

THE RECORD



Volume 108, No. 1

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

January 2014

Mary Pat Berry, President

Mary Ann Scott, Editor

The Historical Society of Charles County
together with the
Ella Virginia Houck Holloway Chapter,
United States Daughters of 1812

is proud to present

A special performance of
Rosalie Calvert's
War of 1812

Saturday, January 18, 2014
La Plata Methodist Church Hall
2:00 p.m.



Mary Ann Jung takes you on a breath-taking journey back to the Battle of Bladensburg, the burning of Washington, the creation of the "Star-Spangled Banner," and the excitement of 18th century plantation life in Maryland as she becomes Rosalie Calvert of Riversdale. Ms. Jung researches and writes her own programs, and uses authentic costumes, accents, and attitudes for her characters' time period in her performances. Her entertaining portraits of famous women and their times continue to encourage a love of history, drama, and literature in young and old alike.

Mary Ann Jung received her degree in British history and has been featured on CNN, in the New York Times, and in other newspapers and magazines worldwide. Mary Ann Jung serves as the history chairperson and Shakespearean language instructor at the Maryland Renaissance Festival. She was nominated in 1997 as one of Maryland's Top Women in the Arts. Ms. Jung's shows have been featured at the National Theater of Washington, Port Discovery, National Museum of Medicine, and the Folger Shakespeare Library.

President's Message

Dear Members – what a roller coaster ride this Fall!

The Society has had some highs and lows. I'm sorry to report the Rich Hill deal fell through. At the eleventh hour, Mr. Vallario and the Society could not agree to terms that would benefit the both of us. I made the decision to not go forward with the deal. I do appreciate all the support of my Board and members. I will never say never as in the future some thing may be worked out, but for now we must continue to lobby for Rich Hill's future.

I hope you were able to take advantage of the first Charles County Holiday Trail and Kris Kringle market. What a special day on December 7th, when Mike Mazzeo, Evie Merritt, and I opened Friendship House to the public. We were overwhelmed by the attendance. So many people, young and old, expressed



their appreciation at being able to see Friendship House and learn its history. It was heartening so many people still care and took the time to come out during this busy season. The was the start of hopefully an annual event. Visitor and Board Member John Morris and his sweet wife, Cricket, took many pictures and came up with many new ideas to enhance Friendship House.

Keep your calendar free on January 18th next year for our general meeting being held with the U.S. Daughters of 1812. Details are in the newsletter. As Charles County celebrates its role in the War of 1812, our programs will center around this pivotal time in our history. Join us in January and again in April for our Spring luncheon meeting. June will mark the opening of the Cellar Museum and we hope to gather the families represented there for a reunion. In August, Charles County's Bicentennial of 1812 will be held in Benedict and Maxwell Hall will host many activities. I hope to see you and talk with you at one of these events.

At this hustle and bustle season, and after spending the day at Friendship House, its nice to remember simpler times. I am thankful for the role the Society does in preserving the past while serving our future.

Many wishes to all for a Merry Berry time and see you in the New Year!

Mary Pat Berry, President
Historical Society of Charles County
301-934-2999 • berrysbugs@wildblue.net

Rich Hill

National Register of Historic Places Description

Rich Hill is a two-story, gable-roofed frame building built probably in the in the early to mid 18th century but with alterations dating to c. 1800, c.1825, the late 19th century. The house has a double chimney on one end and a one-story

