



# THEN & NOW

QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME XLVIII NO. 1

January - March 2019

## THE PASSING OF OUR LIBRARY "ANGEL"

On the last day of 2018, Louise DeMarr Tatspaugh passed away, three weeks after celebrating her 108<sup>th</sup> birthday with her family. She was, for nearly a half-century, an enthusiastic supporter of our Historical Society, and the true "angel" of our Historical Society library.

Louise was the older sister of Fred DeMarr – she had lived and raised five children in Hyattsville since 1937, and when her brother Fred returned to Prince George's County in the early 1970s, she, by then widowed, welcomed him to move in with her. Fred very soon became heavily involved with the County Historical Society, and over the next 25 years served as president of the Society and then as its Historian; he encouraged his sister's participation as well. As president in 1973, Fred initiated and prepared the Society newsletter *News and Notes*, and Louise spent many hours at her dining room table, helping him fold and post the early issues.

Fred had an immense collection of books related to Prince George's and Maryland history, and he gradually moved much of this collection to wherever the Society had its headquarters at the time. By 1985, the Society was located at Marietta, and Fred would spend Saturday afternoons opening his library to the visiting public. Louise would often come with him, and help to operate the Society's gift shop at Marietta. At about the same time, she began the huge job of collecting, and typing on index cards, masses of obituaries from the *Washington Post* and other local newspapers, a project that we attempt to continue. She regularly attended Society meetings, tours, and other events, and provided space in her house for the overflow of Fred's library collections. After Fred died, suddenly and unexpectedly in 1997, Louise served as the executrix of his estate, and in 1999 she carried out his wishes, thus providing the orderly transfer of Fred's library to the Historical Society, to become officially the *Frederick S. DeMarr Library of County History*. At the St. George's Day festivities in April 2000, for all of her many contributions to the Society, Louise was honored with a St. George's Award.

In May 2008, when we moved the DeMarr library from Marietta to our new location in the Greenbelt Branch Library, Louise and many other members of the DeMarr family celebrated with us. Louise, not quite 98 at the time, cut the ribbon to open the new library, and was honored again, together with her brother Robert, for their generous and steady support for the library. For several more years, Louise regularly attended Historical Society events until 2014, when she moved to Virginia to live with her daughter, Catherine.

The Historical Society will participate in the planned celebration of Louise Tatspaugh's life at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church in Hyattsville on January 19, 2019. We will miss Louise, but will remember her fondly and gratefully - our true library "Angel!"



Louise DeMarr Tatspaugh at the 31 May 2008 Re-Opening Ceremony in Greenbelt of the *Frederick S. DeMarr Library of County History*

-Susan G. Pearl

# PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

Phone: 301-220-0330

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Website: [www.pghistory.org](http://www.pghistory.org)

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Donna Schneider

**Newsletter Contributors:** Stacey Hawkins, Nathania Branch Miles, Susan Pearl, Lynn Roberts, Leigh Ryan, Donna Schneider, Carl Smith

**Webmaster:** Vacant

THEN & NOW is published quarterly. You are invited to submit a relevant article for print (subject to space limitations).

All Society members are invited and welcome to attend the monthly Board meetings. Please check our website for dates, times and location.

If you would like to volunteer your time and talents to the Historical Society in any capacity, please call us. All ages are definitely welcome!

## FREDERICK S. DEMARR LIBRARY OF COUNTY HISTORY

Greenbelt Library Building, Lower Level  
11 Crescent Road, Greenbelt  
301-220-0330

Hours: Saturday, 12-4 PM  
By Appointment at Other Times



## SOCIETY SPONSORS

The Society would like to thank our generous sponsors for their support. Their donations help to fund various Society programs, its newsletter, website, and the Frederick S. DeMarr Library. Thank You!

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Ken Schneider  
William Thomas III



## NEW MEMBERS

Mark Collins  
Bradley Sweet

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# President's Corner

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Happy New Year!

I want to thank everyone who attended our holiday party on December 9, 2018, and the staff at Marietta House Museum for hosting. Below are party pictures provided by Lynn Roberts.

The revised by-laws presented in the last newsletter were passed during a brief business meeting at the party. As of the writing of this newsletter, the board has not had the opportunity to meet to nominate the 2019 board members. Also, we have not finalized our plans for activities in 2019. Information will be forthcoming in the next newsletter.

Just a friendly reminder that it is time to renew your dues or sponsorship. The annual renewal period ends March 31, 2019.

**Donna**



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# Fill-a-Shelf Appeal

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Thank you to those who have contributed to our \$1,000 goal for 2018! It isn't too late to contribute. This is an on-going program to procure books for the Frederick S.

DeMarr Library. Gifts are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Please send your donation to PGCHS – Fill-a-Shelf, PO Box 1513, Upper Marlboro, MD 20773-1513. Thank you!

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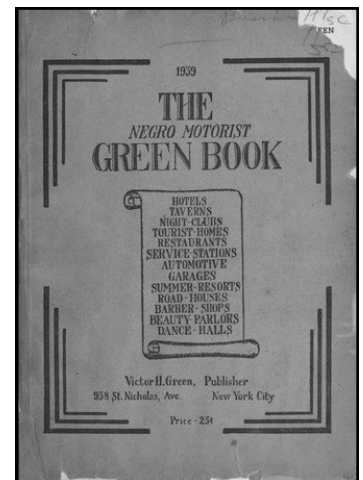
# Green Book

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A new movie, "Green Book," is now playing in our area. The film's title is taken from the "Negro Motorist Green Book," published regularly from 1936 until after the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This handbook listed hotels, guest houses, restaurants, gas stations, night clubs, etc., state-by-state, where African Americans would be welcome during their travels. The movie is based on the true story of black concert pianist Don Shirley and his white driver during his concert tour in the Jim Crow American South.

"Green Book" will soon be screened at the Old Greenbelt Theatre (OGT) probably sometime in January. One of the great things about the OGT is its practice of inviting an expert on the subject of a currently showing film to speak after the screening. In the case of "Green Book," historian Anne Bruder will speak about the history of the "Negro Motorist Green Book" and on current research about sites listed in its published issues. Susan Pearl, PGCHS historian, will fill in on some of the listed locations in Prince George's County.

The movie has received very favorable reviews, and the discussion should be interesting and informative. We will alert all of our members, on our website and by e-blast, about the date of the screening as soon as we know it!



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# SWEET MAIN STREET: CITY OF LAUREL GETS STATE DESIGNATION

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*Laurel and its "Main Street" are the first to receive this important designation in Prince George's County...*

Prince George's County now has an official MAIN STREET. In conjunction with the celebration of the state's 20th anniversary of MAIN STREET MARYLAND last fall, the program announced two new designated communities - the Town of New Market in Frederick County...and the CITY OF LAUREL in Prince George's County.

The City of Laurel is the first designated Maryland Main Street in PGC. Main Street Maryland has now designated 30 communities statewide, supporting the locally-owned shops and restaurants, exciting events and festivals, and a variety of activities that provide an authentic Maryland experience for residents and visitors.

Created in 1998 and managed by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development,

the Main Street Maryland program builds partnerships with local governments, nonprofits, and businesses to strengthen the economic development potential in Maryland's historic downtown districts and neighborhoods.

According to Leigha Steele, Laurel's Economic Development Coordinator, "the Main Street Maryland program will provide additional assistance for the City of Laurel to continue revitalization efforts and meet the potential of our Main Street. The program will provide more support for our business owners, streetscape improvements; as well as create a more walkable and lively downtown area for all to enjoy!"

To learn more about the City of Laurel and its Main Street area, visit the [ExploreLaurel](#) portal.

Reprinted by permission from the Prince George's County Conference & Visitor's Bureau (CVB),

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## MARYLAND LEGACY DAY

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On Saturday, November 18, 2018, the Prince George's County Historic Society partnered with the Church of the Latter-Day Saints-Suitland Award and the Prince George's County Chapter of AAHGS to present its annual Maryland Legacy Day **"Maryland Emancipation: Then and Now."**

AAHGS-PGCM was honored to have as our guest speaker, Sharita Jacobs Thompson, a former Assistant Professor of Civil War Era Studies and African Studies at Gettysburg College. Professor Thompson's research focused on the African American Experience during the American Civil War and Reconstruction Era. Professor Thompson has also presented her work at national conferences such as the Organization of American Historians, Association for the Study of African American Life and History and has appeared on CSPAN3 Series lecture on American History. In response to her wonderful presentation, the audience had many questions and welcomed her with open arms at the new information she delivered.

On this special occasion, Maryland Legacy Day, AAHGS-PGCM commemorates the enslaved men, women and children of Maryland who survived slavery but were not included in Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of 1863. In 1862, President Lincoln enforced a Habeas Corpus which prohibited Maryland, Delaware, Missouri and Kentucky from seceding from the Union. As a southern sympathizer bordering the nation's capital on 3 sides keeping Maryland in the Union was crucial. As a result Maryland as well as the other border states had to hold special conditions to free their slaves individually.

One wonders why AAHGS is celebrating this day in November and not in January but 18 months later. When Presi-

dent Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves through the Emancipation Proclamation of January 1863, this had affected only the slaves in states who seceded from the Union, namely, Virginia, North and South Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee and Arkansas. As a border state, Maryland was not allowed to secede, so the state legislature had to make this a part of the Maryland constitution to free the enslaved people of Maryland on November 1, 1864. Prince George's County's delegation was the only county to vote to keep slavery but lost the vote.

