

The HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF HARFORD COUNTY, Inc.

Preserving Our Past For Your Future



143 N. Main Street
Bel Air, MD 21014

Society News

September / October 2020

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

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COMING EVENTS

Some exciting news!

Although we are still unable to hold this season's events in person, the Society is working with several presenters to bring events to you *virtually*.

- **CIVIL WAR BUFFS PAY HEED**

Although no famous battles were fought in Harford during the Civil War, the county played a significant role on both sides of the conflict. Maryland was crucial to the war effort. The Union had to maintain control of the state to protect the nation's capital and the Confederacy fought hard to take control. Maryland's governor, at the time, Augustus Bradford, was a lawyer and slave owner from Bel Air but he strongly believed that the Union must be maintained. Many in Maryland and Harford County disagreed. To share many of the fascinating stories about the part that Harford County played in the Civil War, Jeff Smart, a noted historian and author, will host two virtual presentations titled *Divided Union: A Military History of Harford County in the Civil War in 1863* on the society's website, www.HarfordHistory.org. The first will appear at 2 pm on Tuesday, September 15, and the second which will continue the story, will be held on Tuesday, September 29 at 2 pm. These presentations will be followed by a roundtable webinar on Tuesday; October 13th at 2 pm to answer your questions and to continue with what we expect will be a lively discussion. These events are open to everyone so please share this announcement with anyone who may be interested in learning more about this crucial time in the history of our county and our country. Mr. Smart is the author of two Society bulletins on the Civil War in Harford County. These will be offered for sale on-line after the event.

Cont'd on page 3

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Time seems to pass so quickly, and we are ready for yet another newsletter and our annual election. Three of our longtime volunteers will be concluding their term of office in December. I want to sincerely thank William Carr, Esq., Mark Gallihue and David Craig for generously giving of their time and expertise over the last four years. Their contributions and support of the Society's preservation efforts has been truly remarkable. Still, we look forward to their continued efforts on behalf of the Society as volunteers.

The Society's nominating committee is currently identifying potential candidates to serve as Trustees for the Class of 2021-2022. Of course, with the pandemic the Society's Annual Meeting is canceled so we are establishing an alternate means to hold this year's election. More information about the revised election process is described later in the newsletter.

The past few months have been truly hectic, even with the pandemic slowdown. Each month we reassess how to proceed to assure the safety of our volunteers and patrons. After much consideration, the Board of Trustees decided that the Society must remain closed for now, recognizing the number of Covid cases continues to rise. Once the situation changes, the Society will reopen using a recently approved Policy document outlining all necessary reopening procedures.

Meanwhile, day to day operations continue as we move forward with new plans and finalize older projects during this extended shutdown. These projects include the long-awaited restoration of the windows and the renovation of the lobby area at headquarters. Funding for these projects was garnered from a state bond bill, county grants and private donations. We thank everyone who so generously supported our fundraising efforts for these projects and will truly celebrate their completion.

The Hays House Museum is also in the throes of some major restoration efforts as we move ahead with the repair of the north wall. Bids for these projects are currently under review and construction is expected to start in the very near future.

The Society owes a great debt of gratitude to Harford County and to the many individual donors who have made these projects possible. But we are not finished yet. For many years, the Society envisioned a museum component as part of its mission. Recent grant funding is making this a reality. We are currently working on the first phase of museum development, so please watch for more information on this exciting development in future Society notices. I continue to work with staff to apply for grants from the federal government and state sources to assure adequate funding is available to proceed with day to day operations.

