



THE RECORD



Volume 106, No. 3

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

October 2012

Joyce Candland, President

Mary Ann Scott, Editor

Fall Dinner Meeting

Saturday, October 27, 2012 – 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Rod Cofield, Deputy Director,
Development and Museum Programs of Historic London Town & Gardens
will present

Colonial Era Taverns



Durham Church & Ironsides, Maryland

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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. Or you can email your articles and photographs to Joyce Candland at joyce.candland@gmail.com.

One of the largest expenses of our Society is the printing and mailing of our newsletter. In an effort to cut costs and keep our budget under control, we are asking those of you with email capability to consider receiving your copy of *The Record* by email. This would be of great benefit to the Society and you would receive your copy in color. If you can help us with this effort please, notify Joyce Candland.

joyce.candland@gmail.com

Friendship House Committees

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Women in Colonial-Era Public Houses: The Proprietors

By Rod Cofield

Preface: On Saturday, October 27, I will be talking about women's involvement with colonial taverns from a patron and serving-end perspective. This short article covers the other way by which women were involved with these establishments; as owners or proprietors.



During the Colonial era, Chesapeake inhabitants loved to drink. If you read enough historical accounts, traveler journals, diaries, or newspapers about or from that time period, you may be amazed at how much they drank. Most accounts though of these drinking establishments (usually called taverns by us today) focus on the men who owned, operated, or visited these places. They most definitely have a place in history. But, if you spend the time really looking at the records, women show

up quite often. And one of the main ways that women are involved with taverns is as an owner/proprietor.

To understand how integral women were to public houses, a quick glance at some numbers that show the percentage of licenses held by women is quite revealing. Depending on the time and place, the percentages range from a low of 4.5% in 1750, in Craven County, North Carolina to the high of 100% found in 1758, Stratham, New Hampshire. In Maryland, women also operate a large number of these establishments. Between 1690 and 1730 in Prince George's County, MD, 31% of license holders are women. Between 1741 and 1750 in Annapolis, the number is 43%. And in London Town, Maryland between 1702 and 1705, 50% of the town's taverns were operated by women with licenses in their own name. These numbers are similar throughout the Eastern Seaboard and thus clearly speak to women being given the opportunity to run a business in their own name.

Additionally, these women proprietors also tended to operate these establishments for significant lengths of time. In Edenton, North Carolina the following three women each held a tavern license in their own name for twelve years: Dorothy Shewine, Elizabeth Wallace, and Mary Wallace. In Williamsburg, Virginia Christianna Campbell was a licensed proprietor for 16 years; Anne Marot Sullivant for 18; and Jane Vobe for 33. In Anne Arundel County, Ann Hammond and Ann Connor both held licenses for 15 years. And in Annapolis

Elizabeth Marriott entertained guests for 14 years; Sarah Ramsay for 16; and Deborah Wilkins for more than 22. Yes, there are many instances of women only operating an establishment for just a few years or less, but there are also many instances of women keeping taverns for lengths similar to the women listed above. Tavern-keeping was clearly an accepted 'profession' for colonial women and one that they could stay in for good lengths of time.



Fortunately for us, enough records survive to also give us an account of how profitable tavern-keeping was for women, and it was sometimes quite profitable. This conclusion can be reached by examining the probate records of deceased proprietors to look at their total wealth level at death. Just looking at Annapolis records, the following women all show signs of economic prosperity: Jane Burnell, £119.07; Elizabeth Warring, £234.36; Anne Middleton, £423.92; Jane Inch, £474.79; and Elizabeth Marriott, £538.10. To put those numbers in perspective, any amount greater than £200 places that person in the upper 20% of the economic ladder. As mentioned above, these amounts clearly show that women could be successful tavern keepers.

As the title of Martha McNamara's book, *From Tavern to Courthouse* indicates, there is a close tie between government and drinking establishments during the colonial era. As a matter of fact, in most early English colonial towns, the public house served double duty as a government meeting place. It should come as no surprise then to discover women at the center of the intersection of drinking and government.