-Nathania A. Branch Miles



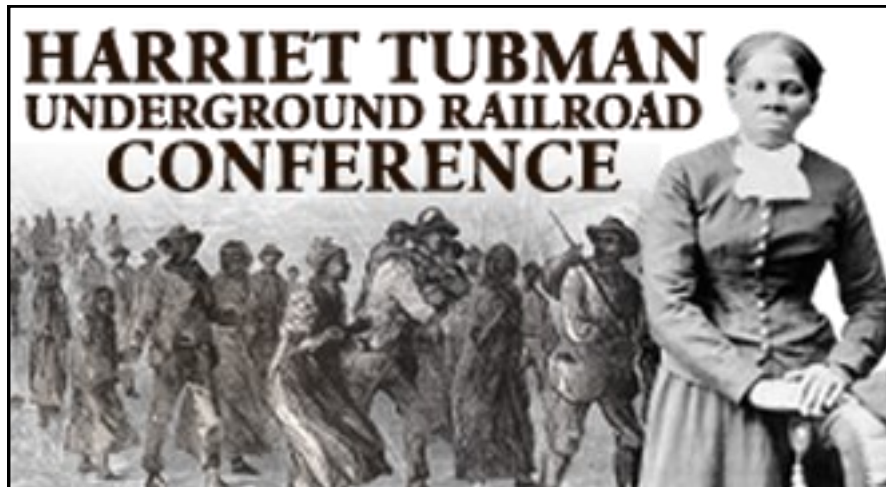
Nathania Branch Miles and Sharita Jacobs Thompson



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# Call for Proposals

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**May 31- June 1, 2019**

**Cambridge Branch of Chesapeake College  
416-418 Race Street  
Cambridge Maryland**

**Tenth Anniversary  
Harriet Tubman Underground  
Railroad Conference**

**It Ran on Faith**

The Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Conference (HTUGRR) focuses on the research about Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad as represented by the rich, cross cultural, multi-racial, multi-state stories rooted in intricate relationships based on family, freedom, community, and faith. This conference invites historians, students, educators, genealogists, researchers, artists, musicians and community members to share and compare research, history research methods, interpretation, curriculum ideas, and creative artistic expressions with a growing community of enthusiasts.

*The theme for the Tenth Anniversary conference is "It Ran on Faith".*

*We are seeking proposals focusing on the faith that provided the foundation for those enslaved*

*who sought freedom and those who assisted to make the Underground Railroad function. Other Underground Railroad histories and stories of people and events, and Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglas research are encouraged. The conference welcomes proposals from the East Coast to Canada regions where so many stories started. Yet over the nine years we have learned wonderful stories from across the country. Please think big and wide. Come, share and explore history with us. We encourage both broadly conceived ideas/research or narrowly focused presentations that inform, educate, challenge, and engage a broad audience.*

Workshop sessions by individuals, panels, cultural/artistic activities, and media presentations shall be one hour in length. All programming is expected to encourage and facilitate audience interaction. If you would like to share the hour with another presenter, the Conference Committee will arrange the grouping.

For Submission Requirements and more information please visit [www.tubmanugrr.com](http://www.tubmanugrr.com)

**Proposals to be submitted by Monday, February 4, 2019**

Submit proposals by email to:  
[Tubman.Conference@gmail.com](mailto:Tubman.Conference@gmail.com) or by mail to:

Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Conference  
424 Race St.  
Cambridge, MD 21613

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# Spring Lecture Series

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The Historical Society is partnering again with Marietta House Museum on a lecture series for the spring. Hopefully you can join us for one or all of the lectures.

**Saturday, February 23, 1pm.**

**Black History Month Presentation:**

**African American Women in Music Lecture Series**

**The Music of PORTIA WASHINGTON PITTMAN**

Portia Washington Pittman, 1883-1978, was the oldest and only daughter of Booker T. Washington. She was born in Tuskegee, Alabama, at the Institute founded by her father, and had become an accomplished pianist by age ten. Educated at schools in New England, Portia finished a four-year college degree at Bradford Academy in Massachusetts where she completed studies in music. October of 1907, she married architect William Sydney Pittman, and settled with him in Fairmount Heights in Prince George's County, Maryland. She made her concert debut in Washington, D.C., in May 1908. The Pittman family moved to Dallas Texas in 1913, and Portia began teaching music in a Dallas high school named for her father. After retirement, she devoted herself to recognition of her father's place in history, and died in Washington, D.C., in 1978. Light refreshments will be served following the program. \$5/person.



**Saturday, March 9, 1pm.**

**Women's History Month Presentation:**

**African American Women in Music Lecture Series**

**The Music of PEARL BAILEY**

Pearl Bailey, 1918-1990, was a singer and actress, appearing in vaudeville, and later Broadway. She won a Tony Award and a Daytime Emmy award. Pearl Bailey toured during WWII with the USO, and later after many

Broadway productions, she hosted her own variety series in 1971. She received the Screen Actors Guild Life Achievement Award, she was appointed special ambassador to the United Nations in 1975, and received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1988. Light refreshments will be served following the program. \$5/person

**Saturday, April 6, 1pm.**

**African American Women in Music Lecture Series**

**The Music of ELLA FITZGERALD.**

As we celebrate *International Jazz Month*, we bring you Ella Fitzgerald, "The First Lady of Song", 1917-1996. It is noted that Ella Fitzgerald was the most popular female jazz singer in the US for more than half a century. She won 13 Grammy awards, and sold over 40 million albums. Ella often used her voice to take on the role of another horn in the band. In her rendition of "You Have to Swing It", she began experimenting with scat singing, and her improvisation and vocalization wowed her fans. Ella would master scat singing and turn it into an art form. In 1987, Ella was awarded the National Medal of Arts. Light refreshments will be served following the program. \$5/person

**Saturday, June 8, 1pm.**

**African American Women in Music Lecture Series**

**The Music of ARETHA FRANKLIN**

Dubbed the "Queen of Soul" Aretha Franklin, 1942-2018, was the first female artist to be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. In 2008, she won her 18<sup>th</sup> Grammy Award, making her one of the most honored artists in Grammy history. Aretha Franklin performed at the funeral of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. She performed at the presidential inaugurations of Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton, and Barack Obama. She received both a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award, and the Kennedy Center Honors, and in 2005 received the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Light refreshments will be served following the program. \$5/person

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## Black History Month 2019

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The annual Black History Month Exhibition presented by the M-NCPPC Black History Program is *Moving Out, Moving In, Moving Up*. It is the story of black migration and immigration in Prince George's County. The exhibition will be held at the Montpelier Arts Center, 9652 Muirkirk Road, Laurel, MD. The exhibit is on view from Sunday, January 27 through Thursday, February 28, 2019.

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# Publications

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- \_\_\_ **Prince George's County: A Pictorial History\*** – The history and essence of Prince George's County come alive in words and pictures in this beautiful collector's edition, with more than 350 photographs, maps, and illustrations. Author: Alan Virta. 1998 - Revised and updated edition. Hardcover, 308 pages. **\$42.95**
- \_\_\_ **Historic Prince George's County: A Confluence of Cultures\*** – A cultural history of Prince George's County, with many photographs from private collections. Authors George D. Denny, Jr., Nathania A. Branch Miles, Donna L. Schneider. Printed 2011. Hardcover, 192 pages. **\$30.00 - new lower price**
- \_\_\_ **Calvert of Maryland** – This fact-based novel shows the home life of the colonists from a child's viewpoint. This story is told in the first person by young George Calvert, godson of the first Lord Baltimore, George Calvert. Reprint of James Otis Kaler's 1910 publication. Hardcover, 166 pages. Pen and ink illustrations. **\$5.00**
- \_\_\_ **Atlas of Fifteen Miles around Washington including the County of Prince George Maryland** – Compiled, drawn and published from actual surveys by G. M. Hopkins 1878 including "historical" sketches. Indexed. Reprint 1979. Soft cover, 32 pages. **\$10.00**
- \_\_\_ **Atlas of Prince George's County, Maryland 1861** – Atlas was adapted from Martenet's Map of Prince George's County, Maryland, with information from 1860 federal census for each election district. Indexed. Reprint 1996. Soft cover, 32 pages. **\$10.00**
- \_\_\_ **Prince George's County, Maryland, Indexes of Church Registers 1686-1885** – Volume I - Protestant Episcopal Church, King George's Parish, and Queen Anne's Parish. Author: Helen W. Brown. Reprint 2000. Soft cover, 200 pages. **\$20.00**
- \_\_\_ **Prince George's County, Maryland, Indexes of Church Registers 1686-1885** – Volume 2 - Protestant Episcopal Church, St. Paul's Parish, and Prince George's Parish. Author: Helen W. Brown. Reprint 2000. Soft cover, 196 pages. **\$20.00**
- \_\_\_ **Out of the Past – Prince Georgians and Their Land** – Chronicle of everyday life in Prince George's County, Maryland, from the time of its founding in 1696 until the beginning of the Civil War. (Information for this book was gleaned from public records, newspapers, and private papers.) Author: R. Lee Van Horn. Reprint 1996. Hardcover, 422 pages. **\$15.00**
- \_\_\_ **Tricentennial Cook Book** – Contains recipes collected from Prince George's County residents as part of the tricentennial celebration. Compiled and edited by Dorothy Rainwater and the Tricentennial Celebration Committee. Printed 1996. Soft cover, spiral bound, 150 pages. **\$5.00**
- \_\_\_ **Prince George's County Maryland** - A pictorial history of the county, an Arcadia Images of America book by Katharine D. Bryant and Donna L. Schneider. Soft cover, 128 pages. **\$15.00 - new lower price**

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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY, STATE, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE (HOME): \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE (BUSINESS): \_\_\_\_\_  
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PGCHS MEMBERSHIP: (Please circle one)

☐ Full-time Student \$10   ☐ Individual \$30   ☐ Family \$45   ☐ Corporate \$75   ☐ Life Member \$500

New Member Bonus: Historic Prince George's County \$20\_\_\_\_\_ Additional Contribution \$\_\_\_\_\_

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For membership in the Maryland Historical Society you must also be a PGCHS member, include an additional

☐ \$35 for individual   ☐ \$50 for family   (a \$15 savings off each category)

Please make checks payable to **PGCHS** and mail your check and this form to:  
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# THEN & NOW

QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME XLVIII NO. 2

April-June 2019

## Historic Preservation Month Reception

Please join the Prince George's County Historical Society and our partners for the annual Historic Preservation Month reception on **Thursday, May 23, 2019**, starting at 6 PM at Snow Hill Manor in Laurel. Invitations with the details will be sent soon.

