



HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF BALTIMORE COUNTY



NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2015

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Thanks to mail-in ballots and a vote taken at our annual membership meeting on May 31st, 2015, several new and returning board members were elected to the HSBC board of trustees. Please send a warm welcome to Jeff Higdon who served on the board previously and after a one year hiatus was elected to another term. Please also welcome back another returning board member, Vicki Young. Both Jeff and Vicki were instrumental in our prior years' Shrimp Feast & Auction Fundraiser and last year's Callaghan Sings at Sotir Farm concert. Last but not least, we would like to welcome a new member, Len Kennedy.

Directly following our board member elections, the trustees voted to elect officers of the organization. By unanimous vote the board voted to elect Tom Graf to continue serving as President, Dale Kirchner as Vice-President, and H. David Delluomo as Treasurer. Although Evert 'Bud' Cornell remains on the board, the Secretary position he held is presently vacant, and the board wishes to thank Bud for his many years of service in that position, among others. We anticipate filling the vacancy soon.

MONTEBELLO 100

Don't miss the history booth at the 100th anniversary celebration of the opening of the Montebello Filtration Plant on September 19th. We will be participating with the Baltimore City Historical Society , The Fire Museum of Maryland and several other organizations in the History Section. The first opening of the plant on September 13, 1915 was open to the public with music and speeches by notables involved. This year, there will also be a recreation of these events, plus giveaways, music, food, recreational and children's activities. Additionally, there will be an unveiling of a historic marker, and a time capsule . The Montebello Water Filtration Plant was a dramatic improvement for the drinking water quality for city and county residents and is an important part of our history. A fun and informative day for all. The free outdoor event takes place around Montebello Lake. See more details on Facebook "Montebello Centennial " page.



Montebello Filtration Plant 1915
Photo courtesy of Martha Hendrickson

GET YOUR BUS TOUR RESERVATIONS SOON

The bus is filling up for the Catonsville Bus tour , "Catonsville at Large", to be held on October 10. Don't miss out. Get your reservations soon!. Registration forms available online at hsbc.org., and at HSBC Almshouse headquarters.



THE CITIZENS OF
BALTIMORE COUNTY

UPCOMING EVENTS

First Thursdays: ; September 4th, 2015, October 1, 2015, November 5, 2015

10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. @ HSBC Almshouse Headquarters

GENEALOGY INSTRUCTION (Free to all)

Free, monthly, genealogy instruction at the Historical Society of Baltimore County with local genealogist Noreen Goodson, and professional genealogist Angela Walton-Raji, BA, M.Ed.

Sat., August 28th to 30th and to September 4th to the 7th, all day @ MD State Fairgrounds in Timonium

VISIT OUR BOOTH AT THE STATE FAIR

For one week each year the society shifts many of its volunteer assets to plan for, setup and man (or woman) a booth at the Maryland State Fair to promote the society, its mission and programs. Please stop by and give a friendly hello or thank you to our wonderful corps of volunteers!

**Sat., September 19th, 10:00am to 4:00pm. @ Lake Montebello in Baltimore
100th ANNIVERSARY OF THE MONTEBELLO FILTRATION PLANT!**

Visit us at our booth at the Montebello Water Filtration Plant's 100th Anniversary. Music, food trucks, burying of a new time capsule, unveiling a new historic marker, kids and family activities, and the Mayor and other notable speakers attending. Also, look for our history article, "The Montebello Water Filtration Plant: Clean Water for City and Suburb Alike," which the City will be distributing.



Sun, September 27th, 2:00 p.m .to 3:30 p.m. @HSBC Almshouse Headquarters

REMEMBERING WINTERS LANE WITH LOUIS DIGGS

Because we will not have time to see all of the historic areas of Catonsville during our Legacy Tour on October 10th, we have asked Mr. Diggs to share with us some of the stories from one of his earlier books, *It All Started on Winters Lane*, about the families and people from this historic African-American district in Catonsville. The members and individuals who signed up for the bus tour will be able to attend for free. For all others there is a \$5.00 fee.