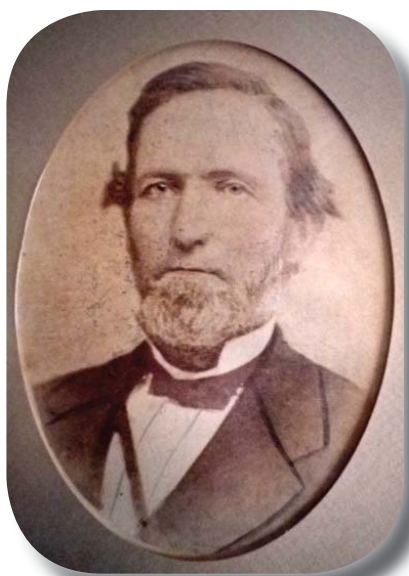


frame wing with central chimney on the other. The main house possesses many architectural features that are significant to the study and interpretation of the vernacular architecture of the Southern Maryland region. The historical significance of Rich Hill relates directly to its ownership by Colonel Samuel Cox and the role Cox played in the flight of John Wilkes Booth through Charles County to Virginia following the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, April 14, 1865. Samuel Cox, whose sympathy for the Southern cause was well known, hid Booth and his companion-in-crime, David Herold, on his Rich Hill farm after Booth and Herold were sent there upon being discovered in a nearby swamp by a neighbor's servant. Cox then proceeded to arrange for their safe (and secret) passage to Virginia. Booth and Herold remained hidden in a pine thicket at Rich Hill until April 21, when Thomas A. Jones, foster brother of Colonel Cox and a former Chief Signal Agent for the Confederacy, provided them with a small boat in which they crossed the Potomac River to Virginia.

Rich Hill Tract History

Notes of J. Richard Rivoire

- 1666 - Patent of Rich Hills to Hugh Thomas, 600 acres. (G1/3)
- 1673 - Division of Rich Hills 600 acres between Hugh Thomas and Thomas Lomax. (F2/51)
- 1676 - Thomas Lomax give to brother Claiborne Lomax a gift as part of Rich Hills, containing 100 acres. (G1/3)
- 1710 - Ralph Lomax and Margaret his wife to Mary Contee (M.P. Hemsley), part of Rich Hills containing 300 acres. (C2/245)
- 1714 - Philemon Hemsley and Mary His wife to Dr. Gustavus Brown, part of Rich Hills containing 300 acres for 21,500 pounds of tobacco. (F2/51)
- 1765 - William Courts to Rev. Richard Brown, a one year lease on part of Rich Hill for "1 grain of Indian Corn". (03/29)
- 1765 - William Courts and wife Mary to Rev. Richard Brown for 270 pounds an 20,000 less crop of tobacco, half-part of Rich Hill now in the occupation of Richard brown, containing 270 acres. (03/31)
- 1783 - Marriage contract: Katherine Hawkins releases all dower rights to Rich Hill following her marriage to Rev. Richard Brown. (23/35)
- 1783 - From Richard Brown to John Brown, part of Rich Hill "on which dwelling home stands". (23/37)
- 1783 - John Brown, son, to Richard Brown, a life estate in Rich Hill. (23/38)
- 1783 - Tax Assessment: Part of Rich Hill, 566 acres; Rev. Richard Brown owner, improvements.
- 1790 - John and Susannah Brown to Dr. William Brown for 1,000 pounds, half-part of Rich Hill. (K4/75)
- 1791 - Dr. Gustavus Brown to Dr. William Brown, for 30 pounds of Lomax's Addition, containing 30 acres. (K4/250)
- 1807 - Richard and Catherine Brown to Samuel Cox for \$1,250. Two tracts: Rich Hill, containing 300 acres and Lomax's Addition. Reserving graveyard. (B7/393)
- 1807 - Samuel Cox to Catherine Brown, a mortgage on one-half of Rich Hill. (B7/396)
- 1810 - John C. Cox to Elizabeth Brown. (B10/272)
- 1849 - From parents Hugh and Mary Ann T.T. Cox to Samuel Cox, part of Rich Hill adjoining the property of S. Cox residing on, containing 400 acres. (WM3/492)
- 1880 - From Samuel Cox to Samuel Cox, Jr. (adopted son) after the death of his adopted mother, Walter Ann Cox, Rich Hill. (Wills MF18/131)
- 1906 - From Samuel Cox, Jr. to son Walter Cox providing William Cox pay Lucy B & Edith Chapplelear. (Wills CHP19/273)
- 1906 - From Walter Cox and wife to Lucy Beale Neale, Walter Cox's share of Rich Hill. (17/566)
- 1971 - From James F. Neale, et. al to Joseph Vallario Rich Hill Farms; two parcels: 143.280 acres on North Side of Bel Alton-Newton Road and 149 acres on the South Side of the road. The grantors acquired under the will of Lucy Beale Neale. (240/80)



The photo on the left is Samuel Cox.