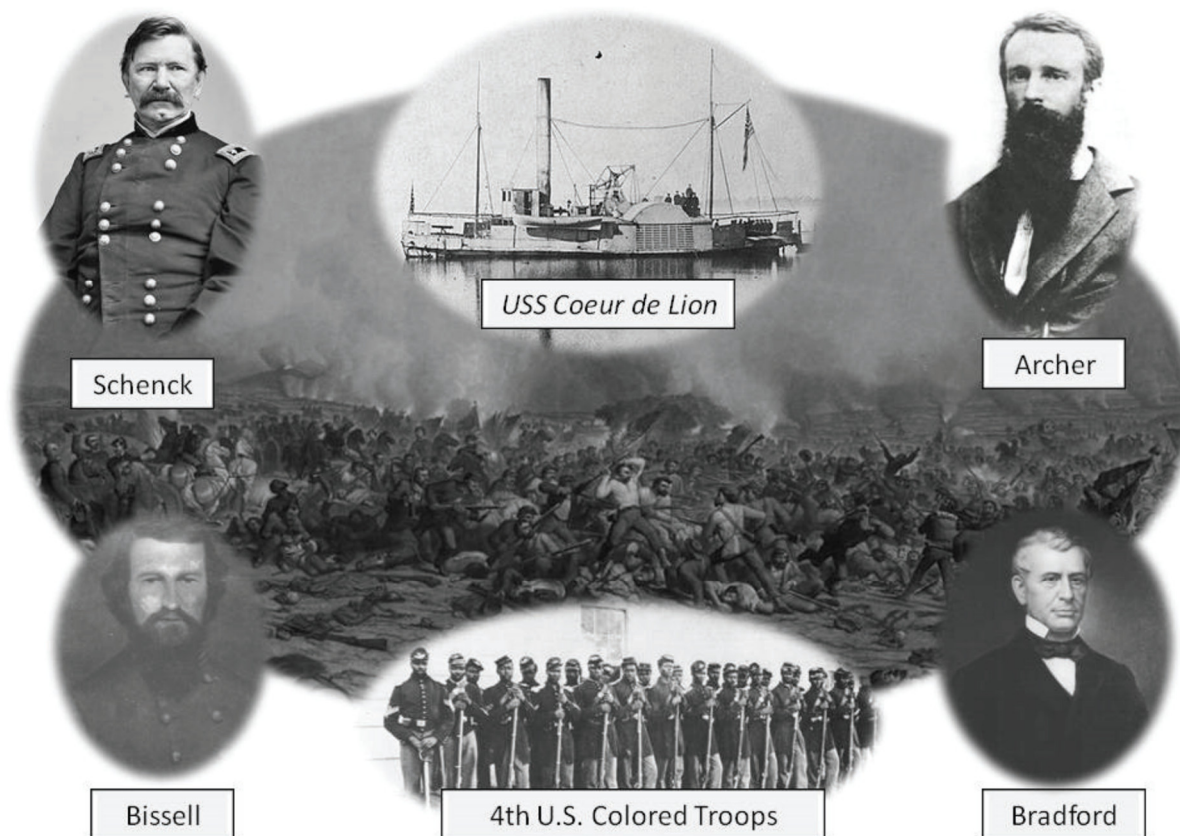
For now, the Board and I agree that all in-person events must be canceled for 2020. We will re-evaluate the situation in the beginning of January 2021. Meanwhile, I have some exciting news about the Society's adventure into Virtual Events. Plans are in place to begin a series of events on the Society's website and Facebook page. These will include stories, lectures, roundtable discussions, Photo Fridays and our annual Archer Lecture.

Please visit the Events section of the website www.HarfordHistory.org for details. While you are there, please notice a new section under events that features programs of interest sponsored by other local non-profits. This is our way of helping neighboring county non-profits stay afloat during this pandemic and to share news with our members about historic and cultural events in the county.

Please stay safe and healthy.

Bill Walden, President

Coming Events ... continued from page 1



*Cover image from Harford Historical Bulletin No. 117
Divided Union: A Military History of Harford County in the Civil War in 1963*

• **GENEALOGY WORKSHOP - FAMILY HISTORY MONTH PRESENTATION**

The Genealogy Group has been busy putting together a wonderful presentation for its October 10th, 2020, Family History Month presentation. While we were disappointed that we would not be able to meet in person, we are planning an exciting virtual program. Mike Dixon has agreed to participate and will be presenting on a topic that will be announced on the Historical Society of Harford County's Website. Mr. Dixon is a historian and writer whose research and teaching focuses on social history and community studies. For over four decades he has worked to encourage public interest and participation in the preservation of the past while creating understandings between earlier eras and the present.

