

The HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF HARFORD COUNTY, Inc.

Preserving Our Past For Your Future



143 N. Main Street
Bel Air, MD 21014

Society News

November / December 2017

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

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Where are we now? Where will we be?

The Historical Society of Harford County, Inc. has grown over the past twenty years and has made great strides to become a major asset in the preservation of the unique and positive history of our county. As the months are dwindling in my term of office, it seems appropriate to review the accomplishments that the members and friends of the society have brought about during the past years.

Collectively, we have built upon the successes of previous Presidents and Boards of Directors and are continuing to add to our achievements. Many of our longtime members have witnessed, benefited from, and worked to bring about these changes. Our newer members have joined the Society because they see the value of our collection for their own research and have made good use of our historic materials and programming. Volunteers with a variety of skills, dedication and years of donated hours have fused into a strong body that makes us what we are today. Several areas of accomplishments that I would like to chronicle are restoration, outreach, collections management, and administration.

Our buildings, historical structures in themselves, have been the recipients of careful restoration and maintenance. At headquarters we have replaced the roof, sealed the walls, and refurbished the facade of the building. These tasks have made the building more attractive and more watertight. We have replaced the concrete parking lot, which will provide a safer surface and better drainage for decades to come. The final major external restoration, which will occur as soon as possible, will focus on the main floor windows.

On the interior, we have acquired new lighting, freshly painted walls, a modern heating system, more efficient and attractive library shelving, and a better layout of the furnishings in the research and work areas. However, we plan to do additional restoration in the lobby area and improve upon our ability to display and interpret long hidden elements of our holdings.

In the basement, improved storage space was created for the housing and preservation of artifacts – objects, fine art, and textiles, as well as

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maps, zoning plats, excess library materials, and irreplaceable court and county records. More work in this area is required to improve the climatic conditions and prepare storage areas to create a proper place to house our ever-expanding collection.

Improvements to the Hays House Museum show evidence of our stewardship with the installation of a new HVAC unit, internal and external painting, cleaning, grounds keeping and general repairs. Soon, roof and siding work will be required to maintain the integrity of the historic structure.

Traditionally, assistance to researchers has been the major public focus of the Society. Today that service continues and so do additional elements of historical outreach. Our bylaws require quarterly historical presentations but recently additional options have expanded our focus on community education. In-school and in-house presentations have been made to elementary and middle school students by volunteers. New programs - Brown Bag Lunches, Genealogical Toolbox, the Learning Bee Series, Harford History on Parade and the "Down Yonder" event, among others, have reached out to county residents in fresh programs that draw new and old friends to the Society and give them a better understanding of the county's history. As in the past, we continue to assist numerous organizations in the county to better understand and promote Harford's history. Numerous authors have prepared additional issues of the *Harford Historical Bulletin*. We are currently expanding on our desire to highlight our collection in a museum-type environment, and by doing this; we can make the Historical Society of Harford County a destination of choice for tourists who visit the area.

One of the long-established tasks of volunteers has been the preparation of materials to benefit researchers. Many dedicated individuals have organized and cataloged thousands of archival materials, including photographs and court records, library items and genealogical materials, along with a multitude of artifacts. They faithfully transcribed this data onto 3x5" index cards.

With the proliferation of computers, new methods of cataloging prodded the Society to adopt modern techniques. We began using Past Perfect, a digital cataloging program, in 2007. Since then, volunteers have added over 116,000 individual items and collections into a digital catalog that is not only available in-house but on-line via our website. To accomplish this, an increasing number of interconnected computers have been put into service on all levels of the headquarters building, and the amount of stored data continues to grow. Proper methods of backup are in place to protect this digital system. This expansion of material has also required the traditional divisions of the collection to be expanded by the development of several independent subdivisions with their own budgets. As time passes, we will need to find and utilize additional dedicated volunteers to maintain this forward momentum.

