

THE RECORD



Volume 110, No. 2

A Publication of the Historical Society of Charles County, Inc.

April 2015

Mary Pat Berry, President

Mary Ann Scott, Editor

Spring Meeting & Luncheon

Saturday, April 11, 2015



*Please join us for the Dedication of Friendship House
by the National Society Colonial Dames XVII Century*

11:00 a.m. - Dedication Ceremony

11:30 a.m. - Friendship House and Cellar Museum Open

12:00 noon - Luncheon at the Center for Business & Industry,
College of Southern Maryland, La Plata Campus

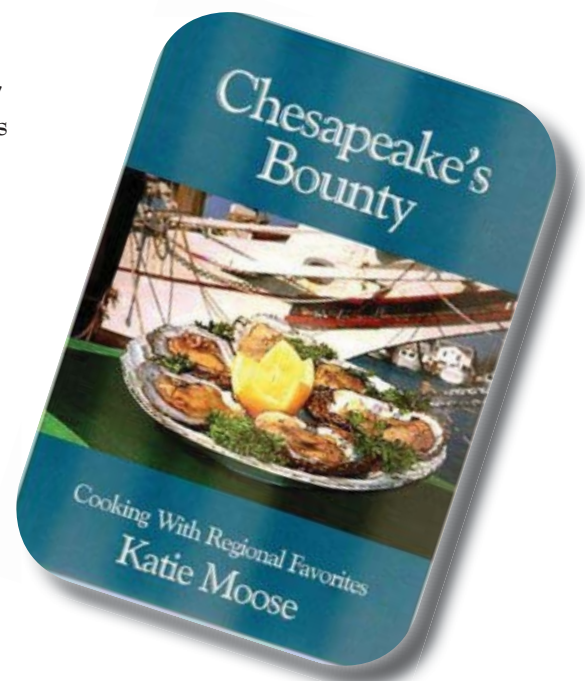
12:30 p.m. - Guest Speaker Katie Barney Moose will present
Chesapeake Foods and Herbs from the
Colonial Period to the Civil War

Menu

BQ Buffet

*Pulled Pork BBQ, BBQ Chicken Quarters
Coleslaw, Baked Beans, Rolls, Chips, Brownies
Coffee (Regular & Decaf), Lemonade & Iced Tea*

\$22.00 per person - Please R.s.v.p. no later than March 30, 2015
to Carol Donahue ~16401 Old Marshall Hall Road ~ Accokeek, MD 20607



A Brief History of Bryantown

By Vivian B. Edelen

*presented to the Port Tobacco Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution
with deep appreciation to John T. Mudd and Francis I. Ferrall, Sr. for data they contributed*



“But where is Bryantown?” asked a visitor to the community in the 1940’s after he had come through the intersection of Route 5 and Route 232, past the store, houses, and church grounds that comprised the village. No doubt he had expected to see a real town, and the sprinkling of buildings centered around the crossroads scarcely lived up to the name.

Had the gentleman been a traveler in the early days of the village, he would have been looking forward eagerly to reaching this point. It would have been his stopping place between St. Mary’s City and Port Tobacco and communities elsewhere. Had he been zipping down the dual highway of the 1970’s, road signs would have made him aware that here is a “town.”

Even so, the traveler could not fully appreciate the long history of this tiny village with its big name. Since colonial times, it has held a prominent role in the itinerary of any Southern Maryland traveler. In the 18th century, it was an important stage coach stop because it had a hotel with a dining room and saloon, known as Bryan’s Inn. Tradition has it that the home of the distinguished late John F. Mudd was this inn. Many features of the house, now destroyed, were indicative of its having served in that capacity.

In this early period there were other saloons and, at least, a general store or two. Located on the main wagon train and stage route between the old capital cities of Maryland and the Virginia Colony, it drew passenger traffic not only from the general area of Bryantown Hundred but, also, as far north as present-day Aquasco in Prince Georges County and as far south as Allen’s Fresh on the Wicomico River in Charles County.

