

# The HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF HARFORD COUNTY, Inc.

Preserving Our Past For Your Future



143 N. Main Street  
Bel Air, MD 21014

## Society News

November / December 2011

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The Historical Society of Harford County, Inc., headquarters.

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## CELEBRATING HARFORD'S VETERANS

By Carol L. Deibel

The Historical Society, in conjunction with Harford County and the Town of Bel Air, is sponsoring a major celebration of Harford County's veterans on November 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. The three day celebration will give everyone a chance to thank our veterans for their service and an opportunity to view memorabilia from the Society's collection, as well as numerous private collections of war memorabilia never before displayed.

The weekend celebration will begin on Thursday, November 10<sup>th</sup> at 5 PM at the Bel Air Armory, 37 N. Main Street with a wine and cheese reception. Music will be provided by Duke Thompson of the *Maryland Conservatory of Music* with an emphasis on favorite songs from World War I and World War II. *Cameo*, an *a cappella* quartet, will also perform 40's era songs.

Exhibits will include memorabilia from each major conflict since the American Revolution through the War on Terror, such as a replica of George Washington's uniform, the Bush Declaration, a War of 1812 exhibit prepared by the Lock House staff, an exhibit on the musical written by soldiers at APG during WW I, a wedding dress constructed from a parachute for a Navy nurse in WW II, flags, weapons, uniforms and much, much more.

On Friday, November 11<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM, the first Veteran's Day Parade in Bel Air in more than fifty years will proceed along Main Street from Churchville Road to the Armory. The parade will feature Joe Cassilly as Grand Marshall, and will include bands, military vehicles, color guards, uniformed military re-enactors from many different conflicts. Ceremonies will proceed directly after the Parade with guest speakers, a performance of the National Anthem, a reading of the *1<sup>st</sup> Maryland Regiment* and a ribbon cutting ceremony as the Armory is rededicated from a State National Guard facility to a Community Center.

(Continued on Page 2)

## CELEBRATING HARFORD VETERANS (Continued from Page 1)

A catered luncheon will follow at 12 PM at the Armory. The luncheon is limited to 250 persons and reservations are required. Tickets are available for \$18 each and may be ordered by phone at 410-838-7691 or via email at [DirectorHSHC@verizon.net](mailto:DirectorHSHC@verizon.net). The luncheon will feature the National Guard Adjutant General and Attorney General Douglas Gansler, as guest speakers.

The Grand Master of the Maryland Masonic Lodge will lead a cornerstone rededication ceremony at 2 PM. This promises to be a unique experience. The Mt. Ararat Masonic Lodge dedicated the building when it was first constructed in 1915, making its participation in the rededication especially historic. All exhibits will reopen to the public between 2 – 5 PM. All events, except the luncheon, are free of charge.

A special feature of the event will be the opportunity to tell your story of military service or experiences at the Armory for posterity. The interviews will become part of the Historical Society's archives to share with future generations and act as a resource for researchers.

On Saturday, November 12<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 AM – 1 PM, activities move to the Liriodendron on West Gordon Street. Large military vehicles, military displays, Native Indian exhibits, patriotic music performed by the Bel Air Community Chorus, food and tours will culminate the weekend's events.

These are just the highlights of the celebration. Many surprises await attendees. Everyone is encouraged to attend and to thank our veterans from past conflicts and those currently serving in the Armed Services.

For more information visit the event website at [www.celebratingharfordveterans.org](http://www.celebratingharfordveterans.org).