Administratively there has been parallel growth. Bylaws and Policy & Procedures manuals have been expanded and updated to keep up with the ever-growing requirements to fulfill the mission and objectives of the Society. The Board of Trustees members and the Executive Committee have devoted a great deal of time and effort to create these enhancements and have addressed all the other issues brought before them. Over the years much effort has been expended to improve other tasks of running the Society - the systems for financial accounting, annual giving, membership, and tracking volunteer hours.

Staff support and leadership have expanded to keep pace with all this growth. Without the dedication of the director and administrative assistant, this organization would have great difficulty functioning on a day-to-day basis. Soon we will need to consider expanding the staff with additional qualified people to handle collections management, assist researchers and maintain the front desk.

Our ability to preserve Harford's history will grow exponentially in the next decade as we attract additional supporters by expanding our communication with the community. Eight new people have been elected to serve on the Board of Trustees to provide expertise and experience in the areas that need additional development. I trust they will give us their best, and we will do likewise.

My last term as president is ending, but the work to advance the growth and development of our Society will and must continue. In closing, I would like to paraphrase a former President of the United States when I challenge you to "Ask not what the Historical Society of Harford County can do for you, but ask what you can do for **your** Society." - *Richard Sherrill*, President

IN MEMORIAM

We are sad to report the loss of three long time members of the Historical Society in the past month. They were Elwin Penski, David Hodge and Colonel Benjamin Silver.

Elwin ("El") Carl Penski (June 18, 1935 - September 3, 2017) received his education at Catonsville High School, Philadelphia Textile Institute (now Philadelphia University), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and the University of Utah. Upon leaving military service, El continued as a research chemist at the University of Dayton Research Institute and then at Aberdeen Proving Ground.

El was always involved in environmental work. In 1973, he and his wife, Betty Wright Penski, proposed to the State of Maryland that a large part of Cunningham Falls State Park be set aside as a wildland. In 1981, the Maryland Legislature set aside the proposed area, 3500 acres. He and Betty maintained a few miles of the Appalachian Trail and regional trails for many years. He was president of the Otter Point Creek Alliance. He served as the webmaster for the Historical Society of Harford County and served on the Board of Directors for four years. He is the founder of the Junius B. Booth Society, Inc. El has received numerous awards for his Equal Employment Opportunity, scientific, leadership, historical, and charitable contributions. In 2009, he coauthored and published a history book, *Al's Odyssey, from Catonsville to Japan*, Edward Albert Aldridge II's World War II Letters.

Sadly, the Society has lost another member who, over the years, has been very supportive of our mission. The Society President, Richard Sherrill attended the Memorial Service for David C. Hodge, a Life Member of the Society, at Churchville Presbyterian Church on September 28th. He noted, "It was a privilege on behalf of the Society to remember and honor Dave at his Memorial Service." He was a gentleman and a talented and genteel man who gave so much to the society in time, talent and generosity. He was a gifted photographer as well and donated much of his collection to the Society to be shared with members and future generations. He will be sorely missed.

Colonel Ben Silver was born on August 22, 1922 and passed away on Saturday, August 26, 2017. Colonel Silver was a generous supporter of the Historical Society even after his move to Gatesville, Texas where he lived at the time of passing. Benjamin graduated from Havre de Grace High School in 1939 and the University of Maryland in September of 1943. He enlisted in the United States Army and graduated from officer candidate school, in Fort Benning, GA. He is to be buried at Deer Creek Harmony Church Cemetery in Harford County.

NEW MEMBERS

Ann Blouse, Anne Fazio, Rob Furlong Lyle Garitty, Cecilia Hartman, Daniel and Katherine Hopkins, Cynthia Leyko-Fleischman, Diane Mitchell, Waverly Moore-Haney, Sandra Neville, Caleb Thompson, Milton E. Whiteford, Harvey Miller.

HARFORD MUTUAL CELEBRATES ITS 175TH ANNIVERSARY

The Mutual Fire Insurance Company of Harford County was formed at the Bel Air Court House Orphans Court in 1842 at a time when John Tyler was U.S. President, the telegraph was not yet in operation (the first telegraph line was funded in 1843 between Baltimore and Washington), and two years before the formal opening of the Naval Academy in Annapolis. This was a time of major expansion in the United States, a time before banks, a time of discovery.



