

THE RECORD



Volume 117, No. 2

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

May 2022

Ronald G. Brown, President

Mary Ann Scott, Editor

The Historical Society of Charles County
*Please join us for a Field Trip to
Patrick Henry's Scotchtown and Historic Hanover Tavern*

Thursday, May 19, 2022



9:00 am – Depart La Plata Courthouse
Farmers Market Parking Lot

10:30 am – Tour of Patrick Henry's
Scotchtown

12:30 am – Lunch at Historic Hanover
Tavern, (lunch costs
on your own)

2:00 pm – Tour of Historic Hanover
Tavern

4:30 pm – Arrive back in La Plata



\$25.00 per person

(Scotchtown, Hanover Tavern and school bus)

Please r.s.v.p. to Carol Donohue by May 1, 2022

16401 Old Marshall Hall Road ~ Accokeek, MD 20607

Please make checks payable to: The Historical Society of Charles County

Email your lunch choices (see last page) to: mjmazzeo55@gmail.com by May 1, 2022. Thank you!

School Memories

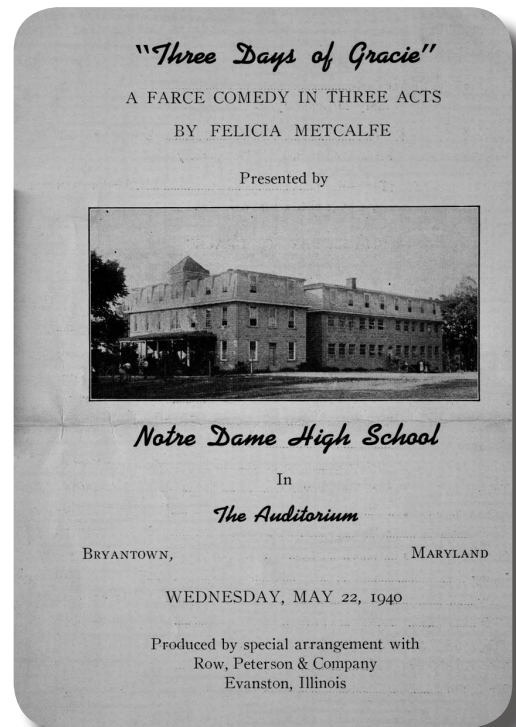
St. Mary's Catholic School, Notre Dame High School, and St. Mary's Colored School in Bryantown

Edward B. Edelen, Jr.

St. Mary's Catholic School and Convent were built in 1915 with more grades added within a few years, and the nearby St. Mary's Colored School opening soon after. I attended St. Mary's Catholic School and Notre Dame High School from 1957 to 1967 until the white and colored school buildings were torn down in the summer of 1967. The four grade school classrooms were downstairs with two classes per room. We had 72 students one year in my 1st and 2nd grade classroom. Our nun, who was a member of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, had no problem teaching these two large classes in one school room. Subjects were mostly taught separately to each grade. However, it did give students a chance to jump ahead in knowledge, or to catch up the next year if they didn't quite learn some subjects the previous year. I never saw a disadvantage to having combined grades in one classroom. The high school classrooms were upstairs with one homeroom per grade. The high school students moved from classroom to classroom for various subjects. I think the Colored School also had two classes per room. The white grade school was desegregated by about 1962 with Notre Dame High desegregated within a few years.



The best thing about St. Mary's Catholic School in Bryantown was the huge playground. The 1st and 2nd grade playground was directly behind the school on the same level. The play area was mostly gravelly dirt and many exposed tree roots with two galvanized steel sliding boards and several seesaws at the southwestern end. When school started in early September, the sliding boards were very rusty. Those impatient or very young ended up with rust-stained clothes. The sliding boards were soon polished slick by students polishing the slides with waxed paper. Everyone's sandwiches were wrapped in waxed paper back then. Playing marbles was a favorite activity back in the 1950s. There were spots under oak and maple trees where circles could be drawn, and many games of marbles were played by 1st and 2nd graders. Folding knives were carried by many boys back then. A favorite game was to



spread your feet wide. Your opponent would throw his knife into the ground between your feet. You moved one foot up against the knife. This continued a few more times until one of you gave up, fearing a knife blade through your shoe as the gap narrowed. We were not supervised by the nuns. Fights were common. Activities that might be considered criminal now did not greatly concern the nuns or parents back in those days. Students could be a bit naive too.

