at Riversdale House Museum, 12:30 PM; Sarah Urdaneta will show Riversdale's garden and orchard, Kitchen Guild demonstration, activities and refreshments; $5/person, reservations required by calling 301-864-0420

June 11 – Museum Open House at Darnall's Chance House Museum, 12 – 3 PM; free, call 301-952-8010 for details

June 14 - Sustainable Table at National Colonial Farm Education Center, 6-7:30 PM; cooking course that demonstrates how to use in-season fruits, vegetables and herbs; free, reservations required by calling 301-283-2113 or www.accokeek.org

June 18 – 5th Annual Juneteenth Celebration at Watkins Park, 12-5 PM; keynote by Congressman Elijah Cummings, seminars, music, children's activities, educational exhibits, speakers, games, food; free; for more details call 301-218-6700

June 19 – Father's Day Tours at Darnall's Chance House Museum, 12 – 4 PM; free, call 301-952-8010 for details

June 19 – Father's Day Tours at Riversdale House Museum, 12:15-3:15 PM; free tour with each paid admission

June 21 – Kids Kaboose at Bowie Railroad Museum, 10:30 AM – 12 PM; stories, fun and trainspotting for ages 1-11; free

June 28 – Tuesday Time Travellers at Belair Stable Museum, 10:30 AM – 12 PM; ages 5-11 will examine Bowie's "horse history" with stories, a craft and tour of stable; free

June 28 – Film Series: The Plow That Broke the Plains at National Colonial Farm Education Center, 6:30-9 PM; a 1936 film exploring the factors that led to the formation of the Great Plains Dust Bowl; free

July 4 - University Park Parade celebrating the town's 75th Anniversary, time TBD

May 13 – August 1 – "Back to the 60's" Exhibit at Belair Mansion; 12-4 PM, Tuesday-Sunday; take a step back to "the way we were" when Belair at Bowie began in 1961

May-December -- Maryland: A House Divided at Surratt House Museum; exhibit commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the American Civil War; 301-868-1121; www.surratt.org

National Colonial Farm has additional classes and workshops; visit www.accokeek.org for more details.

Patuxent Research Refuge has many free public programs ranging from art exhibits, bird, nature and flower walks, to owl prowls and hands-on wildlife activities; visit http://patuxent.fws.gov for more information or call 301-497-5887

For details and additional events, visit: www.pgparks.com, www.accokeek.org, www.anacostiatrails.org, www.greenbeltmuseum.org, www.cityofbowie.org/LeisureActivities/Museum, http://www.nps.gov/fowa/, www.mdhs.org, http://pgcm.aahgs.org, www.surratt.org, www.laurelhistoricalsociety.org and http://patuxent.fws.gov

News & Notes

A Publication of the Prince George's County Historical Society

XXXX Number 4 *July & August 2011*

FRANCISCAN MONASTERY & NATIONAL SHRINE TOUR

A hidden gem in Washington DC, this amazing Church and Monastery with its lovely grounds and gardens is a site not to be missed. If you've never seen this place, join the Prince George's County Historic Society for a guided tour on Saturday, July 16. We'll have a guided tour of the Church beginning at 10:00 AM and lasting for about an hour. After that, we'll be free to roam the gardens, the chapels and the rest of the 44-acre site. After that, join us for lunch off the menu at Colonel Brooks' Tavern nearby, and follow on with a visit to the National Shrine of Immaculate Conception at Catholic University, the largest basilica church in the United States.

The Church is at 14th and Quincy Streets NW, and has ample parking in a lot just across 14th Street. Meet us in the roundabout (above photo) just no later than 9:45 AM. To get there from Prince George's County, take Route 50 to the South Dakota Avenue exit, and follow South Dakota across Rhode Island Avenue, turning where you see signs for Catholic University and for the National Shrine of Immaculate Conception, left onto Monroe Street. Six blocks take you to 14th Street NE -- turn right, and look for the Church on your right in 4 more blocks. Parking is on the left.

The Monastery of the Holy Land in America began with a vision of re-creating full size models of various sites in Jerusalem, as a "Holy Land in America" by Very Rev. Charles Vassani (1831-1896). The concept was originally intended for Staten Island, but could not be completed there. The founder of this monastery, Very Rev. Fr. Godfrey Schilling O.F.M. (1855-1934), eventually found land in Brookland, very near the Catholic University of America, and purchased the former McCeeney Estate in 1897. The Architect Aristede Leonori (1856-1928) was contracted to design the Church, which was begun in 1898 and completed in September of 1899. Other portions of the church were added later, and the complex was finally consecrated in September of 1924; it has been a National Historic Site since 1992.

The Franciscans (Order of the Friars Minor of the Commissariat of the Holy Land)

The Order of St. Francis has overseen the preservation and maintenance of the Holy Land shrines for about 800 years, overseeing shrines in Israel, Syria and Lebanon. The American Commissariat was founded in 1880 in New York, and intended to gain American interest in their preservation efforts.

(continued on page 5)

The Prince George's County Historical Society

Phone: 301-220-0330
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Historian: Susan G. Pearl

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News & Notes is published six times a year. You are invited to submit a relevant article for print (subject to space limitations).

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By Appointment at Other Times

Welcome New Society Members

Mr. & Mrs. James Cousins
Eugene Pitrof
Joan Suit
Taylor Wells

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SUMMER LECTURE SERIES

You are cordially invited to attend each of four summer lectures. The popular series continues from last year with presentations about the history of communities along U.S. Route 1.

August 3	College Park	"Much More Than a College Town" Kathy Bryant, co-author of photo history of College Park
August 10	Beltsville	"Neither a Belt nor a Village but an Intriguing Mix of Development" Karen Coakley, long-time civic association president and civic activist
August 17	Laurel	"Former Mill Town and Oasis on the Patuxent River" Shari Pollard, Laurel Historical Society
August 23	Savage	"Quaint Mill Town With a New Life" Reverend Galen Menne, expert on history of Savage

Time: 7:00 PM

Location: Marietta House Museum
5626 Bell Station Road
Glenn Dale, MD 20769
(near the intersection of Routes 193 and 450)

FREE

Light refreshments will be provided at the conclusion of the program.

VINTAGE BASEBALL

July 31, 2011 at 12 Noon
Magruder Park, Hyattsville

Anacostia Trails Heritage Area, the City of Hyattsville, and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission will host the Chesapeake and Potomac Base Ball Club on July 31, 2011, at Magruder Park in Hyattsville. This event, intended to commemorate the camp life in the Civil War ,will showcase the popular game from the 1860s - baseball! Played in historic uniforms, accurate equipment, and with the 1861 era rules, this double header starting at noon should be a great event for the whole family. Players will talk with the crowd during the break to tell them about the game as it was in the Civil War. Food and booths from the Bowie Baysox will be on hand, as well as a raffle of baseball tickets for the Nats and the Baysox. Peanuts and Crackerjack will be available too!

SURRATT SOCIETY HONORS STUDENTS

The Surratt Society, a volunteer affiliate of Surratt House Museum in Clinton, recently presented annual awards to local students who have done outstanding work in the field of history and social sciences. On the evening of May 4, 2011, the president of the Society presented the Thomas S. Gwynn, Jr. Memorial History Award, a $250 cash award, to Denya Leonora Resumadero of Friendly High School. Denya has a 4.375 GPA, is enrolled in seven advanced placement courses, and is a member of three honor societies in addition to the National Honor Society. She is also very active in school and community activities.

The Society also presented the Michael E. Patten Memorial History Award, a $500 cash award, at the recent State of Maryland National History Day competition. The award recognizes the best use of primary source materials. That honor went to Michael Keen, a homeschooler from Montgomery County, whose project was related to the failures in diplomacy in Vietnam during the 1940s and 50s. Michael received outstanding comments from the panel of judges on his excellent work.