One of the early booklets distributed by the company states that “To understand a company one must know its history. Successful companies are not those who make money alone. They are companies who, because of the faithful adherence to an idea and an ideal have lived through many trials to ripe old age. The history of Mutual Fire Insurance Company in Harford County is closely interwoven with the history of Maryland ... formed by Maryland people and dedicated to the service of policy-holders; the history of the company is rich and colorful.” The company has truly lived up to this description not only for its longevity – it is one of the oldest mutual fire insurance companies still writing insurance in the country – but also for its tremendous contributions to the community both through employment, volunteerism, and financial support.

The State Legislature chartered the company and granted it full power and authority to “Make insurances on any kind of property against loss and damage by fire and generally to transact, execute and perform all such business as may appertain to a fire insurance company.” The initial Board consisted of 15 members who elected James Moores as its first President and John S. Norris as its first Secretary. In later years Mr. Norris served as the President of the First National Bank of Baltimore and President of the Sheppard Asylum.

Board members served without reimbursement and the Secretary was voted the sum of \$200 per year for his services. Each director was voted the sum of \$1.00 for each meeting he attended and six cents per mile mileage. The President was allowed the same mileage charge and \$2.00 for each meeting he attended. Members agreed to share losses proportionately to the amount of insurance they carried. Thus, expenses were kept at a minimum and insurance was furnished practically at cost.

The company’s first home was a small office on Courtland Street in Bel Air. By 1887, the business had grown and the company moved to an office in the Masonic Lodge on Wall Street directly behind the Court House. In 1906, Harford Mutual needed its own building, relocating to the former Dunnigan’s Hotel at 33 Courtland Street and eventually in 1921 to 18 Office Street. Business continued to expand until ultimately the company moved to its current home in 1953 at Main and Gordon Streets. This longevity and continual expansion was the result of a strong business plan and commitment to its customers.

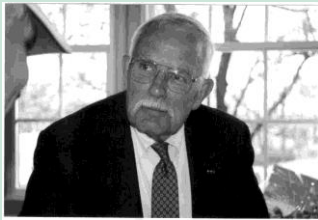
The original procedure to obtain insurance coverage was a multi-step process. Applicants were required to submit a written application to at least two of the company Directors. The Directors would then visit and evaluate the property. The insurance could be no more than three-quarters of the value of the property. If approved, the applicant would then sign the company’s constitution and become a member. At this point the insured was required to provide a “note of hand” for the premium. In case of loss, policy owners notified the company Secretary who called a special meeting of the Board of Directors. The Board had to approve all projects. Construction material determined Premium rates: ½% of value for brick or stone with tile, slate or metal roofs and 2% of value for wood, farm buildings, mills and factories. 1% was added for stores that sold liquor. The first policy was issued at a cost of \$32 to Bay View Farm on June 19, 1843 which

was owned by Cheyney Hoskins.

Today, after a name change in 1947 to Harford Mutual Insurance Company, the Harford Mutual employs over 150 people and has expanded into eight states and Washington DC.

The Historical Society congratulates Harford Mutual Insurance on its 175th Anniversary and thanks the Company for its many years of service to Harford County.

CHARLES L. ROBBINS AWARDED THE GEORGE ARCHER FELLOW AWARD



The Historical Society established the George Archer Fellow Award to recognize Society members and others in the community who have demonstrated exceptional service and provided unique contributions toward the Society's mission *to collect, preserve, promote and interpret the rich and diverse history of the Harford County area...for the education and enjoyment of current and future generations*. This year's award went to Charles L. Robbins.

The numerous students who were fortunate enough to have Mr. Robbins as their history teacher will testify that they learned more and enjoyed his classes more than any others. He could bring history alive and is credited with influencing the careers and interests of many of these students. He is the author of several books both for the school system and for the general public. Each of his published works communicates a unique story of Harford's history. These include *Harford Images*, *R Madison Mitchell: His Life and Decoys*, and *The Heavenly Waters Gang* (a story about growing up in Bel Air in the 40s). Additionally, as a long time Society member, he served on the Board as Vice President and still provides assistance and background on collection materials and research needs.

