

# The HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF HARFORD COUNTY, Inc.

*Preserving Our Past For Your Future*



143 N. Main Street  
Bel Air, MD 21014

## Society News

July / August 2014

Phone: (410) 838-7691

FAX: (410) 838-5257

E-Mail: HarcHis@msn.com

On the web: [www.HarfordHistory.org](http://www.HarfordHistory.org)



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

### IN THIS ISSUE

<i>Harford County and the War of Independence</i>	1
President's Message	3
New Members	3
Old Joppa Exhibit	4
Building Restoration	5
Did You Know?	5
Commercial Property Renovation Funds	6
New Shagena – Peden book coming soon	7
Judge Day's Memorabilia	7
Coming Events	8
Reservation Form	11

### HARFORD COUNTY AND THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

**Independence Day**, commonly known as the **Fourth of July**, is a federal holiday in the United States commemorating the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, declaring independence from the Kingdom of Great Britain (now officially known as the United Kingdom). Independence Day is commonly associated with fireworks, parades, barbecues, carnivals, fairs, picnics, concerts, baseball games, family reunions, and political speeches and ceremonies, in addition to various other public and private events celebrating the history, government, and traditions of the United States. Independence Day is the National Day of the United States. This is a very special holiday for the nation, but the contributions of local citizens to this effort should be celebrated as well.

In 1774, just as Harford County was established as a separate entity from Baltimore County, King George III approved the "Intolerable Acts: closing the Port of Boston, outlawing meetings in Massachusetts without royal approval, permitting the Royal Governor to remove trials to England and requiring citizens to quarter Royal troops." The Act enraged the colonists and led to the First Continental Congress which met in Philadelphia and appointed twelve delegates to petition King George for relief. At home on June 11, 1774, several Harford County citizens met in Bush, the county seat at that time and adopted a resolution pledging support and aid to the people of Boston. A few days later county representatives including John Love, Richard Dallam, Thomas Bond, Benedict Edward Hall and Jacob Bond attended the Maryland Convention in Annapolis. The Convention agreed to provide relief to the people of Boston and funds to purchase ammunition for the defense of "Lives, Liberties and Properties." As directed by the Maryland Assembly, the county established a War Committee with Aquila Hall as treasurer and began collecting contributions. The Congressional petition was ignored by the King and the colonists grew ever more frustrated. On March 22, 1775, thirty-four citizens from Harford

*(cont'd next page)*

*(cont'd from page 1)*

County signed the Bush Declaration supporting "opposition by arms to the British troops." The Declaration also provided the county motto "at risqué of our lives and fortunes." On April 19, 1775 the American colonies entered into war with Great Britain, a war that would last until 1783 and change the world forever.

The Continental Army formed in June 1775. Eventually approximately 3,600 Harford County citizens served as officers, soldiers, seaman, marines, militia or minutemen. Among the most prominent of these was William Paca, who helped establish state and national policies. War plans were actually developed locally through the War Committees. For Harford County this was done at Bush. The Committee required all freemen 15-60 years of age to organize themselves into companies with a minimum of 68 members. Each company was to select a captain, two lieutenants, an ensign, and four sergeants and to muster once a week until full membership was obtained. Harford's troops soon headed for battle in New York fighting on the Hudson River at Fort Washington. For those not engaged in the actual fighting, the war effort took a different turn. Joppa and Otter Point began constructing wooden ships and local furnaces provided iron needed for weapons and ammunition. On July 4, 1776, the Continental Congress in Philadelphia approved the Declaration of Independence and the British responded by expanding the war effort. Until this time, there was still the possibility that the colonies would remain a part of the British Empire.

In the fall of 1777, the British fleet came up the Bay and attacked the village of Joppa but locals were able to repulse the attackers. Throughout the war years, it was not unusual for our future "Founding Fathers" to pass through Harford along the Post Road (what is now MD Route 7), en route from Virginia to Philadelphia and to stop at Bush to inform local leaders about the war effort.

