



HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF BALTIMORE COUNTY



NEWSLETTER

JUNE-JULY 2016

ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING The annual members meeting will be held on Sunday, June 12, 2016. The meeting (for members only) will take place from 2:00-2:30 pm. A brief state of the society address will be given and members will vote on a slate of new candidates to join HSBC's Board of Directors. Light refreshments will be served following the meeting from 2:30- 3:00 pm.

Presentation: "Women's History in Baltimore County"

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- *Members Meeting*
- *Fall Tour*
- *Upcoming Events*
- *You May Have Missed*
- *Henry Gwynn House*
- *Just for Fun*
- *Volunteer Corner*
- *What is it?*
- *Maryland History Day*



Ladies at Ravenhurst, c. 1950s
(HSBC Collection # P005064)

The public part of the program will begin at 3:00 pm with a presentation by the Society's new Executive Director, Kathleen Barry, entitled "Women's History in Baltimore County."

Ms. Barry earned a doctorate in American and women's history. She is the author of *Femininity in Flight: A History of Flight Attendants* and other publications on United States, women's and labor history. Her illustrated talk will provide an overview of women's history from the vantage point of Baltimore County, from the colonial era to the

present. Admission to the public presentation is free to members and \$5.00 a person for non-members.



Double Rock Park, c. 1900
(HSBC Collection # P002849.1)



Five Ladies, c. 1916
(HSBC Collection # P0006091)

FALL BUS TOUR REGISTRATION

Get your reservations in now for this year's Legacy Almshouse Bus Tour scheduled for October 22, 2016, entitled "Early Baltimore County, Step Back in Time," with visits to historic Fork, Kingsville, Franklinville and Jerusalem Mills. The tour includes lunch and a walking tour of Jerusalem Mill Village featuring museums and blacksmith shop. See enclosed form for details. Call or visit HSBC headquarters to learn more.



THE CITIZENS OF BALTIMORE COUNTY

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesdays and Saturdays: by appointment only @ HSBC Almshouse Headquarters

ALMSHOUSE TOURS (\$8.00 per person, Free for HSBC members)

Find out the interesting history of our Almshouse and learn about some of the people who lived here. Tours last approximately 1 hour, and are offered on Wednesdays and Saturdays, by appointment only. Please contact Pat Routson at HSBC headquarters 410-666-1878 to schedule your tour.



First Thursdays each month: June 2, 2016, July 7, 2016, August 4, 2016, September 1, 2016, 10:00am-2:00pm @ 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. Walton-Raji is the author of *Black Indian Genealogy Research: African American Ancestors Among the Five Civilized Tribes*. The instructors have a wealth of general and niche genealogy knowledge, experience, and resources to share.

Sun., July 17, 2016, 2:00-4:00 pm @ HSBC Almshouse Headquarters (Speakers Series)

MILLING AROUND OWINGS MILLS

(\$5.00 for non-members, Free for HSBC members)

Speaker: Kathy Aspden

As a research librarian at the Historical Society of Baltimore County, Kathy has looked at the history of many areas within the County. Her focus for this talk is on the area on either side of Reisterstown Road, which is known today as Owings Mills. Going back to pre-colonial times in an illustrated talk, Kathy will walk us across the years to modern times, discussing the many settlers, farmers, millers, and business men and women who have contributed to the development of today's Owings Mills.

Sun., August, 21, 2016, 2:00-4:00 pm @ HSBC Almshouse Headquarters (Speakers Series)

PUBLIC HISTORY > LOCAL HISTORY > YOUR HISTORY

(\$5.00 for non-members, Free for HSBC members)

Speaker: Ruth Mascari

When was your last history course? Did you like it? Or not? Can't remember? That is probably the answer for most of us. But it might be more recent than you imagined. Have you seen the road side markers like the one in front of the Society? What do you think of the controversy over the Maryland State song? Our public history is all around us all the time. It can be found in architecture, music, road patterns, social trends, cemeteries and more. While academic history that is taught inside the classroom is critical, it lacks the elements of spontaneity and hands-on opportunity. Public history is there to touch and see and be part of. It will probably be your history at some point. Ruth will use points in Baltimore County history to discuss this topic. She will have pictures and artifacts for demonstration. You are invited to bring a favorite or unique artifact of your own to share.

YOU MAY HAVE MISSED...