*1943 Parade on Main Street Bel Air. (HSHC Archives)*





## CELEBRATING HARFORD'S VETERANS

**November 10, 11, & 12, 2011**

**Bel Air Reckord Armory 37-41 North Main Street**  
**Liriodendron Mansion 502 West Gordon Street**



Named in honor of  
 WWI and WWII local hero,  
 Lt. Gen. Milton Reckord



Parade featuring the  
 U.S. Army Band - Color Guard and  
 a National Guard flyover



Bush Declaration

Exhibits showcasing  
 Harford's Military Service  
 from the French and Indian War  
 to the Present Day

### Thursday, Nov. 10, 2011

**5-8 pm** Wine & Cheese Reception  
*Music by Duke Thompson,*  
*Maryland Conservatory of Music*  
 Exhibits

### Friday, Nov. 11, 2011 Veteran's Day

**10:00 am** Veteran's Day Parade –  
 Main Street in Bel Air  
**11 am** National Anthem  
**12 pm** Luncheon (Reservations Required)  
**2 pm** Armory Rededication Ceremony  
 by The Grand Lodge of Maryland  
**2-5 pm** Exhibits

### Saturday, Nov. 12, 2011

**9:30 am – 1 pm** Liriodendron Mansion  
 Military Displays  
 Patriotic Music by the Bel Air  
 Community Chorus  
 Food and Tours Available

For more detailed information, luncheon reservations, or to make a donation,  
 go to: [www.celebratingharfordveterans.org](http://www.celebratingharfordveterans.org)  
 or call The Historical Society of Harford County at 410-838-7691

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Financial results for the Society through the third quarter of 2011 are as expected and tracking budget.

The Annual Meeting was held on September 29 at the Maryland Golf & Country Club with over ninety members and guests attending. County Executive David Craig gave a most interesting talk on the diaries of Herbert McCommons, a WWI veteran who was a lifelong resident of Havre de Grace. At the meeting, six Officers and seven Board Members were elected to serve the term 2012-2013.

The 2011 Annual Giving Campaign is underway and we hope you will consider the Historical Society of Harford County in your giving plans this year. Our 75 year old Headquarters building continues to require several expensive repairs that need to be done to maintain our building and protect our collections.

Two major repair projects at Headquarters are still in the works for this year. The first is to meet the requirements of the Maryland Department of the Environment concerning the abandoned underground oil storage tank that is under the parking lot in the rear of the building. We have been fortunate in that our petition to MDE to allow us to treat the tank in place rather than requiring us to dig it up has been accepted, which will result in a significantly lower cost to the Society. This work is expected to occur in October.

The second project involves repairs to the roof parapet to eliminate the water leakage into the building which has been damaging the inside walls and ceilings on the main floor and risking damage to our archives and collections. As approved by the Maryland Historical Trust, repairs need to be made to the mortar between and underneath the parapet capstones and to the copper flashing which is original to the building. We have obtained several quotations from contractors and hope to have the work completed in October before cold weather prevents such work.

The Historical Society continues to be heavily involved in our partnership with the Town of Bel Air for the Celebrating Harford's Veterans Events to be held on Veteran's Day weekend November 10-12. Additional volunteers are needed for this event. Information on the Celebrating Harford Veterans Events can be found on the website [www.celebratingharfordsveterans.org](http://www.celebratingharfordsveterans.org).

*Phil Brundrett, President*

## NEW MEMBERS

Jerry R. Arnold  
 Chuck and Carolyn Brennan  
 Charles W. Burns  
 John Gladden  
 Charlotte B. Harlan  
 William and Joann Hawk  
 James and Nancy Lagan  
 Alma V. McComas  
 Dawn Shiflet  
 Eleanor Walter  
 James M. Sacks

## WANTED

### NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

The society is seeking articles on local history for the newsletter. Articles should be no more than 750 words and should tell the story of a local family, event or place in Harford County. Articles may be mailed to C. Deibel c/o the Historical Society, 143 N. Main Str., Bel Air, MD 21013 or

emailed to [HSHCNewsletter@verizon.net](mailto:HSHCNewsletter@verizon.net)

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Society hosts four lectures a year and sponsors bus trips and occasional special events. If you are interested in helping with these efforts as a chair or committee member, please contact Maryanna Skowronski, 410-838-7691. This is a great opportunity to work with some very talented people and to help the Society accomplish its mission.

## CANNING TOMATOES IN DARLINGTON IN THE FIFTIES

By Cathy Kilminster

When I was sixteen, I got my first job peeling tomatoes in the G.G.S. Jourdan & Sons Cannery in Darlington, Maryland. Nearly all of the workers were local teens and adults and several of the workers were also friends of mine, which made it more fun.

