

The HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF HARFORD COUNTY, Inc.

Preserving Our Past For Your Future



143 N. Main Street
Bel Air, MD 21014

Society News

March / April 2014

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The Historical Society of
Harford County, Inc.,
headquarters.

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DONOR RECOGNITION

The Society wishes to express our sincere gratitude to the following businesses, individuals and families for their generous donations to the Building Campaign effort during the last two months. These include Mary Alice Furman, Michael Cullum and Dorothy Stambaugh and donations from the History on Parade and Valentine's Day Dinner attendees.

We encourage anyone who would like to learn more about the building restoration campaign and how you can help to contact the Society Director, Maryanna Skowronski at 410-838-7691 or visit our website at www.HarfordHistory.org. Donations may be made using PayPal on the website or sent directly to the Society at 143 N. Main St., Bel Air, MD 21014.

Carol L. Deibel, chair

BUILDING RESTORATION CAMPAIGN

After meeting with representatives from the Harford County Community Services offices, a request for Maryland Historical Trust review and approval of the next phases of improvements was submitted and two Request for Proposal documents prepared. The first was for the capstone, mortar and flashing repairs which will be paid for with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. The second was for replacement of the tin roof. This section of the roof is 75 years old and repairs done over the years have failed, so it is critical for us to address this problem quickly as the leakage is impacting the interior of the building. Meanwhile committee members are working on additional funding sources by requesting another round of CDBG funds and submission of a grant request to Preservation MD. Additionally the committee is still seeking the last \$10,000 in funding needed to meet the Dresher Matching fund and is working with the State on a request for a \$200,000 bond bill at this session of the legislature.

The committee is also working on several fundraising events. In February, we held a very successful Valentine's Day dinner and concert with a portion of the proceeds going to the building fund. On May 31st the committee will host an open house and winery tour at Mount Felix Winery in Havre de Grace. On September 6th, the committee will host an "Antique Road Show" event at the Bel Air Armory – more details will follow. (Watch for more information in the next Newsletter and on the Society's Facebook page.) If you would be able to help with either of these events, please contact Maryanna Skowronski (410-838-7691).

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

During the past 31 days I have expanded my knowledge of the workings of the Historical Society by attending many meetings with the Director, members of the executive committee, volunteers and the public. As a result, the following have been done. With the help of a young man who has to complete community service hours, the Artifacts Conservation Room has been emptied completely and the walls cleaned and prepared for painting. It is hoped that by the end of February the room will be scheduled for painting by trustees from the Maryland Correctional System. If this project turns out successfully, the possibility of more extensive painting can be planned.

Board Member Mike Cullum and I installed the two remaining new water-saving toilets donated by Bob Cassilly. In the process, I learned where the main water cutoff for the building is located. I am appreciative of Mike's willingness to take on some of the long-needed conservation of artifacts and other projects.

I was involved in the preparation for, participation in, and clean up from the very successful Harford on Parade event. Under Larry Carmichael's leadership and the involvement of a very high percentage of our volunteers in those same activities, we had an event of which we can be very proud.

A lot of time has been involved in dealing with several aspects of the Building Restoration Project. Working with our Director, Maryanna Skowronski and Vice President, Carol Deibel, we have made progress in perfecting a Request For Proposal for repairing the problems with the roof. Coordinating our needs with the requirements and schedule of the Maryland Historical Trust and those providing the funding is a challenge. I have a stronger appreciation for the efforts of Henry, Maryanna and Carol over the past year. Another aspect of the program is the return of the flagpole to the vicinity of its original location. I have been in discussions with Eastern Shore Flagpoles & Flag Shop as to some options to move the pole from the adjacent maple tree and make it possible to fly the flag appropriately.

Progress is also being made on moving the B&O Railroad Station in Aberdeen. Through the efforts of Maryanna and Rick Herbig the building supplies have been donated and workers contacted to repair the shed dormer and perform the foundation work. A conversation with the movers gave me a better understanding of how the building will be lifted in preparation for the move and why the wainscoting needs to be removed from inside the exterior walls.

It has been a busy time but the year 2014 is off to a positive start and we are accomplishing good things.

Richard Sherrill, President

NEW MEMBERS

Patricia M. Crews
Ruth Harrison
Bob and Linda Lemmon

Mary Jo Romba

Joan Papier
James Richardson
Bob Richardson

COMING EVENTS

HAYS HOUSE MUSEUM



As we open for the 2014 season, join us in celebrating March as National Women's History Month. A number of special events are planned starting with a display of vintage women's and children's clothing and exhibits recognizing notable women in Harford County history. Living-history events during the season will include spinning, beekeeping, children's games, and hearth cooking demonstrations as well as our annual Fourth of July Open House. See the Calendar of Events at the end of this newsletter for more information on specific events.