Paths led downhill to the large playgrounds for grades 3 through 8. The wooded hillside above the 3rd and 4th grade ball field was covered with narrow trails and ailanthus trees. These tropical Asian trees are also known as Trees of Heaven. Their branches and leaf fronds made great huts used as gang headquarters. Girls were usually the gang leaders with the boys as their servants or roving gangsters. The 3rd and 4th grade ball field was below the hillside, and dropped down about three feet to the 5th and 6th grade boys' ball field. Several girls' softball diamonds were between the 5th and 6th grade boys' field and that of the 7th and 8th grade boys' baseball field. We seldom played football. In the colder months, the favored boys' game was Keep Away. Keep Away was a much simpler version of rugby. We played with a round ball similar to a soccer ball. Grab the ball and run until you were tackled. Then pass to a teammate while kneeling and surrounded by opponents. There was no scoring. The team with ball possession when the bell ending recess rang was considered the winner. There was a wide grassy path that led uphill from the 7th and 8th grade ball field. Others would climb narrow gravel paths up through the steep hillside and gullies. There was an annual

School Memories, continued on page 3

spring Field Day organized by the nuns and priests. Field Day was held on the baseball field on church property used by the local Hughesville-Bryantown baseball team. There were games such as sack races, tug of war, sprint races, and other games. Hotdogs, sodas, candy, and ice cream were sold by the nuns to raise money for school supplies. We were well-schooled, but recess and the playground are what really stood out to many students.

St. Mary's Catholic Colored School

John H. Neal

I was in the first grade when I started St. Mary's Colored School in 1962. My favorite teacher was Sister Walter Mary, who changed her name to Sister Virginia Anne. I rode to school on a bus driven by Mr. Burt Thomas. Our bus trip took about 40 minutes to complete. My school was a two-story farm house with eight rooms and radiator heat.

The activities I enjoyed the most while attending SMCS was arithmetic and spelling bee competitions with the white school students. At first, we lost about two rounds. Then we studied harder and won several successful bees. We returned to our school and had arithmetic and spelling bees between classes. I received many stars, placed on my chart. After arriving to school, we started morning prayer. Then we had our first classes of reading and language. Learning our alphabet and putting words together to make sentences. Lunch and recess were next. This lasted approximately 45 minutes; playing on swings and see-saws. Sometimes we left the school grounds and explored the airplane crash in the woods. This was exciting. Those of us who returned late, including me, were spanked for leaving the grounds. We were also spanked when we would not eat the lunches of the white students if we did not have lunch. We returned to the school house for evening classes, which consisted of science and history. All classes were schedule in the same classroom.

Pomfret Elementary

(Author unknown)

I started school in 1931 at Pomfret Elementary. There were two one-room school houses. One from grades 1 to 4 and one from grades 5 to 7. Miss Rector taught grades 1 to 4 and Miss Mayme Ransom taught grades 5 to 7. I had to walk about 4 miles to school in the rain, snow and ice because black children didn't have buses to ride to school and when I got to school my hands and feet would be aching. We all had to gather around the old wood stove to get warm and for our hands and feet to thaw out.

White children had buses to ride to school and when the bus would pass us on the road, they would spit out of the windows at us, until one day, we all got switches and when they put their heads out of the windows, we would hit them with

switches and that stopped them from that. I went to Pomfret school 6 years, that's because I passed from 3rd grade to the 5th grade. I started going to Pomonkey High School in 1938. Mr. Kane was one of my teachers. My parents had 10 children and when I was in the 2nd year, I was taken out of school to go work at the age of 14.

Pomonkey High School

Mary Farmer Thomas

I attended Pomonkey High School from September 1948 thru June 1952, graduation. Mr. Maurice was the principal, with a class of about 38. Mr. Aaron Kane was my homeroom and science teacher.

The first day of High School was the biggest challenging day of my life. I had to catch a bus at Gallant Green, walking 3 ½ miles alone. Mr. Thompson, waiting on a ride to take him to work, waited at the bus stop with me and said I looked frightened or sick.