As the war shifted to Virginia, American and French troops had to move southward through Maryland, crossing at the ford and ferry at Bald Friar and the ferry at Susquehanna Lower Ferry (later known as Lapidum). These locations provided ideal although difficult crossings for troops and war supplies. The largest recorded troop movement was the army of 6,000 French soldiers commanded by Count *de Rochambeau* which crossed at Susquehanna Lower Ferry on September 9, 1781 to join with Washington and Lafayette in Virginia. The French Army camped by the side of the Post Road just south of Susquehanna Lower Ferry.

Earlier that year in April, General Lafayette and his forces crossed the river at Bald Friar and camped at the Rigbie mansion near Berkley. While there, General Lafayette and his officers quelled a potential mutiny. The troops were tired, poorly clad, ill-fed, without proper shoes, without pay for many weeks and traveling southward, farther from their homes. There had recently been an alarming number of desertions from their ranks. Yet the troops went on by way of Trappe Church to Churchville, Bush and southward to join in the eventual defeat of Cornwallis at Yorktown.

The war for independence ended with the signing of the Treaty of Paris on September 3, 1783. Now all of the troops could return home and continue the amazing feat of building a democratic republic.



### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

One of the most significant, enjoyable and pleasant happenings that brightened the weeks since publication of the past newsletter was the volunteer luncheon on Monday, May 19. Dorothy Stambaugh and Judy Rogers hosted a fantastic luncheon for their fellow volunteers that brought over sixty attendees. I was honored to have the opportunity to thank my fellow volunteers for their efforts and service to the Society. This occasion was entirely the result of the tireless efforts and generosity of two wonderful members.

If it weren't for our dedicated volunteer staff the Historical Society of Harford County, Inc. would cease to function. Granted we do have a talented Director but she alone could not do all the tasks the public requests from the Society. Volunteers are persons who willingly give of their time and talent to serve the needs of others. The needs of our Society are varied enough to provide tasks for people with a variety of interests and skills. This broad range of tasks allows for individuals to focus on areas they enjoy and get satisfaction in their efforts. Preparing for public events, both social and educational, assisting researchers in their search for ancestors or details of Harford history, reading to interpret data and objects in preparation for inclusion into our vast collection, the maintenance and preservation of the place we call home, and providing leadership for the well being of the organization are only some of the accomplishments carried out by volunteers.

Another significant occurrence was the awarding of a \$25,000 matching grant from the Dresher Foundation to the Historical Society for restoration of the building. Thanks go to the Director, Maryanna Skowronski, Carol Deibel, Chair of the Restoration Committee, and the members of her committee who organized a campaign to raise the Society's matching funds necessary to secure the grant. To all of those who contributed to the matching of the Dresher Foundation Fund, we are grateful for your generous contribution. These dollars will assure the completion of repairs to our roof and contribute to the modernization of our electrical system.

In light of the above accomplishments, when the opportunity presents itself be sure to thank a volunteer for his or her dedication to the mission of the Society.

*Richard Sherrill*

### NEW MEMBERS

Jeanne T. Bayer  
Jacob Bensen  
Sara B. Childs  
Pat Crouse  
David Dagati  
Beryl Fleming  
Brian Goodman  
Jule A. Grepps  
Cecilia Hartman