Mr. Robbins has that rare gift of storytelling that captures an audience. He has presented numerous talks on county history for the Historical Society, taught county teachers, as well as students, the history of Harford County and Maryland and entertained many other audiences with his skill as a raconteur.

The Society is very pleased to announce Charles L. Robbins as this year's George Archer Fellow Award.

GOOD NEWS



On Thursday, September 28th, a ribbon cutting was held for the Society's newly paved parking area. County Executive, Barry Glassman, State Senator Wayne Norman and Jeff Deller, Project Manager for the contractor, Kinsley Construction and several society members were on hand to help celebrate the completion of this much needed project. The Society sincerely appreciates the support received from the State, the County, the Dresher Foundation, Henry and Veronica Peden and private donors without whom this project could not have been achieved.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES ELECTED FOR 2018-2019

The Historical Society held its Annual Dinner at the Maryland Golf and Country Club on September 20th. A major part of this event is the election of Board of Trustee members for the upcoming term of office. The Society is pleased to announce that the following members will serve in the Class of 2018-2019: Meg Algren, Mark Dardozzi, Jennifer Dombeck, Edward Hopkins, French Poole, Angela Saccenti, Terry Trouyet and William Walden. Additionally, three members of the existing Board will continue for an additional one year term. They are George Harrison, Larry Carmichael and Richard Herbig, Esq. President Sherrill also announced the officers for the 2018-2019 class as President, Carol Deibel, Vice President, Walter Holloway, Treasurer, Brianne Baccaro Norris, Recording Secretary Elizabeth Lehmann and Corresponding Secretary, Page Smart. The Society thanks these members for offering their service and congratulates them on their appointments. We are truly fortunate to have such a dedicated and talented group of Trustees.

After a delicious meal and the annual Board elections, President Richard Sherrill presented a plaque which will be installed in the Society's library recognizing Henry and Veronica Peden's donation to the Society's restoration program as well as recognizing Henry's dedication and contribution to the Society's genealogical collection. Attendees were then entertained by Bryan Austin portraying President James Madison. Mr. Austin, a living history performer at Williamsburg, transported the audience to the years leading up to the American Revolution and captivated the audience with his knowledge of our founding fathers, bringing them to life as real people with amazing intellect and all of the human faults and frailties that make history truly fascinating.

COMING EVENTS

Harford County Genealogical Workshop – Fall Series

Wednesday, November 8th 2017, 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. HIDDEN SOURCES II

- Genealogist Christopher T. Smithson will continue his series on untypical sources of information for research.

Wednesday, December 13th 2017, 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. LAND RECORDS

- Genealogist Mary Worthington will cover information on land records, land grants and the details they can provide.

Archer Lecture & Tea:

The McCommons Diaries 1932 – 1942: the Life of a WW I Veteran in Depression Era Havre de Grace

Soldiers returning from the front lines in France at the end of World War I found their lives disrupted in unimaginable ways. Some suffered severe trauma from the nightmarish experience of war, others suffered from exposure to gas warfare and others came home incapacitated by injuries. Many were sent to Perry Point, just north of Harford County where doctors were just beginning to develop treatments to help these physical and mental injuries. One of these soldiers was Herbert Mc Commons of Havre de Grace. As part of his treatment, doctors recommended that he keep a diary. A few years ago this diary was donated to the Historical Society and is now the subject of an upcoming Society Bulletin.

The diary leads readers on a journey through the Depression years in Havre de Grace, describing day to day existence from fishing on the flats,



family gatherings at the “Graw”, the popular movies and reading material of the day and yes even the political in-fighting – some things never change.

The lecture and tea will be held on **Saturday, November 4th at 2 pm** at the Historical Society Headquarters, 143 N. Main St., Bel Air, MD 21014. Tickets are \$10 per person. For reservations complete the reservation form at the back of this newsletter or call the Society at 410-838-7691.