Owen Lourie is a historian at the Maryland State Archives where he first joined the staff as an intern in 2003. He has conducted and supervised research on a wide array of topics relating to Maryland History. He has a B.A. in American Studies from Kenyon College in 2005 and a M.A. in history with a concentration in public history from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County in 2012. Mr. Lourie will be appearing in a virtual presentation on The Maryland 400 and Ties to Harford County.

Mary Schweers is a local historian with a long family history in Harford County. In 2011 she completed the Genealogical Research Certificate Program at Boston University and later the Forensic Genealogy

training offered as an extension. She has worked a number of cases involving the return of property and identification of family members for the Maryland State Fireman's Association, St. Mary's Episcopal Church and our Historical Society. Mary will be conducting a virtual presentation on Forensic Genealogy and its current applications.

Please continue to check our website and Facebook pages for updates to our speakers list and a final agenda of topics. There will be no charge to view the presentations and we hope to be able to establish a question and answer session with the speakers at a later date.

- **BEL AIR HAUNTS AND HISTORY TOUR**

Due to the pandemic, the Historical Society will not participate in the Bel Air Haunts and History tour this year. However, the Town of Bel Air and LASOS plan to continue this popular program which will be held on Friday and Saturday, October 16, 17, 23 and 24. Tours will depart from Armory Park, 37 North Main Street in Bel Air at 5:30pm each of these nights.

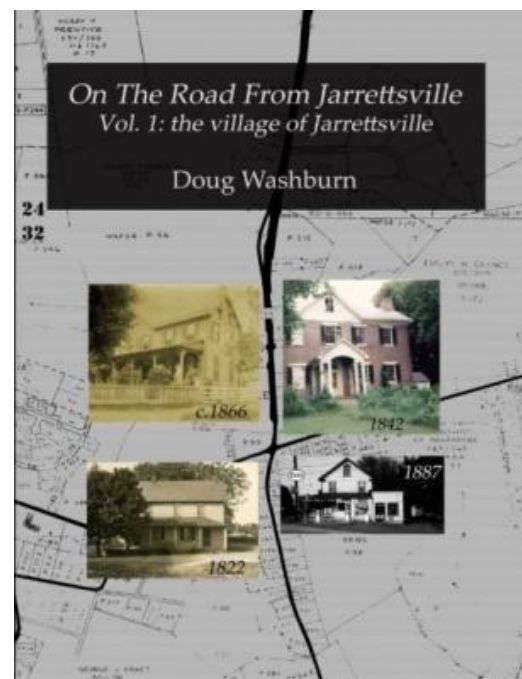
The Haunts and History Tour of Bel Air will take you back in time to enjoy the tales of Bel Air's most curious and mysterious history! Walk the streets lit by lanterns and visit some of the Town's most legendary and haunted sites. Due to Covid-19 regulations, tours will be limited to no more than 12 people each. Actors will have voice amplifiers so that people within the group are able to socially distance and still hear the tour. Masks will be required for all attendees and guides.

Tickets are \$15 and must be purchased prior to the event. They can be purchased using the following link: www.eventbrite.com/ (left click this link) or if preferred you may order by email at amanda@lasos.org or phone at 410-836-0333. For more information visit Eventbrite.com or call 410-836-0333.

- **ARCHER LECTURE: DOUGLAS WASHBURN SHARES THE STORY OF JARRETTSVILLE**

Author and historian, Doug Washburn recently published *On The Road From Jarrettsville, Vol. 1*, a local history on the village of Jarrettsville that starts in 1724. Originally named Carman's in 1826, Luther Martin Jarrett became the postmaster in 1835 and renamed the village in 1838. Doug will take us back to a time when the Jarrett Manor formed part of the village square that included a hotel and general store. A few of the businesses that were part of the original community still exist, but many have long since passed, yet remain in the memories of long-time residents. Mr. Washburn will share photographs of these early days and tell the story of this unique part of Harford County.