We were transported to the Cannery by bus because in those days there was only one car per family, and our fathers drove those cars to work. Once there, we were issued hair covers, aprons and most importantly, the knife.

We stood on wooden pallets around a moving merry-go-round. The tomatoes, which were grown by B.G.S. Jourdan in their own fields and also purchased from local farmers, were scalded and came down an incline where they emptied into large metal pans. The pans were then placed on the merry-go-round, and the peelers pulled off a pan as needed. At that point, the knife came into play. It was small with a wooden handle and a blade in the shape of a small scoop that was very sharp. We peeled the tomatoes by placing one in our left hand, sticking the knife blade into the core and quickly scooping it out. At the same time we gently squeezed the flesh of the tomato out of the loose

skin, turned the tomato over and took off the black spot on the bottom where the blossom had been.

We were each assigned a large numbered metal bucket. The tomatoes we peeled were put into these buckets. Once they were filled, we put them back on the merry-go round. When we retrieved our bucket, we took out the token and started the process once again.

Sometimes to make it more fun and not so monotonous, we would team up and compete against each other in teams of two peeling in the same bucket. The whole idea was to see who could become the champion peelers and get the most tokens.

At the end of the day we would take our tokens to the office to have them recorded. We worked all season and even came back on Saturday after school to help out. I believe I earned the princely sum of \$250 for my first job, and the experience I gained has carried through my entire life.

*Ms. Kilminster currently lives in York County, PA. She said that writing the article took her back to those days, even*

*seeing the pallets in her minds eye that she and her friends stood on. Several of her friends also worked in corn canning houses and were paid hourly unlike the tomato canneries.*



*Unidentified canning house. (HSHC Archives).*

## ANNUAL MEETING 2011

On September 29th, the Historical Society held its annual meeting at the Maryland Golf and Country Club. The guest speaker was County Executive David Craig, who highlighted the stories from the diaries of Mr. Herbert McCommons of Havre de Grace. The diaries cover Mr. Mc Commons experiences from the Great War through the mid 1940's.

Mr. Craig described the political, economic and domestic issues of the day as seen through the eyes of a soldier, husband, father and citizen of the era. The diaries, purchased and donated to the Society by Dr. David Hodge, are handwritten in pencil and very fragile. The Society plans to have them transcribed so they will be available to the public and each of us can experience this unique time in our County's history.

The Society also presented the 2011 George W. Archer Fellow Awards to Richard Sherrill, Chairman of the Archives Department and 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President of the Society and to David Craig. The Award, instituted in 2006 recognizes those persons who have gone above and beyond in the preservation or promotion of Harford County history. Also recognized during the evening was Mr. Charles Mahan who was presented a Certificate of Appreciation for his donation of a lifetime's collection of the history of the Ma & Pa railroad.

Finally, society members voted on the upcoming slate of officers and board members for 2012-2013. The following individuals will serve in the coming year:

### HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF HARFORD COUNTY, INC SLATE OF OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS 2012 – 2013

|                                |                    |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| President                      | Henry Peden        |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Vice-President | Richard Sherrill   |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice-President | Richard Herbig     |
| Treasurer                      | Lesley Lookingbill |
| Recording Secretary            | Elizabeth Lehmann  |
| Corresponding Secretary        | Page Smart         |

### Board Members Class of 2012-2013:

|                |                  |                            |
|----------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| Carol Deibel   | Larry Carmichael | Mary Cardwell James Wollon |
| Adrienne DeRan | Robert Preston   | Philipp Brundrett          |

## Christmas Greens Sale and Open House

Stop into the Society on Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup> from 9 AM to 3 PM for our annual Christmas Greens Sale and Open House. Society volunteers will have freshly made wreaths, swags, centerpieces and other table arrangements for sale along with freshly cut loose greens. Traditionally, holly, magnolia, boxwood, and a wide variety of evergreen (pine, fir, cedar, etc) are available. The Society will be decorated for Christmas and light refreshments will be served. Our gift shop will also be open for convenient holiday shopping. Great books on Harford history are featured as well as many interesting vintage, antique and hand-crafted items. Donations of greens are always appreciated. If you would like to donate to the cause please call 410-838-7691 to arrange for drop off or for someone to pick up. If you have experience in creating flower arrangements and would like to volunteer please call the same number. This is one of the Society's larger fundraisers. Please keep it in mind as you decorate for Christmas!