The Principal Architect

Leonori was born in Rome, and Jesuit-trained at Collegio Romano, graduating eventually in 1880 as an architectural engineer. In Rome, Leonori was designer of several churches, including St. Patrick's (1892) and Santa Croce on the Via Flamina (1912). In 1909, he completed the Church of St. Joseph in Cairo, Egypt (image, right). In the United States, he architect for the Cathedral Basilica in Saint Louis and St. Joseph's Cathedral in Buffalo.

The Site

The site, a 44-acre tract, was originally granted by King Charles I to George Calvert, First Lord Baltimore. It was apparently known as "Cuckold's Delight", and passed through several owners, ending with the McCeeney family prior to the Civil War. The land was abandoned when first found by Fr. Schilling, and the McCeeney farmhouse, quite derelict, became the first residence of the Friars.

Rosary Portico and the Grounds

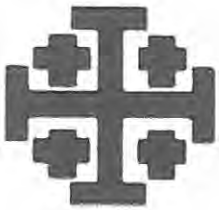
On Quincy Street, we pass the Franciscan Center, which is a sort-of mission-style building designed by Architects Murphy and Olmstead in 1931, as a reception hall for church visitors. The Murphy of this firm was Frederick Vernon Murphy, founder and first Chairman of the School of Architecture at Catholic University, where he served for 39 years.

The monastery complex, though, begins across 14th Street NE with the Rosary Portico, also by Architects Murphy and Olmstead, with John J. Earley, architectural sculptor and a pioneer in exposed-aggregate concrete, and was based on Romanesque monastic architecture. Earley's sculptures in the Portico eroded away, though, and the glass mosaics you'll find are from the late 1950's.

Mr. Earley was also well-known for the design of Meridian Hill Park, along 16th Street, where this method of concrete was first developed from suggestions by Architect Cass Gilbert. Earley wrote prolifically on concrete, and even served as President of the American Concrete Institute.

In the courtyard, among the 600 rosebushes, you will see the 1955 Statue of Fr. Schilling, the founder of this monastery, by Frederick Charles Shrady. He's holding a model of the church. The sculptor was the son of Henry Merwin Shrady, who did the absolutely magnificent Grant Memorial at the foot of Capitol Hill, in front (or is it behind?) of the US Capitol Building.

The Monastery Church



The main church building, faintly Byzantine, is in form of a five-fold cross of Jerusalem, the Coat of Arms of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, with a square cloister joined to the north/south transept.

Originally, the floor pattern mirrored these crosses, but the floor was removed during a major renovation in 1949, and replaced with marble.

Originally, the interior of the Church was renaissance-simple, but the 1949 renovation added gilding and coloring to the interior. Stained glass windows from Germany were also added in 1911. The bronze baldacchino was also added in 1949-1950. The sculpture of the Crucifixion is generally considered to be sculptor Earley's masterpiece.

Here you will also find exact replicas of the Grotto of Bethlehem, the Home of the Holy Family at Nazareth, the Holy Sepulcher and others. Although the provenance of these Holy Land shrines is generally considered perhaps doubtful these days, they have been reproduced here from careful on-site measurements by the Architect Leonori.

Marble steps in the transept lead to facsimiles of Roman catacombs as well as to several additional Chapels.

Other Buildings and Features on the Site

To the north of the Portico is the small stone Chapel of Portiuncula, or St. Mary of the Angels Chapel (1925-1926) by Murphy & Olmstead. This is a copy of Portiuncula in Assissi, where St. Francis renounced his wealth and formed the Franciscan order in 1209.
Beyond Portiuncula to the east, in the woods, is the Alverna Chapel, made from the same bricks as the cloister.

To the south of the Monastery, a walk leads to the Ascension Chapel (1925), built to resemble the Chapel of the same name on Mount Olivet, built by crusaders. This was designed by Earley as well. Behind the Monastery at the foot of the hill to the east, the small Chapel of St. Paschal (1917) is made from the foundation stones of the McCeeney House, which stood here. It was apparently built by one of the early Friars. Also here is the cemetery.

Ascension Chapel

Colonel Brooks' Tavern

Join us for an off-the-menu-lunch at Colonel Brook's Tavern. You are responsible for payment of your lunch. This local landmark is a very nice tavern in the Brookland neighborhood, and located at 9th and Monroe Streets NE, right across from the CUA Metro Stop and very near the University. Reuben sandwiches, burgers and crabcakes are all very good here.

Other Buildings

After lunch, tour the National Shrine of Immaculate Conception at Catholic University. This is the largest Roman Catholic Church in the US, one of the 10 largest in the world. This church is open every day, and you can stroll through or take a guided tour. There's free parking here, too.

Any questions you may have regarding the tour, directions, parking or lunch, please contact Kent Abraham at kent@kentabraham.com.

If you are interested in joining the Historical Society for the tours and lunch, please RSVP no later than Thursday, July 14 to PGCHSMembers@hotmail.com or 301-952-8539. Please provide your name, the number in your party and a phone number or email where you can be contacted. There is no charge for the tours. Lunch is pay on your own. However, we would like to have an idea of who is coming so we don't leave anyone behind.

FROM THE LIBRARY

The spring of 2011 has been a busy and fruitful one, with some very interesting research projects appearing on our doorstep. I am delighted to say that we are maintaining our tradition of sending all of our researchers away very happy and excited with what they have found. Here are a few examples of what we've been working on:

A Smithsonian researcher came hoping to find information about a collection of human remains (African-American) that had been stored at the Smithsonian since the 1930s. Putting together the information that she had about this 19th-century collection with our information about the plantations of the area,, we were able to identify the plantation where the burials had taken place. More specific research can now continue, and we are eager to learn the next steps and final results.

Another inquiry involved a possible Prince George's County schoolmate of a North Carolina girl, and we were able to figure out that the girls met just before the Civil War when they were students at the Patapsco Female Institute in Ellicott City. We were able to find out lots about our young woman, who grew up in Aquasco, and married into one of our prominent Upper Marlboro families.

But the most interesting is the exhibit that the University of Maryland will be mounting this fall, regarding students at the Maryland Agricultural College who left school to fight in the Civil War. The researcher who is preparing the material for the exhibit came to us for information about the Waring family of the Nottingham area. She had documented that two teenage brothers, Robert and William Waring, had left the College to fight for the Confederate army. She knew that Robert had died within months (in December 1862, of typhoid at Strausburg, VA) while William had soon after that been released from the Confederate army when he too became ill. She did <u>not</u> know whether Robert's body had been returned to Prince George's, or where he might have been buried. And she did not know what had happened afterwards to his brother, William.*

We were of course happy to help her, and began our standard searches into church records, gravestone inscriptions, and contemporary newspapers, etc. In addition, I began to look through parts of the John W. Burroughs diaries (1861, 1862, and 1863) that the Historical Society bought a few years ago together with Mr. Burroughs' desk. (I've been working my way through the diaries, transcribing and editing as I go along, but had not yet gotten to the end of 1862.) Knowing that Robert Waring had died in December 1862, I began reading Mr. Burroughs' notes from that period, and quickly found the answer to the question of young Robert's burial:

.....

January 29, 1863
Mr. Waring's son Bob died over in Virginia at Strausburg of Typhoid fever, his corpse was brought home today and he will be buried tomorrow.

January 30, 1863
. . . I attended today the funeral of the son of Col. J. H. Waring who left his home but a few short months ago, to avoid oppressions of a tyrannical government to share his fate in the glorious cause of freedom from that tyranny, but is now no more. Died one month ago today. His body was brought home and placed among his friends, which I felt it my duty to the troubled family and the cause he espoused to witness.

.....

Of course the University was very happy to have the contemporary confirmation from the Burroughs diaries, and we will see images of the pages of our diary in the exhibit this fall!

*(William Waring returned to Prince George's County in May of 1863, later trained as a physician, and practiced as the local doctor in Nottingham and Upper Marlboro until his death. He was actually murdered by a friend and cousin in Upper Marlboro in August 1896. I shared with the University researcher some of the details of this tragedy – she was of course more than a little interested, but had to suppress her natural temptation to be sidetracked. It is, after all, another story, for another time . . . .)