Please plan to join us on the Society's website, www.HarfordHistory.org, on Saturday, November 7 at 2 pm for this trip down memory lane.



- **WRITING A MEMOIR: IT'S ALL ABOUT HISTORY, SHARE YOUR STORY WITH THE FUTURE**



Continuing the Society's Brown Bag lunch tradition, Debbie Jennings, a local writer, author, and teacher, has prepared a unique program that will be aired on the Society website on Tuesday, November 10th. Many of us have wanted to tell our story for our grandchildren and for posterity but have not known how to approach such a task.

At a time when many of us are confined to our homes, this could be the perfect opportunity to learn how to write a memoir and possibly to share your writings with the Historical Society where they can be kept in the Archives collection in perpetuity.

It may also help those of us who would like to capture the life stories of our loved ones, let them share their adventures, joys and sorrows. This can be an amazing experience, bonding families together. A memoir can tell of one major event, a series of adventures or an entire life, but whatever method you choose, the story will stay with you forever.

GOOD NEWS

Many of us routinely order merchandise from **Amazon**. If you are one of these customers, please consider registering for **Smile.Amazon.com**. This is a unique and easy method of supporting the Historical Society. Simply register as an Amazon Smile customer and specify that you support The Historical Society of Harford County, Inc. Whenever you place an order with this account a small percentage of your purchase price, one half of 1%, is forwarded to the Historical Society. While this does not seem like a lot, those orders can multiply, and every little bit helps.

ANNUAL ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

Each year the Board of Trustees, with the help of its nominating committee, identifies candidates to serve on the Board for the upcoming term. Candidates serve a two-year term with a maximum of a two term limit

The vote on the Class of 2021-2022 Board Members will take place online. The names and biographies of this term's candidates will be posted on the county website on or before September 30, 2020. Society members should go to the Society website to read more about each of the candidates and to learn more about the online voting procedures. As required by the Society's bylaws, information about the potential candidates will appear at least two weeks prior to the actual online election. When you submit your votes, please note that write-in candidates are permitted, as in a normal year, members would be allowed to introduce candidate nominations from the floor.

When the time comes for the vote, instructions will be posted on the website. Voters are directed to go to the website www.HarfordHistory.org. Click the link to ELECTION and you will be taken directly to the ballot. The Society President and his team are in the process of setting up a Survey Monkey election type ballot. This program will calculate the results and give the Society the needed documentation to assure a valid election.

We appreciate your understanding and support. This has been truly a unique year with incredible challenges so we hope you will work with us and help make our election process a success. If you have concerns or questions, please contact the Society info@harfordhistory.org or 410-836-7691.

IN MEMORIAM

Kathryn K. Keen

Bel Air resident, Kathryn K. Keen, 97, a long-time Historical Society member and Court Records volunteer passed away peacefully on Wednesday, August 5, 2020 at her home surrounded by her loving family. Born in Oxford and raised in Birmingham, Alabama, she was the daughter of the late Alfred and Katherine (Stewart) Kerr and the loving wife of the late Howard M. Keen. She resided in Aberdeen, Havre de Grace, and most recently Bel Air since moving to Maryland after her marriage in 1953.

Kathryn is survived by her two sons, James Keen of Washington, DC and Stewart Keen of Bel Air, Maryland; daughter, Rebecca Keen of Newark, Delaware; two granddaughters, Katie McCabe (Jordan) and Kerri Frey (Michael); and two great grandchildren, Colton and Avery McCabe.

A private interment took place in Emory United Methodist Church Cemetery on Saturday morning, August 8, 2020 with her immediate family. In lieu of flowers the family has recommended donations in Kathryn's memory be made to the Historical Society.



HARFORD & THE PRAIRIE SCHOONER CAMPAIGN

The Prairie Schooner Campaign of 1915 was spearheaded by Just Government League of Maryland member, Lola C. Trax of Baltimore. Working with a small group of local suffragists, she developed a proposal to construct a horse drawn canvas covered wagon with a flying U.S. flag and a purple, green and white "hikers" (suffrage) flag. The wagon was fitted complete with sleeping tents, cooking utensils, pots, pans, cots, blankets, camera, typewriter, lanterns and flaming, gasoline powered lanterns to provide light for night meetings.