World War I Centennial Celebration

On Saturday, November 11th, at 10:30 AM the Historical Society of Harford County will gather to recognize the service of Harford County’s WWI veterans with a brief ceremony to be held at the Bel Air Reckord Armory on Main Street. The public is invited to join members of the Society in front of the Armory for a Flag and Wreath placement event and bell ringing which will commemorate the end of the First World War. After the ceremony all are invited to progress to the Historical Society for light refreshments and a talk by William Biehl on the musical heritage of World War I.

Mr. Biehl is a noted authority on vintage sheet music and songs. His talk will focus on the stage musicals that were performed by and for the soldiers stationed at various encampments both locally and afar. In particular he will talk about the show staged at nearby Aberdeen Proving Ground where the young soldiers played not only the men’s role but the women’s as well!

Visitors will also be able to view the Society WWI exhibit between 9 and 2 pm.

The event is free to the public and all are invited. Reservations are not required but are requested. For more information contact the Society at 410-838-7691.

This year marks the 100th Anniversary of our country’s entrance into World War I and the development of Aberdeen Proving Ground. To mark the occasion, the Society has prepared a series of exhibits, displays and an amazing trove of information about Harford County residents who served in many capacities during the war. If you had a relative who served in any branch of the service, as a Red Cross nurse or as a volunteer, chances are the documentation of their service is part of the collection. Walter Holloway spent much of the last year collecting service records, photographs and stories about these amazing people and the trials and tribulations of the time.

The War in Europe began on July 28, 1914 after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary. By August 1914, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia, France and Britain were at War. The Germans invaded Belgium on August 4th and the U.S. formally declared neutrality. Many Americans sailed for Europe to fight or nurse the wounded on both sides, but the general populations wanted to avoid the War at all costs. Even after the Lusitania was sunk by a German submarine, killing 1,200 people, 128 of them



Red Cross Nurses heading to battlefields

Americans, the U. S. maintained its neutrality. The War widened to even more countries and Battles raged in Europe, Russia and Africa. For a time, the Germans restricted attacks on neutral shipping but rescinded this in February 1917. In March, the White House released the Zimmerman telegram to the press exposing German attempts to draw Mexico into the War against the U.S. Shortly thereafter on April 6, 1917 the U.S. declared War on Germany.

Locally, Harford County changed forever. Life centered around the War effort: the Emergency Loan Act introduced Liberty

Bond sales; the Selective Service Act instituted the draft; the Espionage Act limited civil liberties; rationing became a way of life; but the major change came in October 1917 when President Wilson signed the order taking thousands of acres of the County's coastline for development of the army installations in Aberdeen and Edgewood.

Over the next year and a half, thousands of men worked and trained at Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG). Many went on to fight at the Battle of Meuse-Argonne and others. This is an opportunity to learn their stories and the story of the military in Harford County.



The Battle of Meuse-Argonne

One of the forgotten aspects of the War is the homemakers challenge of dealing with rationing. The following is an example of propaganda efforts even in War Era Cookbooks.

SAVING FOOD AND EXPENSE FOR VICTORY

America may march to victory on its stomach. a nation's morale and health depend greatly upon food. If the homemaker can do nothing else, she can wage an earnest battle for health and strength for her family in the kitchen, and thus contribute her share to ultimate victory on the military front.

The book went on to describe what to buy, how to use leftovers and how to deal with rationing.

The restricted use of sugar has brought with it many welcome benefits. The homemaker is discovering that using less sugar helps prevent excess body weight. It serves the appetite for the essential nutrients. It also unmasks the natural flavors of foods.

War propaganda abounded. We hope you will visit the Society and learn more about this time in our history and perhaps share stories and memorabilia about this time of conflict that have been handed down in your families.

Brown Bag Lunch Series

On Tuesday, November 14th at 12:30 pm the lunch time series will continue with Maryanna Skowronski and the story of *The History of Fox Hunting in Maryland*. Fox hunting in Maryland can be traced back to the period following the Revolutionary War. Its story and that of the people who participated in the sport is a fascinating tale that continues even today. Come trace the development of the sport from informal private gatherings to numerous Hunt Clubs throughout the east coast and the development of the Elkridge-Harford Hunt Club in particular. (No Brown Bag Lunch program is scheduled for December.)