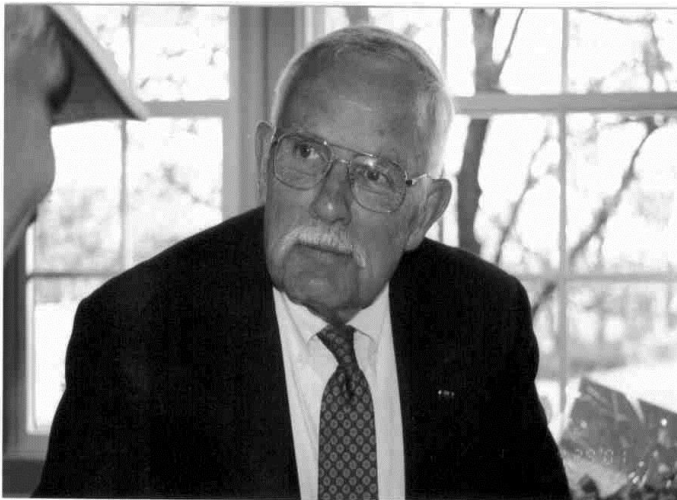
An enjoyable, private party may be arranged for you and your friends at Hays House. This is a perfect way to celebrate a club event or a child's birthday. Served by docents in Colonial attire in Mr. Hays' 1788 Parlor, a luncheon tea and tour may be reserved for your group.

For the 2014 season starting in March, Hays House will be open the second and fourth Sunday from 1 to 4 pm as well as at other time by appointment for group tours and teas.

Many volunteer opportunities are available at Hays House - from behind the scenes work such as sewing or gardening to greeting visitors and giving tours. If you would like to discuss volunteering in some capacity, please call Betsy Lehmann at 410-592-8693.

Ceil Fox and Betsy Lehmann, co-chairs

SPRING LECTURE FEATURING CHARLES L. ROBBINS



Join us for a very special event. On **Saturday, March 29th from 2 – 4 pm**, Charles L. Robbins, author of the *Heavenly Waters Gang* and noted historian will entertain us with the stories behind the *Gang's* adventures and introduce the "rest of the story". As World War II erupted, childhood was put on hold. Mr. Robbins will elucidate attendees on the life changing world of the 1940s as Harford prepared for war and local boys like Tommy Brooks, John Robbins, Broadnax Cameron and many others left for far off places and those left behind pulled together to support the troops and their country in a way never before imagined.

The afternoon will be capped off with a wine and cheese reception and a chance to share your stories and memories of the "good old days". Reservations required.

COMING EVENTS (*cont'd*)

MARYLAND – THE MOVIE

On Friday, April 18th at 7 PM the Society will present *Maryland – the Movie*, starring Walter Brennan at the Society's Headquarters. Several scenes were filmed in Harford County highlighting Maryland's steeplechase industry. A local speaker will discuss the movie and answer question. Come and enjoy free popcorn and soda with the purchase of a ticket.

ORIENTAL RUG LECTURE

On Sunday, April 27th at 2 PM at the Historical Society Headquarters, Aref , owner of Aref' s Oriental Rugs will present a **free** lecture on Oriental Rugs. If you have ever wondered about the history, the construction, the care or the value of these amazing rugs, this is the perfect opportunity to ask a true expert.

JUNE YARD SALE

The Society is getting ready for its annual yard sale. We have a long way to go to match last year's event and we are asking for your help. As always we welcome donations of any types of household items, books, furniture, glassware, clothing in good shape, decorative items, craft supplies, jewelry, antiques etc.

We are ready to accept donations of these and other items. You may drop off your contributions during our regular open hours. Items may be left after hours on the loading dock at the rear of the building. In some instances we may be able to arrange for pick up if you are unable to transport your contributions.

We are asking our members to talk with friends and neighbors to ask for donations. If you know someone who is moving, downsizing or just working on some spring cleaning please ask them to consider contacting the Society about a donation.

The success of last year's sale was in large part due to a generous contribution of antiques and other furnishings donated by Society member Judy Eagle.

Please contact the Society at 410-838-7691 or via e-mail, DirectorHSHC@verizon.net if you have any questions or would like to make arrangements to drop off or have items picked up.