Sat., October 10th, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. @ Departs from the HSBC Almshouse headquarters

BUS TOUR—CATONSVILLE AT LARGE

Visit Historic Catonsville, including Old Salem Lutheran Church. Enjoy a delightful buffet lunch at Dimitri's Restaurant. See the Victorian summer homes of wealthy Baltimoreans. Visit the Catonsville Room at the local library. Registration forms are available online at [hsobc.org..](http://hsobc.org) and at HSBC Alms-house headquarters. HSBC members = \$75.00; non-members = \$85.00.

**Sat., October 10th, 7:00 pm @The Music Barn at Sotir Farm, 14601 Cooper Road, Phoenix Md.
BENEFIT CONCERT**

Join us again this year for a night of music to benefit the HSBC with performances by Nashville entertainers Callaghan, and Granville Automatic. Price is \$50.00. For tickets, contact HSBC 410-666-1878 or Jeff Higdon 410-935-0117. More details on Facebook.

YOU MAY HAVE MISSED...

ANTIQUES APPRAISAL FAIR

On July 20, 2015, Alex Cooper Auctioneers and Appraisers came to the Almshouse for an “Antiques Road Show”

The event started at 1:00 in the afternoon with a brief presentation by Adam Youssi about the Historical Society, followed by a talk by Brian Cooper about his firm of Alex Cooper Auctioneers. The appraisers then gave a sample appraisal of items in the HSBC Collections including a Milton Academy Desk. It was determined that it was a vernacular country piece and was a clerks desk.



There were separate tables for the general categories of silver, fine arts, decorative arts, and jewelry, where the attendees took their objects to be evaluated. Many interesting items were appraised including quilts, pictures land patents and crockery. It was a valuable afternoon and the event raised \$600.00 for the Society. Thank you Alex Cooper Auctioneers!

WELCOME TOWSON UNIVERSITY MEMBERS

Welcome to New Institutional Member— Towson University History Department. The society wishes to thank and welcome the Department of History at Towson University. The department recently became the latest institutional member of the society. Because of this new partnership, we are happy to extend full membership benefits to all history department faculty and history students at Towson University. Academic history and success is equally as important to us as our mission in the public history sphere. We will do everything in our power to support the institution and its students in their endeavors, while we appreciate their mutual support in return.

YEARBOOKS WANTED

Yearbooks from Towson High are desired for our library . There are specific years that are needed to fill in the gaps so call HSBC 410-666-1878 if you plan to donate. Yearbooks from other Baltimore County High Schools are also wanted.

REMEMBER US AT THE STATE FAIR !

Stop by our booth in the museum area and say hello. We will be there with our exhibits. August 28th to August 30th and September 4th to September 7th.

WINTERS LANE HISTORIC DISTRICT

By Louis Diggs, President of the Winters Lane Historic Community Association

The Winters Lane area has been a community of African Americans since the days of slavery, if not as long as there has been a Catonsville. Free Blacks resided in the area, co-existing with slaves that were part of the many estates that dotted the area.

When slavery ended, many African American residents in the Winters Lane area found employment as laborers, farmhands, cooks, butlers, gardeners, maids and other domestics on the large estates in the village of Catonsville. By 1910, 75% of Catonsville's African American population resided along Winters Lane and its immediately adjacent streets. Smaller concentrations of African Americans lived on Asylum Lane and Taylor Avenue.



The African American population of Catonsville organized and constructed numerous institutions including churches, schools and fraternal organizations. The 1800s saw the building of the first African American church in the community, Grace A.M.E. (African Methodist Episcopal) Church that came to the community in 1868 as St. John's A.M.E. Church, the African American one room school house in 1868, and Morning Star Baptist Church in 1896. From that point on, the community had several grocery stores, beauty salons, and hosts of other businesses owned and operated by African Americans.

and to ensure that the community was constantly informed of activities within the community, Mr. Samuel Torsell, a member of Grace A.M.E. Church developed, printed and circulated a local newspaper called "The Weekly Clarion", and people like Mr. Charles Woodland, in 1890 incorporated the Catonsville Cooperative Corporation that built a store on the corner of Winters Lane and Edmondson, and constructed a very successful African American entertainment park on Winters Lane called Greenwood Electric Park.