The tombstones are at Mt. Rest Cemetery in La Plata.

Statement of Samuel Cox, Jr.

June 20, 1891

To recall scenes and incidents of twenty six years ago from memory is no easy task, yet I will endeavor to give you as full and accurate account of the visit of John Wilkes Booth to Rich Hill, within the twenty four hours after having assassinated President Lincoln, as my memory will serve me.



I was at the time eighteen years of age and had just returned from Charlotte Hall School some two days previous, to go with "Pa" (Col. Samuel Cox) on the following Monday to Petersburg to assist in nursing my only brother, who had been wounded in the battle of Hatcher's Run on the 2nd of April 1865, and who was then with a private family near Petersburg.

On Saturday, the 15th of April, I rode to Port Tobacco, five miles north-west from Rich Hill, and there found everything in great excitement- the place filled with Federal Cavalry and detectives and then learned that John Wilkes Booth had shot President Lincoln at Ford's Theater. It was toward the close of the evening, and I returned home to convey the startling news to 'Pa. No one in our family knew John Wilkes Booth, nor had ever seen him. I think Pa had seen him upon the stage but had no personal acquaintance with him.

At about 1 a.m. Sunday morning the 16th of April, there came a tremendous knock from our front door. Not having a bell it is surmounted with a brass knocker and in the stillness of the night the sound from this resounds with great distinctiveness. It aroused every inmate of the house. There was at the time in the house, Col. Samuel Cox, his wife, his wife's mother Mrs. Lucy B. Walker, Ella Magruder, now my wife, two servant girls Mary and Martha and myself. Pa's bedroom was on the first floor and to the extreme eastern end of the house, and to approach the front door, which opens into the hall, Pa had to pass through the dining room where Mary and Martha slept.

The stairway to the second floor is approached through a door midway between the hall and the head of the staircase. Mrs. Walker slept in my room, which is directly over the hall and two windows in this room are immediately over the front door looking upon the yard and lawn in full view of the road which approaches the house. When I was aroused by the knocker, I jumped out of bed and went down in the hall and as I approached the

front door, I found Pa standing with the door partially open with Mary standing just behind him in the doorway of the dining room. As I approached him I heard him say to someone on the piazza... "you cannot come in, I refuse to admit strangers who refuse to give me their names. I have just heard of the assassination of the president and the county is swarming with soldiers and you must leave!"

The party on the outside parlayed with him but a short while. Pa walked on the piazza towards the entrance, leaving the front door open, and there I saw another man approach the entrance from the yard. I then joined Mrs. Walker upstairs and from the window in my room she and I saw the two men leave the yard. They were then joined by another man at the front gate and the three rode from the lawn to the public road about one hundred yards away, muttering about their inhospitable treatment. One was riding a large roan, one a pretty mare and the third a dark animal. The moon was shining brightly and Mrs. Walker and myself watched them out of sight, fearing they might do some mischief at the stable which they passed as they left the house. No one knew who they were and they were not in the yard more than 15 minutes before they left and we returned to our disturbed slumbers.

It was I think on Tuesday morning I think the 18th of April that quite a sensation was created by the appearance of a beautiful bay mare running at large in the neighborhood. This mare turned out to be the mare that was ridden by David Herold, who piloted Booth from Ford's Theater through Southern Maryland, first to Dr. Samuel A Mudd's near Bryantown situated ten or twelve miles northeast of Rich Hill which place they reached



Continued on Page 5

Friendship House Cellar Museum Receives Grant

By Michael J. Mazzeo, Jr.



The Friendship House Cellar Museum has received a mini-grant in the amount of \$1,000.00 from the Southern Maryland Heritage Area Consortium. Currently the Friendship House Foundation Committee is working on a permanent exhibit in the first room of the Cellar titled "The Families of Friendship". So far both rooms of the cellar have been painted. We have finished the panel displays about Nicholas Guyther and the Dents and are currently working on the panel displays on the Grays, the Karlsson and Juhle families and completing the "pull-up" genealogies of the Dents and Grays as well. In addition, the college has once again been very generous with providing specialized lighting in the cellar to highlight our exhibits. We are also working with



an art student at the College of Southern Maryland who will paint frames on the walls around our displays. The final step will be putting in a new stone-like tile flooring. As part of the conditions of the grant we must match the \$1,000.00 before the project is completed.