19th CENTURY BALTIMORE: A CITY OF IMMIGRANTS

Speaker: Wayne Schaumburg

On April 17, 2016, Wayne Schaumburg, a retired Baltimore County Schools history teacher, presented “19th Century Baltimore: A City of Immigrants”. He spoke about the immigrants who crossed the Atlantic, landed in Baltimore and made it their home. He talked to the group about the Irish who came to Baltimore because of the Potato Famine in Ireland. In Germany, the Bremen Shipping Lines brought many immigrants to Baltimore. The Polish immigrants were another group that came through Baltimore. All of our Sunday Speaker programs have been well attended and this was no exception.

(Photo by Jim Long)



RETROSPECTIVE OF 70 YEARS OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Speaker: John McGrain

John McGrain, Baltimore County historian and a retired Baltimore County Planning Dept. employee, took us down memory lane on Sunday May 15, 2016. As a teenager John McGrain received his first camera and has been taking pictures ever since. There were many local pictures of Baltimore City and County in his presentation. John served in the military during the 1950's and showed pictures from Germany, Paris and Barcelona. After the photo presentation, there was a question and answer period. Of interest was a display of

cameras, some of which are from the HSBC collection. He generously donated two of his own cameras to the collection after the lecture. - *Event photos by Jim Long*

An article by Jonathan Pitts profiling John McGrain was published in the Baltimore Sunpaper on Saturday, May 28 (page 1) after his appearance at HSBC. Check our Facebook page for a link to the article.



CLARIFICATION:

In our April issue, in the article “The History of Dumbarton Mansion-Rodgers Forge,” by Robert Ward, the date of Johns Hopkins’s death is stated as August of 1837. The Johns Hopkins mentioned in the article is **not** the famous philanthropist Johns Hopkins of Baltimore (1795-1873), after whom the university and hospital were named. The Johns Hopkins mentioned in the article refers to a Johns Hopkins who sold land to Robert Taylor for “Friends Discovery” and was born in 1763 and died on August 28, 1837. He is buried in Friends (Quakers) Cemetery, 2506 Harford Road, Lot H218. Although both Johns Hopkins’ were Quakers, they were buried in two different cemeteries and it is unknown as to whether there was any connection between the two. *Source: <http://www.findagrave.com/>*

THE HENRY GWYNN HOUSE OR THE MASON-WEISKITTEL HOUSE – A MYSTERY SOLVED



Mason-Weiskittel House, HSBC Coll. #P003038

In my travels around Towson, a large historic Victorian house on the corner of Stevenson Lane and Bellona Avenue piqued my curiosity. To find the history of the house, the logical place to start is the Maryland Historic Properties list or HSBC files. But in this case the address (6909 Bellona Ave.) did not bring up any listing as it normally would and I did not have the name of the house. Some diligent research by HSBC volunteers revealed that the Maryland Historic Properties Inventory number was [BA-1720], and I was able to access information on https://mht.maryland.gov/research_mihp.shtml.

The historic significance of this house arises from the rare architectural style and its connection to owners of Baltimore industry. It was one of the many different popular Victorian-era house styles built in the Towson area in the mid-nineteenth century. The building's significance is described in the Historical Properties listing: "The vertical thrust of this building, its hipped roof and perhaps most of all, its lantern with bracketed eaves give it an Italianate if not a 'castellated' appearance. The cross-gable is a touch of the Gothic. Still standing on a fairly large parcel of land, this house, its outbuildings and landscaped grounds are quite illustrative of many of the ideas behind the Picturesque Movement. The fairly dense development that surrounds it emphasizes its value as a lesson in 19th century residential design."

The property's different names originate from the many owners of the house; some were associated with businesses and industry in Baltimore. This property was originally part of Dumbarton Estate and Friends Discovery owned by Robert Taylor and was leased to various people. One of the lessees was William Mason, who later secured the deed for his wife, Caroline Mason. It is believed that the house was built by Mason in about 1864 when he first started leasing the property. William Mason was a principal in R. Masons and Sons, a business on President Street with a store on Pratt Street that made bread, cake and crackers for ships. Business was likely booming during the Civil War with contracts for production of tack for the military. The house may have been a summer retreat for Mason. He died at the age of 34 in 1868, leaving the house to his wife Caroline.

Caroline Mason sold the house to Henry and Virginia Gwynn in 1869. Gwynn was a cotton manufacturer with the Baltimore firm of Gwynn Cotton and Company. Evidence shows that he was most likely also using the residence as an escape from the summer heat. At the time the estate was described as "in the highest state of cultivation and well supplied with fruit trees and is a very desirable place for a country residence; the improvements consist of a two-story and attic double frame dwelling with a two-story back building; also a stable and necessary outbuildings."