Vision: The Historical Society of Harford County, Inc seeks to be the preeminent and most user-friendly source for an individual to obtain historical information about the county and genealogical information about its inhabitants. **Mission:** The Historical Society of Harford County, Inc. collects, preserves, promotes, and interprets the rich and diverse history of the Harford County area in its regional context from prehistoric origins to the present for the education and enjoyment of current and future generations.

2013 -2016 Strategic Plan- Historical Society of Harford County, Inc.

JOIN THE FUN! JOIN THE TEAM!

Volunteer Opportunities

To volunteer, stop by the Society Headquarters, call or go online at www.HarfordHistory.org to complete a volunteer application. For more information call Maryanna Skowronski, the Society Director at 410-838-7691.



Gardening

Help care for the grounds at the Hays House Museum and the Historical Society Headquarters. Yes, believe it or not this ice and snow will go away and the flowers will need your care!

Event Assistants

The Society sponsors numerous events and programs throughout the year – lectures, teas, movie nights, plays, antique shows, yard sales and concerts. Could you help with one or a couple of these activities? Your participation would be based on your interest and availability and would be greatly appreciated. We really need your help.

Hays House Volunteers

This unique house museum is open two Sundays a month from March through December offering tours and special events. Docents, exhibit assistants, collection aides are needed to assist with serving, care of antiques, displays, research and design of exhibits. If any of these activities interest you, please consider contacting Betsy Lehmann at 410-592-8693.

Artifact Assistants

Good at cataloging? Enjoy working with unique treasures? Consider helping with this long term project of preparing some of the Society's treasures for storage and cataloging these items for future use. The Society is in the process of setting up a new Artifact storage room and needs "bodies" to help make this task possible. Training provided along with a chance to meet new people and enjoy the find.

WINTER EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

HISTORY ON PARADE



Our first annual Harford History on Parade was a great success. Over 200 people came through the doors to visit with bulletin authors, see our artifact displays, videos, history boards and old photographs. A large number of the visitors were nonmembers which was one of our target groups for this event. About 45 Bulletins were sold which really demonstrates the quality of these publications and the need to better publicize them.. An unanticipated benefit was over \$100 of donations to the capital campaign which will be matched by one of our grants. Thanks to all the people who contributed to the success of the event.

VALENTINE'S DAY CELEBRATION

As one of the fundraising initiatives developed by the Building Committee, the Society held a special dinner and show celebrating Valentine's Day. Guests were entertained by Scott Watkins, portraying Henry Harford, Lord Baltimore and Eric Richardson, performing as Dean Martin. Despite snow and ice, attendees described the evening as a **"rousing success!"**.



WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

In preparing this article, I came across an amazingly insightful poem written by a former member, Mary Bristow. Mary was a local Harford County poet and journalist who wrote the poem *History* in 1980. The poem's observations are still true today and seemed particularly relevant as we prepare to celebrate Women's History Month in March. See what you think.

HISTORY

*According to the history books
No Blacks
No Jews and only one Woman
Ever lived in Harford County Maryland
Yet in the records they are live beings*

*Blood and brains
Brawn and guts...
And the graveyards
Are full of them
Who never lived in history books*

ARE YOU OUR NEXT AUTHOR?

Very little is known of a large segment of our population. The Society would like to remedy this by using the Quarterly *Bulletins* as a way of documenting the lives and contributions of those who have not been recorded in the past. Perhaps you could help. If you have an idea for such a *Bulletin*, know of a person or group in Harford County's past who should be commemorated in print, please consider contacting the *Bulletin* editor, Jim Chrismer at jchrismer@verizon.net.

To help generate some ideas, Mr. Chrismer identified the following ideas as topics that could be researched with relative ease and which would fit well into guidelines governing content of the Historical Society's *Bulletin*. Some topics lend themselves to complete *Bulletins*; others to shorter articles grouped with related topics.

1. Harford County and the Spanish American War
2. The Bush Declaration - Myth and Reality: The Historiographical Debate
3. Harford County during the Korea War
4. Inn, Taverns, Motels, and Hotels prior to 1960
5. Liriodendron and the Kelly Family
6. Harford County and the Mexican War
7. The Great Depression, the New Deal, and Harford County, Maryland
8. The Building of the Conowingo Dam: America's wonder dam of the 1920s
9. Cinema and Movie Theatres in Harford County to 1960
10. Harford County During the Reconstruction Era
11. Amateur Theatre in Harford County to the 1970s
12. Villages and Communities (e.g., Level/Hopewell, Mill Green, Perryman, Shawsville)
13. Histories of especially prominent families (e.g., Archers, Stumps, Mitchells, Halls, Hays)
14. The Military Career of James J. Archer
15. Jacob Bull: Builder and Architect
16. Religious Denominations in Harford County (e.g., Baptists, Roman Catholics, Friends)
17. Changing Ethnicity in H/C to 1940 (arrival of Italians, Jews, Irish, Germans)
18. One and Two Room School Buildings of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 6th Districts
19. The Kalmia All Stars and African-American Baseball in Harford County
20. Aberdeen Proving Ground during World War II
21. Havre de Grace: Almost the capital of the United States?
22. John Donohoo: Master Architect and Builder of Lighthouses in the Chesapeake Area
23. Notable Harford County Authors and Painters to the 1960s
24. Presidential Visits to Harford County: George Washington to Bill Clinton
25. Havre de Grace in 1813: Before and after the British Invasion
26. Residents of H/C in the Service of the U.S. Government: A Biographical Reference