In Harford, Estelle Moore and Elizabeth Forbes along with a few prominent men from the county organized a trail for the county's portion of the Prairie Schooner Campaign with stops in Bradshaw (on the Baltimore/Harford line), Magnolia, Edgewood, Abingdon, Forest Hill, Bel Air, Wilna and Benson. The first few stops did not go well. Harford County was considered an "uninvaded" part of Maryland and thus one to be targeted by the Prairie Schooner movement. Still there were several local citizens who had been involved in the Just Government League, fighting for the vote for women for several years. These people played major roles in the movement. Dr. Howard Kelly of Liriodendron served as President of the men's division and led a march on Annapolis. Stevenson Archer, Lucille Robinson, Edmond Preston and others worked diligently on the cause for many years.

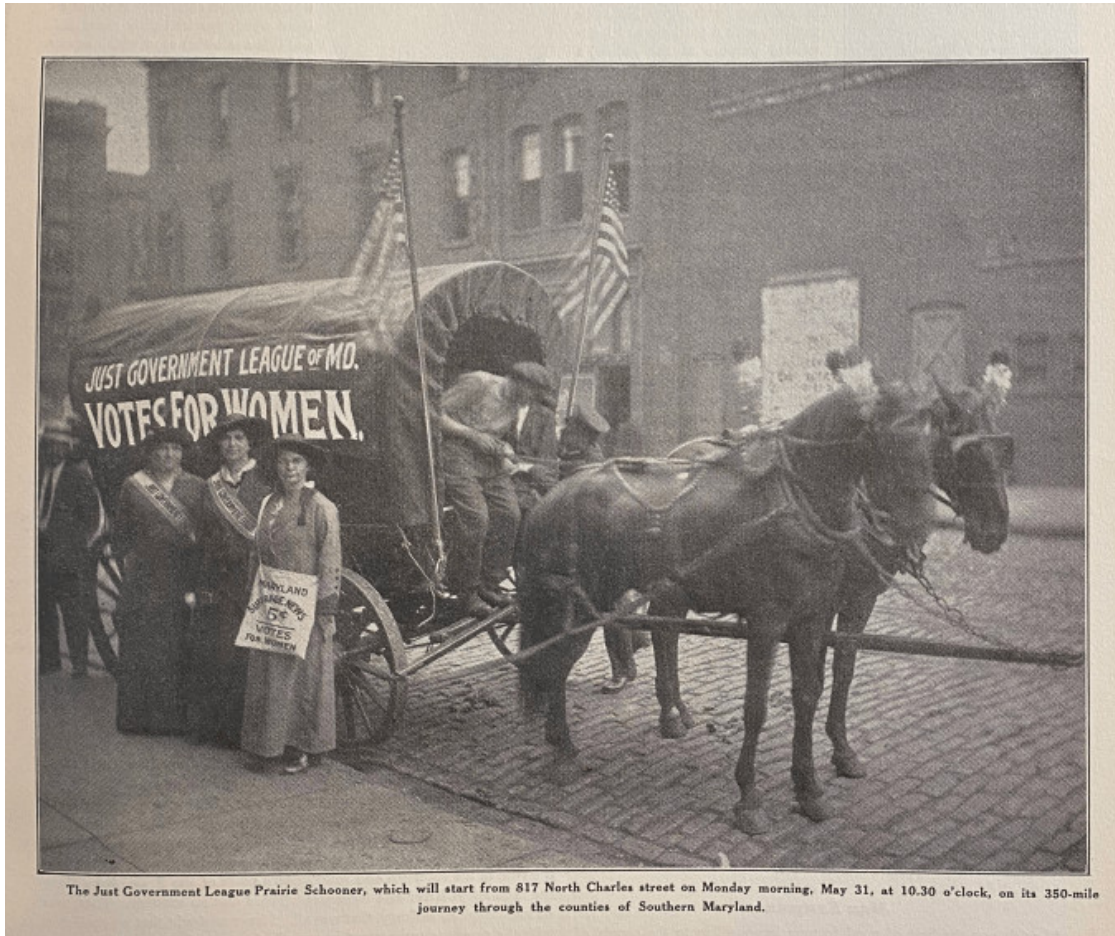
Loaded down with throat lozenges and suffrage literature, the schooner and its five occupants left Baltimore for Bradshaw on June 29, 1915. Unfortunately, the group was not treated well on its first encounter. They moved on to Edgewood where townspeople refused to provide supper or lodging until one woman said she had boarded circus people and figured the suffragists were no worse.