A good example of this is found in Portsmouth, New Hampshire and Elizabeth Harvey's establishment. (Special thanks to Marcia Schmidt Blaine for sending me her research paper about Harvey) In 1697, Elizabeth Harvey received permission to keep a "publick house of Entertainment." This occurred after her husband, Captain Thomas Harvey, was captured by the French in that same year. He later died while in their custody. As for Elizabeth, in November 1699 her establishment received the privilege of becoming the de facto post office for New Hampshire and all points north. In return for acting as post master, Elizabeth no longer had to pay any excise on "beer, ale, or cider." Though I do not know how long

Continued on Page 4

Elizabeth's establishment served as the post office, the fact that she received this privilege speaks to the government's confidence in her and the importance of her establishment.

New Hampshire's provincial records indicate that Elizabeth hosted the colonial legislature quite a few times between 1706 and 1720. And when either standing or special committees met, Harvey's account book referenced them by name and task. Again, these records speak to the government's confidence in Elizabeth Harvey. And from her view, that confidence meant profit.

Now it is not as if Elizabeth Harvey was a singular case. During Blaine's research into colonial New Hampshire's women proprietors, she discovered that of the 45 years between 1690 and 1762 when a government meeting place is known, the government used an establishment licensed by a woman for 38, or 84% of those years. Even if the government did not ever meet at a woman-owned establishment during the other years, that percentage is a still impressive 53%. Without any other evidence, this percentage hints at a potential preference by the government for woman-owned establishments.

Of course, having a government meet in a public house can create problems. In July 1701, when the New Hampshire legislature convened



at Patience Atkins' establishment, those problems caused the legislature to create regulations to rectify some of those issues. The first problem is definitely one unique to public houses and hints at how rooms served multiple uses. As the slide shows, the

legislature was apparently having so many problems with either their members or other patrons "sitting or lying on the bed[s]" that a fine of three pence was deemed necessary to stop it from happening in the future. Also, the temptation to take a smoke break in the chimney was so great, and disruptive, that the legislature decided another fine of three pence was also needed to discourage that activity.

There are many more instances of women, due to their position as a tavern keeper, being a focal point for government business. And there are also many more instances of women being quite influential community members due to their role as a tavern keeper. However, women also served as underlings in these establishments and they also patronized these establishments. If you are interested in learning about these aspects of public houses, that will be covered during the October 27 presentation.

In Memory of Gertrude Wright McWilliams

Gertrude Wright McWilliams of Palm Coast, Florida and long time member and supporter of the Historical Society died on Tuesday, July 3, 2012 at her residence. She was 93 years old.

Gertrude served as Register of Wills for Charles County for 32 years from 1958-1990. She was the Past President of the Maryland Register of Wills Association and in 1968 was appointed by the Governor to serve on the Henderson Commission to review and revise the Testamentary Laws of Maryland. Gertrude was an active and contributing member of the Charles County Historical Society, the Society for the Restoration of Port Tobacco, the Indian Head/Bryans Road Business Association, the Democratic Club of Charles County, the Cancer Society, the Past President of the Seventh District Democratic Club, and Women of the Year in 1973 as well as a Charter Member of the Business and Professional Women's Club. She also served on the "Committee of 100", the Charles County Chamber of Commerce, and was a Charter Member of the Zonta Club of Charles County. Gertrude was also an avid golfer, bringing the game to her children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren and continued to play into her seventies.

The Friendship House Foundation of the Historical Society of Charles County is honored to have been named as a beneficiary of memorial donations made in her name.

Contributors to the Friendship House Foundation in Memory of Gertrude Wright McWilliams

Mr. Clarence D. Carpenter, Jr.
Ms. Deborah J. Carpenter
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Ms. Charlotte K. Cathell
Mr. Patrick Cox
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George Washington Portrait Program

The Thomas Stone Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution, in conjunction with the Mount Vernon Ladies Association has been putting George Washington back in schools.