Calendar of Events – July and August 2011

July 16 – Franciscan Monastery & National Shrine Tour sponsored by the Historical Society, 10 AM; see article on page 1

July 16 – The Art of Housewifery at Riversdale House Museum, 9:30 AM; learn the skills of the 19th century housewife; $60/non-resident; reservations required by calling 301-864-0420

July 16-17 – Mid-Summer Open House at Surratt House Museum, 12-4 PM; free guided tours

July 20 – Summer Jazz Concert by The Leigh Goodwin Trio at Oxon Hill Manor, doors open at 6:30 PM, concert starts at 7 PM; bring your picnic baskets; free

July 21 – Jazz on the Lawn by Brulee at Riversdale House Museum, 7 PM; free, bring a picnic; concert moves inside if rains

July 24 – Family Fun Days at Montpelier Mansion, 4-6 PM; hands-on activities, explore boxwood maze, flower and herb gardens, kite making and flying, bring a picnic; free, but non-perishable items accepted for donation to area food banks

July 29 - "Riots to Relief & Beyond – Baltimore Women & the Civil War" at Maryland Historical Society, 7 PM; Dr. Robert Schoerberlein will highlight Baltimore women's roles in the war from the riots of 1861 to the post-war memorial efforts; free, but reservations are required by calling 410-685-3750, ext. 337 or email estafford@mdhs.org

July 30 – Maryland & Music of the Civil War at Surratt House Museum, 4 PM; join recording artist Doug Jimerson and the Civil War Comrades as the discuss and perform music of the Civil War era with an emphasis on conditions in Maryland that influenced that music; free

August 2 - Lecture: Rosalie's Antwerp at Riversdale House Museum, 7:30 PM; Godelieve Bartley, Belgian native and Riversdale docent, leads a virtual tour of the city as Rosalie Stier Calvert might have seen it; $5/person, $2.50/student

August 3, 10, 17, 24 - Lecture Series at Marietta House Museum, 7 PM, see article on page 3

August 7 – Family Fun Days at Montpelier Mansion, 4-6 PM; hands-on activities, explore boxwood maze, flower and herb gardens, Laurel School of Music performance, bring a picnic; free, but non-perishable items accepted for donation to area food banks

August 12 – Airmail Day at College Park Aviation Museum, 2-4 PM; celebrate the anniversary of the first airmail flight out of College Park Airport; free with regular museum admission

August 13 - Battle of Bladensburg Encampment at Riversdale House Museum, 12 noon; join Birtish and American War of 1812 troops as they prepare for battle; free

August 17 – Summer Jazz Concert by Bill Thomas Blues Band at Oxon Hill Manor, doors open at 6:30 PM, concert starts at 7 PM; bring your picnic baskets; free

August 18 – Jazz on the Lawn by Cheek to Cheek at Riversdale House Museum, 7 PM; free, bring a picnic; concert moves inside if rains

August 18 – The Rogues Concert at Maryland Historical Society, 7:30 PM; $20/person, seating limited, reservations are required by calling 410-685-3750, ext. 337 or email estafford@mdhs.org

August 20 – Hollywood and the Civil War at Surratt House Museum, 6 PM; reminisce with Scarlett and Rhett at a showing of Gone With the Wind on the 75th anniversary of the release of Margaret Mitchell's famous book; free, but reservations are encouraged due to limited seating, call 301-868-1121

August 27 – Kite Workshop at College Park Aviation Museum, 1 PM; build and decorate your own kite; $8 workshop fee; registration required by calling 301-864-6029

May-December -- Maryland: A House Divided at Surratt House Museum; exhibit commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the American Civil War. Maryland's background as a slave economy and the issues that it faced as the great conflict drew near are explored; 301-868-1121; www.surratt.org

National Colonial Farm has additional classes and workshops; visit www.accokeekfoundation.org for more details.

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SAVE THE DATE!!

Annual Prince of a County Reception

Sunday, September 18, 2011

2 to 4 PM at P.A. Bowen House

News & Notes

A Publication of the Prince George's County Historical Society

XXXX Number 5 *September & October 2011*

PRINCE OF A COUNTY AT P.A. BOWEN FARMSTEAD

Photographs by Sally Fallon Morrel

Join the Historical Society for our annual Prince of a County Reception and Fundraiser at the P.A. Bowen House in Aquasco, Maryland, on Sunday, September 18, 2011, at 2 PM. The cost for Society members is $60 per person or $110 per couple. For non-Society members, the cost is $75 per person, which also includes a Society membership for one year. Each reservation includes a tax deductible amount of $25. Please mail payment and names of those attending to PGCHS, 4701 Colonel Ewell Court, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772 or for more information, please email the Society at PGCHSMembers@hotmail.com or call Donna at 301-952-8539.

The P.A. Bowen House is a multi-section frame dwelling that stands at the high point of a 50+ acre farm. The two-and-one-half-story side-gabled main block has a bracketed cornice and a wrap-around porch with ornate brackets and pendants. The two-story south wing has some of the same Italianate style decorative trim, as well as an unusual parapet roof treatment. The kitchen wing is earlier. The house was built circa 1870 for the family of Philander A. Bowen; outbuildings built at that time and later include a smokehouse, corn crib, dairy barn and tobacco barn. The house was extensively remodeled in 2011 with a new two-story south wing addition and kitchen additions on the north elevation.

The P.A. Bowen Farmstead is a fully integrated, pasture-based farm with an on-farm store. The centerpiece of the farm activities is the herd of pasture-raised Jersey cows, whose milk is used to make artisan cheese (blue, Cheddar and Parmesan). Whey from the cheese is used to feed pigs and poultry. The poultry is pasture fed and the pigs are raised naturally in the woodlands. The on-farm store will open mid-October to sell artisan cheese, pastured beef and veal, pastured chicken, turkey and eggs, and pastured pork. Next year plans are to add produce for sale. The store also sells crafts and paintings by Maryland artists.

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Geraldine Witt

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Dusty and Julie Rhoads
Anne and Ghiselin Sasscer
Donna Schneider
Judy and Ken Schneider
Andrew and Sondra Wallace
James and Susan Wolfe

RIDGELEY ROSENWALD SCHOOL DEDICATION

You're invited to the dedication ceremony for the Ridgeley Rosewald School on Wednesday, September 7 at 3 PM. The school is located at 8407 Central Avenue in Capitol Heights. Please RSVP by September 2 by calling 301-446-3300 or go to http://www.pgparks.com/pgparksrsvp.htm.

MUSIC AT MOUNT CALVERT

Join the Society for an afternoon of "Blues With a Funk Edge" by Anthony "Swamp Dog" Clark and his bank. Swamp Dog returns to Mount Calvert Historical and Archaeological Park in Croom on Saturday, October 1, 2011, at 4 PM. The music he and his band played at our summer event last year was enjoyed so much, we invited them back for an encore. Feel free to bring a picnic and blanket or chair to sit and enjoy the music on the banks of the Patuxent River. Beverages will be provided. There is an admission charge of $5 per person, with children 16 and under being free. For more information please email us at PGCHSMembers@hotmail.com or call 301-952-8539.

BOOK AND AUTHOR EVENT

The Prince George's County Historical Society is pleased to announce a Book and Author Event on Saturday, November 12 at 1 PM in the Meeting Room at the Greenbelt Public Library. The event will present the Society's new publication, *Historic Prince George's: A Confluence of Cultures*, along with a dozen more authors who either live in or wrote about Prince George's County. The books range from well-illustrated children's books to equine mystery novels, and books about history, patents and cemeteries. Each author will have a few minutes to introduce and discuss his or her book and afterward there will be the opportunity to purchase books, get them signed and talk individually with the authors. Light refreshments will also be provided. The event is free and open to all. If you have any questions, please contact Beth Lingg at bethlingg@comcast.net or 301-249-0763.