After several more owners, the house and six acres came into the possession of Herbert and Elizabeth Weiskittel in 1930. Herbert Weiskittel and his brother Francis were partners in the family firm founded in the 1850's that manufactured stoves, sinks, pipe and other cast iron items. Several of the stoves were installed in the house. When Herbert Weiskittel divorced and remarried, he sold the house to his brother Francis in 1947 through an auction. Francis made a sheep shed from reused material from "Bon Air," the home of Frank Weiskittel's grandparents, Charles and Francis Carmine. The "Bon Air" house had been on Smith Avenue but burned down in the 1920s. Francis kept forty or fifty sheep on the property to keep the grass mowed. The front steps of the house were wood, but one granite step was from the "Bon Air" house.

Stevenson Lane was cut through in the 1950s. Sometime before then a barn was moved off the property and converted to a dwelling. It is reportedly located on the northeast corner of Stevenson and Bellona. Today the Mason-Weiskittel house is mostly surrounded by development. —*Martha Hendrickson*

Source: Maryland Historic Properties Inventory listing BA-1720 (prepared 2003, updated 2013).

JUST FOR FUN-

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

JUMBLE

Throughout its long history, Maryland has been home to many eminent and renowned women of diverse faiths, cultures and ethnicities. Twining through that diversity there runs a common thread of justice, compassion, charity, altruism and humanity. **Unscramble these jumbles- one letter to each square to unravel the names of a few we have chosen from the meritorious many.**

Clue #1- I made my home in Maryland, in the last years of my life.
 After witnessing around the world, so much embittered strife.
 On battlefields around the globe, I watched as young men fell,
 And with cross of red upon my blouse, gave all to make them well.

LARAC				

TRABON					

Clue #2 -What of the strange fruit hanging from so many southern trees;
 That harvest of injustice, mute to desperate mother's pleas.
 I sang of this - and others - from the heart, as one who's seen
 Firsthand the degradation, and heard a mothers keen.

LIBLIE					

DAHLIOY					

Clue #3-As a crusader and a leader who fought for what was right,
 She held the torch of justice, to once more shine the light;
 On liberty's full promise, mankind's undying dream,
 To be treated as an equal, with respect and with esteem.

NUATIJA					

CHILMELT							

Clue #4-Though converted rather late in life, her compassion for the poor,
 As well as her good works did much to make her all the more
 Deserving of the honors, bestowed after her passing,
 And secure for her, her grace and place in Heaven everlasting.

STANI				

BELHAZTE							

NAN		

TONES			

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

Final Clue:

Some- they called me Moses for the hundreds that I saved,
 After gaining my own freedom from the life of one enslaved,
 Yet going back for others, Lord, dry these tears of mine,
 That I weep for untold millions for whom freedom left behind.

- Jumble by
 Allen Hendrickson

VOLUNTEER CORNER

Volunteers at Work

The tour committee planning the Legacy Bus Tour VII for 2016. Pictured left to right is Pat Routson, John Berthold, Johnna Suter, Nancy Anderson, Bud Cornell, and Sally Riley. Mark your calendars for the tour date of October 22, 2016. Register today! Form enclosed with the newsletter. *(Photo by Jim Long)*



Volunteers Needed

Almshouse Bus Tours – Volunteers are needed to help during all of the tour phases, which includes the planning, logistics, research, and participation on the day of the tour. Email: tourinfo@hsbc.org

Library Research Center - Library volunteers needed to help during public hours on Fridays and Saturdays. Volunteers will greet visitors and help retrieve research materials. This is a great way to help HSBC and learn about our research library holdings.

Those interested please contact Jim Long at info@hsbc.org or 410-666-1878. You may also fill out and mail in a volunteer application, available in person or from our website at <http://www.hsbc.org/volunteer-opportunities>.

OPPORTUNITY FOR VISIBILITY

Want to increase your business visibility? Place an ad in our Legacy Bus Tour Booklet! The booklet is distributed to every individual who participates in the Tour and is for sale after the Tour. If you are interested, contact Sally Riley by emailing tourinfo@hsbc.org.

WHAT IS IT?



See if you can guess what this object is. The object is part of our archives.

Answer: next issue

1962.06.08

HSBC Members – Do you have a copy of our *Baltimore County: Celebrating a Legacy, 1659-2009*, with Historic Sites Map included? Stop by the Almshouse with this coupon and we'll be happy to give you a copy with our compliments.