Snow Hill is a 1 1/2-story brick structure with a gambrel roof and a five bay main (east) facade. The shed-roofed dormer windows reflect the bay divisions of the lower facade, as do the segmentally arched basement windows. The double doors with transom light are sheltered by a one-bay gable-roofed porch, the roof of which breaks through the cornice moldings of the eaves and into the lower edge of the gambrel roof. The porch, and an identical one on the west facade, is a reconstruction carried out during a restoration. It replaces a Classical Revival flat-roofed porch. The brick ends of the building have an irregular fenestration. Flush corbeled brick chimneys rise from either gable end. The south end has two doorways, the western one now used as the exterior door and the eastern one replaced by a window during restoration. This eastern door once connected the house to a log kitchen building which had been attached to the south end. Evidence of an even earlier south wing can be seen in the brickwork, the ridge of the roof rising to the bottom of the chimney stack. On the north end wall the lintel of a closed-off basement entrance remains. In plan, the house has a center hall with two rooms on either side. The staircase rises in three turns from an inset in the back of the north hall wall. The second floor hall, off of which four rooms open, is balustraded on the west (staircase) side. The northeast and southeast ground floor rooms are the most elaborate, with corner cupboards with keystone arched openings and cast iron hearths with mantel shelves with molded cornices. In the northwest room, the hearth is brick and the mantel shelf has a dentil cornice below it. A small boxed staircase to the second floor extends into the south



*Photo courtesy of M-NCPPC*

west corner of the southwest room. Otherwise, the room has been modernized for use as a kitchen. In the attic, the roof framing consists of common rafters with lapped joints at the ridge, with collars lapped over the rafters.

Snow Hill's significance lies partly in its architecture, being built between 1799 and 1801, and partly in terms of Prince George's County and Maryland State history. It is a very late example of Georgian architecture with several unusual features, including the handling of the corner cupboards. It is also significant for its association with late Colonial and early Republican ironmasters, and one of the founders of an industrial family that in later years ran the extensive mills at Laurel (employing in 1850 over 500 persons). The Snowden family, who had formed the Patuxent Iron Works by 1726 and built the house at Snow Hill c. 1800, also owned extensive landholdings in eastern Montgomery County and through the division of their estates and granting of dowries they played a large role in shaping Montgomery County society.

Snow Hill Manor has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1974.

*(Text from "National Register of Historic Places Registration: Snow Hill," Maryland Historical Trust.)*

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**Webmaster:** Vacant

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Benjamin & Diana McEney  
Barrington McKoy  
Douglas & Susan McElrath  
Frank & Shirley Nicolai  
Ken Schneider  
Stephen & Barbara Sonnett  
William Thomas III  
Patricia Williams



## NEW MEMBERS

Rushern Baker III	Gary Hibbs
Richard Banvard	Joy Medley
Mark Collins	Linda Noe
Wanda Gold	Nancy Snyder
Laurie Heffernon	Bradley Sweet

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# President's Corner

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Happy Spring!

Thank you to those who have joined or rejoined the Society for 2019. All members and sponsors will receive our new membership card, which can be used at the DeMarr Library to receive free or discounted services. Just a reminder that this will be your last issue of *Then & Now* if you have not renewed your membership or sponsorship.

The Society is looking forward to presenting our St. George's Day Awards at the Historic Preservation Month reception in May, along with our President's Preservation Award (see article below). The reception is open to anyone interested and it is free, however an RSVP is needed. Please RSVP to 301-864-0420 or email [riversdale@pgparks.com](mailto:riversdale@pgparks.com).

In addition to the reception, the Society will be continuing our partnership this year with Marietta House Museum and Belair Mansion on lectures and Juneteenth and Maryland Legacy Day with the Prince George's County chapter of the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society. This fall we will co-sponsor with Marietta a Rosenwald schools tour and its popular cemetery tour. We are also exploring the establishment of a speakers bureau.

If you have ideas for events or programs, please contact us. We always welcome suggestions!

**Donna**



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## CPMBS Conference

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The *Coalition to Protect Maryland Burial Sites* will hold its 28th Annual Meeting and Statewide Conference in Greenbelt on May 4, 2019 - the first time that this meeting has been held in Prince George's County. The meeting will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Old Greenbelt Theatre, and will include a talk about specific burial sites in Prince George's County, as well as a tour of one historic cemetery near Greenbelt. For information about the meeting, go to the Coalition's website - [cpmbs.org](http://cpmbs.org) - or email Susan Pearl at [susan.pearl@verizon.net](mailto:susan.pearl@verizon.net).

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# Fill-a-Shelf Appeal

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Thank you to those who have contributed to our \$1,000 goal! We've filled in our collections of *The National Intelligencer* and *Prince George's County, MD Land Records*, and are working on several others. This is an on-going program to procure books and other research items for the Frederick S. DeMarr Library, so donations continue to be welcomed. Gifts are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Please send your donation to PGCHS - Fill-a-Shelf, PO Box 1513, Upper Marlboro, MD 20773-1513. Your support is greatly appreciated!

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# President's Award

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The Prince George's County Historical Society is soliciting nominees for this year's President's Preservation Award. The award will be presented at the annual preservation month reception to be held in May.

There are many unsung heroes in the area of preservation and we want to honor someone who supports the preservation of our county's history outside the efforts of the Society. Efforts can be, but aren't limited to, the preservation of a historic structure, publications, art projects, outstanding volunteerism or activism, special projects or research.

This award requires input from you! Do you know someone who fits the description? If so, nominate that person. Please note that Society board members are not eligible for this award. **The deadline for nominations is May 1, 2019.**

Please submit the name of your nominee, the nominee's contact information and in no more than 500 words, why your nominee should receive the President's Preservation Award. Don't forget to include your name and contact information too. The nomination information can be sent to [info@pghistory.org](mailto:info@pghistory.org) or by mail to PGCHS, PO Box 1513, Upper Marlboro, MD 20773-1513. Thank you!!

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# Portia Washington Pittman

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In my research over many years into several subjects that would not at first seem to be very closely related – the town of Fairmount Heights, classical music, pioneering African-American architects, composer Samuel Coleridge Taylor, and Tuskegee Institute – I kept running into the very interesting character of Portia Pittman (1883-1978), née Portia Marshall Washington, eldest child (and only daughter) of Booker T. Washington. She is indeed a fascinating character, and I had the pleasure early this year of presenting an illustrated lecture on her life as part of our “African-American Women in Music” lecture series.

Portia Washington was born in June 1883, at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, to the Institute’s director, Booker T. Washington, and his first wife, Fannie Smith Washington. Portia’s mother died while Portia was still a baby, and she was raised by two successive stepmothers, both of whom worked with Booker T. Washington in the administration of the Tuskegee Institute. Although Washington was often traveling and away from Tuskegee, Portia was devotedly attached to him. She also showed considerable talent playing the piano even as a small child, and her father was very serious about arrangements for her education.

Booker T. Washington traveled often, keeping close contact with well-known men who supported his work at Tuskegee. The Washington family often spent summers on the East Coast, and it was decided early that Portia should attend school in New England. Washington’s second wife, Olivia Davidson, who died in 1889, had attended Framingham State Normal School in Connecticut, and it was decided that Portia should enter the Practice School for younger students at Framingham. She spent four years at Framingham, from age 12 to 16, the only black student at the school, distinguishing herself as piano accompanist for many of the young women’s activities. After she graduated (at age 16 in 1899) from Framingham, Portia spent two years at Tuskegee, both taking classes and teaching music. (It was during that period that she met William Sidney Pittman, then part of the Tuskegee architecture faculty.) She then returned to New England, to attend, briefly, Wellesley College, and then to Bradford Academy (later Bradford College) in Massachusetts. Bradford did not grant Bachelor of Arts de-

grees, but did give Portia serious instruction in piano performance, and encouragement to continue her progress in Europe. She graduated in 1905, and soon afterwards headed for Europe, recommended by her Bradford professor to audition before Martin Krause, former student of Franz Liszt and professor at the Stern Conservatory in Berlin. On her way to Germany, Portia stayed in England at the home of Afro-British composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, who had met Portia’s father during one of the composer’s tours in the United States. Portia greatly admired Coleridge-Taylor, and played one of compositions as part of her successful audition before Professor Krause.