The Mount Vernon Ladies Association, which maintains and helps preserve Washington's historic home Mount Vernon began in 2007 a project to return Washington's portraits to

Elementary schools in Charles County that have received the portrait are Dr. Thomas L. Higdon, Dr. Samuel A. Mudd, Mary B. Neal, Walter J. Mitchell, J.C. Parks, Gale-Bailey, Dr. James Craik, Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer, J.P. Ryon, Malcom, Eva Turner, Mary H. Matula, T.C. Martin and St. Mary's Bryantown.

Historical Society members in the Thomas Stone Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution are Ernest Irish, James H. Berry, Jr., Charles Boone, George C. Dyson, Garth E. Bowling, Jr., Michael J. Sullivan and Michael J. Mazzeo, Jr., who is also the coordinator for the project for Charles County.

The Thomas Stone Chapter is continuing to accept donations in any amount for the Washington portrait for Charles County schools. Donations can be earmarked for a specific elementary school in Charles County or in the general account for the portraits for Charles County schools. Once the \$275 is reached for a specific school the Thomas Stone Chapter will make a formal presentation of the portrait at the school with their Chapter Color Guard.



Dedication of the George Washington Portrait at Walter J. Mitchell Elementary included Historical Society members Mary Pat Berry & Jim Berry with their granddaughter Leanne, dressed in colonial costume, on the left, Charles Boone and Ernie Irish on the right in SAR Color Guard attire and Michael J. Mazzeo, Jr. project coordinator.

schools as part of a commemoration of the 275th anniversary of his birth. The Mount Vernon Ladies Association commissioned reproductions of the Rembrandt Peale portrait of America's first president in uniform. For a \$275 donation, the organization will give a portrait, along with an instructional resource kit, to a school. So far the group has given more than 7,000 portraits across the country.

The Historical Society has funded a George Washington Portrait for J. C. Parks Elementary School. The dedication ceremony conducted by the S.A.R. Color Guard will be held at the school on Thursday, October 18th at 9:45 a.m. All Historical Society members are welcome to attend.

Other organizations that have funded a portrait have been the Port Tobacco Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution, the Charles County Genealogical Society, the Private Wallace Bowling Camp Sons of the Confederate Veterans, Keller Bus Company, the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 8810, the Ella Virginia Houck Holloway Chapter United States Daughters of 1812 and the Thomas Stone Chapter Sons of the American Revolution.

All donations are tax deductible and checks should be made payable to the Thomas Stone Chapter, SAR and mailed to: Thomas Stone Chapter, MDSSAR, PO Box 94, La Plata, Maryland 20646.

Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee will present the following slate to be voted upon at the October Meeting:

Officers for a two-year term ending October 2014

President Mary Pat Berry
 Vice-President Michael J. Mazzeo, Jr.
 Secretary Danielle Webber
 Treasurer Robert Pender

Board of Directors for a three-year term ending October 2015

Carol Donohue & Millie Hamman
 Thomas Pike & G. Howard Post

Southern Maryland Studies Center

Receives Forgotten Stories

A long forgotten collection of newspaper articles from the Times Crescent (1968-1969) written by Mr. John S. Wheeler has been donated to the Southern Maryland Studies Center. They pertain to the western section of Charles County. If anyone has any information about Mr. Wheeler please contact the editor of the newsletter or Louise Turner. The following is an excerpt from September 26, 1968.

History of Charles County

by John S. Wheeler

September 26, 1968 - The Times Crescent

My father Thomas Norman, the former Zelda Norman writes me from South Dakota, told me that in the Indian language, "Nanjemoy" meant the haunt of the Raccoon, and that Chicamuxen meant "The Indian's Moccasin."

Sometime about 1900 my father bought a farm known as "frog's Nest." It is located near Doncaster, home of Mr. Preston Williams, on what I believe is near "Stretch Mark Hill" referred to in your earlier column. Some distance back from the high way were the ruins of an old Manor House, one that had been beautiful in its day. At the time the brick walls still stood, but the windows were out and the huge doors hung on rested hinges. This had during Colonial days belonged to the Budd family.