Coupon for HSBC Members Only

Baltimore County: Celebrating a Legacy, 1659-2009

by Barry A. Lanman

Published by the Historical Society of Baltimore County with support from the Baltimore County Commission on Arts and Sciences, the Office of Community Conservation, and former County Executive James T. Smith

JUMBLE ANSWERS

#1. (A), (R), (T) **CLARA BARTON** (1821-1912): Best known as a famous Civil War nurse and founder of the American Red Cross, she spent the last 15 years of her life in the house in Glen Echo, Maryland which also served as the headquarters of the American Red Cross. #2. (1), (E), (H), (A) **BILLIE HOLIDAY** (1915-1959): Considered one of the greatest jazz vocalists of all time, Billie Holiday, also known as "Lady Day," grew up in Baltimore as Eleanor Fagan. #3. (U), (T), (M) **JUANITA MITCHELL** (1913-1992): A famous civil rights activist who effectively fought against discrimination through the judicial system, Juanita Jackson Mitchell was the first African American woman to graduate from the University of Maryland Law School and the first to practice law in Maryland. #4. (B), (A), (N) **SAINT ELIZABETH ANN SETON** (1774-1821): The first native born American to be canonized by the Catholic Church. The National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Seton is located in Emmitsburg, Maryland. She founded the Sisters of Charity, which established schools, orphanages and hospitals throughout the world. **FINAL ANSWER-HARRIET TUBMAN** (1820?-1913): She was born a slave in Dorchester County, Maryland, but escaped to freedom when she was 25. She returned to conduct over 300 slaves to freedom, earning the title "Moses of her people."

YOUNG HISTORIANS IN THE MAKING - MARYLAND HISTORY DAY

On May 7, nearly 700 students gathered to compete in Maryland History Day at the University of Maryland Baltimore County campus. The seventeen-year-old contest is sponsored by Maryland Humanities (formerly the Maryland Humanities Council). The state-level competitors who showed off their projects on May 7 were the winners of district contests held earlier in the spring in counties across Maryland, including Baltimore County on March 12. Sixty-three state champions in various categories, representing ten counties and Baltimore City, will go on to compete among 3,000 finalists at National History Day at the University of Maryland College Park from June 12 to 16. An additional thirty-six special prize plaques and cash awards were given out at Maryland History Day, including the Special Prize in Maryland History and the George Washington Leadership Prize.

National History Day annually draws some 24,000 student participants in Maryland and more than half a million total from across the United States. Students at both the junior (grades 6-8) and senior (grades 9-12) levels can write a paper or, working individually or in groups, build an exhibition, develop a website, create a documentary film, or put on a performance. Volunteer judges review the projects and interview the students about their approach and findings. Judges for each category then choose the strongest projects to move on to the next level of competition or, at the national contest, pick the final winners.

The contest, founded in 1974, requires original historical research and analysis, encouraging students to develop critical thinking, writing, and research skills as they explore a topic of their own choosing. Any student willing to do some serious historical work is welcome to participate, with the History Day organization and participating teachers providing support and guidance. Each year, the contest has a theme that offers some structure, but allows students to range broadly in time and space in choosing subjects. Under this year's theme, "Exploration, Encounter, and Exchange in History," Maryland students tackled topics ranging from the local (such as the B&O Railroad and Henrietta Lacks) to the global (such as the Silk Road and the international impact of AIDS) with a huge range in between.

History Day also honors the teachers whose mentoring is absolutely essential to the contest's success. At the national contest in College Park each year, a handful of teacher-of-the-year awards are announced. Last year, RaeLynne Snyder of Baltimore City Public Schools won the HISTORY® Award for Service. At Maryland History Day, a junior and senior teacher award for the state is given out, along with a prize for an outstanding teacher in each county. The winner of the Baltimore County teacher award this year was Frank Passaro of Calvert Hall College High School, who had eight student projects under his tutelage at the state competition.

While no Baltimore County student projects were chosen to compete at the national finals this year, students from the county collected some of the special awards at Maryland History Day. Ray Gebhardt and Spencer Nattans of Calvert Hall College High School won a Peace Student Center Award for their website, "The Christmas Truce of 1914," and Abigail Davenport, Ellie Proutt, and Isabel Rodriguez of Dumbarton Middle School won the Barry A. Lanman Award for Oral History for their website, "The Library of Alexandria."

Representatives of HSBC helped out at both the Baltimore County History Day district contest that was held on March 12, 2016, at CCBC Dundalk and Maryland History Day on May 7. The Society provided volunteer judges at both events and contributed to the teacher awards at the district contest. HSBC's director will be judging at the finals as well. As anyone involved with History Day can attest, seeing so many young historians at work at all levels of the contest is truly impressive and inspiring. —*Kathleen Barry*

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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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