Portia Washington Pittman playing piano at Bradford

During her two very active years studying in Berlin, Portia kept in contact with Sidney Pittman through the mail, and after two years, returned to Tuskegee to marry him in October 1907. It was at this time that Portia’s story intersects with Prince George’s County history - Portia’s new husband had already set up his architectural studio in Washington, D.C., and designed a home for his bride in the developing black community of Fairmount Heights. They lived in this house for just a little over five years, while Sidney developed a flourishing architectural career and Portia made her concert debut

*(continued on page 5)*

(Continued from page 4)

in Washington, D.C., gave piano lessons, and gave birth to two sons and a daughter. In 1913, when Sidney received a tempting offer from Dallas, Texas, the Pittman family moved from their house in Fairmount Heights to settle in Dallas. Portia continued her piano performance and teaching, serving as Chair of the Texas Association of Negro Musicians, and teaching music at the Booker T. Washington High School for black students. As she later said, her proudest moment came in 1927, when her 600-voice high school chorus performed for the National Education Association meeting in Dallas – the first time an African-American group had been invited to entertain this group – to great public acclaim.

Things changed for Portia after this. Sidney Pittman's career had begun to collapse, and he became very difficult to live with. After one incident, Portia left him, taking her daughter and returning to Tuskegee in 1928. She taught for several years at Tuskegee Institute, and then continued to teach private music lessons, retiring in 1944. It was at approximately this time that she began to devote herself to the recognition and appreciation of her father's life and legacy. She learned of the sale of the

plantation property in Virginia where Booker T. Washington had been born, and threw herself into the project of making this a monument to her father. After years of work the property was designated (in 1956 on the centennial of her father's birth) the "Booker T. Washington National Monument," the realization of her dream.

Sidney Pittman died in 1958; he and Portia had never divorced, nor had they seen one another since Portia returned to Tuskegee in 1928. Portia moved to Washington, D.C. in 1963, returning to the area she had lived just after her marriage. She lived quietly in this area for 15 years, all three of her children predeceasing her, until her death at age 94 in 1978. When I was working in Fairmount Heights in the early 1990s, I interviewed number of residents who remembered her well, telling me that in those last years she visited Fairmount Heights often, playing the piano for many of her friends. She is buried at the Tuskegee Cemetery, near the graves of her parents.

Getting to know this very interesting woman has been a real pleasure, reminding me once again of how everything is related to everything else.

Susan G. Pearl

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## Country School Association of America

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The Country School Association of America (CSAA) will hold its 2019 Annual Conference in Frederick, Maryland, and two members of the Prince George's County Historical Society have been invited to make presentations at the conference. The conference will cover many different aspects of historic schools and education, and should be very interesting. The conference opens on Sunday, June 16, with two days (June 17 and 18) of lectures and presentations, followed by an all-day



bus tour on June 19 of country schools in Maryland and Virginia (including two, Ridgeley and Seabrook, in Prince George's County).

Seabrook Schoolhouse  
Photo courtesy of M-NCPPC

Omar Price, a PhD student who was guided by our DeMarr library staff to study the Freedmen's Bureau schools of our County, will be presenting material from his successful dissertation.. PGCHS historian Susan Pearl will speak on "Education in Maryland, 1723 to 1948" – from the 1723 School Act, through the establishment of Academies in Bladensburg and Upper Marlborough, including entries from letters and diaries about the education of County children, and ending with a virtual visit to the 1911 Nottingham school. Other presentations will cover Rosenwald Schools, schoolmasters' records and primers, the archaeology and preservation of schoolhouses, and much more.

The conference will be held at the Claggett Center just outside Frederick, where attendees may stay throughout the conference. For more information about the conference and registration, go to the CSAA website <https://www.countryschoolassociation.org/>

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# Spring Lecture Series

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The Historical Society is partnering again with Marietta House Museum on a lecture series for the spring. Please join us!

**Saturday, April 6, 1pm.**

**African American Women in Music Lecture Series**

**The Music of ELLA FITZGERALD.**



As we celebrate *International Jazz Month*, we bring you Ella Fitzgerald, “The First Lady of Song”, 1917-1996. It is noted that Ella Fitzgerald was the most popular female jazz singer in the US for more than half a century. She won 13 Grammy awards, and sold over 40

million albums. Ella often used her voice to take on the role of another horn in the band. In her rendition of “You Have to Swing It”, she began experimenting with scat singing, and her improvisation and vocalization wowed her fans. Ella would master scat singing and turn it into an art form. In 1987, Ella was awarded the National Medal of Arts. Light refreshments will be served following the program. \$5/person

**Saturday, June 8, 1pm.**

**African American Women in Music Lecture Series**

**The Music of ARETHA FRANKLIN**

Dubbed the “Queen of Soul” Aretha Franklin, 1942-2018, was the first female artist to be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. In 2008, she won her 18<sup>th</sup> Grammy Award, making her one of the most honored artists in Grammy history. Aretha Franklin performed at the funeral of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. She performed at the presidential inaugurations of Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton, and Barack Obama. She received both a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award, and the Kennedy Center Honors, and in 2005 received the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Light refreshments will be served following the program. \$5/person



*Photos courtesy of M-NCPPC*

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## The Virginia W. Beauchamp Memorial Graduate Scholarship

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As many of you know, Virginia Walcott Beauchamp passed away on February 10 of this year.

Professor Beauchamp established a long record of contributing to our state and our county as a change agent and history maker. She earned a place in the Maryland Women’s Hall of Fame (2003) for her work on establishing the Department of Women’s Studies at the University of Maryland and for her work on Title IX implementation throughout the state. She served as copy editor and reporter for the Greenbelt News Review from 1957-2016 with a two-year break when she lived in Lagos, Nigeria. While in Nigeria (1963-1965), she co-founded the American International American School of Lagos.

Beauchamp founded the county chapter of the National Organization for Women and was appointed to the Prince George’s County Women’s Commission. She coordinated a project to assist Maryland Delegate Pauline H. Menes in writing her memoirs and autobio-

graphy. Beauchamp had lived in Greenbelt since 1965 and in 2002 earned that city’s Outstanding Citizen Award for her volunteerism.

The University of Maryland’s network for women, the Campus Club, continues a campaign to endow a graduate scholarship at the University of Maryland in honor of Virginia Walcott Beauchamp. Beauchamp was a long-time member of the Prince George’s County Historical Society, the county chapter of the American Association of University Women, and the Campus Club.

Professor Beauchamp’s friends and admirers may contribute to the scholarship named for her by writing a check to the University of Maryland College Park Foundation with “Virginia Beauchamp Scholarship” in the memo line. The mailing address is 4603 Calvert Road, College Park, MD 20740. Online payment may be made at [go.umd.edu/vwbfund](http://go.umd.edu/vwbfund). Write Chris Garcia at [Garcia@umd.edu](mailto:Garcia@umd.edu) for more information.



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# Publications

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- \_\_\_ **Prince George's County: A Pictorial History\*** – The history and essence of Prince George's County come alive in words and pictures in this beautiful collector's edition, with more than 350 photographs, maps, and illustrations. Author: Alan Virta. 1998 - Revised and updated edition. Hardcover, 308 pages. **\$42.95**
- \_\_\_ **Historic Prince George's County: A Confluence of Cultures\*** – A cultural history of Prince George's County, with many photographs from private collections. Authors George D. Denny, Jr., Nathania A. Branch Miles, Donna L. Schneider. Printed 2011. Hardcover, 192 pages. **\$30.00 - new lower price**
- \_\_\_ **Calvert of Maryland** – This fact-based novel shows the home life of the colonists from a child's viewpoint. This story is told in the first person by young George Calvert, godson of the first Lord Baltimore, George Calvert. Reprint of James Otis Kaler's 1910 publication. Hardcover, 166 pages. Pen and ink illustrations. **\$5.00**
- \_\_\_ **Atlas of Fifteen Miles around Washington including the County of Prince George Maryland** – Compiled, drawn and published from actual surveys by G. M. Hopkins 1878 including "historical" sketches. Indexed. Reprint 1979. Soft cover, 32 pages. **\$10.00**
- \_\_\_ **Atlas of Prince George's County, Maryland 1861** – Atlas was adapted from Martenet's Map of Prince George's County, Maryland, with information from 1860 federal census for each election district. Indexed. Reprint 1996. Soft cover, 32 pages. **\$10.00**
- \_\_\_ **Prince George's County, Maryland, Indexes of Church Registers 1686-1885** – Volume I - Protestant Episcopal Church, King George's Parish, and Queen Anne's Parish. Author: Helen W. Brown. Reprint 2000. Soft cover, 200 pages. **\$20.00**
- \_\_\_ **Prince George's County, Maryland, Indexes of Church Registers 1686-1885** – Volume 2 - Protestant Episcopal Church, St. Paul's Parish, and Prince George's Parish. Author: Helen W. Brown. Reprint 2000. Soft cover, 196 pages. **\$20.00**
- \_\_\_ **Out of the Past – Prince Georgians and Their Land** – Chronicle of everyday life in Prince George's County, Maryland, from the time of its founding in 1696 until the beginning of the Civil War. (Information for this book was gleaned from public records, newspapers, and private papers.) Author: R. Lee Van Horn. Reprint 1996. Hardcover, 422 pages. **\$15.00**
- \_\_\_ **Tricentennial Cook Book** – Contains recipes collected from Prince George's County residents as part of the tricentennial celebration. Compiled and edited by Dorothy Rainwater and the Tricentennial Celebration Committee. Printed 1996. Soft cover, spiral bound, 150 pages. **\$5.00**
- \_\_\_ **Prince George's County Maryland** - A pictorial history of the county, an Arcadia Images of America book by Katharine D. Bryant and Donna L. Schneider. Soft cover, 128 pages. **\$15.00 - new lower price**

Shipping and handling is \$4.00 per order. If ordering more than one copy of books with an asterisk (\*) add \$3.00 for each additional book.