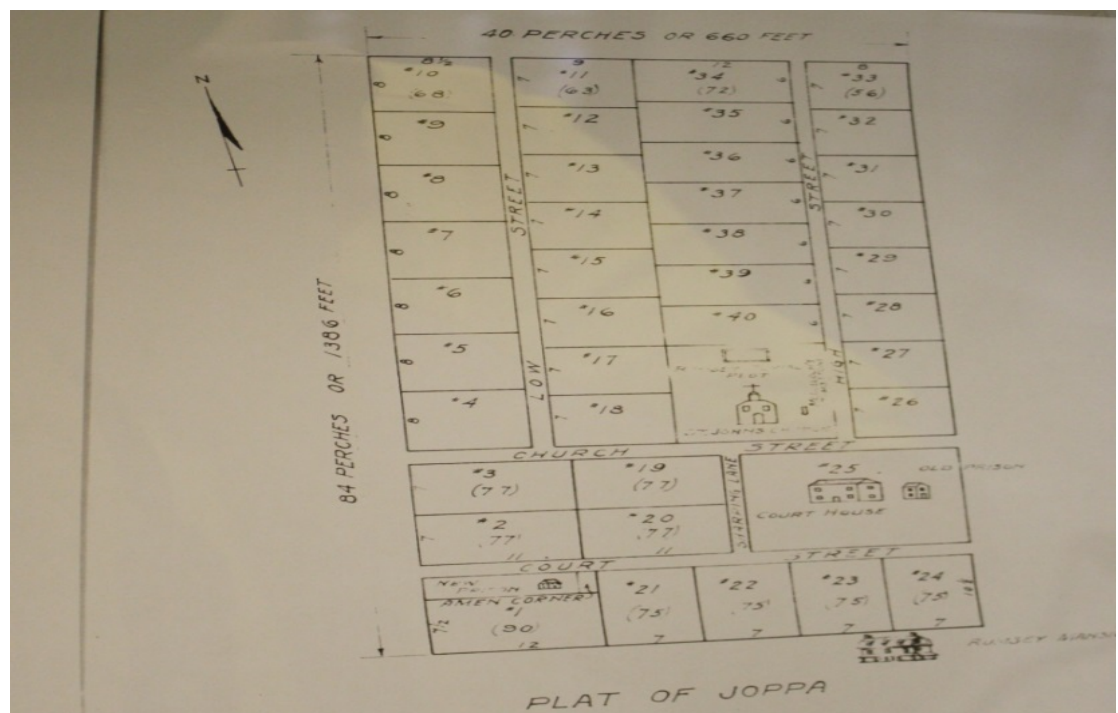
Barbara Hinder  
Elizabeth Day Levy  
Sarah Morrison  
Ron Mullin  
Morris "Rick" Richardson  
Eugene Schmid  
David Shaffer  
Kathleen and Kevin Shilko  
Anne Worthington



## OLD JOPPA EXHIBIT OPENS AT THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Old Joppa served as Baltimore County seat between 1709 and 1768. The earlier county seat "Old Baltimore" near current day APG was abandoned due to silting in the harbor. The General Assembly's choice of a replacement at Fosters Neck was scuttled due to Queen Anne's veto of the site. Colonists had not gotten permission before moving the county seat and offended the monarchy, so a new site "Old Joppa" was designated on the Gunpowder River. This became a thriving community with a court house, jail and several homes and businesses serving what are now Baltimore and Harford Counties for nearly sixty years, until once again silting destroyed harbor access and the county seat was moved to Baltimore on the Patapsco River.

The Historical Society of Harford County and the Archaeology Society of the Upper Chesapeake have coordinated a display of artifacts from a 1967 dig of the Rumsey Island site before the current houses were built. The exhibit includes glassware, pipes, ironware, buttons, bones and pottery. Come to the Historical Society to see all the material on display now till August of this year. A sample of some of the exhibit material is shown right.



*Plat of Joppa  
1709*

## BUILDING RESTORATION CAMPAIGN

We have some very good news to report. Thanks to the generosity of our members and the community, we were able to meet the Dresher Grant match and have received \$25,000 towards our restoration efforts. Also, Delegate Mary-Dulany James' office notified the Society that we were awarded a \$50,000 bond bill in the last legislative session. These funds are already helping with the repair projects as the capstone repairs began in June and the replacement of the tin roof is slated for July. The building committee is currently working on design of the electrical/lighting improvements and assessing the repointing/masonry repairs as well as the design of the flag court. These improvements have been prioritized to address serious water intrusion issues. Once they are completed we hope to address the window repairs and cosmetic needs of the building. So far we are about half way to our goal of raising \$500,000, the estimated cost of the necessary repairs.

Future fundraising initiatives will include continued efforts to identify and apply for grants, future bond bill applications, special events and house tours. The committee sincerely appreciates your support of the special events and tours. In May more than 70 people attended the wine and house tour at Mt. Felix Winery in Havre de Grace. This historic property provided the ideal location for a day's outing and a wonderful opportunity to showcase county history, vistas and a local business. All proceeds from the event went toward the building campaign.

