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 2021

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

IN THIS ISSUE

The Daneker Clock	1
Harford Heritage	3
In Memoriam	2
President's Message	4
Fun Facts of the Past	4
New Members	4
Coming Events:	-
- Thomas Hays & His	5
Neighbors	
- The Life of Harvey Ladew	5
Preservation Awards	6
In Memoriam	7
Fun Facts From The Past	8
Volunteers Needed	9
Yard Sale	9
New Books	10
Ames UMC Needs Help	10
School Photo Donation	11
<u> </u>	

THE DANEKER CLOCK: A TALE OF HOW ONE THING CAN LEAD TO ANOTHER.

By George F. Harrison, Jr.

Charles Rutherford Daneker, Sr. had a long-time fascination with clocks, especially the stately Grandfather clocks that stood in the entryway of many elegant homes. He admired the craftsmanship and the sounds of the chimes every quarter hour, but he never really thought that one day he would be making them.

He was not a clockmaker, but the manager for Harford and Cecil County for the C & P Telephone Company which had begun a large expansion of service to the counties surrounding Baltimore City in the first few years of the 20th Century. He had only been recently married to a widow with three young children when he was transferred to Bel Air.

He built a substantial house on East Broadway in the then-new development of Ingleside with a separate apartment on the second floor to accommodate his growing family, which by then included three more children. That apartment would later prove to be a boon to a new business prompted by the U.S. entry into World War Two.

With the drumbeat of war growing louder, Daneker's oldest son, Charles Jr., known as "Brod" to the family, joined the Army Air Force, and his younger son, Million, a student at the University of Maryland, went to work making airplanes at the Glenn L. Martin plant. Both jobs would prove consequential to the future of the Daneker family.

Brod noted that on his visits to military bases around the country there was little at the base PXs that the new soldiers and sailors could buy to send home to their families. "Pa", as the elder Daneker was known to the family, and the two sons came up with the idea for wood plaque with a medallion denoting the service and gold stamped letters describing the unit.

Cont'd on page 2

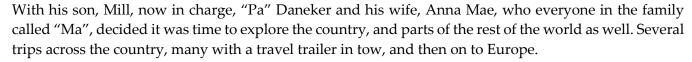
Page 2 Society News

cont'd from page 1 ... They created the wooden shield shaped plaque at another location and assembled and packed them up for shipment in that second-floor apartment in the Bel Air house. Everyone got involved; wives, aunts, grandmothers and neighbors all pitched in. Thousands of plaques were shipped out to military bases across the country.

With the war coming to a close, "Pa" Daneker decided it was time to retire from his telephone company job and try something new. He bought some land on Bel Air Road in Fallston which contained two houses and about 12 acres of mostly wooded land. He and his wife Anna Mae took the smaller house and his son, Mill, who was now married with two children, moved into the larger home.

Between the two houses he built an office and a small woodworking shop to continue producing plaques, which were no longer in great demand with the war's end, but also other projects he had in mind. His many years with the telephone company led to a contract with Western Electric, the manufacturing arm of AT&T, parent company of C&P.

The company, now formally named The Million Rutherford Company, was now in the business of making oak boxes for use in businesses to switch phone calls to different locations within their operations. Western Electric made the actual switches and shipped them to Fallston for assembly. Many thousands went out all across the country.



It was on a trip to Bavaria in West Germany that they visited a clock manufacturing plant, one which made the workings for Grandfather clocks. It struck a chord with Pa. "We can do that," he thought. Little did he know at the time that his business was about to make a major change.

It was the late 1940s and business in America was ramping up after years of a war economy. Technology was changing rapidly and the old ways of doing things were becoming obsolete. And so, it was with Western Electric. Those wooden boxes no longer could do the job and new ways of switching calls were coming online. The Million Rutherford Company got the word: The contract was being cancelled.

What do they do now? "Pa" Daneker had an idea. He had long had an interest in grandfather clocks and there were no manufacturers of "tall case" clocks in the east. He convinced his sons there was market for a smaller version of the classic clock that would better fit in the American homes that were being built after the war.