## CELEBRATE NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

Hays House will mark Native American Heritage Month with special events on Sunday November 13 from 1 to 4 pm. Visitors will learn about the life of Native Americans while viewing Native American beadwork and learning about the life, clothing and customs of the Plains Indians. Musicians with Windsong Flute Circle will demonstrate Native American music on authentic instruments, and members of Archaeology Society of the Upper Chesapeake will demonstrate spear-throwing and display a diorama and artifacts of pre-historic Maryland.

Admission, which includes a tour of the 1788 house, is \$5 for adults and \$3 for students and seniors. Children under 4 are free. Parking is free.



*Dan Coates demonstrates spear throwing.*



*Cub Scouts learn about the Plains Indians.*

## COMING EVENTS

**October 21<sup>st</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>** - Doll, Boyd's Bears & Buyers Choice Show & Silent Auction

Friday – 5PM to 9 PM and Saturday – 11 AM to 3 PM (Society Headquarters)

**November 6<sup>th</sup>** - Native American Day (Hays House)

**November 10<sup>th</sup>- 12<sup>th</sup>** -Celebrating Harford's Veterans Events

(Bel Air Reckord Armory and Liriodendron)

**November 13<sup>th</sup>** - Archer Tea & Lecture, Richard Sherrill, "The Tow Boats of Havre de

Grace, 2 PM (Society Headquarters)

**November 20<sup>th</sup>** - Harford County Genealogical Society, Cannery lecture

2 PM (Society Headquarters)

**December 4<sup>th</sup>** - Christmas Open House (Hays House)

**December 10<sup>th</sup>** - Holiday Live Greens Sale and Open House (Society Headquarters)

**December 11<sup>th</sup>** - Candlelight Christmas Concert and Tea (Emmanuel Episcopal Church)

Please call 410-838-7691 or visit [www.harfordhistory.org](http://www.harfordhistory.org) for more information on any event listed.

## HARFORD COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY MEETING

One of the more popular topics of Harford County history is its canneries. In 2009, the Historical Society of Harford County undertook a project to map the old landmarks in the area: railroads, schools, canneries general store-post offices, and mills. Our November speaker, Bernie Bodt, took on the cannery project. Bernie will discuss the canning industry in Harford County and when possible, the families whose name was attached to the business. The result of Bernie's effort was the Harford Canneries" Map available for purchase at the Historical Society of Harford County.



### "FRIENDS OF OLDE" Doll & Teddy Bear Silent Auction

Friday, October 21, 2011  
5p.m. - 9p.m.

*Lite Fair on Friday evening*

Saturday, October 22, 2011  
11a.m. - 3p.m.

143 North Main Street  
Bel Air, MD 21014

Come reconnect with your childhood and  
make some new friends along the way



**OVER 30 VINTAGE COLLECTOR'S DOLLS**  
by Knowles, Premier, and Kais

**OVER 25 BOYDS BEARS FROM  
THE 80'S AND 90'S**  
many retired

**OVER 100 PAPER DOLL BOOKS**  
in very good condition many by Thomas Tierney

**ASSORTED TOYS & CHILDREN'S BOOKS**  
Some items will be offered as "Buy It Now!"

#### Up Coming Events

Holiday Live Greens Sale and Open House - December 10th  
Colonial Candlelight Christmas Concert and Tea - December 11th

For more information for this event or upcoming events contact:  
410.838.7691 or visit our website at [www.harfordhistory.org](http://www.harfordhistory.org)

Proceeds to benefit the  
Historical Society of Harford County



*The Hays House Museum & Emmanuel Church  
Present A Joyous Holiday Tradition, the Twelfth Annual*



### Candlelight Christmas Concert & Tea



Sunday, December 11, 2011  
4:00 p.m.