Upcoming events include an Antique Appraisal Fair: What's in Your Attic? On September 6<sup>th</sup> at the Bel Air Armory and two concerts: Lincoln's Life and Legacy scheduled for November 15, 2014 and April 18, 2015. The first concert will take you on a journey from Lincoln's inauguration to Gettysburg and will feature Jim Chrismer's story of Harford County's role in the Civil War, Dr. Duke Thompson will provide the music of the day and the rich stories of Lincoln's connection to these pieces, many of which are original arrangements which will be accompanied by photographs depicting the places and people of the era. The second concert will take you beyond Gettysburg to the end of the Civil War, providing the same rich historical context. These events are not to be missed and proceeds will be used to meet our challenging goal of funding the restoration project. For more information or to order tickets, visit our website at [www.HarfordHistory.org](http://www.HarfordHistory.org), call the Society at 410-838-7691 or visit [www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com).



**DID YOU KNOW?** A few of us remember the Coale's store at 318 N. Main Street and are reminded of its quaint exterior from the outstanding mural at the TD Bank on Baltimore Pike, but did you know that before the meat market opened, the store was the Blazing Rag Saloon.



## HAVE A HISTORIC COMMERCIAL PROPERTY AND THINKING OF RENOVATING? FUNDS ARE NOW AVAILABLE

### Apply Now for Sustainable Communities Tax Credit Program

MHT Accepting Applications for Historic Commercial Properties through August 31.

Now is the time to submit an application for a state income tax credit for renovating your historic structures in Maryland.

Fiscal year 2015 applications opened in June for the Sustainable Communities Competitive Commercial Tax Credit program, administered by the Maryland Historical Trust. Commercial property owners may receive a tax credit on 20 percent of eligible expenses up to \$3 million for substantial rehabilitation projects.

The state tax credit program has helped property owners throughout Maryland redevelop and reuse historic buildings since 1996, resulting in the reuse of some of Maryland's most unique historic structures as well as creating spin-off community benefits. The program has been credited with creating jobs, enhancing values of nearby properties and transforming neglected neighborhoods. Studies have shown that every dollar of historic tax credits generates more than \$8 in economic activity and each \$1 million invested by the state program generates 72 jobs.

The program has funded rehabilitation projects all over Maryland, including Cambridge's High Spot restaurant, which revived and upgraded a diner that had closed and sat vacant, to the National Park Seminary in Silver Spring, which is now a dynamic mixed-housing community.

The commercial program is one of three Sustainable Communities Tax Credits that will be offered this year and next. Residential property owners can apply for credits through the Homeowner Tax Credit Program. In April, the Maryland General Assembly reauthorized the program for three years and expanded it to include a small commercial tax credit for modest rehabilitation projects such as new roofs and updated façades. MHT will review small commercial applications starting September 1 for projects beginning January 1, 2015.

For more information, go to the Maryland Historical Trust's tax credit page. Learn more about Maryland's sustainable policies, practices and programs at [green.maryland.gov](http://green.maryland.gov) and follow @GreenMaryland.



*Humanim renovated the American Brewery in Baltimore as its new headquarters.*

Photo: Paul Burk.



*The High Spot restaurant in Cambridge got a fresh start thanks to the tax credit program*

**NEW BOOK. Available soon at the Society's Gift shop**

*Duck Hunters on the Susquehanna Flats, 1850-1930*, by Henry C. Peden, Jr. and Jack L. Shagena, Jr. (2014). Softbound, 8 1/2 x 11, 120 pages, \$20 each (MD residents add 6% sales tax). Books will be available in the Gift Shop after July 15th, or order copies from the Historical Society of Harford County, 143 N. Main St., Bel Air, MD 21014 (add \$6.00 postage).

This book is part of the authors' Harford's County Rural Heritage series. it serves primarily as a "who's who" of men and women duck hunters who lived in Harford County, but it also includes gunners from elsewhere who obtained ducking licenses here (suffice it to say, some hunters did not get licenses) between 1850 and 1930, the golden age of duck hunting in the upper Chesapeake Bay.

Shooters from all walks of life visited the area, including President Grover Cleveland, the Pierponts and the DuPonts, "Sultan of Swat" Babe Ruth and "Little Sure Shot" Annie Oakley. They are just a few of the some 2,500 gunners presented in the book with biographical bullets that include, for many of them, years of birth and death, places of residence and burial, occupations and civic organizations, along with a synopsis of their ducking licenses and hunting experiences. Photographs of some of the gunners have also been inserted.