I was thankful. Our bus started from Benedict, then went to Hughesville, Gallant Green, Malcom, Waldorf, White Plains then to Bryans Road.

I had graduated from St. Mary's Colored Catholic School in Bryantown where I lived, up to the 7th grade. I was the only one in my class to attend Pomonkey High School. The rest of my class went to Bel Alton. I was the youngest of 12. My sister Bernadette had graduated in June 1948. I knew very few students there. I had a very special cousin there, Vernon Butler.

I was quiet and very shy and was looked over very closely. I had always stayed close to my elders. I stayed close to my teachers and was proclaimed by many as the teachers' pet. The teachers looked after their students and they became our mentors. I had never been taught by colored women and by no men, for the nuns [at Bryantown] were white, but they were all good to me.

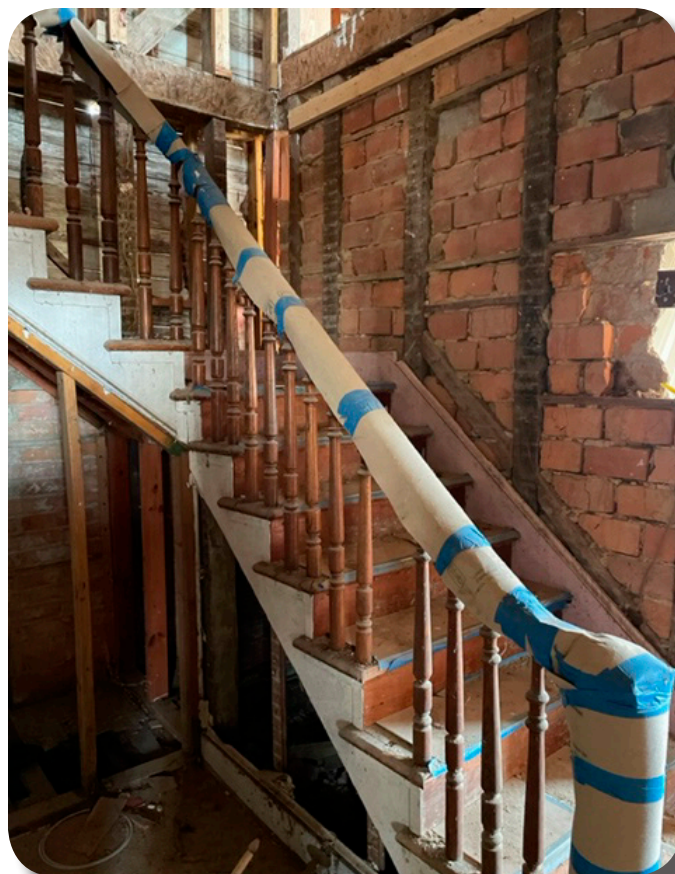
Our day started with prayer, then we quietly lined up single line and walked the hall to the right to our next class. Our classes were Mr. Aaron Kane, Science; Mrs. Mary Butler Thomas, Homemaking skills, sewing and cooking; Mrs. Dorothy Daily Moorman, business; Mrs. Anne Johnson Crisp, history; Mr. Henry Freedman, music; Mr. John H. Brinkley, short hand, bookkeeping and typing and Cordelia E. King was our guidance counselor.

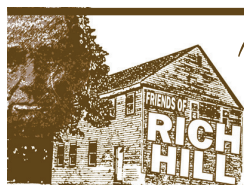
I joined the acapella choir under Henry Freeman, not for my voice, although no student was ever denied a change to improve themselves to build self esteem and confidence. I went on trips too. I thank Mary B. Thomas for her help in home economics. It was not easy to get the needed attire and she always came through for me. My first child, Rose Francine Thomas Harris was picked by Mr. Henry Freeman for the 1957 year book. I thank God for Pomonkey High School and all I learned and hope that I can speak for the rest of my classmates: Lessons well received!