27. The History of Historical Preservation in Harford County: Successes and Failure
28. The Concord Point Lighthouse and the Lighthouse Keepers House
29. John Adlum to Harford County Government: Life at Swan Harbor Farm
30. Vaughn Flannery: Horseman and Artist
31. The Legacy of Robert and Ann Heighe

Topics for which Research is already underway

- ✓ John Adams Webster – Harford’s Forgotten Maritime Leader
- ✓ Doing Black History in Harford County: Topics, Sources, Techniques
- ✓ The Court Houses of Harford County – Origins to the Present
- ✓ Runaways and Fugitive Slaves and Harford County, 1770s – 1860s
- ✓ Harford’s African American Troops in the Civil War
- ✓ Conowingo Village – Lost but Not Forgotten
- ✓ Suppressing Rebellion in Harford County – 1863 – 1865

The Society’s archives are ripe with materials that would help with your research and provide a tremendously satisfying experience. If you are a writer or just someone interested in the County’s history , we encourage you to consider this opportunity to develop a written record of the people and events that made Harford County such a historically significant and interesting place.

LITTLE KNOWN FACT

This interesting prediction was found in a Bel Air paper from the Summer of 1896. Dora Proctor, one of that year’s graduating seniors from the Bel Air Academy was asked to be the “Class Prophet”. Ms. Proctor’s predictions and article provide fascinating reading, but one prediction stands out among them all. It went as follows:

“Next I think of Milton Atchison Reckord and I see a man hustling around an office ordering men about and seeming very much excited. Then he dictates a few letters to his type-writer, puts on his coat, calls for his team and goes home to dinner. I asked for an explanation: here it is. Atch will take a college course and with his brother Herman, succeed his father in business. He will buy Herman out and start for himself. His future is bright and if he overcomes his tendency to wildness he will one day settle down with a sweet little wife for his companion. It seems queer to think Atch would ever marry and even more queer to think anyone would have him, but still his future shows it and I suppose it will be the case. Anyhow we wish him prosperity and happiness.”

For anyone unfamiliar with Milton A. Reckord, he went on to operate his father’s mill on N. Main Street in Bel Air which is still in operation under different ownership. At age 21, he joined the military and served an illustrious career spanning World War I and World War II. The Bel Air Armory is named for him. Ah yes, he did marry, so our prophet truly saw the future of this remarkable Harford County treasure.

ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION – NOW AND THEN

(Yes, believe it or not, spring is coming!)



The first Arbor Day was held in Nebraska in 1872. The idea evolved from a group of pioneers led by J. Sterling Morton. Desiring to recreate the tree shaded neighborhoods they left behind, the pioneers worked with then Governor Robert Fumas to plant trees on the first Arbor Day, recognizing how the tree plantings could provide windbreaks, stabilize the soil, provide shade from the sun, as well as fuel and building materials. Approximately one million trees were planted on that first Arbor Day. Over the years, the celebration of

Arbor Day spread throughout the country until in 1970, President Richard Nixon proclaimed the last Friday in April as National Arbor Day.

Bel Air residents celebrated Arbor Day in the 1890s as evidenced by this entry from an 1899 Bel Air newspaper article.