Very near the old house is the graveyard where members of the Budd family lie buried. Miss Laura Yates of Indian Head could tell you about this property as her mother was of the old Budd family. Budd's Ferry (mentioned in your column February 8th) was named from the Budd family. Thank you Zelda for your help – more later.

Grandma Thomas, Uncle Irving, Aunt Maggie and Uncle Bernace Southerland talked about this old ferry, but I never knew where the Budd family lived until I received this letter from Zelda. Grandma was always talking about Budd's Ferry, but I just cannot remember what she said about this old ferry. Did she cross her on the ferry? Or did she know and were friends with the Budd family? I do not know. I remember Tom Norman used to come to the store at Uncle Irving's and it seems that Zelda and Doris were always with him; and from Zelda's account she and Doris must have visited "Frog's Nest" the home of the Budd family with their father.

It wasn't until I visited Mrs. Eva Davis in Marbury in July that I learned that the Old Norman Homeplace was right beside Grandpa's and Uncle Irving's place where Bud Hancock and Montell Wheeler lived. Bud Hancock lived there when

Grandpa was grubbing out stumps and burning them to clear his place. It was a tough job for a preacher but he kept at it manually.

I was too small to be of much help. Mrs. Eva Davis said she liked to visit old graveyards and read the inscriptions on the tombstone. Then out of a clear sky said that the hardest graveyard to reach was the old Norman graveyard at Montell Wheeler's. She visited Montell Wheeler's place in a horse and buggy and told him that she was with someone else and they would like to visit the Norman burying ground. Mr. Wheeler told them that they couldn't get there in a buggy, but that he would take them out there on his tractor if they didn't mind a rough ride. They found the tombstones.

Thomas Norman's father and mother and a little sister are buried here. Grandpa's place originally belonged to Richard Carr Norman, father of Thomas Norman, and here Thomas Norman spent his childhood. When Uncle Charlie wrote me that both Irving Southerland and Grandpa Thomas bought their land from Tom Norman, I took it for granted that he had bought the property at a tax sale. When Mrs. Eva Davis told me that this was the home of Thomas Norman's father, I understood right away that Grandpa and Uncle Irving had bought part of the old Norman Estate. I helped Grandpa drag the stumps out after he had cut them loose and years later after his death I cut bushes along the fence for Grandma and never knew and probably as a kid never cared, one way or the other, who lived on the other side of the fence. If I had known that Tom Norman was born there and spent his boyhood there, it would have made a great difference to me, as I admired Tom Norman.

"Efton Hills" was the beautiful home of Mrs. Nellie (Cobey) Prout, the widow of the rector of Old Durham Parish, (known in Nanjemoy as "the Brick Church)." Reverend Prout was much beloved and was known as Parson Prout from Efton Hills, even as Reverend Isom Chiles, of Wades Bay, Pastor of the Nanjemoy Baptist Church, was also remembered and beloved.

As a child I remember the terraced lawn of "Efton Hill" that sloped toward the main highway. Huge trees grew near the road and Mrs. Prout's peacocks strutted and screamed beneath their foliage. The only windmill I ever knew in Nanjemoy was at "Efton Hills." Now beside the road of this old home is a plaque dedicated to Admiral Semmes, who once lived there. I also remember the whitewashed or painted board fences along the Grayton Road... it was a pretty sight and had a look of

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Thank You, Joyce!



Friendship House Foundation

The Friendship House Foundation was established to preserve, refurbish and promote this unique treasure of Charles County. Donations will help to maintain the historical integrity of the house through its furnishings, tours and educational programs, and to honor those who have devoted countless hours of volunteer time in the preservation and promotion of this Maryland Tidewater Home.



