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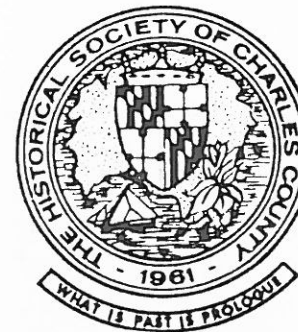
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## EDITOR'S NOTE

Articles of historic interest on Southern Maryland are requested for possible publication in future issues of **The Record**. Please send your typewritten manuscripts to: Publications, **The Record**, Box 261 Port Tobacco, MD 20677

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## The RECORD

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Dr. Lloyd S. Bowling, *President*

## THE NAMING OF OUR COUNTY SCHOOLS

Newcomers to the county often wonder for whom a particular school was named or if it is not persons' name, its origin. Most of our county schools are named for individuals who figured prominently in history not only nationally, but some on a local level or perhaps on the state level. Other schools are named for locations. Continuing with Part 2 in this issue of the Record, the Historical Society hopes to provide the readers with information pertaining to our county school names. Ultimately, this information will be presented to the individual schools in the county so that staff and students will be able to appreciate the origin of their school.

## Indian Head Elementary School

According to a legend concerning the Algonquin Indian tribe, who originally inhabited the Indian Head area, an Algonquin chief promised his beautiful daughter to the son of the chief of the nearby Piscataway tribe. However, before the wedding, she fell in love with an Indian from across the Potomac River. When the Indian brave came across the river to take the daughter away, he was captured and beheaded. His head was placed on a spear and thrust into the sand as a warning to others. On the following day, the first white settlers arrived and discovered the head on the spear, hence the name Indian Head.

Initially the elementary school students from Indian Head were taught in one room buildings, until the Lackey school, built by the Navy, was opened in 1919. The new school had central heating, running water and electric lights which were not present in the one room schools. The school had a staff of seven teachers, but they were listed as janitors in order to be paid for their services.

The first Indian Head elementary school was built next to the "old white building" on Strauss Avenue in 1942 and the old building became the High School.

In 1975, the original Lackey High School was torn down and the present Indian Head School was built on the same site facing the Village Green.

## Lackey High School

Rear Admiral Henry Ellis Lackey USN was born in Norfolk, Virginia, June 23, 1876. He was appointed to the Naval Academy in 1895 and was a naval cadet during the Spanish-American War.

During World War I, he became the Inspector or Ordnance in charge of the Naval Proving Grounds at Indian Head, Maryland. He left Indian Head in 1920 to take command of the *USS San Francisco*. He continued to hold a series of high level positions in the Navy including the position of Director of Shore Establishments for all the U. S. Navy. During the Navy service, he received numerous honors and medals. He also received foreign recognition from Greece and Spain. He retired from the Navy in 1940.

It was in 1919, while he was at Indian Head Proving Grounds, Admiral Lackey had the Navy build a K-12 school for the children living in the Indian Head area. The school, built right outside the Navy gates, was often referred to as the old white building. This school was used until 1954 when a new junior-senior high school was built in Glymont. The present Lackey High School was built in 1969.



### Mathew Henson Middle School

Mathew Alexander Henson was a Negro born in Nanjemoy, Southern Maryland, on August 8th, 1866. Both his parents died when he was a young child. At the age of twelve, he walked from Washington D.C. to Baltimore to become a sailor. He became a crew member of the Katie Hines under Captain Childs. During the next five years, Henson learned to read, write, and develop a number of other skills. These acquired skills and natural intelligence would later become invaluable to Robert Perry over the twenty-three years they would be together in search of adventure and the North Pole.

Henson was the only American who accompanied Robert E. Perry when, in 1909, the explorer reached the North Pole. Henson learned the language of the Eskimos and acted as a trader with the natives. He built the sledges, trained the dogs and drove the teams that carried the party over the savage ice and rock bound country in temperatures reaching fifty below zero. Henson received many honors for his part in the 1908-1909 expedition. He lectured widely around the country and wrote *A Negro Explorer at the North Pole*. His biography, *Dark Companion*, was published in 1947. He died in New York City in 1955.

On April 8, 1962, a plaque and monument were placed on the grounds of Pomonkey Junior-Senior High School by the State of Maryland in Henson's honor. It was not until 1969, however, that the school's name was changed to Matthew Henson Middle School. This event occurred simultaneously with the conversion of the facility to a middle school.

### Walter J. Mitchell Elementary School

Judge Walter J. Mitchell was born at Thainston at the head of the Port Tobacco valley on March 16, 1871. He received his early education from a governess before attending high school at the Charlotte Hall Military Academy. He graduated from the University of Maryland Law School in 1894. In addition to practicing law in Charles County, he was also the editor of the local *Times Crescent* newspaper from 1897 to 1934. In 1899 he married Florence Jennifer and they had five children.

Judge Mitchell was first elected to the Maryland State Senate in 1917 and again in the early thirties. He was president of the Maryland Senate from 1931 to 1933. While in the Maryland Senate, he was a strong advocate of equalization of state education funds. In 1934, he became the Chief Judge of the Judicial Circuit Court. He held this position until 1941. He died in March of 1955.

### William B. Wade Elementary School

William B. Wade was born on November 10, 1881 in Hughesville, Maryland. He worked as an employee of the Court of Claims and as a clerk of the Department of Justice in Washington, D.C. He retired from the government in 1949.

In 1942, he was appointed a member of the Board of Directors of Physicians Memorial Hospital in LaPlata. He was a lifetime member of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Bryantown, Maryland, and president of the Vincent de Paul Society for 20 years, and was very active in the Republican Central Committee, as well as many religious and charitable organizations.

In 1954, the governor appointed him a member of the Charles County Board of education for three years. Through his efforts, a new school was built at Malcolm. The William B. Wade Elementary School in St. Charles was dedicated on October 27, 1990.

### Mattawoman Middle School

In the 1600s the Mattawoman Indians, a tribe of the Piscataway Confederacy, lived near a tributary of the Port Tobacco River. The tributary was originally called Mataughquanend by Captain John Smith during his explorations in 1608. This word came from the Algonquian words - Matukuir, a delightful pleasant with and Mend, to mind. Eventually the ending, quarnend became the modern ending woman. The modern day word, Mattawoman, can be translated to mean - "a place to go pleasantly." The Mattawoman Indians were traditionally fisherman, farmers, and hunters.

In 1676, the Emperor of the Piscataway and the King of the Mattawoman offered to march with the English against the Susquehannocks, who held the fort at Accokeek. This action got the Piscataways into trouble and was almost fatal to the Mattawomans.

The Mattawoman Middle School in Northern Charles County was dedicated on June 9, 1996.