They agreed and The Danker Clock was born. But it was not easy. The elder Daneker made a deal with the Bavarian clock maker to provide the clock movements. Another Black Forest company made the solid brass dials and face plate with the Daneker signature. He then visited various cabinet makers in Pennsylvania's Amish Country to learn just what it would take to create the work of art worthy of a Danker Clock.

His two sons designed the clock bodies in Hepplewhite and Duncan Phyfe styles, using imported mahogany from Africa and The Philippines, and maple, cherry and walnut from New York,



Pennsylvania, and Canada. Each body was hand finished with various stains and many coats of lacquer hand polished to the desired finish.

One more thing; "Pa" Daneker insisted that the clocks be fitted with chimes that replicated the sounds of London's Big Ben as they strike the hour and quarter hours.

It all came together and finished clocks began shipping to stores across the country, among them Macy's in New York City. Production eventually ramped up to over 150 per week. Other items were added over the years to include a smaller version Grandmother Clock, mantle clocks, and an eighteen-century style spinning wheel.

With the clock operation now in full swing, the elder Daneker stepped away from the company and he and his wife resumed their trips, traveling across the country as well as boat trips to Europe. It was on one of those trips in 1957 that "Ma" Daneker passed away. She was always part of the clock business as it was her signature that graces the Daneker name on the clock face.

In 1969, fire broke out in the main assembly area, destroying the operation and causing thousands of dollars in damage to over 700 clocks. Three other buildings were not damaged and after reconstruction of the main plant, operations resumed.

The Daneker family looked upon the business as a family affair, which to them included the workers. But the fire took its toll. Four years later, a group of workers decided they wanted a union to represent them. This did not set well with Mill Daneker. When a majority of the workers voted to join the United Furniture Workers of America, AFL-CIO, Mill Daneker decided to shut down the operation.

He told the Baltimore Sun he was "tired and wanted to take a long rest."

After nearly 30 years of clock making, The Million-Rutherford Company was gone. The factory building was rented out for other uses for a few years before the property was sold to an auto dealership which continues to operate on the site.



HARFORD HERITAGE CELEBRATIONS

The plans for the celebration of Harford County's sestercentennial celebration are moving ahead. Thirty memoirs are under review. Do you have a story to share?

You don't have to be a Willa Cather, or Mark Twain or William Faulkner. You just have to be you. You're the perfect person to tell your grandchildren and the world the amazing things they never knew about you. First loves, first triumphs, even first disasters, it is time to tell your story. Email your typed 500 to 2,000-word stories to

<u>250celebration@harfordhistory.org</u> for inclusion in the Harford 250 Anthology celebrating Harford's residents, businesses and institutions. For more information go to <u>www.harfordhistory.org/250-memoir/.</u>

The Harford250 logo contest winner was announced on June 21st. The winner, chosen from 25 excellent entries, was Jarrettsville resident, Karen Schoelkopf. For now, a 13-person steering committee is working to develop plans for a kickoff program to be held in January 2023 and a finale in March 2024. To share information about the project and future events, www.harford250.org is being developed. Anyone interested in assisting with the project is invited to visit the website and send your contact information to us. There will be much to celebrate in 2023 and we encourage you to be a part of it.

Page 4 Society News

President's Message

Work continues at Headquarter with new and exciting discoveries on a regular basis – some good, some not so good. The most exciting discovery was the vaulted ceiling that appeared when contractors removed the drop ceiling in this area. Exquisite plaster molding and beautiful arched detailing appeared, showcasing the original features of this historic structure.

Unfortunately, the contractor also uncovered some additional problems like massive holes in the walls and damaged materials. For now, contractors are completing asbestos removal, repairing and updating electrical equipment and repairing the plaster wall and ornamentation. We hope to begin painting soon, using the original light green paint color that was uncovered as part of the demolition work.

As this work proceeds, the window restoration project is also moving ahead. The restored windows completed to date are beautiful and we expect to have all of the remaining windows restored by this fall. When these projects are completed, the Society plans on repurposing the lobby area as a museum, highlighting many of the artifacts that have been stored for years that tell the story of the county's history.

Once this work is completed, we will need help reorganizing files and setting up the research area to once again welcome visitors. For more information about volunteering, please visit the website and while there, you may want to check out our newly created Volunteer Handbook.