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# THEN & NOW

QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME XLVIII NO. 3

July-September 2019

## Fourteenth Annual Juneteenth Seminar "Footprints and Roots"

The Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society, Inc., Prince George's County Maryland Chapter, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Suitland (Maryland), and the Prince George's County Historical Society will jointly sponsor the Fourteenth Annual Juneteenth Seminar, "Footprints and Roots," on Saturday, June 15, 2019, at the Nature Center at Watkins Regional Park, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774, from 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM. The seminar will consist of a series of workshops for beginner to advanced family researchers. Ric Murphy, the National Vice President for History for the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society, Inc. and educator, historian, lecturer, and award-winning author, will be the keynote speaker. The concurrent sessions will include topics such as Beginning Genealogy, Mending Broken Ties: Reconstructing Family Trees Sawed by Slavery, How to Write A Family History, Using Probate Records to Research Enslaved Ancestors, Deeply Rooted in North Carolina: Two Runaway Slave Brothers Forever Separated After Joining the Union Army, Understanding Your Genome (DNA), Stories of Emancipations, and An Overview of Enslaved Life and Labor on Maryland Plantations. There will be special activities for children (ages 7-16), designed to intro-

duce them to the world of genealogy and family history. In addition to learning about the history of Juneteenth, they will sing songs, construct family trees, and write stories about themselves.

The Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation is holding a family fun day in conjunction with this event, which will be held at Watkins Regional Park. Attendees may bring a picnic basket, blanket, and lawn chair and participate in an afternoon of live entertainment with guest speakers, games, arts and crafts, food, and dancing from 12:00-5:00 PM. All the activities at both of these community events are **FREE** and open to the public.

Juneteenth is celebrated in more than 200 cities in the United States to commemorate the final announcement in Galveston, Texas, of the emancipation of slaves some two years after the original proclamation. From that day until this, there have been celebrations throughout the United States to mark the date, June 19, 1865, when the last enslaved persons learned of their freedom. Juneteenth, as it came to be called, is a state holiday or special day of observance in 43 states and the District of Columbia.

-Jane Taylor Thomas

**FRANKLINS**  
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**Tuesday, July 23, 2019**

All -day fundraiser for the Society

Franklins Restaurant, Brewery, General Store  
5123 Baltimore Avenue in Hyattsville

To support the fundraiser, notify your server or the host and ask that your receipt(s) be added to the PGCHS fundraiser. Franklins will tally the receipts and donate 20% of the total (before taxes) to the Society.

The fundraiser is all day and includes dining, carryout, and general store purchases.

# PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

Phone: 301-220-0330

Email: [info@pghistory.org](mailto:info@pghistory.org)

[PGCHSMembers@gmail.com](mailto:PGCHSMembers@gmail.com)

Website: [www.pghistory.org](http://www.pghistory.org)

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**Newsletter Editors:** Susan G. Pearl  
Donna Schneider

**Newsletter Contributors:** Christine Garcia, Stacey Hawkins, Susan Pearl, Donna Schneider, Maggie Johnson Sliker, Patricia Sluby, Frederick Stachura, Jane Taylor Thomas

**Webmaster:** Vacant

THEN & NOW is published quarterly. You are invited to submit a relevant article for print (subject to space limitations).

All Society members are invited and welcome to attend the monthly Board meetings. Please check our website for dates, times and location.

If you would like to volunteer your time and talents to the Historical Society in any capacity, please call us. All ages are definitely welcome!

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The Society would like to thank our generous sponsors for their support. Their donations help to fund various Society programs, its newsletter, website, and the Frederick S. DeMarr Library. Thank You!

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Patricia Williams



## NEW MEMBERS

James Sherrick

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## President's Corner

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I hope no one minds that the summer issue is a bit early. We wanted to be able to share with you information about the Juneteenth celebration being held on Saturday, June 15 at Watkins Regional Park. Every time I attend, I learn something new.

The board finally had a meeting that wasn't cancelled by inclement weather. At the meeting, we re-elected our previous officers and directors whose terms had expired in 2018. Congratulations!

We are having our first fundraiser of the year at Franklins in Hyattsville on Tuesday, July 23. I hope you will be able to join us. We would greatly appreciate your support!

There are several activities this summer that Board members are participating (see page 6). Please attend and meet us.

Mark your calendars for our holiday party on Sunday, December 15, 2019. Our vice president, Jack Thompson, offered to open his historic home, Beechwood, for the afternoon. If you were not able to join us for our last Prince of a County, here is another opportunity for you to visit this beautiful home.

Happy Summer!

**-Donna**

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## Fundraising

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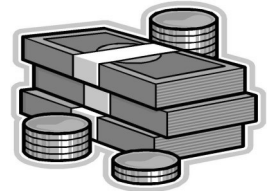
Everyone seems to be bombarded by appeals to help support one project or another. The Historical Society is no different. We have three ongoing donation opportunities:

John J. Petro Fund—which supports placing ghost structures and signage at Mount Calvert Archaeological Park

John M. Essex Memorial Fund—provides financial assistance to scholars, authors, graduate students and doctoral candidates wishing to research the architectural heritage of the County

DeMarr Library—helps to purchase books and other items needed to aid researchers and others in learning more about the County's history

A contribution of any size is appreciated and tax-deductible. Please send your donation to:



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## Collaboration with Professor William Thomas On Prince George's County Research

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Historical Society members will remember the Historic Preservation Reception held a year ago at the Publick Playhouse, when Professor William Thomas (University of Nebraska) talked about and showed his film about Anna Williams, an enslaved woman from Bladensburg. The film, entitled simply "Anna," told the story of how Anna was separated from her husband in 1815, and then took desperate measures to avoid being sold away from her family. She did, however, eventually win her freedom through court action in the District of Columbia.

Professor Thomas continues to work on freedom suits filed between 1800 and 1862 in the District of Columbia courts. He recently approached our Historical Society library requesting information

on members of the Duckett family of Prince George's County, in regard to freedom suits involving the Duckett family in District of Columbia courts. I've been working with him, and so far have been able to establish a connection between a certain man manumitted by the Duckett family and the settlement of Duckettville in the immediate area of Bowie. A descendant of this man will meet with Professor Thomas when he returns to the Washington area in June. We hope to make contact with more African-American members of the Duckett family, especially those who have associations with the Duckettville community.

If you can help with this, please contact me at: [susan.pearl@verizon.net](mailto:susan.pearl@verizon.net). Thanks!

-Susan G. Pearl, Historian

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# 2019 Preservation Month Reception

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The 2019 Annual Prince George's County Historic Preservation Week Reception was held at Snow Hill Manor on May 23. Prince George's County Planning Board Chair, Elizabeth Hewlett, enthusiastically emceed the evening and as always was a cheerleader for the county and its history. The program's keynote address was by H. Clay Braswell, Jr., Vice President-Advancement for the Maryland Historical Society.

Historic Site Plaques were presented by Lisa Pfueller Davison, Vice Chair of the Prince George's County Historic Preservation Commission to:

**Calvert Family Cemetery (68-004-03)** in Riverdale Park

**Bowieville (74A-018)** in Bowie

**Osborn-Talburtt Cemetery (78-008)** in Westphalia

**Scott Farmhouse (87B-036-11)** in Aquasco

Society awards were presented by Sarah Bourne, Leigh Ryan, and Stacey Hawkins to:

President's Preservation Award: **Warren "Dusty" Rhoads**

St. George's Day Awards:

**Virginia Beauchamp** for her accomplishments at the University of Maryland, the *Greenbelt News Review* and for women's issues

**Aaron Marcavitch** for *US Route 1: Baltimore to Washington, DC*

**Jenny Masur** for *Heroes of the Underground Railroad Around Washington, D.C.*

**Mark Opsasnick** for *Rock the Potomac: Popular Music and Early-Era Rock and Roll in the Washington, D.C. Area*

**Krista Schlyer** for *River of Redemption: Almanac of Life on the Anacostia*

Aaron Marcavitch, Executive Director, Maryland Milestones/ATHA Inc. presented Heritage Awards to:

Heritage & Historic Preservation: **Glenn Dale Hospital Legislative Success**

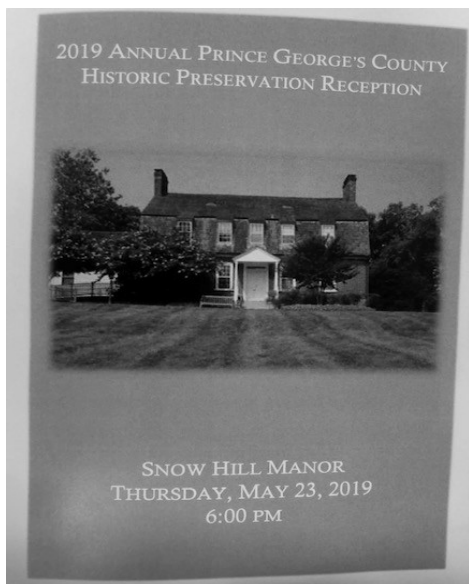
Heritage & Arts: **College Park Aviation Museum & Pyramid Atlantic Art Center** for their collaboration on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of airmail and the Misprints exhibit

Heritage & Natural Resources: **30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Anacostia Watershed Society**

Dennis Pogue, Interim Director of the Historic Preservation Program at the University's School of Architecture, Planning & Preservation presented the Prince George's Fellowship Award, also known as the Margaret Brent Award, to **Sara Baum** for her work on the collection of Margaret Brent papers that have been donated to the University.