Today, 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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- | | | |
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<i>& Julia Cobey Gluck</i></p> | <p><i>Ms. Julia Cobey Gluck</i>
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<i>Ms. Shiela Smith</i>
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- Mr. & Mrs. Ernest L. Irish*

Friendship House Foundation *In Memory of*

- Warren E. Barley*
Philip L. Griffith
Eleanor Higdon
Sue LaHood
Katherine S. W. Mitchell
Kathryn C. Newcomb
Velva Perrygo
Watson Perrygo

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



THE RECORD



Please Join Us for Our *Fall Dinner Meeting*

Saturday, October 27, 2012 – 6:00 p.m.

Durham Church & Ironsides, Maryland

Please reply by October 21, 2012

Program

*Mr. Rod Cofield, Deputy Director, Development and Museum Programs
of Historic London Town & Gardens*

will present

Colonial Era Taverns

Menu

*Roast Beef & Pork Loin & A delicious variety of Fall Vegetables
Rolls & Butter & Ice Tea, Coffee, & Ice Water & Dessert*



Number of people attending _____ @ \$25.00 per person = \$ _____ enclosed.

Attendees: _____

Checks must be received by October 21, 2012 – (sorry, no exceptions)

Mail this form and your check made out to HSCC to:

Mary Pat Berry & P.O. Box 227 & Port Tobacco, MD 20677

Your Society at Work

Your society was represented at the Port Tobacco Market Day on May 19th. It was a beautiful day, and we had the opportunity to meet and greet many Charles County residents. We sold one Friendship House doll and several books.

Welcome to new members: Mrs. Alice Owens Basile, Rev. Rory T. Conley, and Nicole Stewart.

Charles County Cemetery Transcriptions Published

The Charles County Maryland Genealogical Society has published a two-volume set of Charles County cemetery transcriptions. Over 19,309 entries are included which have been carefully read and recorded. The cost is \$70.00 plus \$4.20 sales tax and \$5.00 shipping per set. You may order by mail to CCMDGS at PO Box 1537, White Plains, Maryland 20795 or email ccmdgs@yahoo.com for more information.

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prosperity. It is hard to realize that Confederate wagon trains passed over this road... the only road to the south left open for badly needed medicines, harness for the teams, etc. Confederate artillerymen were known to sacrifice their lives to cut the harness from a dead artillery horse.

The Federal warships controlled the sea lanes and all the rivers blocking supplies to the South, and when General Hooker was sent to Southern Maryland his orders were to close the Confederate Supply road. This was all planned early in the war and Hilltop was chosen by the Federal Engineers as the logical place for a Federal Battery.

Join us on the web!

www.charlescountyhistorical.org

President's Message

Our last HSCC meeting on May 5, 2012 was another wonderful occasion that even rain didn't spoil. Our original plans were to enjoy dinner on the lawn at Friendship House, but Mother Nature interfered with rain. Our members quickly answered the call and everything was moved indoors to the College. Our speaker, Sara Rivers-Cofield gave a most interesting presentation on colonial clothing.

As you can see by the new slate of officers to be presented at our October meeting, I will not be continuing as President. Thank you for the opportunity and honor to serve as your President, and for your support and encouragement as members. It has been a wonderful, fun, and educational four years. Thank you to our ever-supportive Board of Directors, our able Vice President Mary Pat Berry, efficient Secretary, Danielle Webber, money-conscious Treasurer, Bob Pender, creative newsletter editor, Mary Ann Scott, and all of our committee chairs. A special thank you to Mike Mazzeo, our excellent program chair, newsletter contributor, and man behind the scene. It has been a privilege.

Mark Your Calendar

Thursday, October 18th

- Dedication of the George Washington Portrait from the Historical Society at J.C. Parks Elementary School at 9:45 a.m.

Saturday, October 20th

- Share Your History Day: *Working the Land and Water* from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Prince Frederick Campus, College of Southern Maryland, Flagship Building, Room PFA119.

Saturday, January 26, 2013

- Historical Society's winter meeting: *Using Land Records and Plats to Look for Port Tobacco in the 18th Century* at 2:00 p.m.



THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CHARLES COUNTY, INC.

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