MARYLAND HOUSE & GARDEN PILGRIMAGE WRAP-UP

The house and garden tour co-chairs, Jack Thompson, Jr., and Donna Schneider, would like to thank all of the site owners and volunteers who participated in the Prince George's County tour. We could not have done it without your support!

In addition to the tour proceeds we received, the Prince George's tour was awarded $1,000 towards our special project of the erection of ghost structures at Mount Calvert.

RE-OPENING OF TWO COUNTY HISTORIC SITES

Marietta House Museum will be hosting a *Welcome Back Open House* on Sunday, October 23, 2011, from 1 to 5 PM. There will be new exhibits on Negro League baseball, collectibles and clothing; a vintage baseball game; games for children; and refreshments. The museum will be kicking off its re-opening with a Spectacular Saturdays program for children ages 5-12 years on September 10 from 11 AM to 1 PM. Reservations for children are $5, adults are free; please call 301-464-5291.

Poplar Hill on His Lordship's Kindness has re-opened for group tours of 15 or more people. For more information, email poplarhillonhlk@gmail.com, call 301-856-0358 or visit www.poplarhillonhlk.com

SAVE THE DATE — SOCIETY'S ANNUAL DINNER & ELECTIONS

On Monday, November 7 at 6 PM, the Society will host its annual membership dinner and elections for its Board of Directors at the Alamo Restaurant in Riverdale, Maryland. Members will receive their invitations with all the details in October.

If you are interested in joining the Society's Board of Directors, please contact John Petro at 301-249-9000 or email us at PGCHSMembers@hotmail.com.

SOCIETY WEBSITE NEWS

If you haven't had the opportunity to visit our website lately, www.pghistory.org, please check it out. The site provides information about our county, the Frederick DeMarr Library of County History, links to various historical websites, a calendar of events and a message board. One new feature that we have added is an on-line store which allows for the ability to pay for membership, sponsorship and book purchases with a credit card through PayPal.

Also, if you are on Facebook, please friend us!

ENDURING TRADITIONS: RICH CONNECTIONS TO OUR PAST

Join the Accokeek Foundation at National Colonial Farm on September 24, 2011, from 11 AM to 4 PM for the 11th annual African-American Heritage Day. Admission is $5/person, members and children under 2 are free.

Performances and presentations include:

- Washington Revels Jubilee Voices performing songs and poems about the struggle for freedom and triumph of the human spirit.
- Culture Kingdom Kids present children's activities that celebrate African American cultural heritage through arts.
- A conversation about "Food Justice" featuring Denzell Mitchell from Five Seeds Urban Farm in Baltimore and others from the area.
- Buffalo Soldiers sharing stories of African American military men's roles in pioneering the West.
- Sandra Y. Johnson performing soulful jazz and blues oldies.

2012 CELEBRATIONS

The Prince George's County Historical Society will celebrate its 60th Anniversary in 2012. Plans are already underway for events to commemorate our birthday. However, it is not too late for members to provide suggestions or participate in the organizing of an event, please email us at PGCHSMembers@hotmail.com or call 301-952-8539.

Calendar continued from page 6

October 22 (Rain date October 23 at 6 PM) – The Great Jack O' Lantern Campfire at Darnall's Chance Museum, 7 PM; hand-carved illuminated jack o' lanterns on display, roast marshmallows, listen to haunted Halloween tales, have your fortune told, enjoy popcorn and cider; $3/person

October 23 – Welcome Back Open House at Marietta House Museum, 1-5 PM, see box on page 4

October 23 – Kids Day at the Laurel Museum, 1:30-3:30 PM; for details call 301-725-7975 or info@laurelhistoricalsociety.org

October 29 – Twilight Tales at Accokeek Foundation, 6-9 PM; enjoy scary stories and songs, explore the haunted farm house, meet criminals and other lost souls from Colonial Maryland; appropriate for ages 8+, $10/each; visit www.accokeek.org or call 301-283-2113

October 29 – "Not Too Spooky" Campfire Stories at Belair Mansion, 6:30 PM; join the Bowie Rangers for Halloween stories around the campfire; free, for details call 301-809-3089 or museumevents@cityofbowie.org

October 31 – Hands-on History: The Writer's Apprentice at Riversdale House Museum, 10 AM; make paper, write your own stories with quill and ink, create illustrations, for ages 8-12; $15/resident, $18/non-resident, registration required by calling 301-864-0420

May-December -- Maryland: A House Divided at Surratt House Museum; exhibit commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the American Civil War. Maryland's background as a slave economy and the issues that it faced as the great conflict drew near are explored; 301-868-1121; www.surratt.org

National Colonial Farm has classes and workshops; visit www.accokeekfoundation.org for more details.

Patuxent Research Refuge has many free public programs ranging from art exhibits, bird, nature and flower walks, to owl prowls and hands-on wildlife activities; visit http://patuxent.fws.gov for more information or call 301-497-5887

FINDING YOUR CIVIL WAR ANCESTORS

Please join the Maryland Historical Society and The Maryland Genealogical Society for the jointly sponsored workshop, "Researching Your Civil War Ancestors." Speakers and topics include: Michael Hait, "Your Civil War Ancestors: A Guide to Research;" David Shriver Lovelace, "The Shriver Family: A Genealogical Perspective of the Civil War;" Michael Musick, "Lesser Known Civil War Records at NARA." The day includes breakfast, catered lunch, optional tours of the Maryland Historical Society Civil War Exhibits, plus use and tours of the outstanding H. Furlong Baldwin Library. You can also bring a laptop for Wi-Fi access to do your own research.

The workshop will be held on Saturday, September 10, from 8:30 AM to 3 PM. MdHS and MGS members price is $25 and non-members is $40. Pre-registration and payment is required because space is limited. For reservations, call 410-685-3750, ext. 377, email events@mdhs.org or register online at www.mdhs.org/events. Registration deadline is September 7. Special Note: $10 donation for those wishing online research & download by experts (e.g., service records & pension index; LIMITED to first 30 who sign up for this).

2011 GINGERBREAD HOUSE CONTEST

Calling all bakers and artists to create a gingerbread structure for Darnall's Chance Museum's annual gingerbread house contest. The contest is divided into two categories - adult (age 17+) and children (age 8-16). Each category will be awarded 1st, 2nd and 3rd place prizes, along with a Viewer's Choice Award. Please visit their website for contest rules, registration details and their photo gallery of last year's winners: http://www.pgparks.com/Things_To_Do/History/Darnall_s_Chance_Museum/Gingerbread_House_Contest.htm or call the museum at 301-952-8010.

Calendar of Events – September and October 2011

September 3-5 – Trains and Planes at College Park Aviation Museum; the National Capital Trackers bring history to life with the model railroad displays; free with museum admission

September 7 – Dedication Ceremony at Ridgeley Rosenwald School, 3 PM; see box on page 3 for more information

September 8 – Singing Laurel's History at Laurel Museum, 6 PM; Laurel native George McCeney, a singer, songwriter and trustee of the International Bluegrass Music Museum will sing songs related to Laurel's history; free, bring a picnic and blanket; for details call 301-725-7975 or info@laurelhistoricalsociety.org

September 8 – Baltimore Stoneware: Its History and Uses at Maryland Historical Society, 6 PM; Luke Zipp will speak about the evolution of stoneware craft in Baltimore from 1812 to 1900; $35/MdHS Member

September 10 – 1814 British Invasion of Prince George's County Bus Tour at Darnall's Chance Museum, 8 AM-5 PM; Dr. Ralph Eshelman will guide you along the routes and waterways the British Army traveled through the County in August of 1814; $65 each

September 10 – Researching Your Civil War Ancestors at Maryland Historical Society, 9 AM; day-long workshop with the Maryland Genealogical Society, speakers, research access, exhibit tours; $25/members, $40/non-member; registration required online at www.mdhs.org, by calling 410-685-3750, ext. 337 or email estafford@mdhs.org

September 10 – Spectacular Saturdays at Marietta House Museum, 11 AM-1 PM; children ages 5-12 play under the old trees just like the Duvall children, sing songs, light refreshments and souvenir; $5/child, free/adults, reservations requested by calling 301-464-5291