HQ lobby, under Construction

Additionally, we are working on repairs to the Hays House

Museum. The north wall of the building is failing and needs major repairs. The Society is coordinating with the Maryland Historical Trust to meet Easement requirements and assure that the repairs are done properly. Repairs are also needed on the Hays House porch flooring. These historic buildings provide great assets for the community, but do require considerable maintenance. Hopefully, I will be able to announce an opening date for both buildings in the near future, but for now we will continue this needed repair work and assure you that the longterm benefits will be well worth the wait.

I appreciate everyone's patience, recognizing that the buildings have been unavailable for researchers and volunteers for quite some time due to Covid and the repair/reconstruction work.

Bill Walden, President

NEW MEMBERS

Harold K. McComas IV Jean Foulk Melissa Tilley Elie Fraiji Debbie Lane Jeff Smith

COMING EVENTS

• Thomas Hays and His Neighbors



Hays House Museum, Kenmore Avenue, Bel Air, named for Thomas Hays

The Brown Bag Lunch series will continue virtually with our guest speaker, Christopher Smithson on Tuesday, July 13, 2021, at 12:30 pm telling the story of one of Bel Air's most prominent early citizens, Thomas Hays and the neighbors who he influenced.

Christopher T. Smithson, a native of Maryland, has been doing genealogy research for over 30 years specializing in Harford County, Baltimore County and Baltimore City, and Cecil County, Maryland from the Colonial to 21st Century. His work includes documentation retrieval, brickwall ancestor location, patriotic and hereditary lineage research, and missing heirs research as well as

African American research. Chris conducts research at the Maryland State Archives, The Historical Society of Harford County, Inc. and the Maryland Historical Society. He currently serves as the Registrar, Maryland Society of the Sons of the American Revolution and Genealogist General of the Hereditary Order of the Signers of the Bush Declaration.

Chris is the author of seven books. He has been awarded the Florence Kendall SAR Membership National Award three times for generating the largest number of new members in one year. He was featured in the journal of "American Psychologist" for solving the mystery of "Little Albert". In 2019, Chris was presented with the Historic Preservation Recognition Award for Excellent volunteer work in Historic Preservation by the Harbor of Grace Chapter, NSDAR. He is a graduate of Harford Community College with an Associates of Applied Sciences degree in Technical and Professional Studies with a concentration in Historical Preservation and Paralegal Studies

The Hays House Museum, once Thomas Hays home, is now operated by The Historic Society of Harford County, Inc. Many of us have toured the house or attended activities there but have little knowledge of Thomas Hays and how he impacted life in Harford County. This is your opportunity to learn about this amazing county personality.

• Perfectly Delightful: The Life of Harvey Ladew

On Tuesday, August 10, 2021, at 12:30 pm, Maryanna Skowronski, the Director of the Historical Society, will give an illustrated presentation on the life of Harvey Ladew from his boyhood in New York City to his years on Long Island through his final years in Harford County. One of Society's favorite bon vivants, Harvey Ladew's story is that of Industrial Age wealth and a life lived to the fullest.



Harvey S. Ladew at his home, now known as Ladew Gardens.

Page 6 Society News

Ms. Skowronski is a noted freelance writer in the field of equestrian sport and has enjoyed a lifelong connection to equestrian sports. This interest prompted her research into the life of Harvey S. Ladew, former Master of Foxhounds of the Elkridge-Harford Hunt and owner of Pleasant Valley Farm, now Ladew Gardens.

For reservations to either or both of these outstanding virtual programs, please visit the Society's website www.harfordhistory.org.

PRESERVATION AWARDS RECIPIENTS

National Historic Preservation Medal Awarded to Noted Harford Historian

Author and historian Henry C. Peden, Jr. of Bel Air was recently awarded the Historic Preservation Medal, the highest and most prestigious honor for Historic Preservation by the National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution. His application was sponsored by the Harbor of Grace Chapter, NSDAR. Mr. Peden is well-known in Harford County, has been a member of the Historical Society of

Harford County for 40 years, and has received many awards for his work in preserving local history. Although he co-authored many detailed books of Harford County's Rural Heritage, he has reached a much wider audience with his 180 books of document transcriptions have allowed genealogists as well as the public to easily discover and access ancestral information in documents that reach back to the founding of Maryland.