**SOCIETY RECEIVES JUDGE DAY'S MEMORABILIA**

The Society was recently presented with the gift of many pieces of memorabilia belonging to the late Stewart Day, Chief Judge of the Third Judicial Circuit of Maryland (Harford/Baltimore counties.)

Judge Day's daughter, Elizabeth Day Levy and her husband William M. Levy, visited the Society in May and brought with them a collection of items that had belonged to the Judge. Included were a set of judge's robes, a ceremonial gavel, a youth baseball uniform from Judge Day's childhood and many other items. Society Director Maryanna Skowronski and VP Carol Deibel spent an enjoyable time talking with the Levys who had driven in from Towson to make the donation.

The Historical Society is pleased to add the Levys' donation to its collection of artifacts and ephemera.

## COMING EVENTS

### HAYS HOUSE MUSEUM CELEBRATES THE SEASON

As it does every year, Hays House will mark the Fourth of July with special events and free admission on **Friday, July 4 from 9 am to 12 noon**. Learn about rural Maryland life as it was during America's early years, and listen to period music played by the Catherine Street Consort. Also, see this summer's new exhibit of vintage clothing. Learn about Harford County women in an era of change that shifted women's roles from hearth and home to being major influences in the community.



### GOOD 'OLE FASHION SCHOOL DAYS

Come help us celebrate a very special event. On **Wednesday, August 13<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM** at the Historical Society, 143 N. Main Street in Bel Air, visitors will be given a rare glimpse of the old Bel Air Academy as seen through the eyes of several local plein aire artists.

The Gordon Street school building, originally known as the Bel Air Academy and Graded School, dates from 1912 and still sparks nostalgic feelings from former students. For some the memories are of going to a "real public school," one of the first in Harford County and for others, part of that ongoing tradition feeling that kids get from going "where their brothers and sisters used to go."

The building evolved into Harford County School Headquarters from 1950-2006, its outward appearance still reflects that "old school ambience" now to be embodied in paintings and sketches rendered by painters Joan Preston, Connie Beims, Janet Scarborough, Eleanor Mulholland, Virginia Streamer, Gwyn Howard, Beverly Browning, Loretta Di Loretto, and Stephen Howard.



The group, charged by "sentimental graduate" John Sauers, was challenged to come up with "interpretations" of the building—something more than merely representational. These drawings and paintings will be on display and available for sale along with displays of memorabilia from the school including diplomas, pins, photos, athletic ribbons and the like. The event is **free** but donations to the building campaign are welcome. Light refreshments will be served. This is a wonderful opportunity to revisit an earlier time in Harford and meet with some of the graduates from this very special place. Please RSVP if you plan on attending by calling the Society at 410-838-7691 or completing the Reservation form at the back of the newsletter.



COMING EVENTS (*cont'd*)

WHAT'S IN YOUR ATTIC?  
AN ANTIQUE & COLLECTIBLES APPRAISAL FAIR  
SAVE THE DATE



Presented by:  
*The Historical Society of  
Harford County, Inc.*

***What's In Your Attic?  
Antiques and Collectibles  
Appraisal Event***

**Saturday, September 6, 2014  
9:00 am – 3:00 pm**



**Bel Air Armory  
37 N. Main Street  
Bel Air  
Free Parking**

**20+ professional appraisers  
Cost: \$10.00 per item  
Maximum three items per person**

**For more information:  
410-838-7691  
[www.HarfordHistory.org](http://www.HarfordHistory.org)**

On Saturday, September 6, 2014 from 9 AM – 3 PM, the Historical Society will sponsor an appraisal fair at the Bel Air Armory, 37 N. Main Street featuring more than 20 professional appraisers from throughout the state. The Fair is both a fundraiser and a “friendraiser” designed to raise much needed funds for the Society’s building restoration campaign and to introduce the Society’s mission to the community.

For just \$10 per item, you can come and learn the history and value of your family’s heirlooms while supporting the Historical Society of Harford County in its effort to fund repairs to its 77 year old headquarters.