September 10 – The Art of Cookery Made Seasonal and Historic at Riversdale House Museum, 6:30 PM; a bountiful table of locally grown produce of the kitchen garden and orchard prepared using historic recipes; $30/resident, $36/ non-resident; registration required by calling 301-864-0420

September 10 – Movie Night at the Museum at Darnall's Chance Museum, 9 PM; enjoy "The Princess and Frog" under the stars; bring lawn chair or blankets and picnic basket; refreshments available for purchase; free

September 13 – Kids Kaboose at Bowie Railroad Museum, 10:30 AM-12 PM; ages 1-11 enjoy railroad fun; free, details call 301-575-2488 or museumevents@cityofbowie.org

September 17 – Monthly Foodways Demonstration: Haute Cuisine at Accokeek Foundation, 12-1 PM; join a kitchen table conversation and be introduced to epicurean delights of colonial Marylanders; free, for details visit www.accokeek.org or call 301-283-2113

September 17 – "They Flew Proud" at College Park Aviation Museum, 2 PM; Jane Gardner Birch discusses her book about the Civilian Pilot Training Program, which provided pilot power for WWII; free with museum admission

September 18 – Prince of a County Reception and Fundraiser at P.A. Bowen Farmstead, 2 PM; see article on page 1 for details

September 20 - The Invention of Slavery in the Chesapeake at Accokeek Foundation, 6:30-8 PM; lecture by Josephine Withers on how the dominant tobacco culture of the Chesapeake region created a slave society; free, visit www.accokeek.org or call 301-283-2113

September 21 – Fall History Lecture Series at Montpelier Mansion, 7:30 PM; local historian Sara Walser shares family memoirs from the Civil War; free, for details call 301-377-7817

September 24 – Smithsonian Magazine Museum Day at College Park Aviation Museum; museum is free to Smithsonian magazine readers with Museum Day Admission Card

September 24 – Model Rocket Workshop at College Park Aviation Museum, 1 PM; design and build your own rocket; free with museum admission, but pre-registration is required by calling 301-864-6029

September 24 - African American Heritage Day at Accokeek Foundation, 11 AM-4 PM; explore the "Enduring Traditions: Rich Connections to Our Past"; $5/person, children under 2/free; visit www.accokeek.org for more information

September 24 – Movie Night at the Museum at Darnall's Chance Museum, 9 PM; enjoy "National Treasure" under the stars; bring lawn chair or blankets and picnic basket; refreshments available for purchase; free

September 25 – "Take Me Out To The Ballgame" at Huntington South Park in Bowie, 2 PM; vintage baseball game with the Chesapeake and Potomac Vintage Baseball Club; free, call 301-809-3089 for details or museumevents@cityofbowie.org

September 28 – An Afternoon Outing in 1861 at Belair Mansion; 11 AM – 4 PM; Atlantic Guard Soldiers Aid Society celebrate the Confederate victory at Manassas in July 1861; free, details call 301-809-3089 or museumevents@cityofbowie.org

October 1-2 – Civil War Expo Weekend at Maryland Historical Society; visit www.mdhs.org for details

October 1 – Restoration Shop Open House at College Park Aviation Museum, 1-4 PM; see the process of creating and restoring museum quality exhibits and aircraft; free with museum admission

October 1 – Music at Mount Calvert Historical & Archaeological Park sponsored by the Historical Society, 4-7 PM; Anthony "Swamp Dog" Clark and his band will play blues music; see article on page 3 for details

October 6 – 'O Say Can you See' at Maryland Historical Society, 6 PM; David Hildebrand will speak about the real story behind the creation of the Star Spangled Banner; $45/MdHS member

October 8 – Songs and Stories of the Civil War at Surratt House Museum, 4 PM; Judy Cook presents the Civil War experience through period music and pictures coupled with readings from personal letters; free, call 301-868-1121 for details

October 11 – "Native American Code Talkers: Myths, Movies and Reality" at Belair Mansion, 7:30 PM; lecture by Dr. David Hatch, NSA; free, for details call 301-8009-3089 or museumevents@cityofbowie.org

October 13 – Free Fall Event at Maryland Historical Society; The Henderson Photograph Collection and the McKeldin Jackson Oral History Collection celebrate the Civil Rights Era in Baltimore; free

October 15 – Colonial Fall Frolic at Accokeek Foundation, 10 AM –4PM; a variety of colonial demonstrations as costumed volunteers spend a day spinning, cooking, basket making, woodworking, blacksmithing and gardening on National Colonial Farm; free

October 15 – "Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum: An Autobiography" at College Park Aviation Museum, 2 PM; Michael Neufeld will discuss the evolution of the institution; free with museum admission

October 15 – Sock Hop! at Bowie Senior Center, 7-10 PM; return to the 60s with Gene Vincent and The Cadillac Cruisers to celebrate Belair at Bowie's 50th Anniversary; for tickets and information call 301-809-3089 or 301-262-0920

October 18 – Quarterly Lecture Series at Greenbelt Community Center Multipurpose Room #201, 7:30 PM; call 301-507-6582 for details

October 19 – Fall History Lecture Series at Montpelier Mansion, 7:30 PM; the Historical Society's own Jane Dodd speaks on the Civil War in Prince George's County and Baltimore; free, for details call 301-377-7817

October 22 – Whose Who In Baltimore? at Maryland Historical Society, 10:30 AM-2:30 PM; see portraits of important Marylanders and visit their graves with guided tours at Greenmount Cemetery; $35/MdHS member, $50/non-member, includes lunch

October 22 – Gothick Evening: Historic Whodunit at Riversdale House Museum, 6:30 PM; in 1805 a Frenchman visited Riversdale and insulted everyone. What if he were found dead? Meet the victim during dessert, collect clues and solve the puzzle of who killed him; ages 18+, $25/resident, $30/non-resident, registration required by calling 301-864-0420

Calendar continued on page 5

News & Notes

A Publication of the Prince George's County Historical Society

XXXX Number 6 *November & December 2011*

HISTORIC ALAMO RESTAURANT HOSTS SOCIETY'S ANNUAL DINNER

The Prince George's County Historical Society will enjoy a special buffet banquet on Monday, November 7, from 6:00 to 8:30 PM at the Alamo. Cost is $25/person. Please make your check payable to PGCHS and send to 4701 Colonel Ewell Ct, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772 no later than November 2.

The Alamo Mexican Restaurant in Riverdale Park, MD opened in 1954. As one of the Washington Metro area's first Mexican/Tex-Mex eateries, the Alamo brought fresh, hearty, authentic food to a community ready to welcome it. President and Mrs. Eisenhower were regular visitors in those early days. Mrs. Eisenhower always sat in the back booth, almost always ordering the cheese enchiladas and often a margarita, made from scratch; both recipes remain unchanged since that time.

The original owner of the Alamo, John F. Van de Putte, was born in Guatemala City and raised in San Antonio, Texas. He attended Texas A&M University and owned a dairy in Brownsville, Texas, before marrying his sweetheart Clara and moving to the Washington Metro area in the early 1940s. The Van de Puttes' daughter, Ann V. Witten, and son, John "Johnny" D. Van de Putte, were born in the Metro area.

Both John and Clara loved to cook and collected recipes whenever they visited Texas or Mexico. John would perfect those recipes and the Alamo's customers continue to benefit. Johnny developed the recipe for enchiladas suizas (Swiss-style), still offered on the Alamo's menu.

John Van de Putte owned several restaurants in the Metro area during the 1940s and 1950s before opening the Alamo. This restaurant actually had its start on U. S. Route 1, north of College Park. The current Alamo sign with its neon star was made for that earlier location. In those days, pilots heading for the College Park airport used the brilliant red star as a navigational landmark.