To date we have received generous donations toward the Cellar Museum Project from the following:

Lloyd S. Bowling
John & Joyce Candland
Elizabeth Linton deKeyser
Dan & Carol Donohue
Edward B. Edelen, Jr.
Chuck & Paige Jackson
Michael J. Mazzeo, Jr.
Chris & Evelyn Karlsson Merritt
George & Elsie Picyk
G. Howard Post
Hilda K. Roderick
Sheila Smith
Susan & Otey Walker
Barbara Wright Griffin, in memory of
Gertrude Wright McWilliams

If you would like to make a contribution toward the matching grant for the Cellar Museum, please make your tax-deductable donations payable to the *Friendship House Foundation*, c/o the Historical Society of Charles County, PO Box 2806, La Plata, Maryland 20646.



Statement of Samuel Cox, Jr., Continued from Page 4

some time Saturday morning after the assassination. Dr. Mudd told me he did not know Booth except casually, having met him once before on Penn. Ave. in Washington, where he refused an introduction to Booth and once afterwards when he came to his house for a short time from Bryantown Church uninvited. and that when he and Herold came to his house that Saturday morning they told him Booth's horse had fallen on him soon after leaving the Potomac River, while they had just crossed from Virginia, and Booth's leg was broken by the fall. Dr. Mudd knew nothing to the contrary, nor anything about the President's assassination until after he had rendered surgical attention to Booth, where that evening on riding to the vil-

lage of Bryantown, he found the place surrounded by soldiers, and was informed that Booth had shot the President the night before. Dr. Mudd returned to his home and upbraided Booth with having deceived him and threatened to give him up to the soldiers. But Booth appealed to him in his --- way wherefrom Dr. Mudd relented but ordered them away from his house. They took refuge in the Zekiah Swamp and that night were piloted by a negro named Oswald Swann to Rich Hill. This negro was the third party whom I watched from the house early that Sunday morning and who afterwards gave us the trouble we had to endure by informing the authorities that we took Booth and Herold in the house and entertained them for four hours with champagne and oysters etc.

A Tribute to Anita L. Wood

1930-2013



in Europe, cruised the Baltic, had extended stays in Spain and Africa, and traveled all over the United States.

She was a member of the Christ Episcopal Church, William & Mary Parish in Wayside and later the Port Tobacco Parish in La Plata.



Anita L. Wood, a life time member of the Historical Society, passed away September 23, 2013 in Port Saint Lucie, Florida. Anita was an avid supporter of the Historical Society and volunteered in various capacities for 29 years. She was the first coordinator of the Tours and Educational Programs at Friendship House. She along with Madelyn Irish, Eleanor Higdon, Sue LaHood and Carolyn Shamblin provided tours to over 400 local school students each year. Anita served four years as a docent on this committee from 1991 to 1994.

Anita was an active member of the Cemetery Committee for eighteen years from 1983 to 2001. She served on the Board of Directors from 1986 to 1992. She was chair of the Programs Committee from 1992 to 1994 and served on that committee for eight years until 2000. She was a member of the Friendship House Foundation from 2007 to 2012.

Anita also volunteered in the Southern Maryland Studies Center and was responsible for creating indexed bound volumes of Charles County obituaries from 1983 to 1992, part of the Rare Book Collection today.

Anita was a native of Charles County and an avid world traveler. Among her trips she toured England, France, Russia



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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Friendship House Foundation In Memory of

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| <i>Warren E. Barley</i> | <i>Katherine S. W. Mitchell</i> |
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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 donate, please make checks payable to the Friendship House Foundation, and mail to the Historical Society.

A Generous Donation

Mrs. Betty Cobey Senescu of Albuquerque, New Mexico recently donated a very old coverlet to Friendship House. Ms. Senescu is a descendant of the Gray Family of Friendship and the great-granddaughter of Catherine Elizabeth Gray who stitched the 1831 sampler we now have in Friendship House.

