



HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF BALTIMORE COUNTY

NEWSLETTER



DECEMBER 2016

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The Historical Society of Baltimore County offers our most heartfelt thanks to the following sponsors of our “Evening of Holiday Cheer” fundraiser on December 10, 2016, at Silo Hill on the Sotir Farm in Phoenix, Md. A special thanks to our performers, too!

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Performers

Dr. Carolyn Black-Sotir, vocalist
Dr. Matthew Bachman, pianist
The Gilman Traveling Men
Towson University Festival Singers

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- *Thank You to Our Sponsors*
- *Upcoming Events*
- *You May Have Missed*
- *Who is Santa Claus?*
- *New Publications for Sale*
- *Library Additions*
- *New Member Benefits and Reduced Dues for 2017*
- *In Memory*



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 there. Tours last approximately one hour, and are offered on Wednesdays and Saturdays, by appointment only. Please contact Pat Routson at HSBC headquarters at 410-666-1878 to schedule your tour.

First Thursdays each month: January 5, February 2, March 2, April 6, 2017, 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.

Sunday, January 22, 2017, 2:00-4:00pm @ HSBC Almshouse Headquarters
UNDERGROUND RAILROAD (\$5.00 per person, free for HSBC members)

Speaker: Scott Mingus

Some accounts suggest that the term "Underground Railroad" originated in the Susquehanna River region, an area that witnessed the transition from slave ownership in the 18th century to fugitive slave assistance in the 19th. Come hear multiple award-winning author and lecturer Scott Mingus as he delivers a PowerPoint presentation on the history of slavery and the operations of the Underground Railroad in York County and the surrounding areas, including Baltimore County.

Sun., Feb. 12, 2017, 2:00-4:00pm @ HSBC Almshouse Headquarters
SPARROWS POINT (\$5.00 per person, free for HSBC members)

Speaker: Bill Barry

From its opening in 1887 to becoming the largest steel mill in the world, with 31,000 workers, to its closure in 2012, the Sparrows Point plant, and its incorporated town, has been a landmark of industrial and post-industrial America and Baltimore County. Bill Barry, retired Director of Labor Studies at CCBC-Dundalk, has prepared a history of this epic civilization. He is publishing a new book, *We Always Told Steel Stories*, with oral histories of the workers at the Point.



Bethlehem Steel interior, no date, from William Lynch Collection, HSBC Collections #004815.01

LOOKING FOR A GIFT FOR FRIENDS, CLIENTS OR EMPLOYEES? HSBC IS OFFERING A NEW GIFT SUBSCRIPTION

With the arrival of the holiday season, HSBC is pleased to offer a new gift subscription available individually or for groups. The \$10 subscription includes:

- A one-year subscription to our public history journal, *History Trails*, delivered by post
- A one-year subscription to our newsletter delivered via email
- One free admission to either our research center or a Sunday Speakers Series event (normally a \$5 value)

Purchasers will receive a professionally designed certificate to present to the gift recipient. For more information, please contact HSBC at info@hsobc.org or call us at 410-666-1878.

YOU MAY HAVE MISSED...



Photo by Sally Riley

HSBC LEGACY TOUR VI, EARLY BALTIMORE COUNTY

On Saturday, October 22nd, 51 guests and 5 tour committee members left the Almshouse just after 9:15 am on a Gunther luxury motor coach to visit Fork, Kingsville, Upper Falls, Franklinville, and Jerusalem Mills. These are some of the earlier villages which developed along the Little Gunpowder Falls and early turnpike crossroads in northeastern Baltimore County.

Although it was a very breezy Fall day, the tourists enjoyed a talk by Mrs. Maxine Rising at St. John's Episcopal Church in Kingsville, as they were seated in the "old" (ca. 1815) church on the property. Later, Mr. Tony Rising showed visitors through the "new" (consecrated in 1911) church, pointing out the pewter communion set given to the old parish by Queen Anne.



Photo by Bud Cornell



Reenactor at the Gun Shop, Jerusalem Mills. Photo by Michael Stillwell.

Another surprise awaited the tourists when they left the bus in Franklinville for a brief walking tour of the old mill village. Mr. and Mrs. Henry very generously invited everyone into their home, which had been the foreman's house in the 19th century.

After lunch, the members of the Tour Committee led their tourists on a walking tour of the historic Jerusalem Mill Village at Little Gunpowder Falls. The village is currently under restoration by the Friends of Jerusalem Mill in modern-day Harford County. When it was first established in the area it was still a part of Baltimore County.