The Armed Forces community from Maryland, Washington, DC, and Virginia enjoyed the Alamo for the flavors and atmosphere many had discovered while stationed at various posts in the western and southwestern United States during and after World War II. Members of the military community were curious to try the Alamo even if their duty stations had not yet included the southwestern states, for that part of the country was likely to become a destination. And the Alamo was different.

The elder Van de Putte extended his appreciation of the U.S./Mexico border culture exhibited by the Alamo's cuisine and décor by ensuring that both would remain unchanged when he sold the restaurant in 1986. Mr. Van de Putte stipulated that the new owners, Vivien and Charles Shih, would not change three things: the recipes, décor, or staff who might wish to stay.

The Alamo's interior décor reflects a type common to the Rio Grande Valley. Indeed, the Van de Puttes brought all the decorative elements back from trips to that region. Subdued lighting, knotty pine paneling, black wrought iron lanterns, red leatherette booths, brightly painted papier mâché figures, and cream-colored stucco walls perfectly evoke the atmosphere of border town restaurants in the 1940s and 1950s. Those who choose vintage dress from those decades will feel right at home on November 7.

A three-man mariachi group that plays most Friday and Saturday nights will serenade diners on November 7. At least one of these classically trained musicians, Efrain Anaya, has performed at the Alamo since the early days. Society members can hear this talented trio at various venues in the Washington Metro area, including, on special occasions, the magnificently restored Mexican Cultural Institute on 16th Street in northwest DC.

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The Prince George's County Historical Society

Phone: 301-220-0330
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PGCHSMembers@hotmail.com
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News & Notes is published six times a year. You are invited to submit a relevant article for print (subject to space limitations).

All Prince George's County Historical Society members are invited and welcome to attend Society Board meetings. We meet each month. Dates and locations vary. Please call 301-249-9000 for meeting details.

If you would like to volunteer your time and talents to the Historical Society in any capacity, please call us.

Frederick S. DeMarr Library of County History

Greenbelt Library Building
11 Crescent Road, Greenbelt
301-220-0330
Hours: Saturday, 12-4 PM
By Appointment at Other Times

Welcome New Society Members

Patti Willenborg

2011 SOCIETY SPONSORS

The Society would like to say thank you to our generous sponsors. Their donations help to fund the Society's programs and newsletter, as well as the Frederick S. DeMarr Library of County History. We greatly appreciate the continuous support!

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EARTHQUAKE DAMAGES MOUNT CALVERT AND OTHER HISTORIC BUILDINGS

On Wednesday, August 23, 2011, at 1:51 P. M., a rare 5.8 magnitude earthquake shook and rattled buildings all up and down the East Coast, damaging the Historical Society's headquarters at Mount Calvert, as well as numerous other historic properties around the county, both public and private.

The damage at Mount Calvert was quite extensive, and necessitated closing the building until structural repairs can be made. Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning archaeologist and site manager Donald Creveling is hopeful that the headquarters might be open by the end of this year or beginning of 2012. Meanwhile the grounds of Mount Calvert remain open to the public.

The worst damage occurred to the double chimneys on the west end of the building. Both horizontal and vertical cracks have opened up, and bricks have shifted. From inside the attic, daylight can be seen between the chimneys. The chimneys will have to be taken down at least below the roof line in order to make structural repairs. There are numerous cracks in the plaster walls throughout the interior, corners have separated, and the stairway appears to have dropped slightly from its former position. There is also evidence of damage to the east end chimney, and a gap has opened up between the brickwork and roof along the gable line.

Ironically, Mount Calvert had just undergone a major repointing campaign and, with a new roof, was in the best shape, both structurally and cosmetically, that it had been in many years. Let's hope that she's back in good shape soon!

Mount Calvert was by no means the only historic structure to suffer from the earthquake and subsequent hurricane, tropical storm, and torrential rains. Numerous other properties, public and private, from Oaklands and Snowden Hall in the north to St. Thomas' Church (Croom) in the south, sustained significant damage in the worst month of weather in living memory. Across the Western Branch from Mount Calvert, Billingsley's chimneys moved, developing structural fissures. Other M-NCPPC- owned properties suffered damage as well - the Surratt House now has minor plaster cracks, and Marietta shows significant interior plaster cracks and some apparent separation between the 1812 main block and the 1830 wing. Possibly the most seriously damaged is Compton Bassett, which experienced major structural cracks and considerable destruction of its very fine interior plaster detail. In Bladensburg, the Hilleary-Magruder House and the Market Master's House suffered structural cracks and some chimney damage; Bostwick was the hardest hit, with the toppling of one chimney causing destruction of the rear porch roof. Down the road in Cheverly, Mount Hope suffered chimney and water damage, while further south on the same road Mount Lubentia had plaster damage and numerous trees downed by the sequence of bad weather. Farther south at St. Thomas' Church, the gothic arches of the 1888 bell tower gave way, and the tower is somewhat skewed from the original 1745 church structure.

Other properties reporting damage include Pleasant Hills, Weston, Bellefields, Fairview, Belair, Hitching Post Hill**, and Bowling Heights. Doubtless there are more that have not yet come to our attention.

The Maryland Historical Trust has a tax credit program to help offset the cost of repairs to historic buildings The Trust has given some indication that properties damaged by the earthquake and subsequent disasters might receive priority. Properties would have to be on state or local registers and comply with the Trust's guidelines, of course. For information, contact Renee Novak: rnovak@mdp.state.md.us.

Prince George's County also has a historic property tax credit as well as a capital projects grant program, although the deadline for application for the latter is November 1st, 2011. (Even if you miss that deadline, call 301-952-5447 for information and assistance.)

**Footnote addition:

This was not the first earthquake experienced by Hitching Post Hill. We have documentary evidence that this handsome circa-1840 Hyattsville house (and probably many of

Continued on page 6

Damaged chimney at Mount Calvert

BOOK AND AUTHOR EVENT

The Prince George's County Historical Society is pleased to announce a Book and Author Event on Saturday, November 12 at 1 PM in the Meeting Room at the Greenbelt Public Library. Attending authors and their books are:

Melissa Avery & Don Lynch	Riverdale Park
Ira Berlin	Making of African-America: The Four Great Migrations
Maxine Gross & Diane Ligon	Lakeland: African Americans in College Park
Amy Hansen	Bugs and Bugsicles: Insects in the Winter
Sasscer Hill	Full Mortality
Lillian L. Lambert	Road to Someplace Better: From the Segregated South to Harvard Business School and Beyond
Richard Morris	Well Considered
Michael Olmert	Kitchens, Smokehouses, and Privies
Anthony Pitch	They Have Killed Papa Dead: Road to Ford's Theatre Abraham Lincoln's Murder, and the Rage for Vengeance
Franklin Robinson, Jr.	Bring Your Friends: A Brief History of St. Thomas Parish
Aneta Shine	Rubens and the Archaeology of Myth 1610-1620: Visual and Poetic Memory
Patricia Sluby	Entrepreneurial Spirit of African American Inventors
Paul Sluby	Bury Me Deep
Patrick Young	Old Abe, Eagle Hero: The Civil War's Most Famous Mascot

Also, the Historical Society will introduce its newest publication, Historic Prince George's County: A Confluence of Cultures written by Society members George D. Denny, Jr., Nathania A. Branch Miles, and Donna L. Schneider.

Each author will have a few minutes to introduce and discuss his or her book and afterward there will be the opportunity to purchase books, get them signed and talk individually with the authors. Light refreshments will also be provided. The event is free and open to all. If you have any questions, please contact Beth Lingg at bethlingg@comcast.net or 301-249-0763.

Historic Prince George's County: A Confluence of Cultures cover painted by James Masters

Continued from Page 1

One staff member, Katie Grandstaff, remains from the days of the Van de Puttes' ownership. She began as a waitress at the age of seventeen. Mrs. Grandstaff remembers the Van de Putte family with great fondness and has transferred that loyalty to the Shihs.