Rich Hill Update

The County is beginning its final phase of rehabilitation on Rich Hill. This will include removing the entire exterior of the front and back of the house and replacing it with new framing, siding and new windows. Next, the interior work will include new flooring for the first floor, rehabilitation of the stairs, a hvac system and insulation. Unfortunately, because of all the rotten wood that has had to be replaced from this 1729 structure, monies to finish Rich Hill as a museum, have totally been encumbered in order to replace and stabilize the framing of the structure. Therefore, the Historical Society of

Charles County has applied for a matching Capital Grant from the Maryland Historical Trust to help complete Rich Hill and have it ready to open to visitors. The grant request includes funds for electrical outlets, an alarm system, drywall, painting and millwork for the fireplace mantels, staircase and the 18th century upstairs doors. If received, the grant will be awarded in July and we are anticipating the remaining work will take place throughout the summer with an opening of Rich Hill in the early fall. We will keep you updated!





The Friends of Rich Hill

Supporting the Rehabilitation of a Historic Property

Historic Southern Maryland

Memberships

The *Friends of Rich Hill* was established to preserve, promote, and restore a unique part of Southern Maryland's heritage. Rich Hill was built in 1729 by Dr. Gustavus Brown, one of the wealthiest men in the Maryland colony. More notably, it was the home of Colonel Samuel Cox, who hid John Wilkes Booth and David Herold in his "pine thicket" in the days following the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln in April of 1865.

The Purpose of the Friends of Rich Hill is to:

- Develop interpretive activities to tell the many stories of Rich Hill.
- Collect interior furnishings & accessories.
- Host special events at Rich Hill.
- Create partnerships with other organizations.
- Record pertinent information, documents, and photographs as part of the Historic Sites file at the Southern Maryland Studies Center, College of Southern Maryland, La Plata Campus.

Tax-deductible donations will help to maintain the historical integrity of the house through its exhibits, activities, furnishings, tours, and educational programs.

Levels of Giving

<i>Friend</i>	\$ 1-49
<i>Supporter</i>	\$ 50+
<i>Innovator</i>	\$ 100+
<i>Steward</i>	\$ 250+
<i>Ambassador</i>	\$ 500+
<i>Visionary</i>	\$ 1,000+
<i>Legacy</i>	\$ 2,500+
<i>Distinguished</i>	\$ 5,000+
<i>Benefactor</i>	\$10,000+
<i>Philanthropist</i>	\$20,000+

To donate, please make checks payable to
Friends of Rich Hill
c/o the Historical Society of Charles County
PO Box 2806, La Plata, MD 20646

Name:

Email:

Phone #:

Address:

Donation Amount: \$

Areas of Interest: (check all that apply)

☐ African-American History

☐ Archaeology

☐ Brochures

☐ The Browns of Rich Hill

☐ Cemetery Research

☐ Civil War Trails

☐ Consultants

☐ Exhibits & Displays

☐ Fund Raising

☐ Furniture & Accessories

☐ Genealogy

☐ Grants for research

☐ Publicity

☐ Special Events & Encampments

☐ Tours & Educational Programs

www.richhillfriends.org



Friends of Rich Hill Memberships



Philanthropist (\$20,000+)

Frank R. Brown, IV, in honor of his father, Dr. Frank R. Brown, III

Benefactor (\$10,000+)

Distinguished (\$5,000+)

Legacy (\$2,500+)

*General Society of Colonial Wars
Lucy Beall Cox Neale Memorial*

*Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Maryland
Surratt Society*

Visionary (\$1,000+)

*Charles County Antique Arts Association
Charles County Genealogical Society
Edward B. Edelen, Jr.*

*Nelse L. Greenway
Joseph H. Neale & Marcy J. Oppenheimer*

Ambassador (\$500+)

*Kate Neale & Matt Cooper
Carol & Dan Donohue*

*Tim Hutchins
Ann Neale*

*Ann Mudd Wills, in memory of
Thomas Albert and
Mary Ida (Boarman) Simpson*

Steward (\$250+)

*Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Bennett
John & Joyce Candland
Denise Cheseldine
Dr. & Mrs. Blaine Houmes*

*Lady Jane Sewell Chapter, Colonial Dames of the XVII Century
Jane K. Linton
James Neale
Port Tobacco Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution*

Innovator (\$100+)

*Warren & Jeanne Bowie
Lloyd S. Bowling
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Marie deLozier
Lucy Neale Duke
Dale & Carol Flowers
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*Brad Gottfried
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James F. Neale III
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Daughters of the American Revolution
G. Howard Post
Dr. & Mrs. Howard Reich
James A. Simpson
James C. Simpson
Gan Rae Tarpey
James Tarrant
Schuster & Mary Vance
Laurie Verge*



Friends of Rich Hill Memberships

(continued)



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Jim & Mary Pat Berry
William P. Binzel
Margaret M. Brown
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*Barry Doohan
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Fr. Richard Frank
Sherri Marsh Johns
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Frank R. Brown, IV
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Karl Hense
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Direct Descendants of Samuel Cox, Jr.