Emmanuel Episcopal Church  
303 N. Main, Bel Air, MD

Candlelight Concert with 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> Century Instruments, Costumes  
Followed by  
A Festive and Elegant Tea Party in the British Tradition

Concert & Tea \$23 *Must be reserved and paid in advance*  
Concert Only \$11 *Tickets will be available at the door*

*For Reservations, call for availability, send check to:  
The Historical Society of Harford County, Inc.  
143 N. Main Street, Bel Air, MD 21014*

*Information: 410-592-8693, [concert@hayshouse.org](mailto:concert@hayshouse.org) or 410-838-7691*



## IN MEMORIUM

BARBARA WEAVER WARFIELD EHLERS  
SEPTEMBER 21, 1928 – August 11, 2011

Mrs. Warfield Ehlers attended Mary Washington College. She was a devoted wife, mother and homemaker and played a major role in the family dairy farming operation. In later years, she managed the Forest Hill farm, Cedar Heights, on Grafton Shop Road where she spent her life. She studied piano and organ and was an avid art lover. Among her many accomplishments, she served on the Board of Directors at Liriodendron, was an RN, serving at Fallston General Hospital, was an organist at the Centre United Methodist Church and a member of the Historical Society of Harford County for many years,

DINAH FABER

It is with great sadness that we report that Society volunteer and Booth Family scholar, writer and researcher, Dinah Faber passed away on October 1<sup>st</sup> after a brief and brave fight against cancer. While Dinah was not a native of Harford County, nor of Maryland, she none the less took the preservation of our county's history very seriously. Her particular field of interest was that of the Booth family and of their home Tudor Hall.

**Dinah Faber**

If you were to take all of the hours of research and sleepless nights spent worrying, and add to them thousands of e-mail messages and hundreds of phone calls and then on top all of that off with countless miles and hours spent on site and visiting other related landmarks you would still not have any inkling of the devotion that Dinah Faber has toward the history of the Booth family and their home Tudor Hall.

Dinah is our "Booth Lady." For almost a decade she has volunteered her time at the Society fielding calls, e-mail and letters from literally around the world all pertaining to the history of the Booths. She has written three (yes three) Bulletins. When it was announced that the sale of Tudor Hall was imminent Dinah went to County Executive David Craig to plead the case for the County's purchase of the historic site. She met a like-minded individual and the house is now safe.

Most recently Dinah filmed an episode of Harford Cable Network's *Historic Harford* series about Tudor Hall and the Booths which was hosted by Society president, Joe Swisher. If this were not enough to keep her busy she has recently agreed to take on the presidency of the Junius B. Booth society at the request of its founder Elwin Penski.

All of this she has done in addition to creating and maintaining the blog *Spirits of Tudor Hall*.

For her scholarship and her championship she is this evening made an Archer Fellow.

In 2009 Dinah was given the prestigious Archer Fellow award by the Historical Society of Harford County. The text, left, was read at the presentation and gives one some small inkling of what Dinah has done to further research into and the preservation of the history of the Booth family and their home Tudor Hall. Dinah was a meticulous researcher and a passionate advocate who appreciated the landscape as much as she did the buildings which stood upon it. The Society's holdings are the richer for her scholarship. We are the richer for having known her.

Dinah's family has asked that any memorials be designated to one of the following: Hospice Services, Inc., PO Box 116, Phillipsburg, KS 67661; The Historical Society of Harford County, Inc., 143 N. Main St., Bel Air, MD 21014; or the Junius B. Booth Society, Inc., 2515 Jerusalem Rd., Joppa, MD 21085.

## HOLIDAY BARGAINS AT THE GIFT SHOP

Just in time for Christmas, the Society store has been able to acquire an additional quantity of NEW paperback copies of two Harford County classics, and is able to make them available at greatly discounted prices.