Tickets will be available for purchase the day of the event, but may be purchased now at the Society headquarters, on the Society website, [www.HarfordHistory.org](http://www.HarfordHistory.org), or at [www.eventbrite.com/e/whats-in-your-attic-antique-and-collectibles-appraisal-event](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/whats-in-your-attic-antique-and-collectibles-appraisal-event).

An express line will be in place for pre-purchased ticket holders.

Additionally, the Society is seeking sponsors ranging from \$100 to \$2,500 for the Appraisal Fair. Each sponsorship level includes many benefits for your business or organization. All sponsors are listed in our

program; other benefits are included based on sponsorship level. For more information about becoming a sponsor call Mary Moses at 443-866-3419 or Mary Cardwell at 410-638-1284.

## COMING EVENTS (*cont'd*)

### ANNUAL DINNER FEATURES THE MARQUIS de LAFAYETTE

**On Thursday, September 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM,** Society members are invited to attend a very special dinner and show at the Maryland Golf and Country Club. Mark Schneider, who portrays the Marquis de Lafayette at various and frequent occasions in Colonial Williamsburg, will be the speaker at the Historical Society's 2014 Annual Dinner. Born in Quebec, Canada his family moved to the United States, where his interest in history became focused on military history. To further his appreciation for the contributions of those involved in combat situations he enlisted in the U. S. Army. After serving in the military, Mr. Schneider accepted a position in Colonial Williamsburg working in the brickyard. He claims that he was eventually selected to portray the vibrant and energetic French aristocratic military officer because he could speak French and ride a horse.

Mr. Schneider has spent a great deal of time and energy researching his character so that his presentations and his answers to follow-up questions from the audience have the effect of making the audience feel that he is truly the Marquis. Mark Schneider enjoys his role as Lafayette but has also portrayed Benedict Arnold on occasion, which requires a major adjustment in his thought patterns. On several occasions he has portrayed Napoleon Bonaparte at various locations in Europe.

We are fortunate to have arranged for Mr. Schneider's appearance at our dinner and look forward to a delightful evening the cost for the dinner and show is only \$35 per person and will include your choice of Grilled Salmon with grain mustard sauce **or** Bousin cheese and spinach stuffed chicken breast with Madeira wine sauce. Salad, rolls and butter as well as coffee, hot and iced tea are included. Dessert is crème Brule in keeping with our French menu theme.

Reservations are required. See the form at the back of the newsletter.



*It is a great pity to read a book too soon in life. The first impression is the one that counts; and if it is a slight one, it may be all that can be hoped for. A later and second perusal may recoil from a surface already hardened by premature contact. Young people should be careful in their reading, as old people in eating their food. They should not eat too much. They should chew it well.*

Winston S. Churchill

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](http://www.HarfordHistory.org), [www.facebook.com/TheHistoricalSocietyofHarfordCounty](http://www.facebook.com/TheHistoricalSocietyofHarfordCounty) or call 410-838-7691.



## RESERVATION FORM

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Fee</u>	<u># Tickets</u>	<u>Amount</u>
July 4	Hays House Independence Day Celebration	Free	_____	\$0.00
August 13	Good Ole Fashion School Days- Art Exhibit & Sale	Free	_____	\$0.00
September 6	Antiques & Collectibles Appraisal Fair	\$10/item (max 3 items)	_____	_____
September 25	Annual Dinner Enter quantity: Salmon _____, Chicken _____	\$35 ea	_____	_____

**TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED**

**\$\_\_\_\_\_**



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



**Nonprofit Org.**  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
BEL AIR, MD 21014  
PERMIT No. 40

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED  
July / August 2014

DATED MATERIAL

The NEWSLETTER of The Historical Society of Harford County, Inc. is published bi-monthly.

**OFFICERS 2014-2015**

***President***  
*Richard Sherrill*

***Vice President***  
*Carol Deibel*

***Secretary***  
*Elizabeth Lehmann*

***Treasurer***  
*Brianne B. Norris*

***Past President***  
*Henry Peden*

**TRUSTEES 2013-2014**

*George Harrison*

*Walter Holloway*

*A. A. Roberty*

*John Spielberger*

**TRUSTEES 2014-2015**

*Mary Cardwell*  
*Richard Herbig*

*Larry Carmichael*  
*Edward Meerholz*

*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.