The next day the group lunched in Creswell and then moved on to Perryman. One of the suffragists, Miss Trax, called the *Evening Sun* reporting how "the group got lost in a great forest and jolted over two miles of the worst roads in the United States until they were feeling like a baseball after an eleven-inning

game." Eventually, after arriving two hours late, the suffragists were met by a crowd of over 200 people waiting to hear them and some even joining the cause.

On arrival in Aberdeen on June 30, 1915, the pilgrims exclaimed it was like "an oasis of friendliness in a desert of unkindness." Soon they moved on to Havre de Grace where Mayor Michael Fahey and his predecessor, T. Milton Carroll welcomed the suffragists at what is now Tydings Park. They were invited to use the city's newly erected grandstand. The suffragists spoke to an enthusiastic crowd of 800.

On July 1, the Prairie Schooner reached Level and the group was warmly welcomed by Mrs. J. Scott Hughes. After enjoying a fine dinner and stay at her home, the group moved on to Darlington on July 2, where they were stopped by Mrs. Edward Allen of Kelvin Grove Manor. Mrs. Allen was hosting the Harford Garden Club at her home and invited the suffragists to join them. In the evening the suffragists held a well-attended open-air meeting in Darlington and moved on the next day to their final Harford County destination in Bel Air. Lucille Robinson, the daughter of Senator and Mrs. Thomas Robinson and Mary Hughes escorted the suffragists to the steps of the County Courthouse for a final rally before returning to Baltimore.



The information for this article came from a Blog by Amy Rosencrans, PhD entitled Historical Rabbit Holes with Amy. I encourage you to visit and see the many photos and stories about Harford County and the fight for women's suffrage.

INTRODUCING PHOTO FRIDAYS

In May, the Society's Facebook followers enjoyed our *This Place Matters* photographs so much that we decided to continue the program, but just a little differently. We are inviting members to share their photos of Harford County's historic places, people and events with us. Each month we will introduce a new topic and invite you to share photos with us on our Facebook page each Friday.

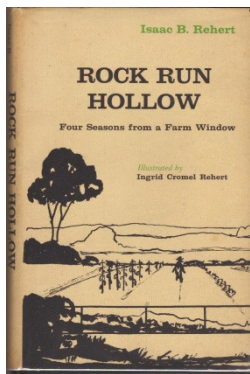
Harford County has a fascinating horse racing history with two major race tracks and many equine breeders, trainers and related industries. Now, the tracks are just a memory but the many legends live on. We encourage you to share photos of the race tracks, the horses and the people who were behind this legendary part of the county's history.

To start the September Photo Friday project, we are featuring two photographs taken at the Bel Air Race Track showing the grandstand and a parade. We are not sure of the date or the actual event, but encourage you to share your memories of this and other race track events throughout the county, along with photos of some of the famous horses, their owners, trainers and for added fun consider including one of the racing stories from these bygone days.



Bel Air Race Track

SOCIETY LIBRARY TREASURES



The Historical Society library is a unique resource for county residents. It contains innumerable family histories, publications of all sorts that are no longer found in print elsewhere and many books and collections of poetry written by talented county authors. From time to time, it is our pleasure to share excerpts from some of these publications to whet your appetite for when the pandemic is over and you will once again be able to explore this amazing resource.