Mr. Peden is shown receiving his medal from Barbara Park, Regent of the Harbor of Grace Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution on April 3, 2021 at his home in Bel Air, MD.



2021 County Historic Preservation Award Goes to Richard Sherrill

The County's Historic Preservation Commission biannually recognizes an individual who exhibits a strong, long-term commitment to historic preservation values through their initiatives and years of service. This year's award went to the Society's former President and current Chair of the Archives Department and the Building Restoration Committee, Richard Sherrill.

As indicated in his nomination form, submitted by Society member, Jim Chrismer, Richard Sherrill exemplifies a unique combination of public and private, behind-the-scenes advocacy of Historic Preservation in Harford County. During his 55 years in the County, Richard has held many significant offices (President and Vice President of the Historical Society of Harford County), chairmanships (HSHC Archives, HSHC Publications), and positions in heritage and related organizations such as the Historic Preservation Commission, the Historical Society of Harford County, and the Bel Air American History Club. In 2010 the County Council proclaimed him a Harford County Living Treasure.

In addition to his evident leadership skills, Richard is known for his ready willingness to get his hands dirty, performing the sort of manual drudgery one late local hardware store owner used to characterize as the "all brawn, no brain" sort of work that allowed institutions to operate successfully. In his many years of promoting Historic Preservation in his adopted county, Richard has made contributions as a draftsman, author, speaker/presenter, photo analyst, landscaper, carpenter, painter, plasterer, plumber, wall paperer, interior designer, administrator, and idea man.

A video featuring all of this year's award recipients is available on the county's website, www.harfordcountymd.gov/2420/Historic-Preservation-Awards. While there you may also want to watch the video of Jacob Bensen who was our recent guest speaker for the May Brown Bag Lunch series. He describes the county historic preservation program and answers many questions about the role preservation plays in retaining the spirit and look of Harford.

IN MEMORIAM

Alfonso "A. A." Roberty, 94, of Bel Air, MD, a former member of the Historical Society's Board of Trustees, passed away on May 14, 2021, at the Upper Chesapeake Medical Center, one week before his 95th birthday. He was the last surviving child of five born to Erminia and Michael Roberty on May 21, 1926, in Mannington, West Virginia. While attending high school he worked in his parents' shoe store and at a local printing company. He graduated from Mannington High School in June of 1944 and was drafted into the Army in August of 1944.

Upon completion of basic training at Camp Croft in South Carolina, he was assigned to the 14th Regiment of the 71st Infantry Division and was sent on the Queen Mary troop ship to Gorrick, Scotland; he then proceeded to South Hampton, England, to cross the English Channel to Le Havre, France and to the Alsace Lorraine area of France to join the U.S. army unit to which he was assigned as a replacement soldier. He participated in military action in several locations across France and through the Siegfried Line to cross the Rhine and Danube Rivers through Germany and Austria. In June of 1945, he was transferred from the 71st Division to the Military Government Unit that was involved in the occupation of places in Bavaria that included Munich and Wurzburg. He continued serving in this assignment, returned to the United States, and was discharged as a Staff Sergeant on the July 4, 1946. He received the Combat Infantryman Badge, the European Theater Operations Medal with two Battle Stars, the Good Conduct Medal, the Victory Medal, and the US Army Occupation Medal. In 2014, Dr. Roberty received the order of Saint Maurice Medal provided by the National Infantry Association.



Following active duty, he graduated in 1950 with a bachelor's degree in education from Fairmont State College in West Virginia. That same year he married Ruth Trumbo and was employed as a science and mathematics teacher at Cambridge High School in Dorchester County, Maryland. In 1951, he was employed as a chemistry and physics teacher at Bel Air High School in Harford County, Maryland. In 1962, Dr. Roberty was promoted to Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Harford County. In 1970, he was appointed to the position of Superintendent of Schools and held the position until he retired in 1988.

Page 8 Society News

FUN FACTS FROM THE PAST

Old Hotel Remodeled

An Aegis article in the July 10, 1958 edition of the Aegis tells the story of the transformation of the Granger Hotel into Courtland Hardware.