Hays House Happenings

On Sunday November 12, 1-4 pm join us at Hays House for a delightful afternoon when historic reenactor Pam Williams prepares a scrumptious meal of early-American fare over the open hearth as was done by our ancestors in American Colonial days. Mrs. Williams, dressed in Colonial



garb, will enlighten us about the food and cooking methods of the 18th century.



On **Saturday and Sunday, December 2 and 3**, Hays House will host a free Christmas Open House from **1 to 4 pm**. The museum will be decorated with arrangements of fresh greens by the Country Garden Club of Harford County, which is a founding supporter of the historic mission of the Hays House dating from its move from Main Street in 1960 to its present location. Begin the holiday season at Hays House, and on Sunday listen to the Catherine Street Consort playing their arrangements of holiday music on period instruments.

All events include a tour of the historic Hays House, the oldest house in Bel Air built circa 1788.

ON DOING HISTORY

by Jim Chrismer

Among the most fascinating sources of history are personal letters. While always of interest to families and individuals directly connected to the author or to a particular topic, letters (like memoirs, diaries, autobiographies) vary in value to Historians anxious to depict the past as fully accurate as possible and with producing credible and inclusive explanations of an earlier time. Letters from soldiers from the 19th to early 20th century are a case in point.

This topic is extremely timely this month as we observe Veterans' Day during the centennial year of America's 1917 entry into World War I.

Among the records in the collection of the Historical Society is a printed copy of a letter from Silas Winfield (Mike) Cain, written from France to his mother in Bel Air. The date: November 11, 1918, Armistice Day, the Monday morning when the Allied and Central Powers agreed to end what was then called "The Great War."

Cain was the third son and fourth of five children of Henry and Charlotte B. Cain, farmers from the Hickory-Forest Hill area of the county. On Monday, April 9, 1917, three days after the United States declared war against Germany and its allies, the unmarried 23-year-old left the family farm for the Armory in Bel Air, where he enlisted in Company D, First Regiment of the Maryland National Guard.

Action for the Harford County troops came slowly. For several months the Guard helped secure local vital infrastructure from possible sabotage. In early August the troops were mustered into federal service, became part of the burgeoning United States Army, and were sent for advanced training to Camp McClellan, Alabama. Eleven demanding months later, in July 1918, Mike Cain and his mates finally left for Europe as part of the newly organized 115th Regiment, 58th Brigade, 29th Division, United States Army.



Events moved quickly once the Marylanders arrived in France. Within days the 115th found itself in the trenches in the Alsace region of France, a supposedly quiet sector that

suddenly came alive, providing the 29th with a baptism of fire that resulted in 744 casualties. In late September the now-hardened Division received orders to join the massive Meuse-Argonne offensive. For twenty-one straight days in October, the 29th fought forward over four miles, captured some 2000 prisoners, and destroyed some 250 machine guns or artillery pieces. One-third of its soldiers suffered casualties in helping break the backbone of the Central Powers. When the Armistice came, Mike Cain and the 29th were in reserve awaiting another possible campaign.

Combat experience has few comparisons, and accounts by its participants can be especially compelling. Documentarian Ken Burns demonstrated their forceful nature in his magisterial series on the Civil War, utilizing selections to carry his viewers on the multi-faceted journey from Fort Sumter in April 1861 to Appomattox four years later. Writers of the Mexican War, the Wars in the West, and of the Spanish American War have likewise used the raw observations of participants to great advantage in communicating the life of a soldiers and the intensity of combat.

The dramatic rise in recent decades of Social and Cultural History has been abetted by soldiers' correspondence. Letters home like those employed by Burns and historians of America's 19th century wars are rich with the thoughts and the details of soldiers' everyday experiences. However mundane, exciting, comforting, painful, boring, pleasant, unpleasant, serious, and silly, the observations of "your boy" convey a sense of openness and candidness that contrast with the stark, conceptualized, and self-protective language of "official" documents produced at the higher levels of an army.