The second and current owners, Vivian and Charles Shih, admit they had not been fans of Mexican food before buying the Alamo in 1986. However, the burst of flavor from her first Alamo margarita and their first taste of home-style Mexican cuisine convinced the Shihs to take the plunge into restaurant ownership and management. Mrs. Shih, an accountant who had recently retired from the Department of Education, wanted to remain productive and possessed a fine sense of commerce and finance. Van de Putte and Charles Shih had been colleagues at the General Services Administration and John agreed to train Vivian so that she would succeed in her new enterprise. She was a very good student. When Charles retired from Civil Service, he joined Vivian and today acts as the company's treasurer.

Mamie Eisenhower's Back Booth at the Alamo

Shih as a Chinese surname can translate as "bestow, grant or provide." The Shihs live their name. From helping to sponsor an annual Thanksgiving meal for vulnerable members of the community to roasting lamb for local Middle Eastern neighbors in the restaurant's special oven and ensuring a learning atmosphere for their restaurant employees, the Shihs demonstrate leadership by sharing. Former Alamo employees have started several local Mexican restaurants and many of those have thrived in the presence of friendly competition.

From 6 to 6:30 on November 7, Society members can enjoy a frozen drink, cocktail, soft drink, or beer while sampling antojitos (appetizers), such as the Alamo's special, fresh salsa, wings in tamarind sauce, guacamole, and taquitos (tiny, crispy, rolled tacos). For the evening's buffet banquet at 6:30, members can look forward to original menu items such as (Mamie's) cheese enchiladas, asado de puerco (succulent, slow-roasted pork marinated in savory, red chile gravy), the Alamo's famous pico de gallo (fresh relish of shredded cabbage and tomato with herbs), beef fajitas, and tacos, to name a few.

For our banquet, the Alamo's chef has a special treat in store for diners with a sense of curiosity and culinary adventure. Regular customers may have enjoyed the Alamo's mole de pavo (shredded turkey simmered in a fragrant mole sauce adjusted for American tastes) over the years. However, the Society's buffet will feature an authentic Mexican turkey mole with even more subtle touches of spices, herbs, fruits, and, yes, chocolate. Some members may recognize turkey as a native source of protein unlike chicken or beef, which arrived in the Americas with European colonizers in the 15th and 16th centuries.

Dessert in the form of sopapillas, or puffed, freshly deep fried bread, is to be enjoyed with honey, or the Alamo's very special chocolate sauce—the combination of hot bread and chocolate satisfies on so many levels.

The Alamo anchors a strip mall located at 5508-5516 Kenilworth Avenue (west side of Kenilworth) two blocks south of the intersection with Highway 410. The fully accessible restaurant sits at the back of a spacious, free parking lot. The sign is a bona fide landmark. Únete a nosotros!

**** SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR ELECTION ****

In addition to a festive meal, the evening will also include the Society's annual elections. This year's slate of candidates is not limited to these nominees. We will accept nominations from the floor.

President:	John Petro	Board Members:	Kent Abraham
Vice President:	Lynn Springer Roberts		Beverly Addison
Secretary:	Jack Thompson, Jr.		Dan Louck
Treasurer:	Donna Schneider		Nathania Branch Miles
Historian:	Susan G. Pearl		Edward Scott

Continued from page 3

the other places noted above) was jolted by an earthquake on the first of November 1935. From *The Washington Post,* 1 November 1935: "Just after 1 a.m. today an earthquake shook Washington and vicinity. Thousands of persons were awakened by the shaking of their apartments and homes . . . Newspaper offices were swamped with calls from frightened residents wondering what had happened. . . . One of the first to call *The Post* was Labert St. Claire, transportation assistant to Secretary of Commerce Roper. He said the shock felt like his bed was being pulled from under him. He said the shock lasted about 30 seconds. The house shook so that his entire family was awakened. Mr. St. Claire lives near College Park. He lives in the old Gen. Beall (*sic*) home which is of brick construction and solidly built."

In 1935, Labert St. Claire was the owner/resident of Hitching Post Hill. It had formerly been the home of General Edward F. Beale, who had made his name during the Mexican War. As far as we know, his "solidly built" house did not suffer significant damage in 1935. We don't know the magnitude of the 1935 earthquake, but we do know that Maryland has experienced more than 60 earthquakes since 1758, when an estimated 3.7 magnitude tremor startled Annapolis.

Tower damage at St. Thomas Church

JOIN THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

AND THE CITY OF BOWIE MUSEUMS

IN CELEBRATING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2011
FROM 6 TO 9 PM

AT BELAIR MANSION
12207 TULIP GROVE DRIVE IN BOWIE

TOUR THE SEASONALLY DECORATED MANSION

PLEASE BRING A DISH TO SHARE

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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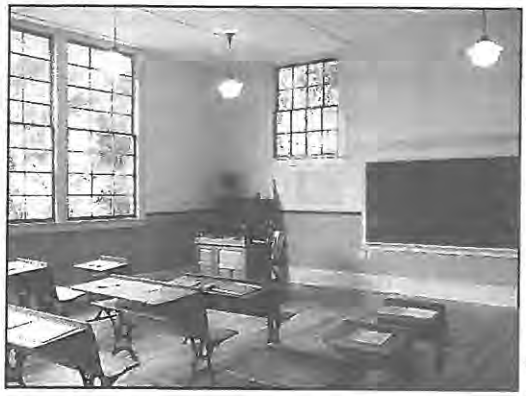
RIDGELEY ROSENWALD SCHOOL OPENS TO THE PUBLIC



On September 7, 2011, the restored Ridgeley Rosenwald School was formally opened to the public. The school building, built with financial support from the Julius Rosenwald Fund, opened in 1927, and served as a primary school for the African-American children of the local community. Opened originally as a two-teacher, two-classroom schoolhouse, the building was enlarged by the addition of a third classroom in the 1940s. During the 1950s, the schoolhouse served as a special center, and since the 1960s served as school-bus management office for the Prince George's County Public Schools.

The Ridgeley School is one of nine of the original 28 Rosenwald schools that survive in Prince George's County (a total of 156 schools were built with Rosenwald funds in the State of Maryland). Approximately 10 years ago, when the community began to be aware of its historical significance, the Ridgeley school building was in deteriorating condition, but still exhibited many of the prototypical features of Rosenwald schoolhouses of the 1920s (e.g., the tall banks of windows lighting each of the classrooms), and was probably in the closest to original condition of any of the County's surviving Rosenwald schools. The building was designated as an Historic Site in 2002, at which time a serious effort, actively supported by the Historical Society, began toward preservation and restoration of the building. With financial support from organizations, individuals, the County, and the State, that goal has now been realized – the building has been restored by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), and has opened as a museum and meeting place. One of the original classrooms is furnished as a typical 1930s Rosenwald-school museum-classroom, while the other will serve as a meeting room, with informational murals on all of its walls. Delta Sigma Theta sorority members, who have played a large part in the preservation process, will serve as tour guides, and the building will be open for visitors each Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., and from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. on the fourth Sunday of each month. The Ridgeley Rosenwald School is located at 8507 Central Avenue, about ¾ mile inside the Beltway, and accessible from the south on Truck Way.

REMEMBERING A REMARKABLE LADY

Elizabeth Keckly was born into slavery, but used her talents with needle and thread to buy her freedom and that of her son. She used those same talents to begin her own business as a designer and seamstress for some of Washington City's socialites, including Mrs. Stephen A. Douglas, Mrs. Robert E. Lee, and Mrs. Jefferson Davis.

Shortly after the inauguration of Abraham Lincoln in 1861, she was introduced to Mary Todd Lincoln and became the modiste for the First Lady. Her warm personality also endeared her to Mrs. Lincoln, and they soon became great friends. Mrs. Lincoln once described Elizabeth as "my best living friend."

During and after the Civil War, Mrs. Keckly assisted in contraband relief – donating her own funds to help those in need of housing, food, and education. She died quietly in 1907 and was buried in the old Columbian Harmony Cemetery on Rhode Island Avenue. That cemetery closed in the 1950s, and the bodies were moved to other cemeteries. However, tombstones were not moved. Mrs. Keckly was re-interred in New Harmony Memorial Gardens in Landover and forgotten until a Surratt Society member and a cooperative staff member at the cemetery located her records.