About 1920, the old Granger Hotel at the corner of Main and Courtland Streets in Bel Air was remodeled by Mr. F. Bond Boarman into a hardware store and auto sales establishment. The entire front of the structure was previously a porch and was enclosed by the late Mr. Boarman. During the early 20s, Hudson and Essex cars were sold in the front of the store, displayed in the front window on a stone floor. Car sales were done in conjunction with an extensive Hardware business. Boarman



Courtland Hardware Store

also sold gas at a pump located at the curb in front of the store on Main Street. With so few cars on Main Street at the time, it was relatively easy to pull up in front of the store to fill up on gas.

The southeast corner of Main Street and Courtland Street was the original location of Courtland Hardware. The hardware store relocated to its current location at Bond Street and Pennsylvania Avenue in Bel Air when the 18th century hotel building was demolished in the 1980s to make way for the current office/retail building.

"Reliable and Dependable Concerns That Serve You"

In the January 17, 1930 edition of *The Aegis*, George E. Stone wrote of many outstanding businesses in Harford County. Here is an excerpt declaring the many exceptional qualities of the Home Comfort Inn & Garage located near Darlington.

The Home Comfort Inn & Garage Renders Dependable Service to Tourists And Travelers

This is the age when we cater to the neat-appearing establishment when we have patronage to dish out. In all lines of business we lean toward the establishment whose outward appearance shows that it is run on a high plane, and the fellow who neglects to put on a good front with his service station is passing up real American dollars.

You couldn't drive by the Home Comfort Inn & Garage, situated one mile from Darlington, (the first place south of Conowingo Dam), without taking a second look and if you needed gas or oil or anything done on your car, you wouldn't hesitate a second to turn in here. The whole atmosphere of the place assures you that you will get real service here. True, the Home Comfort Inn & Garage is built in a picturesque environment, but that doesn't spell anything unless it was kept up and conducted on a high plane. It might easily be a miserable looking place if someone else besides B. H. Sargable, proprietor had hold of it.

When Mr. Sargable opened the establishment here three years ago he determined to maintain a service that would be unsurpassed by any service station and rest camp in this section. He has three and a half acres of shaded camping grounds on which is built a modern tourists inn with comfortable rooms, electric lights, hot and cold running water and every home convenience. He also has a number of tables which are rented at reasonable charges and furnishes regular home-cooked meals, light lunches and refreshments. Being situated just a stone's throw from the Conowingo Dam on the Susquehanna River; he arranges for fishing parties and furnishes bait for same.

Then, too, motorists will find here a modern filling station and a completely equipped repair shop where the highest standard of services is maintained. Travelers and tourists, as well as the local trade are invited here and are treated so well that they come again and again and tell their friends about the wonderful service they received at the Home Comfort Inn and Garage in Harford County, Maryland.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Vertical Files Volunteer: The Vertical files volunteer at the Historical Society files newspaper articles that are related to Harford County on Thursdays. The volunteer reads through the Aegis or other local newspapers, selects appropriate historical articles, cuts them out, labels with significant terms then files them in the select folders. There may be opportunities to rearrange the file cabinets and folders when the folders are too full for more entries. This project is always ongoing since the newspapers are circulated twice a week.

If you are interested in volunteering for this or other positions, please call 410-838-7691 or visit our website at www.harfordhistory.org/supportus/volunteer.





WOODEN TWIN BED, HEADBOARD, FOOTBOARD, SIDE RAILS: \$15.00

Wooden Twin Bed Set with Headboard, Footboard and Side Rails. No Mattress or springs. Good Condition with normal wear and scratches. Some sun bleaching.

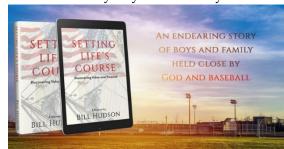
To see this and more Yard Sale items, visit the Society's website, www.harfordhistory.org/product-category/virtual-yardsale/.

Page 10 Society News

NEW BOOKS AVAILABLE

Setting Life's Course - This newly released book by a former Bel Air resident shares stories of Bel Air High in the 60s, the Softball league at St. Margaret's, "The Hole" and the early days at the Maryland Golf

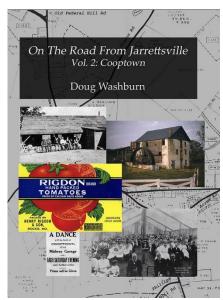
and Country Club from the eyes of the caddies of the day. The book takes you back to a quieter, gentler time and follows Hudson's life from his childhood in Parkville to Bel Air to California and the space industry, highlighting many adventures along the way. It is available at Amazon.com. Excerpts from the book will be included in the upcoming Memoir Anthology celebrating Harford's 250th anniversary.