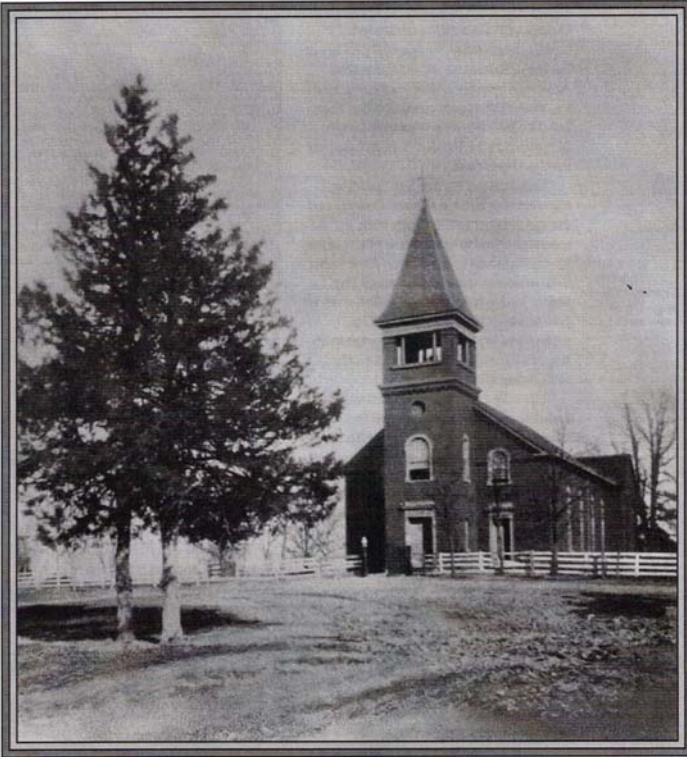
The State Census of Bryantown Hundred taken during the period of 1775-1778 by John Harbin, Constable, lists six persons having the name of “Bryan” in its data on all the males

eighteen years or older living in the area then. Evidently, the name of the village originated from that of the innkeeper whose hostelry was so vital to travelers of that era.

Looking back in records of land grants, one would think that the village should have received its name from the earliest owner of the land in this part of the Maryland Colony. Between 1650 and 1699 Lord Baltimore had granted thirty tracts of land totalling 17,000 acres to Major William Boarman who had come to Maryland in 1645 and served as an officer in the Provincial Militia, High Sheriff, and as delegate to the Lower House of the Assembly. The land “east of Zachiah Swamp” consisting of 3,333 acres called “Boarman’s Manor” and “Boarman’s Rest” lay in the area now known as Bryantown. Major Boarman’s prominence in the early history of the Colony and his vast holdings in Charles and St. Mary’s Counties would have warranted his name being assigned to the village.

Traditionally, it is thought that his dwelling was the home known as “Boarman’s Manor” situated in the center of Bryantown until it was torn down in 1913 to make way for the newer manor house now standing on the site. An old photograph reveals that the original home bore many features of other 17th century homes in Southern Maryland such as “Susquehanna” (1654) and “Ocean Hall” (1650’s) in St. Mary’s County, and “Charles’ Gift” (originally called “Preston” (1650) and “Maidenstone” (1658) in Calvert County. The main two-story brick section with its deep sloping roof and dormer windows, a one-story wing on the side and separate clapboard kitchen in the rear, attached to the house by an open porch, were typical of that period of architecture. The bricks for the house had been brought from England to Port Tobacco by boat and thence to Bryantown by ox cart. Many years prior to the destruction of

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This was one of the first photographs of St. Mary's Church. It was taken in the 1890's. It appeared in the book, *Common Bond*.

the house the bricks had been painted white. All indications are that this was the dwelling-plantation "Boarman's Rest" that Major Boarman devised to his third wife, Mary Jarboe, and their son, Benedict Leonard Boarman, in his will of 1708.

The newer home built in 1913 was designed by Benjamin M. Edelen, Jr. (1871-1947), a talented gentleman of both architectural and mechanical ability. He married Mary Ellen Gwynn Boarman who had inherited the land and old house. It is an impressive Victorian-type mansion with its wide halls and walnut stairway, flanked by large high-ceilinged rooms, and its hospitable columned verandas.