In all, the Almshouse Hill History Tour Committee pointed out over 50 historic structures or sites over the seven hours of the tour. As has been done in the past, the Tour Committee produced a 40+ page booklet detailing the history of the sites visited and a few additional ones in the general area.

WADING IN THE WATERS OF AN UNSUNG RIVER: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE PATAPSCO, BALTIMORE'S RIVER OF HISTORY AND RIVER OF HOPE

Speakers: Paul Travers, Alison Kahn and Peggy Fox

On Saturday, November 12th, the Historical Society of Baltimore County and the Baltimore City Historical Society presented their 5th joint annual program, this time featuring the history of the Patapsco River. Paul Travers, author and former State Park ranger, in a lively and interesting talk, focused on "green" issues, based on the new material in the second edition of his book *The Patapsco: Baltimore's River of History*. Starting from his own experiences of the river, Travers highlighted the intricate history of some of the local greenway organizations, environmental struggles and successes, and the effect of industry on the Patapsco harbor basin. He discussed today's issues with development of the harbor and the importance of continuing to improve the Patapsco's water quality with the goal of creating a "fishable, swimmable river in our lifetime."

The second half of the program took a different approach with author Alison Kahn and photographer Peggy Fox, who highlighted parts of their book *Patapsco: Life Along Maryland's Historic River Valley*. In a live narration and slide show, they brought to life stories of people who have lived in communities along the river, which they had interviewed and photographed for the book. Through the memories and photographs of seniors from diverse backgrounds in communities such as Oella, Ellicott City, Relay, and Elkridge, a rich sense of the cultural history of these areas emerged.

WHO IS SANTA CLAUS?



Who is Santa Claus? Legend has it that he was patterned after St. Nicholas, a fourth-century bishop who lived in Asia Minor (now called Turkey). He was a rich and kindly man who had a reputation for helping the poor and giving anonymous gifts to people. Nicholas was made a saint because of his kindness and generosity.

During the 16th century the stories about St. Nicholas became unpopular. This was after the reformation in Northern Europe. However, someone had to deliver the gifts. So in England he became “Father Christmas” or “Old Man Christmas.”

Throughout Europe this gift-giver took on many names. For example, he was “Pere Noel” in France and “Christ Kind” in Germany. In early America he was called Kris Krinkle. The Dutch settlers called him Sinterklaas or, as we now say it, Santa Claus.

These were the benevolent gift bringers for good children. If you were one of the naughty children in the song “Santa Claus is Coming to Town” and you were on the naughty list, you received your gift from Belsnickel or Knecht Ruprecht. These two gentlemen are popular in German tradition.

According to the tradition, Knecht Ruprecht asks children if they can say their prayers. If they can recite their prayers, they will receive apples, nuts, and gingerbread. If they cannot recite their prayers, he beats them with his bag of ashes. At other times Ruprecht would give the children lumps of coal, sticks, and stones in their shoes.

So please follow the song and be good, because he sees you when you are sleeping or awake. *So be good for goodness sake!* —Pat Routson

NEW PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE AT HSBC

It is holiday time! How about filling a few stockings with some HSBC publications? This year’s bus tour booklet and the booklets from the 2013, 2014, and 2015 tours are available for purchase for \$10 each at the Historical Society of Baltimore County.

2013 *From Falls to Faucet – On the Trail of the Baltimore Water System*

2014 *West of the Interstate: Historic Cemeteries and Churches*

2015 *Out West: Catonsville at Large*

2016 *Early Baltimore County: Step Back in Time*

LIBRARY ADDITIONS

MARYLAND BLOOD: *An American Family in War and Peace, the Hambletons 1657 to the Present*, by Martha Frick Symington Sanger (Baltimore: The Maryland Historical Society, 2016).

Ms. Sanger has written an indexed, highly illustrated, and sourced history of the Hambleton family of Virginia and Maryland, including Baltimore County and the Eastern Shore. The colonial-to-present history of these states is also explored with respect to this influential family, as well as their military service in various wars, and life and property in Chestnut Ridge, Baltimore County, Md.

Ms. Sanger did some of the research for her very comprehensive book in the research library of the Historical Society of Baltimore County. —Kathy Aspden

LOWER DUES AND NEW MEMBER BENEFITS FOR 2017

We have been working to add new benefits to our membership package while also reducing dues for 2017. We hope you'll be as excited as we are by the changes we are making to HSBC memberships!