The letters of the ordinary soldier carry little interest or value to military historians focused on policy, strategy, and tactics. Seldom during the lengthy periods of relative quiet between battles -- and certainly never during a major clash when he would have been enveloped by noise, smoke, and fire -- was the common soldier aware of the larger picture of which he was a part. He would be fortunate (perhaps not) to know what was occurring directly in front of him. Anything soldiers may have included in their letters about movements of a given engagement would have been by way of hearsay or "guesstimation."

Sadly, Mike Cain's letters to his parents and siblings back home on Jarrettsville Road differed greatly in content and tone from those of his earlier counterparts. Why? Soldiers' letters during the "War to make the world safe for democracy" were heavily censored. In the interests of security and morale at home, once out of the country America's "Doughboys" received strict instructions as to what they could **not** include in their letters: their location, troop movements, condition of the unit and of their living circumstances, and the impact of recent action on the army's strength and readiness. Letters were to be mailed at a U.S. Postal station, not in a French post office. "ABOVE ALL," the directives stressed, formulating or using "any system of code, cipher, shorthand, or any other means of concealing the true meaning of your letters...is the surest road to a court martial and to severe punishment."

WW I soldiers, indeed, "played it safe," and took great care not to challenge their instructions. Even with the armistice, Mike Cain's letter the night of the war's conclusion made no mention of location beyond indicating that his village "was not the smallest over here," and that the "few people" living there "flocked to the doors" in joy, and are "parading after an old boy about seventy who is doing his darndest [sic] on a drum" of a far earlier period. Still veiling any concrete assessment, Cain asserted that "No doubt the 29th is mighty lucky," acknowledging that "I have never mentioned just how long we were at the front and what took place, but am now glad to say that I pulled through O.K."

Despite the blandness of WWI correspondence, families like the Cains took great comfort in the mere arrival of a letter "from somewhere in France" or "from the front." Even at the moment of what must have been his happiest experience since April of 1917, the dutiful Cain concluded: "glad I'm all whole. Devotedly yours,

Sergeant S. W. Cain, 29th M. P. Co."

After his return to Bel Air in May 1919 Mike Cain held a number of jobs while studying law at the University Of Baltimore. In 1930 he married Belle Taylor and had a son, S. Winfield Cain, Jr. Active in Democratic politics, he was twice elected Clerk of the Court in the mid-1930s, but resigned to open his own law practice. He died in 1966 and is buried at Christ Episcopal Church in Forest Hill. Mrs. Cain lived another twenty-six years, eventually moving to Pennsylvania.

HELP WANTED

Volunteers are always needed at the Society. If you have a few hours to give, please contact us at Volunteer@HarfordHistory.org or call 410-838-7691. Some jobs require volunteers to come to the Society, but others can be done from home. Let us know if you would like to explore the possibilities.

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Available to everyone

RESERVATION FORM

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Fee</u>	<u># Tickets</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Nov 4	Archer Lecture & Tea with Christine Hanson: <i>The McCommons Diaries</i>	\$10	_____	\$_____

(Brown Bag Lunch Series is free and
Hays House Museum events are ticketed at door, no Reservations required.)

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$_____

Name: _____ Ph. or E-Mail: _____

For more information, check the Society's website at www.HarfordHistory.org, [www.Facebook.com/HarfordCountyHistoricalSociety](https://www.facebook.com/HarfordCountyHistoricalSociety) or call 410-838-7691. Return your Reservation form to the Historical Society, 143 N. Main Street, Bel Air, MD. 21014.

*The Historical Society of Harford County is supported in part by a grant from the
Harford County Government Office of Economic Development.*

The Historical Society
of Harford County, Inc.
143 North Main Street
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED
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DATED MATERIAL

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

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Corresponding Secretary
Page Smart

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TRUSTEES 2017

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Walter Holloway

TRUSTEES 2017-2019

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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.