In 2009, the Surratt Society and the Surratt House Museum began a campaign to raise funds to mark the lady's grave, and a bronze marker was installed in May of 2010. As a result of the publicity, the National Park Service contacted Surratt House and has begun another campaign to have Mrs. Keckly recognized by the Underground Railroad Initiative for the assistance she gave to fugitive, and then emancipated, slaves.

On November 5th, the Surratt House will present a first-person portrayal of this amazing woman at 4 pm in the meeting room of the James O. Hall Research Center on the museum's campus. Admission is free, but seating is limited. Doors will open at 3:30 pm. Call 301-868-1121 for information.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS - NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2011

November 5-27 – Needleart 2011 at Montpelier Mansion, 11 AM – 4 PM; sponsored by Stitching Pretty of Laurel, view a dazzling array of stitched art, vote for "People's Choice", demonstrations of needleart techniques are given daily

November 5 – Choregraphie Antique at Riversdale House Museum, 2 PM; Goucher College's dance history ensemble brings history to life through reconstructions of dances popular in Federal-era Baltimore, Washington, and at Riversdale; tickets are $20, concessions sold before the concert

November 5 – Elizabeth Keckly: My First Year in the White House at Surratt House Museum, 4 PM; Kandie Carle Productions will relate Elizabeth Keckly's experiences in the Lincoln White House; free, see page 7 for details

November 7 – Annual History Lecture Day at Belair Mansion, 9 AM - 4 PM; "A Collection of Curious and Entertaining Orations" on topics ranging from fishing to ladies dressing tables, includes lunch; fee, reservations required by calling 301-809-3089

November 7 – Historic Society's Annual Dinner and Elections at the Alamo Restaurant, 6 PM; see page 1 for details

November 8 – Second Tuesday Lecture at Belair Mansion, 7:30 PM; "Meet Mary Surratt – Robert Redford's Conspirator" by Julia Cowdery from Surratt House Museum; free

November 12 – Book and Author Event at the Greenbelt Public Library, 1 PM; see article on page 4 for details

November 14 – Brown Bag Lunch Lecture at Belair Mansion, noon; "Talking Turkey – Thanksgiving History", bring a brown bag lunch, coffee and tea provided; free

November 15 – Kids Kaboose at Bowie Railroad Museum, 10:30 AM-12 PM; ages 1-10 enjoy railroad fun; free, details call 301-575-2488 or museumevents@cityofbowie.org

November 16 – Fall History Lecture at Montpelier Art Center, 7:30 PM; Michael Bosworth, a naval architect and historian specializing in the War of 1812 and Federal Period will present his research on the early history of the Snowden family in Maryland, focusing on the seafaring aspects, John Contee as a Marine, the early U.S. Navy, and War of 1812; free

November 25-27 – 12th Annual Gingerbread House Contest and Show at Darnall's Chance House Museum, 12-5 PM; view an amazing display of edible gingerbread houses and vote for Viewer's Choice Award; $1/person

November 26 – Trainspotting Day at Bowie Railroad Museum, 10 AM - 4 PM; train watch as lots of unusual cars pass by on Amtrak's busiest day of the year; free

November 27 – Taste of the Past at Riversdale House Museum, 6:30 PM; a bountiful table of locally grown produce of the kitchen garden and orchard prepared using historic recipes; $30/resident, $36/ non-resident; registration required by calling 301-864-0420

December 1-4 and 8-11 – 12th Annual Gingerbread House Contest and Show at Darnall's Chance House Museum, 12-5 PM; view an amazing display of edible gingerbread houses and vote for Viewer's Choice Award; $1/person

December 2, 9 and 16 – Holiday Open House at Billingsley House Museum, 9 AM – 3 PM; get into the holiday spirit with a tour of the this beautifully decorated historic house; for more information call 301-627-0730

December 3 – Breakfast with Sint Niklaas at Riversdale House Museum, 9 and 11 AM; enjoy a Belgian-inspired breakfast and gift; $9/ child & $5/adult for resident; $11/child & $7/adult for non-resident, call 301-864-0420 for required registration

December 3 – KinderKristmas at Belair Mansion, 10 AM – 12:30 PM; visit with Mr. and Mrs. Claus, tours, crafts; for youngsters 3-10; free, but donations to Bowie Food Pantry requested

December 3 – Santa Fly-in at College Park Aviation Museum, 12-4 PM; watch Santa fly into College Park Airport, have your picture taken with Santa, and enjoy arts and crafts; free with museum admission

December 4 – Twilight Tours of Belair by Candlelight at Belair Mansion, 4-7 PM; enjoy holiday decorations of the past, music of Bedlam and cider in the kitchen; free but donations to Bowie Food Pantry requested

December 9-10 – Holiday Candlelight Tours at Montpelier Mansion, 6-9 PM on Friday, 5-9 PM on Saturday; local garden clubs decorate in 18th century style, area performers entertain nightly, hands-on activities light refreshments; teachers are free on Friday; public safety employees and active duty military are free on Saturday

December 10 - Snowlflake Tea at Belair Mansion, 4 PM; $25/person, registration required by calling 301-809-3089

December 12 – Society's Holiday Party at Belair Mansion, 6-9 PM; see box on page 6 for details

December 14 – Holiday Tea at the Manor at Oxon Hill Manor, 11 AM – 1 PM; enjoy tea and delicacies and listen to festive holiday music; $20/person, reservations required by calling 301-839-7782

December 17 -23 – Holiday Trains and Planes at College Park Aviation Museum, 10 AM – 5 PM; the National Capital Trackers bring a fascinating and constantly moving display of model railroads; free with museum admission

December 17 – The Legend of Civil War Santa at Surratt House Museum, 12-4 PM; join Santa as he delights with tales from the ages; tour price applies for house tours

December 17 – Hansel and Gretel Tea Party at Darnall's Chance House Museum, 2 PM; listen to the story of Hansel and Gretel, enjoy tea and dessert; for ages 5 & up; $12/resident, $15/non-resident, call 301-852-8010 for reservations

December 27 – KristmasKaboose at Bowie Railroad Museum, 10:30 AM-12 PM; ages 1-10 enjoy railroad fun; free, details call 301-575-2488 or museumevents@cityofbowie.org

December 30 - Winter Wonderland Tea at Belair Mansion, 4 PM; $25/person, registration required by calling 301-809-3089

December 30 – The Calverts by Candlelight at Riversdale House Museum, 6 PM; pay an evening call on the Calverts, enjoy refreshments, live music and children's activities; $5/adult, children 12 & under are free

January 14 – Twelfth Night Ball at Riversdale House Museum, 7:30 PM; come in period attire or black tie to celebrate the traditional end of the holiday season at this Regency-style ball; reservations required by calling 301-864-0420, $30/resident, $36/non-resident

January 18 – Surratt House Reopens for the 2012 Season, 11 AM – 3 PM on Wednesday-Friday, 12-4 PM on Saturday and Sunday

May-December -- Maryland: A House Divided at Surratt House Museum; exhibit commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the American Civil War. Maryland's background as a slave economy and the issues that it faced as the great conflict drew near are explored; 301-868-1121; www.surratt.org

National Colonial Farm has classes and workshops; visit www.accokeekfoundation.org for more details.

Patuxent Research Refuge has many free public programs ranging from art exhibits, bird, nature and flower walks, to owl prowls and hands-on wildlife activities; visit http://patuxent.fws.gov for more information or call 301-497-5887

For details and additional events, visit: www.pgparks.com, www.accokeekfoundation.org, www.anacostiatrails.org, www.cityofbowie.org/LeisureActivities/Museum, http://pgcmaahgs.org, http://www.nps.gov/fowa/, www.greenbeltmuseum.org, www.mdhs.org, www.surratt.org, www.laurelhistoricalsociety.org, and http://patuxent.fws.gov