The homes of African Americans in the Winters Lane area dates back to the mid to late 1800's, with many constructed around 1910, and owned by those residents. Several of the structures within the Winters Lane area have historic status.

REMEMBERING WINTERS LANE WITH LOUIS DIGGS

Because we will not have time to go to Winters Lane as part of the "Catonsville at Large" bus tour, individuals who signed up for our Bus Tour will be treated to a bonus.

Louis Diggs, local historian and expert on African American History will be giving a presentation on the History of Winters Lane on Sun, September 27th, 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. @HSBC Almshouse Headquarters. Don't miss this interesting talk!

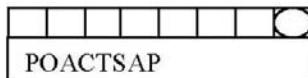
JUST FOR FUN-

For you puzzlers out there, we have put together a little brain teaser with history related clues. Answers on page 6. Good Luck!

JUMBLE

Unscramble these jumbles- one letter to each square to form words related to the upcoming Bus Trip in October.

Clue #1- To Elkridge Landing boats did go, when my waters once more deeply flowed.

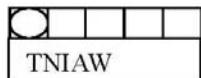
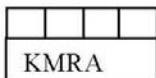


Clue #2 - Upon me the wagons would sway, as they made the trip south to bay

With crops from the field, or hogsheads well sealed, and filled with tobacco. Make Way!

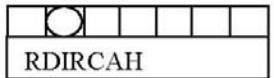


Clue #3- This famous wit, he claimed his fame, writing under an alternate name.



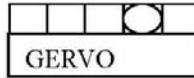
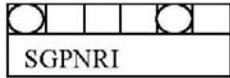
Clue #4 - He was married to Charles Carroll's daughter, and lived on the land her dad bought her.

His fame and renown gave the name to a town, not far from Baltimore's harbor.



Clue #5 - Oh the sorrow I've seen, the sad despair, the anguished keen beyond compare

Of tortured souls so long confined, it was for them I was careful and kind.



Now arrange the circled letters to form answer suggested by the final clue.

Final Clue--

To get to Ellicott Mills from the east, you see, you take the road that runs through me.

Put your answer here:



Jumble by Allen Hendrickson

VOLUNTEER CORNER

Welcome new volunteers!

Dawn Hemler is an accountant who joined us in February and she is working as our bookkeeper.



Ginny Deardorf is a retired attorney, High School History teacher, and mediator who joined us in February and is now volunteering as one of our archivists.

Robert Levine joined us in April with an extensive resume in education. He is photographing objects in our museum collection.

Donna Courtney is a retiree from Government service and will be working with our topic vertical files.

Valerie Thaxter-Grant joins us with many skills and volunteer experience with Baltimore County schools. Valerie will be working as one of our archivists with our archives collection.

Pat Rice joins us with experience from volunteering at Hampton National Historic Site and will be working with our museum collections.

Gail Sallitt also joins us from Hampton National Historic Site and will be working with our museum collections as well.

Thank you All!

FAREWELL TO ADAM YOUSSI

The board and volunteers gave a farewell party on Sunday, July 26th for Adam Youssi who is leaving his position as administrator for bigger and better things. Adam served us at HSBC for nearly 10 years and has made many improvements and innovations to our organization that has helped us toward our mission to collect, preserve and interpret the rich history of Baltimore County. Thank you Adam, we will miss you!



DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS IS?

It's State Fair time, and for this months mystery object, we have selected something connected with farming from our collection. Hint— it was used in connection with animal husbandry. Answer will be in next newsletter issue.