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*African American Heritage Society of Charles County
Charles County Antique Arts Association
Charles County Archaeological Society
Charles County Garden Club
Charles County Historic Preservation Commission
Dr. Samuel Mudd Society
General Society of Colonial Wars
Lady Jane Sewell Chapter, Colonial Dames of the XVII Century
Maryland Veterans Museum at Patriots Park*

*Port Tobacco Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution
Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Maryland
Southern Maryland Civil War Roundtable
St. Mary's County Historical Society
Surratt Society
The Society for the Restoration of Port Tobacco
Thomas Stone Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution
Wallace Bowling Camp, Sons of Confederate Veterans*

Remember When....Images of Waldorf

The Howard County Historical Society was kind enough to send these postcards to us. They will be housed in the Historic Sites Files in the Southern Maryland Studies Center.



Calvary M.E. Church, South, Waldorf, Aug. 1914



Howard & Berry's Store & Post Office, Waldorf



Gates' Ice Cream Parlor, on state road, Waldorf



Methodist Parsonage, Waldorf, Aug. 1914



Home of Dr. G. O. Monroe, Waldorf



Ryon Brothers Store, Waldorf

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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.

Friendship House Committees

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Evelyn Karlsson Merritt

John S. Morris, III

Cellar Museum & Shop

James H. Berry, Jr.

Mary Pat Berry

Ways & Means

Ruby Dyson

Sandra Mitchell

Furnishings

Louise B. Turner



In Memory

Robert M. “Bob” Pender

April 25, 1933-August 26, 2021

Beverly J. Stone

July 31-1931- October 6, 2021

Rev. Joseph M. Doyle, S.S.J.

November 18, 1938-November 2, 2021

Robert C. Ehrenstrom

September 23, 1936-November 4, 2021

John “Buddy” Sprague

November 21, 1938-December 26, 2021

Ernest L. Irish

May 8, 1929 - March 15, 2022



ENTRÉE ONLY \$16

INCLUDES NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

6% TAX AND GRATUITY WILL BE ADDED TO FINAL BILL

CLASSIC BURGER

COOKED MEDIUM-WELL WITH AMERICAN CHEESE ON A BUN LETTUCE, TOMATO,
RED ONION, & TAVERN SAUCE,
SERVED WITH PICKLE & HANDCUT FRIES
— VEGGIE BURGER AVAILABLE

VIRGINIA BARBECUE SANDWICH

PULLED PORK SMOKED IN HOUSE ON A BUN
WITH VIRGINIA BARBECUE SAUCE AND SOUTHERN COLE SLAW,
SERVED WITH PICKLE & HANDCUT FRIES

FRIED GREEN TOMATO BLT

FRIED GREEN TOMATOES, BACON, AND LETTUCE ON SOURDOUGH TOAST WITH
HONEY MUSTARD DRESSING
SERVED WITH A PICKLE & HANDCUT FRIES

FRIED FLOUNDER SANDWICH

ON A BUN WITH BABY LETTUCES AND TARTAR SAUCE,
SERVED WITH A PICKLE & COLESLAW

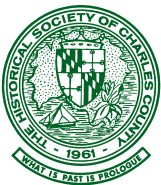
SOUP & SALAD

CUP OF SOUP & HOUSE SALAD:
CHOICE OF RANCH OR RED WINE VINAIGRETTE DRESSING

HOUSE SALAD WITH GRILLED CHICKEN

CHOICE OF RANCH OR RED WINE VINAIGRETTE DRESSING

THANK YOU FOR DINING WITH HANOVER TAVERN!



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

P.O. Box 2806 • La Plata, Maryland 20646

www.charlescountyhistorical.org