Of course, the reception would not be what it is without collaboration and sponsorship. The Society would like to offer a big thank you to its co-host, the **Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission**, not only for providing a location for the reception and staffing, but for all the logistics and organization needed beforehand and for the evening. Another big thank you is extended to our sponsors: **Maryland Milestones/ATHA, Inc.; Prince George's County Historical & Cultural Trust; O'Malley, Miles, Nylan & Gilmore, P.A.; G.S. Proctor & Associates, Inc.; Shipley & Horne, P.A.; Prince George's Heritage, Inc.; Riversdale Historical Society; and Surratt Society.**

As was echoed multiple times throughout the program, preservation of our county's history and culture could not be done without YOU. No matter how big or small your contribution may be, it is appreciated and recognized and we thank you.



Photos Courtesy of  
Frederick Stachura, M-NCPPC





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# Our Deep Roots in Maryland

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In 1687, my mother's Addison ancestors arrived from England to settle on a beautiful spot on the Potomac, today known as the resort and entertainment destination, National Harbor. The Addison's sprawling colonial plantation grew in Prince George's County to include a brick mansion -- "Oxon Hill Manor" (built in 1710, and lost to fire in 1895)-- tenant houses, a shipping pier, a granite mausoleum and a family cemetery. The property remained in the family until 1810, but even after the property was sold, the cemetery remained for the Addisons' perpetual use. Through ensuing years, with the help of the Maryland Department of the Environment, The Maryland Historical Trust, and The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, we were able to protect it from highways and businesses as modern developments encroached upon the family cemetery's modest boundaries.

By 2008, The Peterson Companies' massive National Harbor development began on the shores of the Potomac River just south of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge span and eventually the MGM Casino sprouted up like a gargantuan obelisk only yards away from my ancestors' formerly serene and peaceful resting place. Future plans to build a high-rise hotel next to the casino put the cemetery on the list for removal. After repeated appeals from family members with conflicting views on what would be the proper and the best thing to do, an Historic Work Permit was granted for the archeological exhumation, and re-interment of the family remains. The site chosen by 50 Addison descendants for the re-interment was St. John's Episcopal Church, Broad Creek -- a nearby church with deep connections to the early Addison settlers.

It was an interesting, emotional and bittersweet process, trying to get fifty surviving descendants to agree on the move. A few of us who had grown up close to the cemetery had severely wrenched heart-strings about the proposed relocation, but the majority of us agreed that we wanted to see the remains rescued from asphalt pavement, backhoes and future plans for a Metro development.

When the exhumation began, I frequented the site weekly to witness, with gratitude, the extreme care and reverence with which the archaeology team members from R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates conducted themselves with our precious family remains. The celebrated Smithsonian forensic scientist, Dr. Douglas W. Owsley, was brought in to identify the gender and ages of the European-descended relatives -- forty in all.

Then, after many months of thought and involvement with our Maryland genealogical roots, I found myself in a different kind of root study, horticulturally speaking. During the exhumation, the archaeologists surprised me with a present of a brown paper sandwich bag filled with several hundred very small but still vital daffodil bulbs that had been abundantly sprouting around a few remaining tombstones. I was moved to tears to have this horticultural gift passed to me from the gardening spirits of my ancestors. But what were they? We had to plant them to find out -- would they bloom at all?

In the fall of 2018, I planted half of the unknown variety of "daffies" in a field on our Upper Marlboro farm, as well as in selected spots around our home's flower beds. I shared the other half with my green-thumb Addison cousins to plant on

their Croom, Maryland property.

This March -- 2019 -- I was rewarded with the first blooms -- eleven curious double-yellow-and-green-petaled daffodils that resembled a mop-headed explosion of color.

Most of the recovered bulbs showed only green leaves, so the precious few blooms on our property allowed me to research the mysterious nomenclature and history. It had to be quite a hardy stock, I felt, since it remained vital despite its lack of tending for many generations. My "hort" nose was twitching big-time!

Delightedly, I learned almost immediately that I had an old heirloom variety of daffodil of unusual hardiness. Our rescued bulbs are *Narcissus "Telamonius Plenus,"* commonly labeled "Van Sion" in the Netherlands, its place of origin, or 'Wilmer's Double Golden Daffodil' in England, or sometimes mistakenly called "Butter and Eggs." It was a Fleming -- Vincent Sion, living in London -- who grew it in his garden before giving it his name in 1620. The double flower of this variety became extremely popular all over England and Europe and was passed along for centuries.

Van Sion -- or *V. Sion*--daffodils became a feature in the gardens of George Washington's Mount Vernon estate, along with other notable plantations, and soon migrated throughout colonial America. One can often find the location of old homesites by looking for the long-blooming Van Sion throughout the Virginias, Kentucky, Tennessee and Carolinas.

Van Sion was a favorite flower amongst the Native Americans, and the Cherokee tribe is responsible for their prolific growth in modern day Oklahoma.

Today [Fluvel's Dutch bulb online catalog](#) describes the Van Sion daffodil as having "something indestructible, you can see the blood of the wild species Daffodils running through her veins. She perennializes like no other." In 1978 The Royal Horticulture Society awarded Van Sion its highest merit for exhibition.

The unexpected gift of these bulbs has allowed me to add to the historical record of my family's gardening in quite a memorable way. It's been gratifying and enjoyable to imagine my Addison ancestors --a family of military, civilian and religious leaders, shipping merchants, tobacco farmers, scholars, artists, and the gentry women who entertained the day's prominent politicians -- enjoying the shaggy powder puffs cheerfully poised in Colonial blown-glass vessels, or perhaps ones of porcelain, stoneware or delftware imported from England, Holland and the Continent.

The Federated Garden Club of Maryland's District II sponsored a Daffodil show in Severna Park on April 9<sup>th</sup> this year, and I entered the best Van Sion bloom from my meager choices into the historic daffodil horticulture section. I held my breath as it was placed amongst a dozen other heirloom blooms, the pressure was on. And guess what won a Blue Ribbon for the Historical Division? -- Our ancestral Van Sion!

-Maggie Johnson Sliker



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# Upcoming Events

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PGCHS Director Nathania Branch Miles will be speaking about her experience doing first hand genealogical research at on Saturday, August 10, 2019, at Belair Mansion in Bowie. This will be part of a free, day-long genealogy workshop. Please call 301-809-3089 for more information.

Society Historian Susan Pearl will be speaking on the *Green Book* at Belair Mansion on Saturday, September, 21, 2019, at 3 PM, free

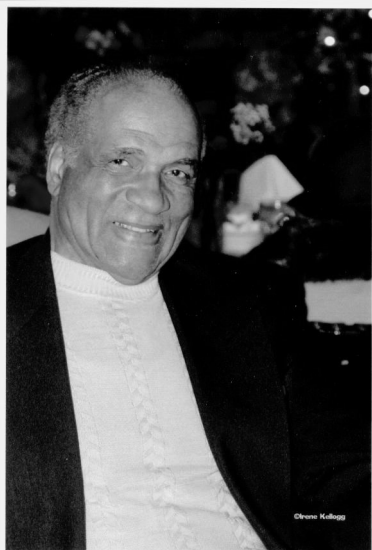


"The Write Women Bookfest" at Marietta House Museum in Glenn Dale on Saturday, September 21, 2019, from 10 AM—4 PM. Please join us for a bookfest day of fun! We will have scheduled readings and presentations, a children's book corner with readings and crafts, publishers, book craft items, and music. Authors' books, food, wine and other beverages will be available for purchase. Come browse, listen, relax, and enjoy the day. The Prince George's County Historical Society will have books available for purchase and the authors available for discussion. Proceeds from the book sales will benefit the Frederick DeMarr Library.

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## In Memoriam: Paul Edward Sluby, Sr., Esq.

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November 23, 1934-  
March 27, 2019

The Society lost one of its most accomplished and notable members with the passing of Paul E. Sluby, Sr., Esq. Paul was born in Canonsburg, PA. He lost his mother when he was five and his father when he was 11. He was raised by his loving stepmother. After graduating from high school and holding various entry level jobs, Paul enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1954. He served with the 385th Military Police Battalion in Germany, earning an honorable

discharge in 1957. Paul's Veteran's Project interview may be heard at the Veterans History Project of the Library of Congress American Folklife Center by searching on his last name at this site: <http://www.loc.gov/vets/> Paul's military police experience led to a career with the Metropolitan Police of Washington, DC (MPDC) where he served from 1961 until his retirement in 1980. Personal interest and hard work earned him a private pilot's license in 1964. His experience flying

fixed-wing aircraft helped him qualify as one of ten officers selected for the MPDC's first helicopter branch in 1970. Paul would become the first African American officer to be selected for U.S. Army Primary Helicopter Training at Ft. Wolters, TX. He flew helicopters on patrols, as an Instructor Pilot, and as Chief Pilot until he retired.