Direct descendants of Major Boarman still own the land and house, and it still bears the name of "Boarman's Manor," even though the village does not. The present owner, Benjamin M. Edelen III, and his sisters, Gladys Edelen Williams and Mary Boarman Edelen, who live on portions of the Manor, descended from the Major not only through their mother's Boarman line, but also through their father's Edelen line. Major Boarman married three times and his descendants include many families in Southern Maryland.

The actual history of Bryantown, however, began earlier than Major Boarman's acquisition of the land. Geographically it is situated near the head of Zekiah Swamp, which extends from a point about three miles north of the main road, to Allen's Fresh, where the main stream becomes the headwaters of the Wicomico River. Prior to the arrival of the English colonists, the swamp was a favorite camping and hunting area for the Algonquin Indians. In fact, the present name is derived from the Algonquin-Fox dialect "Sacaya," meaning "a dense thicket."

Through the years there have been many spellings: "Zachian," "Zachia," "Sakiah," and now "Zekiah." Today, it is one of the largest natural frontiers in Southern Maryland. It abounds with wild game of every description from the white-tailed deer to ducks, as well as several varieties of fish. As important as the "Swamp" has been to the people who have lived in the area, the village might well have borne the name of "Zekiah."

The place name was not firmly established until January of 1920, when the Federal Government approved a post office for the community, and appointed Jesse C. Cooke as the first postmaster. He was also the first proprietary of a combination hostelry, tavern, and store known as "Cooke's Tavern" and "Bryantown Hotel." The last proprietor before it became the residence of Charles Julian Boarman was Lewis Jenkins. Others who had run its business were George Goode and Milton Bean.

The golden age of Bryantown as a shopping and business center was between 1840 and 1910, but an even earlier "account of Clothing Purchased in Charles County by Daniel Jenifer" shows that on February 2, 1778 "shoes and stockings left at ----- McPherson's and ----- Boarman's store at Bryantown



Boarman's Manor

were collected from Edward Boarman, Charles Montgomery, William Montgomery, David Rawlings, and William Roby of Richard." This item in the Md. Calendar of State Papers is perhaps the earliest record of a store in Bryantown.

A topographical map of the swamp area as surveyed by John Henry Alexander in 1835 shows Bryantown to have been a village of seventeen buildings, including the tavern and a jail from which a set of "irons" is still in existence. By the time of the 1860 to 1870 Census, professional and business people residing in the four mile area included six medical doctors, a constable, a hotelkeeper, three blacksmiths and three apprentices, a wheelright, a coachmaker, two bootmakers and shoemakers, three merchants and four clerks, five mechanics,

Continued on Page 4



The Cedars

six schoolteachers, two millers (water mills), a magistrate, two lawyers, a carpenter, a Protestant Episcopal minister, and a Roman Catholic priest.

Old letters of that era reveal that there was a dancing master as well as a music teacher, so the cultural development of the community was not neglected. The first educational facility was "St. Mary's Female Seminary," a boarding school opened by the Misses Mary and Winifred Martin in 1859 on the Catholic Church parish grounds. Patronized by local and distant families, it was highly successful until after the Civil War when patrons suffered financial reverses and Mrs. Daniel Majors and her daughters (who had carried on its work after Miss Winifred Martin retired) closed the school. Later there were two frame public school buildings. Most of the males in Bryantown received their education at Rock Hill College in Ellicott City, or Maryland Agriculture College during the days of the "Female Seminary." Many children were tutored at home.

The Civil War created divided sympathies in Bryantown, just as in other parts of the U.S., but mainly this was considered enemy territory by Union soldiers. Eleanora Bowling Kane, of Towson, who is a descendant of Bryantown residents of that period tells an interesting anecdote about the way her Confederate grandfather, Aloysius Bowling, intrusted with secret papers, hid from Union soldiers in the St. Mary's Church belfry by straddling the beams. From his lofty perch he viewed the Union men fruitlessly searching for him in the Church and grounds.

The grave of Dr. Samuel A. Mudd in the cemetery there is a quiet reminder of the sad role he was called upon to play in the treatment of John Wilkes Booth's broken leg after the assassination of President Lincoln. Much has already been written about this, so it will not be dwelled upon here.