PRICE REDUCTIONS AND NEW OPTIONS:

For 2017, HSBC memberships will be offered at the following levels:

Individual / \$35 *REDUCED!*

Household / \$50 *REDUCED!*

History Lover's / \$100 *NEW!*
(with reciprocal museum pass—see below)

Educational / \$10 *NEW!*
(n.b.—available only to students and educators)

To learn more, please see the enclosed letter from HSBC Board President Tom Graf and the renewal form on the reverse.

NEW JOINT MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM WITH MARYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY



maryland
historical society

Become a Joint Member at a Discount!



Historical Society
OF BALTIMORE COUNTY

- Joint Individual Membership with MdHS for an additional \$35.00
- Joint Family Memberships with MdHS for an additional \$50.00
- That is a \$15.00 savings!
- That is a \$15.00 savings!

Joint Members Receive ALL the Benefits of MdHS Membership:

FREE museum and library entry, special publications, museum store discounts, invitations to programs and exhibit openings, and more!

HSBC is delighted to announce a new joint membership program with the Maryland Historical Society. Any renewing or new member of HSBC can opt to join the Maryland Historical Society at the same time **at a discounted rate**, saving you \$15 whether you join as an individual or as a family/household.

You enjoy all the benefits of membership in both organizations, support their vital work, and save!

NEW “HISTORY LOVER’S” OPTION WITH FREE ADMISSION TO AREA MUSEUMS

Through our membership in the Greater Baltimore History Alliance (GBHA), we are able to offer HSBC members who join at the \$100 History’s Lover level a special GBHA Reciprocal Admission Pass. The pass enables its holder and an additional person to gain free admission for one year to participating GBHA member museums, including the Baltimore Museum of Industry, B&O Railroad Museum, Glenn L. Martin Maryland Aviation Museum, Historic Ships in Baltimore, and Reginald F. Lewis Museum, among many others. (Please note: special events are excluded and while the pass grants free admission privileges, it does not confer membership in other organizations). For details, please visit the GBHA website at www.baltimoremuseums.org/membership/programs/reciprocal-admission-program or contact us at HSBC at info@hosbc.org or 410-666-1878.



GREATER BALTIMORE

Reciprocal Admission Pass

Present this card along with your current museum membership card for special admission considerations at participating GBHA museums.

Please visit www.baltimoremuseums.org/membership/programs/reciprocal-admission-program for an up-to-date list of participating museums and eligible events.

Name of member or family

This pass serves as free admission for two (2) people for general tours.
Special events/exhibits excluded.

Date of Issue
(expires 1 year from this date)

Name of Issuing Museum

IN MEMORY

We at the Historical Society of Baltimore County were deeply saddened by the loss this year of two of our honorary board members. As 2016 draws to a close, we invite you to join us in reflecting on their lives and contributions.



Helen Delich Bentley
(Wikimedia Commons)

Helen Delich Bentley, 1923-2016

The late Congresswoman was a pioneer in journalism and a pathbreaker in politics. Her decades of work on behalf of the maritime trade in Baltimore and beyond led Governor Robert L. Ehrlich Jr. to officially rename the city's port the Helen Delich Bentley Port of Baltimore in 2006.

Born in Ruth, Nevada, she began her newspaper career in high school and completed a BA in three years at the University of Missouri, then considered the nation's top school for journalism. After working for smaller papers, she eventually landed a big-city reporting job working for the *Sun* in 1945. Instead of writing for the society pages, as women generally did then, she started out covering labor issues and soon moved to the port beat. She had no waterfront experience, but loved the challenge. "I had to be as mean and as tough as I could be. And I was," she recalled in 2010. "I was kicked out and carried out of the [union] halls." She soon made friends and sources out of the longshoremen's leaders, however, and managed to hold her own in the male-dominated newsroom. In 1950, she conquered TV as well with a show on WMAR, "The Port that Built the City and State," which lasted until 1965.

Her reporting on port issues in Vietnam during the war caught the attention of the White House, and the Nixon administration eventually appointed her the Chair of the Federal Maritime Administration in 1969. The position made her the highest-ranking woman in the Nixon administration. In 1975, she returned to Baltimore and began working as a maritime consultant. Her conviction that the port of Baltimore needed dredging, and opposition from the local Congressman, led her to enter politics. She missed being elected in 1980 and 1982, but won a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1984. Though Bentley was a Republican and Senator Barbara Mikulski a Democrat, the two female political pioneers – who became good friends – struck many as alike in their tenacity and commitment to their hard-working, blue-collar constituencies.