In 1967, Isaac B. Reher published his book, *Rock Run Hollow; Four Seasons from a Farm Window*. Reher was a staff reporter for the Baltimore Sun who had served in World War II. He spent several years "trying to discover what was worthwhile in the world." He found his answer on a farm near Port Deposit. The following is an excerpt from his 1967 book describing autumn on the farm.

Over the Hump of Summer, Drowsily

It is high noon and hot-steaming, sultry, Maryland, mid-August hot. The hills, meadows, fencerows, thickets have blended to a monolithic blotch of solid green-dark and gloomy, stagnant and still, as unmoving as a solid boulder on a plain. All the customary outlines that spell variety and stop the roving eye as it darts across the landscape creating interest seem obliterated. Fields and fencerows, trees, bushes, weeds—all of nature has merged into a single amorphous mass of green. It is not the lively green of May; it is an August green with the germ of autumn's red already starting a stain of brown. A Blue mist hangs wearily from the

pallid azure dome like a faded lace curtain, blurring further those lines that might be tempted in the high noonday sun to step forward from the mass.

According to farm legend it is six weeks from the first katydid song until first frost. And although that saying is about as true as the one for ground hog day, seeing the katydid there in the living room reminded me that the afternoon sunlight is growing softer, the shadows are lengthening, the dew on the grass is staying longer in the morning and newspapers are printing a pollen count...The katydid's message-indeed beyond dispute-is that summer is almost done.

These late summer days are just like late summer days since time began-and yet, there has never been a day just like today, or like tomorrow's will be.

Reher's words written so beautifully more than 50 years ago still ring true today. In this time of constant change, it is nice to look back and reflect, perhaps somewhat nostalgically on the past, recognizing that no matter how things change, there is still so much beauty just outside your window.

READER'S COMMENTS

One of the great joys of writing and editing the Society's newsletter is receiving comments from our readers letting us know how much they enjoy a story or receiving the newsletter. Last month I included a story about Fair Meadows, the National Register site that recently burned. Curtis Pace, a longtime Society member reached out telling us how much he enjoyed the story and adding some fascinating background accumulated over his years living in the Joppa area.

Charcoal used to be made in the Clayton Road area. It was a dirty, nasty job that took about three weeks. The Society has a bulletin that provides detail of how the charcoal was made. The first iron furnace was behind the Bush Tavern (near the intersection of Routes 7 and 136) and across the road from the stagecoach house, now owned by Dr. Holt. The State Highway Administration conducted an archeological dig there a few years ago. Mr. Pace also mentioned that the lake at the Lakeside Motel on Route 40 was formed from an area that was used to dig for iron ore and the Glebe house mentioned in the original article is still located on Goat Hill Road.

The bottomless lake was in Old Abingdon off Sewell Road. Job's Hole in the Susquehanna River at Berkley was also considered to be bottomless until preparations for Conowingo Dam determined it was 90 feet deep. Another story about Job's Hole claimed that an engineer was testing the current prior to dam construction and put dye in the water. Some of the dye surfaced in caverns in Virginia.

Mr. Pace went on to ask some very interesting questions. If anyone has the answers, please let us know.

1. Did Parnell and Dietrich have a role in St. Francis de Sales Church history?
2. When Mary Walsh bought the Fair Meadows mansion, did she have a sheep farm and is there a Harford Historical publication about the farm?

Each of these details adds to the story and makes it more interesting and relevant. Thanks to Mr. Pace for his contribution to the story. If you have stories or comments that you wish to share, please do not hesitate to send them to info@harfordhistory.org and I will try to share them in future editions

CIVIL WAR GOVERNOR, AUGUSTUS BRADFORD: A STUDY IN CONFLICT

By Carol L. Deibel

Augustus Bradford was born in Bel Air in 1806. His home, located where the county parking lot is at the corner of Churchville Road and Main Street, was only a couple blocks from the Bel Air Academy on Pennsylvania Avenue where he received his early education from the Reverend Reuben Davis. He then went on to St. Mary's College, graduating in 1824 and returning home to Bel Air to read law with local attorney, Otho Scott. He was admitted to the bar in 1826. After several years practicing law in Bel Air, Augustus decided to move to Baltimore City where he married Elizabeth Kell in 1835. Elizabeth, who was 17 at the time of the marriage, grew up at Oak Hill, a plantation on Philadelphia Road. Together they had twelve children.