Throughout his life Paul nurtured an active interest in genealogy. In 1973, he became the first African American to earn a certificate from the Board of Certification of Genealogy (Virginia). Four years later, he co-founded the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society. Paul was certified by the American College of Genealogists (Chicago) in 1984. He would go on to conduct genealogical research for families and, equipped with a LL.B degree, attorneys. He also established a solid reputation as a genealogy instructor. Between 1972 and 2010, Paul authored biographies, family lineages, histories of cemeteries, special recollections, and works on how to do your genealogy, self-publishing many of these efforts. Scholars can access his papers at the DC Public Library, Special Collections, D.C. Community Archives (<https://www.dclibrary.org/node/47627>).

Mr. Sluby leaves behind his beloved wife, Dr. Patricia Carter Sluby, daughter Rene' S. Sluby, sons Paul E. Sluby, Jr. and Thomas G. Sluby (Nancy), stepdaughters Felicia A. Ives and Dr. Julia A. Ives, and grandson Michael P. Sluby. His son Michael P. Sluby preceded him in death.

-Christine Garcia and Patricia Sluby

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# Publications

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- \_\_\_ **Prince George's County: A Pictorial History\*** – The history and essence of Prince George's County come alive in words and pictures in this beautiful collector's edition, with more than 350 photographs, maps, and illustrations. Author: Alan Virta. 1998 - Revised and updated edition. Hardcover, 308 pages. **\$42.95**
- \_\_\_ **Historic Prince George's County: A Confluence of Cultures\*** – A cultural history of Prince George's County, with many photographs from private collections. Authors George D. Denny, Jr., Nathania A. Branch Miles, Donna L. Schneider. Printed 2011. Hardcover, 192 pages. **\$30.00**
- \_\_\_ **Calvert of Maryland** – This fact-based novel shows the home life of the colonists from a child's viewpoint. This story is told in the first person by young George Calvert, godson of the first Lord Baltimore, George Calvert. Reprint of James Otis Kaler's 1910 publication. Hardcover, 166 pages. Pen and ink illustrations. **\$5.00**
- \_\_\_ **Atlas of Fifteen Miles around Washington including the County of Prince George Maryland** – Compiled, drawn and published from actual surveys by G. M. Hopkins 1878 including "historical" sketches. Indexed. Reprint 1979. Soft cover, 32 pages. **\$10.00**
- \_\_\_ **Atlas of Prince George's County, Maryland 1861** – Atlas was adapted from Martenet's Map of Prince George's County, Maryland, with information from 1860 federal census for each election district. Indexed. Reprint 1996. Soft cover, 32 pages. **\$10.00**
- \_\_\_ **Prince George's County, Maryland, Indexes of Church Registers 1686-1885** – Volume I - Protestant Episcopal Church, King George's Parish, and Queen Anne's Parish. Author: Helen W. Brown. Reprint 2000. Soft cover, 200 pages. **\$20.00**
- \_\_\_ **Prince George's County, Maryland, Indexes of Church Registers 1686-1885** – Volume 2 - Protestant Episcopal Church, St. Paul's Parish, and Prince George's Parish. Author: Helen W. Brown. Reprint 2000. Soft cover, 196 pages. **\$20.00**
- \_\_\_ **Out of the Past – Prince Georgians and Their Land** – Chronicle of everyday life in Prince George's County, Maryland, from the time of its founding in 1696 until the beginning of the Civil War. (Information for this book was gleaned from public records, newspapers, and private papers.) Author: R. Lee Van Horn. Reprint 1996. Hardcover, 422 pages. **\$15.00**
- \_\_\_ **Tricentennial Cook Book** – Contains recipes collected from Prince George's County residents as part of the tricentennial celebration. Compiled and edited by Dorothy Rainwater and the Tricentennial Celebration Committee. Printed 1996. Soft cover, spiral bound, 150 pages. **\$5.00**
- \_\_\_ **Prince George's County Maryland** - A pictorial history of the county, an Arcadia Images of America book by Katharine D. Bryant and Donna L. Schneider. Soft cover, 128 pages. **\$15.00**

Shipping and handling is \$4.00 per order. If ordering more than one copy of books with an asterisk (\*) add \$3.00 for each additional book.

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# THEN & NOW

QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME XLVIII NO. 4

October–December 2019

## Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells, Jingle All the Way to Beechwood

The Historical Society is Celebrating the Holiday Season

Join us for our Annual Holiday Party

at Beechwood  
2301 S.W. Crain Highway  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20774

Sunday, December 15, 2019

2 to 5 PM

Food and Libations will be provided

**HEAR YE! HEAR YE!**

The Frederick S. DeMarr Library of County History  
will be **CLOSED** from November 25, 2019, through  
January 21, 2020, while the Greenbelt Public Library  
is re-carpeted and having shelving replaced.  
We will reopen on Saturday, January 25, 2020.



# PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

Phone: 301-220-0330

Email: [info@pghistory.org](mailto:info@pghistory.org)

[PGCHSMembers@gmail.com](mailto:PGCHSMembers@gmail.com)

Website: [www.pghistory.org](http://www.pghistory.org)

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/PGCountyHistory>

Facebook: "Prince George's County Historical Society"

President:	Donna L. Schneider
Vice President:	Jack I. Thompson, Junior
Secretary:	Jane Taylor Thomas
Treasurer:	Lynn Springer Roberts
Membership:	Nathania Branch Miles
Historian:	Susan G. Pearl

**Directors:** John Brunner, Katharine Bryant, Maya Davis, Arthur Dock, Amanda Elliott, Christine Garcia, Stacey Hawkins, Justin McClain, Barrington McKoy, Nathania Branch Miles, Nancy Dixon Saxon, Wayne Tonkins, Sr., Sealani Weiner

**Newsletter Editors:** Susan G. Pearl and Donna Schneider

**Newsletter Contributors:** M-NCPPC, Susan Pearl, PGCGS, Donna Schneider

**Webmaster:** Vacant

THEN & NOW is published quarterly. You are invited to submit a relevant article for print (subject to space limitations).

All Society members are invited and welcome to attend the monthly Board meetings. Please check our website for dates, times and location.

If you would like to volunteer your time and talents to the Historical Society in any capacity, please call us. All ages are definitely welcome!

## FREDERICK S. DEMARR LIBRARY OF COUNTY HISTORY

Greenbelt Library Building, Lower Level

11 Crescent Road, Greenbelt

301-220-0330

Hours: Saturday, 12-4 PM

By Appointment at Other Times



## SOCIETY SPONSORS

The Society would like to thank our generous sponsors for their support. Their donations help to fund various Society programs, its newsletter, website, and the Frederick S. DeMarr Library. Thank You!

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Stephen & Barbara Sonnett  
William Thomas III  
Patricia Williams



## NEW MEMBERS

James Boughton



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## President's Corner

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The DeMarr Library staff recently learned that the library will need to be closed for two months (see front page). Please email us with any questions/requests and we will do our best to respond to them while we are closed: [info@pghistory.org](mailto:info@pghistory.org).

Volunteers are needed to work at the library. There are a variety of tasks, such as welcoming visitors, scanning photos and documents, document collections, organizing files and more. Please contact us if you are interested.

The website will be updated in the coming months. Visit [www.pghistory.org](http://www.pghistory.org) after the first of the year.

It is that time of year again for membership and sponsorship renewals. Dues notices will be arriving in your mailbox in late November. Membership is on a calendar-year basis. Please renew no later than March 31, 2020, to remain current.

A big THANK YOU to our vice president, Jack Thompson, Junior for opening his historic home, Beechwood, for our holiday party.

**Donna**

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## Fundraising

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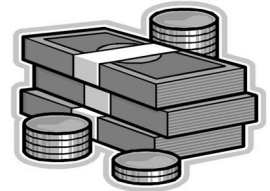
Everyone seems to be bombarded by appeals to help support one project or another. The Historical Society is no different. We have three on-going donation opportunities:

John J. Petro Fund—which supports placing ghost structures and signage at Mount Calvert Archaeological Park

John M. Essex Memorial Fund—provides financial assistance to scholars, authors, graduate students and doctoral candidates wishing to research the architectural heritage of the County

DeMarr Library—helps to purchase books and other items needed to aid researchers and others in learning more about the County's history

A contribution of any size is appreciated and tax-deductible. Please send your donation to:



PGCHS  
PO Box 1513  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20773-1513

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## Echoes of the Enslaved

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Several Society members participated in the Echoes of the Enslaved Conversation Circle and Campout at Mount Calvert on September 6, 2019. With Hurricane Dorian making her way up the East Coast, everyone was concerned about the weather. As it turns out, Joseph McGill from the The Slave Dwelling Project, was able to make it from South Carolina, albeit a day late and the 150+ attendees had a beautiful weekend to learn and engage. Joe kicked off the evening with his story while attendees circled around four campfires and held open conversations about slavery and race in this country. The firepits and camping area were located where enslaved men, women, and children had lived and worked while at Mount Calvert. There are no slave dwellings or recreations at Mount Calvert but their presence can still be found. The following day there was a public archaeology dig where discoveries of nails and bricks from slave quarters were found, along with evidence of daily life - dish fragments, animal bones, tobacco pipes, and buttons. On the evening of this day, at Marietta, Joe McGill moderated a lively panel discussion on the legacy of slavery in the United States today.