On The Road From Jarrettsville, Vol. 2: Cooptown - Doug Washburn continues the history of the villages of Harford County Election District 4, Precinct 2 (aka Jarrettsville). Cooptown, the next village to the southeast of Jarrettsville, was named in honor of the Revolutionary War service by several Coop family members. Mrs. Coop was most likely a Stansbury. Although the family removed from the area to North Carolina, then on to Tennessee in the 1800s, the name prevailed.

One of the oldest villages in the precinct, 1774 deeds refer to the area as Eden Town. Originally located at the intersection of West Jarrettsville, Rigdon and Morse Roads, it appeared on *Griffith's Map of Maryland & Delaware* (1794) as the most substantial settlement in the precinct. Through the decades the village has migrated south to the area of West Jarrettsville, Cooptown and Sharon Acres Roads.





IN NEED OF HELP

Ames United Methodist Church in Bel Air is seeking your help.

In December 1873, land was purchased at 1014 Vale Road from the Hendon family to be used as a Black Cemetery. Since that time, more than 160 people, babies, adults, and veterans have been buried on this one-acre site, with as many as 70% of the graves unmarked. The Church hopes to raise funds to create a memorial marker, a driveway to allow access to the cemetery, boundary markers and funds for perpetual care of the cemetery.



Hendon Hill Cemetery

For more information about this historic cemetery, visit the Ames UMC website amesumc.org. Click on "Cemetery Project" then "Hendon Hills Cemetery Project" to view a video.

SCHOOL PHOTO DONATION

A few months ago, the Society was contacted by long-time member Connie Beims with a question about a potential donation to its archives collection. Mrs. Beims was calling on behalf of C. Eugene Weaver who had spent decades putting together a collection of class photos of lost Harford County schools and who was now looking for a permanent home for the collection. The question asked was whether the Society would be interested in the collection. The answer of course was a resounding "Yes!" The Society's response was relayed back to Mr. Weaver who by all accounts was very happy that the Society was interested in and appreciative of his efforts.

Several weeks later Mrs. Beims hand delivered a meticulously put-together album of thirty-nine class and individual student photos with a few of one-room schoolhouses too. The collection includes Darlington Academy, Glenville School, Franklin School, Aldino School, Dublin, and a few unidentified school classes. The earliest photo dates to 1916 with the majority being from the 20s, 30s and 40s. Of particular value to researchers is the fact that Mr. Weaver has been able to identify a large number of the students pictured in each class.

In addition to the class photos there are photographs of a musical performance identified as the Darlington School Operetta.

The Society is in the process of scanning the photographs in Mr. Weaver's collection and will be making them public over time. It is our hope that some of those unidentified children may be known to our members or the general public and that we will be contacted with new information.

Our thanks go out to Connie Beims for suggesting the Historical Society as the permanent home for this important piece of history. Finally, we thank Mr. Weaver most especially for his dedication to the project and for entrusting his work to our collection where it will be utilized and enjoyed by many for years to come.



Darlington Academy 1919: First rowleft to right - John Lamb, Elmer Chandler, Gilpin Jourdan. Second row - left to right - Gladys (?), Lucy Whaling, Cornelia Wilson (Kirk), Katherine Gibson, Agnes Scarborough (Holloway), Third Row - left to right - Luther Little, Wallis Jones, Mary Elizabeth McNutt (Weaver), Beatrice Scarborough, Robert Gibson, Elsie Botts, Laura Bradford. Teacher -Mr. Finney Galbreath The Historical Society of Harford County, Inc. 143 North Main Street Bel Air, MD 21014



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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.

Third Wednesday ARCHIVES & HENRY C. PEDEN Jr. LIBRARY 5:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.

Thursday HENRY C. PEDEN Jr. RESEARCH LIBRARY 9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

Fourth Saturday ARCHIVES & HENRY C. PEDEN Jr. LIBRARY 10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.