Many "Bryantown Hundred" residents served faithfully for the Colonies during the American Revolution and others signed the Oath of Allegiance to demonstrate their adherence

to the cause. Later their descendants did their part in the War of 1812, Mexican War, Spanish-American War, World Wars I and II, as well as in recent conflicts.

By 1890, Bryantown was the second most important community in Charles County with several stores and many fine homes. "Bryantown Hotel" had been built for over a century and Edward Turner had built "Brick House Lot" in 1812. These are two of the oldest structures still standing in the village today, and a history of them and their many owners could fill many pages. Across from them, overlooking present-day Bryantown is the impressive Victorian home, "The Cedars," which Henry Turner built about 1870. Many farm homes in the surrounding vicinity were constructed in the 1800's, replacing the 17th and 18th century homes originally built on the plantations that had been in the same families for many generations.

The decline of the village's importance began in 1872 when the Pennsylvania Railroad built its lines through Southern Maryland via Waldorf and La Plata. No longer a main stopover for travelers, Bryantown became a residential area, more or less. Even as late as 1941, however, two of the stores stood as remnants of bygone days. John T. Mudd and William T. Bowling had vacated the old store on the corner of the Thomas Edgar Boarman property where they and several previous merchants had conducted business for many years. The other store stood at the base of what is now the Carrico property, last owned by Luke Oswald Downs. Mrs. William M. Boone has the last known picture of this store in existence, showing how the road through Bryantown approached it. The old hotel and these stores had once borne such mercantile titles as "Cooke," "McPherson's and Boarman's," "Bean's," "Bowling (Charles Albert) and Jameson (Archibald)," "Fowler and Edelen," "Summers" (Eugene). Sometime after World War II, the two stores were torn down because of deterioration. A blacksmith shop, a grist mill, a saw mill, and Harry Moreland's first garage had disappeared from the scene even earlier.

The stores had been the location of the post office, too, and in the new one now there is a framed list of former postmasters, recently compiled by Francis I. Ferrall, Sr. From 1820 they include: Jesse C. Cooke, William N. Bean, Mason L. McPherson, George T. Richards, Rufus Robey, John J. Harbin, John E. Robey, Walter F. Boarman, Robert L. Burch, George A. Hunt, Thomas H. Harbin, Richard M. Dyer, John T. Johnson, George W. Smith, E.D.R. Bean, Eugenius F. Edelen, Josephine Chappelle, George D. Mudd, James A. Lyon, Angela Boarman, Charles A. Bowling, Thomas E. Boarman, Elizabeth A. Boarman, William Eugene Summers, Marian B. Summers, and William T. Bowling, who has held the appointment since 1940.

In 1939-40 when a new concrete road was constructed over the old winding one from Waldorf to St. Mary's County, it by-passed the former hotel (which was then the home of George I. Gardiner, Sr.), "Brick House Lot" owned by Louis Steffens, the Eugene Summers home, and the Dr. Louis Carrico home, by a few hundred yards. Hence, "Bowling and Mudd" built a new store on the north side of Route 5. It housed the post

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Brick House Lot

office and for a few years after World War II, an Allis-Chalmers tractor business.

The 1970's brought further change to the crossroad village. A dual highway was laid, necessitating another move for "Bowling and Mudd" to a larger building erected on the southbound lane in the point where it meets the old stagecoach road. The new structure houses "Bryantown Store" and "Bryantown Post Office" in separate sections. A large parking space for commuters enables easy access to both. Nearby is the Pat Bowling Auto and Marine Sales business.

Crossing the village north and south, Route 232 retains many of its century-old houses, but is dotted now with homes built in recent decades. Developments have sprung up in every direction and with them have come two large schools. T. C. Martin School is the public educational facility replacing the old Hughesville School. St. Mary's School and Convent replaced the original schools and convent started by Reverend Patrick Conroy in 1916.