JUMBLE ANSWERS - #1 Patapsco River (O,E) #2 Rolling Road (L,I,A) #3 Mark Twain (T) (He made his last public appearance on June 9, 1909, at the commemoration ceremony at St. Timothy's School for Girls) (T) #4 Richard Cation (I,C) #5 Spring Grove (Hospital) (S,N,V) FINAL ANSWER-Catonsville

DID YOU KNOW?

That there is a part of our Baltimore water supply history hidden in Cromwell Park?

The Willow Grove Farm area of Cromwell Valley Park on Cromwell Bridge Road is an interesting park adjacent to Baltimore City Watershed property adjoining Loch Raven Dam. The farm had been sold to the County at some point and is now a beautiful park. My wife and I were walking one day and noticed that about a hundred yards along the trail past the lime kilns, there is what appears to be a concrete and stone dam-like structure to the left through the denuded trees beyond. We went off the path and searched our way uphill through the tangles and vines and brambles, and came to the edge of a huge, concrete lined depression with an enormous concrete and steel standpipe in the center. Knowing that a Balancing Reservoir was purported to be in this area, we assumed this is what we had found –and further research proved us to be correct.

We were curious as to what exactly is a balancing reservoir and technically how does it work? We knew that a 7 ½ mile long water tunnel existed that ran from the Loch Raven Reservoir to Montebello dating to 1881. We also knew that at the time the Montebello Filtration Plant was built in 1915, the 1914 Loch Raven Dam that supplies it was not built to the original planned height. The pumps installed at Montebello Plant when it was built, were designed to bring the water from the dam through the tunnel to the level of the plant. When the Loch Raven Dam was finally raised to the proper height in 1921, there was a need to stabilize the pressure on the 40 year old tunnel for the increased supply. Building a new tunnel was not an option.

I looked it up in the Municipal and County Engineering Index, Volume LXI, July-Dec, 1921, in an article by James W. Armstrong, and I will let his description suffice:

“...a shaft sunk to an intersection with this reservoir [Balancing Reservoir], will thus permit water to flow freely in and out, and it is obvious that if it is admitted from Loch Raven, whose surface is 30 ft. above that of the balancing reservoir, at a rate greater than that required by the pumps, the excess will pass over the spillway into a nearby stream, and the tunnel will be relieved of pressure.”



So this balancing reservoir acted basically as a giant pressure valve. If the flow of water from Loch Raven was high or surging, the Balancing Reservoir would minimize the hydrostatic pressure in the tunnel by filling up; any excess water would overflow the spillway and into nearby Minebank Run. The inverse to this would be that if the water pressure was minimized due to drought conditions, the water capacity of the Balancing Reservoir would make up for any loss in pressure. And all built at a one-time cost of \$50,000.00. I thought – as I researched this: ‘what an ingenious idea’, albeit an idea that had a little bit of luck going for it. Here’s why:

The tunnel from the Loch Raven dam to the Montebello Filtration Plant passed under the property of the Willow Grove Farm on Cromwell Bridge Road. The limestone quarry on this farm we saw had been mined for generations to produce fertilizer both for its own use and for supplemental income. And where exactly was this quarry on the property? That’s right, you guessed it. By an amazing piece of luck it was exactly overtop of the water tunnel... talk about serendipity!

The Balancing Reservoir ceased operation with the completion of a new tunnel capable of withstanding the hydrostatic pressure in 1940. Our discoveries complete, my wife and I decided to leave by a different way than the first visit. We traveled east from the standpipe, only to find a clearly delineated path. My wife and I looked at each other and smiled. Here was the clearest, easiest, most direct route to the Balancing Reservoir. We had hiked through the thorns and prickles of wild raspberries, thick brush and dangling tree vines searching like Stanley for Livingston, and we could have easily come in this way. And if we could go back in time and do it all over again...we would not have changed a thing . - **Allen Hendrickson**

References:

Armstrong, James, "Operating and New Construction Features of the Baltimore Water Works" Municipal News and Water Works" Volume LXI no 6. December 1921 page 236 and page 235



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Research Library Hours:

Fridays - noon to 4 p.m.

Saturdays - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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