A Satire on the Boys – On petition of the boys of the Bel Air Academy and Graded School the trustees ordered five of the trees on the school ground to be cut down, to make more room for ball playing. Miss Allis F. Mitchell, of the ninth grade, wrote the following poem for Arbor Day:

A MORAL AND A TALE

*When the soft sunlit breezes were blowing
Thro' the fair April days, ninety four,
Five trees on the campus were growing,
Alas, but they stand there no more!
My hearers, I fain
Would spare you this pain,
But the day of their destiny is o'er*

*Then list to the ditty pathetic,
That telleth the tale of their fall,
The boys took a craze so athletic,
For playing -or working- foot ball.
"Ah 'tis glorious!" they say,
"But with trees in the way –
Why we never can manage at all!*

*"Down, down with the theory inflated,
That trees are essential to man;
Why there's nothing that Nature's created
Since the time that creation began
Can compare with the crush
Of a grand 'center rush'!
Dispute it, ye sages, who can."*

*Ill it speaks for our honor, or glory,
But the boys run the world as they please;
Ah, I shudder in telling the story,
But they cut down those beautiful trees!
Yes the dark sod above
Nature's labor of love
Lay a victim to human caprice.*

*And so, thro' the long sultry silence,
The sun, from the heights of the sky,
Beats down with a tropical violence
We now have no means to defy.
On again for a breeze
Thro' those shadowy trees!
But, the boys must play foot ball, or die.*

*Attention, then mortals benighted,
A moral I'd point if you please,
The boys, they are not to be slighted
In times so progressive as these;
So next Arbor Day
It were best we should say
To plant foot balls, kind patrons, not trees.*

2014 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MARCH - MAY

All events are held at either the Historical Society of Harford County, Inc, 143 N. Main St., Bel Air, MD 21014 or at the Hays House Museum, 324 Kenmore Avenue, Bel Air, MD 21014 unless otherwise noted. For more information check the Society's website at www.HarfordHistory.org, [Facebook.com/HarfordCountyHistoricalSociety](https://www.facebook.com/HarfordCountyHistoricalSociety) or call 410-838-7691. All events are free unless otherwise noted. Any changes and/or additions to the calendar will be posted on the Society's website.

MARCH

- 9 Season opening of the Hays House Museum featuring an exhibit of vintage clothing, highlighting women who made a difference in county history, \$5 for adults and \$3 for children and students. 1 – 4 PM.
- 22 Fourth Saturday Open House at the Historical Society Headquarters 10 AM – 2 PM, free.
- 29 Spring Lecture/Wine & Cheese Reception featuring Charles L. Robbins speaking on life in Harford County in the 1940s, a child's perspective and the War Years at the Historical Society Headquarters. 2- 4 PM, \$10.

APRIL

- 13 Hays House Open House, 1 – 4 PM
- 18 Maryland – The Movie, starring Walter Brennan, scenes filmed in Harford County highlighting Maryland steeplechase industry, local speaker will discuss the movie and answer questions. Free popcorn and soda with purchase of ticket, Historical Society Headquarters, 7 PM, \$7
- 26 Fourth Saturday Open House at the Historical Society Headquarters, 10 AM – 2 PM, free
- 27 Children's Colonial Games Day, Hays House Museum, 1 – 4 PM, \$5 for adults and \$3 for children and students, 1 -4 PM.

2014 CALENDAR OF EVENTS (cont'd)

MAY

17 Summer Lecture and Tea, Bata Shoe Company and Harford County, presented by author and historian, Larry Carmichael at the Historical Society Headquarters, 2 -4 PM, \$10

24 Fourth Saturday Open House at the Historical Society Headquarters/Pit Beef on the lawn, 10 AM – 2 PM

31 Mount Felix Winery Tour in Havre de Grace, additional information will follow in the next newsletter and on the web.



RESERVATION FORM

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Fee</u>	<u># Tickets</u>	<u>Amount</u>
March 9	Vintage Clothing Exhibit	\$5 adult	_____	_____
		\$3 senior/student		
March 29	Robbins Lecture/Wine and Cheese Reception	\$10	_____	_____
April 18	Maryland - The Movie	\$7	_____	_____
April 27	Children's Colonial Games Day	\$5 adult	_____	_____
		\$3 senior/student		

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED

\$_____

Times and descriptions of the events are more fully shown in the Coming Events portion of this newsletter. Tickets will also be available at the door on the day of event, but reservations are strongly encouraged. *Please enclose your check with your name and address and send to the Historical Society of Harford County, Inc., 143 N. Main Street, Bel Air, MD 21014. For more information, please call the Historical Society at 410-838-7691.*

The Historical Society
of Harford County, Inc.
143 North Main Street
Bel Air, MD 21014



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Michael Cullum
Mary Moses

DIRECTOR

Maryanna Skowronski

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Carol Deibel

HISTORICAL SOCIETY and GIFT SHOP HOURS

Tuesday
COURT RECORDS
9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

Wednesday
ARCHIVES
9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

Thursday
RESEARCH LIBRARY
9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

Fourth Saturday
ARCHIVES and
RESEARCH LIBRARY
10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.