St. Mary's Church nearby had its beginning in the "30 foot log chapel" that existed on the Boarman estate prior to 1696, known as Zekiah Chapel. By 1793, there was a "Congregation of Upper and Lower Zekiah and Mattawoman" served by Jesuit Fathers from their residence at St. Thomas Manor. Their hand written baptismal, marriage, and death registers are excellent sources for genealogy enthusiasts. A frame church replaced the log chapel and in 1846 a brick church was erected, which was enlarged in 1895. A disastrous fire in 1963 necessitated complete renovation of the church in 1964. Plaques at the entrance to the church and school grounds denote the history of the church and Boarman's Manor.

That traveler of 1941 would no longer have to ask, "Where is Bryantown?" A huge sign on Route 5 directs people to the church. State road markers designate the "town," the route numbers, and mileage to other places. The store and post office carry their names in large lettered signs. Blinking lights

at the intersection warn motorists that here is a community, small commercially and residentially, perhaps, but still a good stopping place as in days of old – a good permanent one!



Sunny Side, the home of Edward B. and Vivian B. Edelen

Mark Your Calendar

- **Saturday, April 11, 2015:**
**Spring Luncheon and Dedication
of Friendship House
by The National Society of the
Colonial Dames of the XVII Century**
11:00 - Dedication Ceremony
11:30 - Friendship House and Cellar Museum Open
12:00 - Luncheon at the Center for Business & Industry, College of Southern Maryland, La Plata Campus
12:30 - Guest Speaker Katie Barney Moose will present *Chesapeake Foods and Herbs from the Colonial Period to the Civil War.*
- **Saturday, May 2, 2015:**
Port Tobacco Market Days
- **Saturday, October 24, 2015:**
Fall Dinner Meeting. Dave Taylor will present "The John Wilkes Booth Escape Route: Rich Hill and The Garrett Farm." Tour, dinner and meeting at the Surratt House.
- **Saturday, January 23, 2016:**
January Meeting. Sara Rivers-Cofield will present *Small Finds, Big Picture: Artifacts of the Colonial Chesapeake as Bait for the Tobacco Trap.*

In Remembrance

BETTY LEVERING

Sarah Elizabeth “Betty” Grainger Levering, a life-long member of the Historical Society, passed peacefully on December 31, 2014. She was 85 years old. She was born in Kinston, North Carolina, the daughter of James Marion Grainger, Sr. and Elizabeth Wilson Morton Grainger.

Betty was an active realtor with Baldus Real Estate from 1986 until the time of her death and a member of the Southern Maryland Board of Realtors. Previously, Betty had careers with the Charles County Board of Education as a secretary and media specialist where she thoroughly enjoyed daily interactions with the students and video recording sporting and other events. In the mid 1970’s she joined the U.S. Department of Agriculture working in the Information Office directly for the Administrator of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

Betty was an active member of the Episcopal faith at Christ Church, Port Tobacco Parish, and Christ Church, Old Durham Parish since moving to Maryland from North Carolina 66 years ago following her marriage to her husband, Russell Levering. Throughout the years she was involved in Altar Guild, Sunday School, Youth Group, Vacation Bible School, Nursery, Worship and Music Committee, Church Bazaars, and Dinners.

Betty was a 60-year member of the Charles County Garden Club, known for her long leadership as Bird Chairman, and her chairmanship of the Charles County Bus Tour for the Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage every three years. She was an early member of the Port Tobacco Players, and enjoyed performing in many theatrical shows and later attending and supporting the group. She was also a member of the Society for the Restoration of Port Tobacco, and the Daughters of the American Revolution, Halifax Convention, Charlotte, NC.

She was an enthusiastic participator and devoted member of the Historical Society. It was very rare not to see Betty with her daughter, Bonnie Rafer, at each and every Historical Society event. She will truly be missed.

JOSEPH YOUNG ROWE

Joseph Young Rowe, lifetime member of the Historical Society, died quietly in Orange, Virginia on Sunday, January 4, 2015. He was 92 years old.

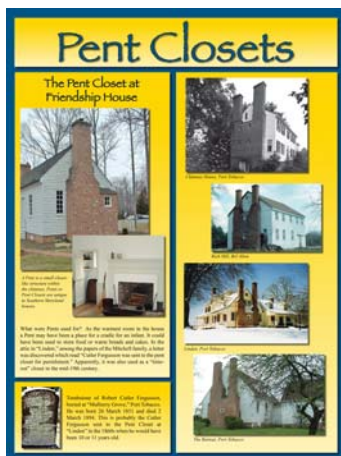
He was the son of the late John Downs Rowe and the late Maule Young Rowe. Joe was directly descended from Captain Thomas Graves of Jamestowne and also from Governor William Stone of Poynton Manor in Maryland.