In 1845, Governor Pratt appointed Bradford, Clerk of the Court for Baltimore County and in 1861, Governor Hicks appointed him as one of Maryland's delegates to the Washington Peace Conference. At the Conference, Bradford made a speech that changed his life. He was noted for his great oratorical prowess and this speech supporting the Union cause deeply moved President Lincoln and others in attendance.

During that summer, Bradford joined the newly formed Union Party (Republican) and was selected as the Party's nominee for governor. He defeated the Democratic candidate Benjamin C. Howard by 30,000 votes and was sworn in on January 8, 1862 as Maryland's Governor. The Civil War raged on as Confederate troops pushed into western Maryland. The Battle of Antietam was fought in September 1862, the bloodiest single day in American military history. Tensions ran high as the state was torn between supporters on both sides. Federal troops were stationed in Maryland to assure its loyalty to the Union and were accused of intimidating voters and interfering with the election. Bradford spoke out against this federal interference even though he supported the Union cause. He felt strongly that the secession arguments and the dissolution of the Union were wrong.

As a slave holder, he stood to lose financially and approached the President about such losses and possible compensation, this was denied but he still stood strongly behind the Union, while continuing to speak out against the harsh and arbitrary federal troop occupation of Maryland. This Union support made Bradford a target for Confederate troops. In July 1864, Bradley Johnson's Raiders visited Bradford's home in Baltimore during his and the family's absence. The troops burned the house to the ground together with all of his possessions and papers.

Unfortunately, the war overshadowed Bradford's other accomplishments; his support of immigration into Maryland; his appointment of the first State School Superintendent and School Commissioners; the establishment of a system of education; the acceptance of Government scrip for the encouragement of agriculture and mechanical arts; the reorganization of the militia; and his assistance in the movement to acquire a portion of the Gettysburg Battlefield for a cemetery for the Union dead. He served only one



Governor Augustus Bradford -
Source: Maryland State
Archives

term as Governor. However, after the war, President Andrew Johnson appointed Bradford surveyor of the Port of Baltimore. He died in Baltimore in 1881.

To learn more about Harford County's role in the Civil War, please visit the Society's website and listen to Jeff Smart's three-part workshop on this subject.



RESERVATION FORM

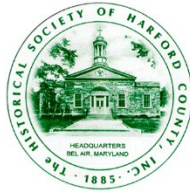
<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Fee</u>	<u># Tickets</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Sep 15	Video presentation: <i>Divided Union, Pt. 1</i>	\$free	_____	\$_____0
Sep 29	Video presentation: <i>Divided Union, Pt. 2</i>	\$free	_____	\$_____0
Oct 10	Genealogy Workshop	\$free	_____	\$_____0
Oct 13	Q&A Webinar: <i>Divided Union</i>	\$10	_____	\$_____
TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED				\$_____

Name: _____ Ph. or E-Mail: _____

All programs are online until further notice. For more information, check the Society's website at www.HarfordHistory.org, www.Facebook.com/HarfordCountyHistoricalSociety or call 410-838-7691. Return your Reservation form to the Historical Society, 143 N. Main Street, Bel Air, MD. 21014.

The **Hays House Museum** remains closed for now. We will let you know when the museum is able to reopen. Meanwhile, the Society is working on a virtual program broadcast from the Hays House for December. We will have more information in the next edition of the newsletter

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

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY and GIFT SHOP HOURS

Tuesday COURT RECORDS 9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.	Wednesday ARCHIVES 9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.	Third Wednesday ARCHIVES & HENRY C. PEDEN Jr. LIBRARY 5:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.	Thursday HENRY C. PEDEN Jr. RESEARCH LIBRARY 9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.	Fourth Saturday ARCHIVES & HENRY C. PEDEN Jr. LIBRARY 10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.
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