Christopher Weeks, *An Architectural History of Harford County, Maryland*. Johns Hopkins Press. \$20.00

Cornelia Nixon, *Jarrettsville: A Novel*, (Awarded the Michael Shaara Prize for Civil War Fiction). \$10.00

The Gift Shop also features Cats Meow figures of Harford County landmarks, many books and bulletins featuring local stories as well as unusual gift items unique to Harford County for those special people on your holiday gift list. The Shop, located at the Society Headquarters, 143 N. Main Street in Bel Air is open during the Historical Society's regular business hours.



Steven D. Linkous, President & CEO (holding envelope) and John R. Spielberger, Executive Vice-President & General Counsel of Harford Mutual Insurance present a check in the amount of \$1,000 to the Historical Society of Harford County. Accepting the donation are Henry Peden, Genealogy Department Chairman, Maryanna Skowronski, Director of the Society and James Chrismer, Publications Chairman and Board member. Mr. Chrismer and Mr. Peden recently assisted the insurance company with research for a company project. (photo by Walter Holloway)



Noted Baltimore writer and President of the Edgar Allan Poe Society, Rafael Alvarez was the guest speaker at the Society's September 11th lecture and tea. Pictured with Mr. Alvarez is society volunteer and Gift Shop Chair, Angela Davis. The two are standing next to an antique traveling trunk that once belonged to John Clemm, a member of Poe's wife's family. The trunk is in the collection of the Society.

### READERS COMMENTS *by Peggy Stirling Ballew*

We are always pleased to hear from our readers and hope from time to time to share some of your thoughts. The following correspondence was submitted in response to a previous article on the Bel Air Armory.

*After reading the latest newsletter from you, it brought up some nostalgic memories of the Armory. When I was in Elementary School in Bel Air about 1934 or so, we marched up from the school which then was on Gordon Street and put flowers on the monument to the fallen soldiers of World War II. Another child and I led our class because we were each related to one of the soldiers who died in that war. My ancestor was Captain Archibald Stirling.*

*Later on I got to know the Armory better. I was an Assistant clerk at the Draft Board in 1944-1946. Our offices were in that building. The Clerk was Mrs. Jarrett Ward. Margaret*

*McComas was the other Assistant Clerk. I was about nineteen years old and had just finished a quickie secretarial course after two years at Goucher College. It was a very interesting and responsible job for a "kid". When Mrs. Ward was ill, and it was time for the latest draftees to report, the men reported to the Armory. I gave them the proper papers, and "marched" with them to the Bel Air Train station and sent them off to their induction spots. Since I was about 5'2" and about the same age as the young men, it was a memorable experience. Happier times were the few dances that were held at the Armory during the 50s.*

### LUNCHEON TICKETS

#### CELEBRATE HARFORD'S VETERANS

NOON ON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2011

BUFFET LUNCHEON LIMITED TO 250 PEOPLE INCLUDES EXHIBITS AND GUEST SPEAKERS at the Bel Air Reckord Armory, 37-41 N. Main Street, Bel Air. Free parking available at the Bel Air Garage on Hickory Avenue.

Please note the number attending \_\_\_\_\_. **All reservations must be received by November 4, 2011.**

Please enclose your check with your name and address and send to Celebrate Harford's Veterans Luncheon, 143 N. Main Street, Bel Air, MD 21014. For more information call the Historical Society at 410-838-7691.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

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Bel Air, MD 21014



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U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
BEL AIR, MD 21014  
PERMIT No. 40

DATED MATERIAL  
November / December 2011

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

The NEWSLETTER of The Historical Society of Harford County, Inc.  
is published bi-monthly

**OFFICERS 2010-2011**

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*Maryanna Skowronski*

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

*Carol Deibel, HSHCNewsletter@verizon.net*

**HISTORICAL SOCIETY and GIFT SHOP HOURS**

Tuesday  
COURT RECORDS  
10:00 A.M. - 2:30 P.M.

Wednesday  
ARCHIVES  
8:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.

Thursday  
RESEARCH LIBRARY  
9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

Fourth Saturday  
ARCHIVES and  
RESEARCH LIBRARY  
10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.