In 1952, Joe came to Virginia to accept a position to teach mathematics at Woodberry Forest School. He eventually became chairman of the Woodberry math department. He remained at Woodberry Forest for 24 years. He left Woodberry Forest to become the fourth headmaster of the nearby Grymes School, where he served for eight years.

Joe’s memberships included Saint Thomas Episcopal Church where he had been a vestryman and Senior Warden. He was also a member of the Orange County Historical Society where he served as president. Mr. Rowe was also a member of the Jamestowne Society and Society of the Cincinnati.

In his retirement years his interests turned to writing. He was very proud to admit to writing and publishing eight books. Probably his best known book was “The Greatest Generation of Orange.” Joe also served honorably in the U. S. Army in Europe from 1943 to 1946. He remained in Germany after the war and attended the University of Munich.



Friendship House

The Friendship House Foundation Committee has been busy this winter preparing for the April 11th dedication. An eight-page booklet has been produced for visitors who tour the house. It not only features photographs, but also the history of the Friendship House tract from 1657 to the present. A “Rack Card” about Friendship House will be distributed to sites to elicit interest and tours. The back room of the Cellar Museum will showcase five new panel displays highlighting special features of Friendship House: The Friendship House Dolls, the Gray and Dyson Samplers, the Pent Closet, Roped-Beds, and Tea Bricks. Come out on April 11th to see all of these new enhancements to Friendship House, a Charles County treasure!

Friendship House Foundation

Friendship House sits proudly on the campus of the College of Southern Maryland. Please join the Historical Society of Charles County in contributing to the preservation of Friendship House for many generations to come.



Friendship House Foundation Contributors

FRIEND

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<i>Mrs. Barbara Wright Griffin in memory of</i>	<i>Mary Constance Hoffmaster Hutchins</i>
<i>Gertrude Wright McWilliams</i>	

RENAISSANCE

<i>The Gluck Family Fund</i>	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Ernest L. Irish</i>	<i>Elizabeth Cobey Joseph</i>
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Friendship House Foundation In Memory of

<i>Warren E. Barley</i>	<i>Kathryn C. Newcomb</i>
<i>Philip L. Griffith</i>	<i>Velva Perrygo</i>
<i>Eleanor Higdon</i>	<i>Watson Perrygo</i>
<i>Sue LaHood</i>	<i>Anita Wood</i>
<i>Katherine S. W. Mitchell</i>	

Friendship House Foundation Levels of Giving:

Friend	\$ 25.00-\$ 99.00
Colonist	\$ 100.00-\$199.00
Patriot	\$ 200.00-\$499.00
Statesman	\$ 500.00-\$999.00
Renaissance	\$1,000.00 +

To donate, please make checks payable to the Friendship House Foundation, and mail to the Historical Society.



In Commemoration of Lincoln's 150th Anniversary
 Charles County Government and the
 Historical Society of Charles County will present

Villains, Rebels & Rogues
 Archaeology and Preservation
 along the Booth Escape Trail

Historic

Rich Hill Farm House

Saturday & Sunday, April 18-19, 2015

10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Join professional archaeologists as they excavate around Rich Hill uncovering evidence of its 19th century appearance. Hear from local historians as they share Rich Hill's connection to the Lincoln assassination and learn about the little known people who lived and worked on this historic Charles County farm.