After a failed bid for the Republican nomination for Governor in 1994, Bentley left Congress and began a maritime and defense lobbying firm, Helen Bentley & Associates, in 1995. In her later years, she remained active and engaged in port affairs, watching the resurgence that she helped ensure. On August 6, 2016, Bentley succumbed to brain cancer and died in her home in Timonium. "Congresswoman Bentley worked with tenacity, energy, and passion on behalf of her constituents, making her a rare breed in politics and a role model to public servants across Maryland," Governor Larry Hogan told the *Sun* in August. "She was a trailblazer for women in media and government, a longtime champion for manufacturing, maritime issues, and the Port of Baltimore."

Sources:

Michael Dresser, "Helen Delich Bentley, Congresswoman who was a Staunch Advocate of the Port of Baltimore, Dies," *The Baltimore Sun*, 6 August 2016, <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/obituaries/bs-md-ob-helen-bentley-2016-20160806-story.html>, accessed Nov. 7, 2016.

Helen Bentley biography, Helen Bentley & Associates, Inc., website, <http://helendelichbentley.com/bentley-bio>, accessed Nov. 7, 2016.

FAMILY HISTORIES — Do you have a written family history? HSBC is looking for more family information to add to our files and library. Your donation will help patrons and researchers. Call HSBC to donate your family history.



Photo from the *Towson Times*,
Feb. 24, 2016, p. 15

IN MEMORY (CON'T)

Charles Scheeler, 1926-2016

Charles Scheeler was a lifelong contributor to Baltimore County as a sports-loving accountant and leader of Rosedale Federal Savings and Loan Association in an era of tremendous growth for the bank. He was born in Rosedale in 1926 and raised on Old Philadelphia Road, part of a German immigrant community that relocated from Butchers Hill after the 1904 Baltimore fire. His father, George Scheeler, ran a feed store. Because the store had the only safe in the local area, the Scheelers were key figures in the founding of the Rosedale Permanent Building and Loan Association in 1908. The Association's board met in the Scheelers' home.

Charles graduated from Kenwood High School in 1942 and served as a Navy radio operator in the Pacific during World War II. After the war he earned a BA at the University of Maryland College Park and, in 1948, became a Certified Public Accountant. He also attended the University of Maryland School of Law, earning a law degree in 1952 and meeting his future wife there, attorney Mary Katherine Scarborough. His son recalled to the *Sun*, "She borrowed his law books, and would not give them back until he asked her to marry him."

After law school he went to work as an accountant at the construction firm C.J. Langenfelder and Son (now known as Environmental Reclamation, based in White Marsh). Of his long tenure with the firm, current CEO Kenneth C. Lundeen told the *Sun*, "His actions and decisions fostered a culture of fairness, honesty and integrity," and "Charles was not a man of many words, but his word given was more reliable than gold."

Mr. Scheeler also followed in his father's footsteps as a board member at the rechristened Rosedale Federal Savings and Loan Association. He joined the board in 1952 and stayed for 64 years; he served as the board's chair for 26 years. Under his leadership, Rosedale Federal expanded dramatically, from less than \$4 million in assets in 1952 to more than \$800 million when he stepped down from the chairmanship in 2013.

In his spare time, Mr. Scheeler was a sports enthusiast who coached all three of his sons' Little League baseball teams at the Lutherville-Timonium Recreation Council and attended as many University of Maryland football and basketball games as he could manage. He created a memorial fund at the University of Maryland College Park, and was inducted into the Kenwood High School Hall of Fame in 1992. Mr. Scheeler, most recently a resident of Edenwald Retirement Community in Towson, passed away on February 5, 2016, from the after effects of a fall on Christmas Eve. His wife, Mary Katherine Scheeler, died in 2011. She was a life member of the Historical Society since 1984 and served on the HSBC Board of Directors from 2008 to 2011.

Source: Jacques Kelly, "Charles Scheeler, Accountant and Rosedale Federal Board Chair, Dies at 90," *The Baltimore Sun*, February 21, 2016, <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/obituaries/bs-md-ob-charles-scheeler-20160221-story.html>.

NEW GIFT CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE FOR GIVING A YEAR'S MEMBERSHIP IN HSBC TO THE HISTORY LOVERS YOU KNOW

Our new graphic design team* has come up with an eye-catching certificate to present a year's membership in HSBC as a gift. Please consider giving your friends and family who care about history a gift that keeps giving all year—an HSBC membership! For more information, please contact HSBC at info@hsobc.org or call us at 410-666-1878. *Our thanks especially to graphic designer and HSBC board member Sarah Koch of SK Creative Solutions for her work on this.

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