M-NCPPC, which hosted the event with Joe McGill plans to host future events with him and continue to explore its enslaved history and tell the County's story. If you would like to learn more about the fire-pit conversations and Joe McGill's The Slave Dwelling Project, visit: <https://slavedwellingproject.org/mount-calvert-hurricanes-follow-the-paths-of-slave-ships/>.

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# Happy 50th Anniversary

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The Prince George's County Genealogical Society (PGCGS) celebrated its 50th Anniversary on Saturday, September 14, 2019. The festivities were kicked off by PGCGS President, Harry M. Rudd, and continued with commendations, highlights of the PGCGS's history, its library, and reminiscences from charter member, Shirley Wilcox.. Here is a brief synopsis of its history:

*In September 1969 George E. Russell had an idea to assemble people who would enjoy and benefit from periodic meetings to exchange and share genealogical experience, knowledge, resources, and problems. So he set out to do just that. Like-minded Laird C. Towle, Barbara C. Dash, Anne H. Burroughs, and Eleanor Watson met with George and so the Bowie Genealogical Forum was formed, holding its first official meeting on October 4, 1969. The advertised event offered informal discussions, exhibits, demonstrations, presentations, and problem-solving sessions to amateur genealogists, ancestor hunters and family historians. The Society is now Maryland's oldest county genealogical society in continuous operation since its inception.*

*By January 7, 1970 the name was changed to the Prince George's County Genealogical Society and a schedule and location for meetings was established; the first election of officers took place on April 1, 1970. A rented post office box gave the Society an*

*official address, and an IRS identification number was the first step toward becoming incorporated and obtaining tax-exempt status as a non-profit education organization. The Articles of Incorporation were presented to the membership on November 2, 1982 and President James A. McCafferty signed the document in the presence of the attending members.*

*The Society's library has increased in size from 49 books in 1975 to more than 6,000 books and periodicals today. Over the years, PGCGS has compiled and published numerous volumes of Prince George's County genealogical source records - including cemetery, probate, land, tax, census, almshouse, church, and funeral home records.*



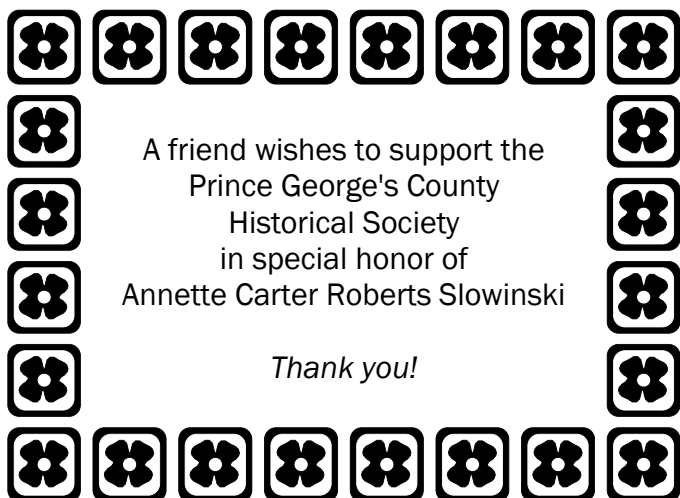
If you want to learn more about the PGCGS, visit its website at [www.pgcs.org](http://www.pgcs.org) or stop by its library on Wednesdays from 10 AM to 5 PM, except the first Wednesday, when they are open only to 1 PM. The library is located at 12219 Tulip Grove Drive in Bowie, or call 301-262-2063 or email [library@pgcs.org](mailto:library@pgcs.org).



To celebrate the gift giving season, the Society is offering free shipping on all book orders postmarked by December 31, 2019. This offer is not available for on-line orders.

Memberships are great gift ideas too!

Happy Holidays!



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# Upper Marlboro Schools Site Status

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The Society has been watching with interest for several years the plans for the Old Marlboro Primary School and the Old Marlboro High School buildings. Earlier this summer we learned that the Prince George's County Council, sitting as the District Council, adopted Resolution CR-072-2019 for the purpose of initiating a Minor Amendment to the



*Photo Courtesy of M-NCPPC*

2010 Historic Sites and Districts Plan. This proposed amendment would delete the two schools from the County's Inventory of Historic Resources.

For several reasons the Society became concerned about this amendment. First, nothing has changed about either of these two buildings that would warrant the removal of their historic site status after being designated in 2010. Also, even though the Society and other interested parties suspect the reason why the amendment to remove historic site status for these two schools is being proposed, other development options that could be more beneficial to the Upper Marlboro community have not been explored. Finally, and the most troubling of all, is the method in which the de-listing of these sites is being requested and the precedent it sets. The Minor Amendment is not necessary, since there is already a process in place that would accommodate the redevelopment of the property without the need to delete the historic site status.

Following is the letter sent by the Society.

September 9, 2019

Todd M. Turner, Chair  
Prince George's County District Council  
14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

Re: Deletion of Old Marlboro Primary School (79-019-51) and Old Marlboro High School (79-019-52) from the Inventory of Historic Resources

*Dear Chairman Turner:*

*The Prince George's County Historical Society (the "Society") strongly supports maintaining the historic site status of the Old Marlboro Primary School (79-019-51) and Old Marlboro High School (79-019-52) and opposes the use of a minor amendment to the 2010 Prince George's County Historic Sites and Districts Plan to remove the referenced properties. The use of a minor amendment for this purpose is unnecessary, as Subtitle 29 of the Prince George's County Code (the Prince George's County Historic Preservation Ordinance) already provides for the potential demolition of historic sites.*

*Further, the Society supports a full examination of the potential reuse of the existing historic sites before any action is taken to remove them from the protections of Subtitle 29. To the Society's knowledge, no such studies have been undertaken and there has been no public discussion of any plans for the use of the property without the historic sites. Therefore, in the interest of public information and transparency, no action on the proposed minor amendment to the Historic Sites and Districts Plan, or the potential demolition of these two historic sites, should be taken until the matter is fully investigated.*

*Finally, assuming that these demolitions will result in some form of new construction, the Society would like to express its concern about the potential impacts of any new construction on the Dr. William and Sarah Beanes Cemetery (79-019-22) located within the same parcel. This cemetery is the only local vestige of an important chapter in the County's and the Nation's history...a chapter that led to the creation of our national anthem. Do not take lightly the impact that nearby new construction would have on this nationally significant historic site.*

*Thank you for your consideration in this matter.*

*Sincerely,*

*Donna L. Schneider  
President*

---

# Membership Acknowledgement

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The Society and DeMarr Library could not continue without member and sponsorship support. We greatly appreciate your membership, donations, and contributions. Thank you!

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# Publications

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- \_\_\_ **Prince George's County: A Pictorial History\*** – The history and essence of Prince George's County come alive in words and pictures in this beautiful collector's edition, with more than 350 photographs, maps, and illustrations. Author: Alan Virta. 1998 - Revised and updated edition. Hardcover, 308 pages. **\$30.00**
- \_\_\_ **Historic Prince George's County: A Confluence of Cultures\*** – A cultural history of Prince George's County, with many photographs from private collections. Authors George D. Denny, Jr., Nathania A. Branch Miles, Donna L. Schneider. Printed 2011. Hardcover, 192 pages. **\$30.00**
- \_\_\_ **Calvert of Maryland** – This fact-based novel shows the home life of the colonists from a child's viewpoint. This story is told in the first person by young George Calvert, godson of the first Lord Baltimore, George Calvert. Reprint of James Otis Kaler's 1910 publication. Hardcover, 166 pages. Pen and ink illustrations. **\$5.00**
- \_\_\_ **Atlas of Fifteen Miles around Washington including the County of Prince George Maryland** – Compiled, drawn and published from actual surveys by G. M. Hopkins 1878 including "historical" sketches. Indexed. Reprint 1979. Soft cover, 32 pages. **\$10.00**
- \_\_\_ **Atlas of Prince George's County, Maryland 1861** – Atlas was adapted from Martenet's Map of Prince George's County, Maryland, with information from 1860 federal census for each election district. Indexed. Reprint 1996. Soft cover, 32 pages. **\$10.00**
- \_\_\_ **Prince George's County, Maryland, Indexes of Church Registers 1686-1885** – Volume I - Protestant Episcopal Church, King George's Parish, and Queen Anne's Parish. Author: Helen W. Brown. Reprint 2000. Soft cover, 200 pages. **\$20.00**
- \_\_\_ **Prince George's County, Maryland, Indexes of Church Registers 1686-1885** – Volume 2 - Protestant Episcopal Church, St. Paul's Parish, and Prince George's Parish. Author: Helen W. Brown. Reprint 2000. Soft cover, 196 pages. **\$20.00**
- \_\_\_ **Out of the Past – Prince Georgians and Their Land** – Chronicle of everyday life in Prince George's County, Maryland, from the time of its founding in 1696 until the beginning of the Civil War. (Information for this book was gleaned from public records, newspapers, and private papers.) Author: R. Lee Van Horn. Reprint 1996. Hardcover, 422 pages. **\$15.00**
- \_\_\_ **Tricentennial Cook Book** – Contains recipes collected from Prince George's County residents as part of the tricentennial celebration. Compiled and edited by Dorothy Rainwater and the Tricentennial Celebration Committee. Printed 1996. Soft cover, spiral bound, 150 pages. **\$5.00**
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