Saturday, April 18th

- Costumed Docents, courtesy of the Surratt House Museum, Clinton, Maryland
- Exterior Tours of Historic Rich Hill
- Charles County Archaeological Society of Maryland onsite workshop
- African American Heritage Society Craft Demonstrations
- Pvt. Wallace Bowling Camp, Sons of the Confederate Veterans Encampment

Sunday, April 19th

- Costumed Docents, courtesy of the Surratt House Museum, Clinton, Maryland
- Exterior Tours of Historic Rich Hill
- Charles County Archaeological Society of Maryland onsite workshop
- Pvt. Wallace Bowling Camp, Sons of the Confederate Veterans Encampment



List of Participants

- Charles County Government*
- The Historical Society of Charles County, Inc.*
- The African-American Heritage Society*
- The Charles County Archaeology Society of Maryland*
- The Charles County Genealogical Society*
- The Society for the Restoration of Port Tobacco*
- Pvt. Wallace Bowling Camp, Sons of the Confederate Veterans*
- The Surratt House Museum*

Wheelchair Accessible: ADA accessibility is limited at the site. Patrons will be stationed at viewing points on the property.
 The house is not open for tours.

Officers, Board of Directors, and Committee Members

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 Vice-President Michael J. Mazzeo, Jr.
 Secretary Danielle Webber
 Treasurer G. Howard Post

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 Dr. Lloyd Bowling 1992-1998
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 Kaye O'Kelley 2004-2008
 Joyce B. Candland 2008-2012

* Deceased ** Acting President

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Genealogy and Research:
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Historian:
 Tom Pike

Historic Sites:
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Publicity:
 Tom Pike

EDITOR'S NOTE

If you would like future newsletters sent to you by e-mail, please send us your e-mail address. Articles of historic interest on Southern Maryland are requested for publication in future issues of *The Record*. Please send your articles and photographs to: The Historical Society of Charles County, Publications, *The Record*, P.O. Box 2806, La Plata, Maryland 20646. Or you can email your articles and photographs to Mary Pat Berry at bugs4berry@gmail.com.

Friendship House Committees

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 Anne Boone
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 Evelyn Karlsson Merritt
 John S. Morris, III

Furnishings

Joyce Candland, Chair
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Cellar Museum & Shop

James H. Berry, Jr.
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Ways & Means

Ruby Dyson
 Sandra Mitchell



President's Message

Dear Society Members,

I do hope the weather has made the turn to warmer days. As I write this, there is another chance of snowflakes tonight along with the brutally cold temps. Brr....

The weather has not slowed down your Society. On a frigid Saturday morning in January, many of us met with Cathy Thompson, Charles County Planning & Growth (PG&M) Community Planning Program Manager and Esther Reed, Charles County consultant for archaeology at Rich Hill. This meeting was to determine site improvements and other considerations for the April 18-19 Lincoln 150th Commemoration. The Historical Society has been asked by PG&M to arrange and coordinate some of the activities that will take place at Rich Hill that weekend. Though the "main event" will be centered at the Dr. Mudd House in Waldorf, Rich Hill will host Jim Gibbs and be assisted by the Charles County Archaeological Society of Maryland performing a small "dig" next to the house. The HSCC has arranged to have costumed docents, courtesy of the Surratt House Museum in Clinton, Maryland to greet and meet the visitors. The African American Heritage House will give craft demonstrations and the Sons of the Confederate Veterans will camp out for the weekend. Historical Society members



will be onsite along with some other heritage organizations. Mark your calendars and come on down to Bel Alton!

I hope you will join us April 11 at CSM for the Colonial Dames XVII Century marking of Friendship House. This was the impetus for our dendrochronology study to date the house. The beautiful marker will have the date on it and for the first time we have definite proof the house was built in 1766. Something to celebrate! Friendship House is 249 years old!

Your Board has performed its normal housekeeping duties with the printing of more letterhead and envelopes, development of a Friendship House booklet and rack cards, insurance review and renewal, and other items we are charged to attend to by you our members. Our next Board meeting will take place in March and Anna Kephart from the Southern Maryland Studies Center and Timothy Morgan, the (new) Tourism Director are scheduled to present items for the Boards consideration. The HSCC is very fortunate to have such wonderful working relationships with both of these parties.

Again, please let us know of your comments or concerns. The HSCC Board is here to preserve and protect Charles County's rich heritage and to educate and disseminate the information. Consider inviting a friend to the meeting or offer a membership to someone new in your community.

See you in the spring!

Mary Pat Berry
HSCC President



**THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF CHARLES COUNTY, INC.**

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