Ms. Senescu also donated to the Southern Maryland Studies Center six photographs of students from Holly Springs school taken between 1875 and 1880. A description of the photographs written by H.S. Cobey is shown here as well as the photographs.

H. S. Cobey was the Reverend Harry Speake Cobey, Mrs. Senescu's uncle.



Sept 6 1955

This is a group of pictures taken, I think, between 1875 and 1880. They were school children, taught by my Uncle James T. Carpinter, in Charles County Md., at the one room one teacher country school known as Holly Springs School. It stood at the entrance to Holly Springs Farm, then the home of a Col. Miller. His daughter "Aggie" later Mrs. Marbury, Mother of the present Mrs. Samuel Linton owned Holly Springs, as Mrs. Linton now does. Down to the present day the Holly Springs family has always been outstanding in Western Charles County, Md. I cannot identify anyone in these pictures, they are a generation older than am I. Am confident I knew some of them in their latter years, Mrs. Marbury being one.

H.S. Cobey



Read more about Holly Springs School on page 10.

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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 Mary Pat Berry at bugs4berry@gmail.com.

One of the largest expenses of our Society is the printing and mailing of our newsletter. In an effort to keep our budget under control, it was voted at the January Board meeting of the Historical Society of Charles County to email the newsletter to all members with emails on file.

If you receive a newsletter in the mail, and have an email address, we would ask that you notify Mary Pat Berry at: bugs4berry@gmail.com and begin receiving your newsletter via email. Thank you for your help in saving the trees, postage stamps, and other costs involved in mailing this newsletter.

Friendship House Committees

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Holly Springs School

The following was written by Emily Marbury Linton in 1976 for the publication
A Legacy: One- and Two-Room Schools in Charles County
published by the Charles County Retired Teachers Association

Holly Springs was located off what is now Holly Springs Road, Nanjemoy, Maryland, in the Third Election District of Charles County. It was in existence before 1900 and no longer stands.

It is somewhat uncertain just when the name Holly Springs was given to the nearby public school, which was sometimes referred to as Poplar Springs School, because of the beautiful flowering poplar trees quite near. Holly was beautiful and in abundance, as were mountain laurel and magnolia. The natural beauty of the landscape and a natural flow of clear, clean water must have impressed the neighborhood who had access to this water.

Our forefathers had foresight and wisdom. Old records refer to men teachers as a necessity to keeping order. Several of these lived in their riverfront farm homes and walked to Holly Springs School. Several families lived nearby, while many boys and girls walked between three or four miles (short cuts) daily to and from their homes to school. Some had perfect attendance. The children from these homes were taught to respect their elders. As with any group, while there were different opinions, the children were expected to respect and listen to their elders. This they did!

The average attendance at Holly Spring Schools School was 20 pupils, first grade through fifth or sixth. The primary children would often take a nap after lunch. The teacher realized a four or five mile walk earned a nap.

Handwriting was emphasized, and many children from these one-room schools were outstanding in penmanship. Neatness was required in children's copy books. These were furnished by the County. Many children learned to write beautifully. Practice made perfect. Many parents were anxious to have their children excel in reading, writing, and arithmetic.

Mr. James Brawner and Mr. Alpheus Haislip taught at different times at Holly Springs School. A board of Trustees and a Superintendent supervised the teachers at that time.

There are many families who had a part in and influence on this little school; the Marburys, Wheelers, Burgesses, Davies, Haislips, Grays, Franklins, Cobey's, Dudleys, Bastains, Browns, etc. These families, with family names familiar to many, lived in this area and are probably recognized by some at this time.

Mark Your Calendar

Spring 2014

- The Historical Society of Charles County's Spring Meeting: *Benedict and the War of 1812*. Saturday, April 26, River's Edge Restaurant, Benedict @ 12:00 noon.

Fall 2014

- The Historical Society of Charles County's Fall Meeting: From Historic Londontown, *Recreating an 18th-Century Carpenter Shop*; Durham Church, 6:00 p.m.



THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CHARLES COUNTY, INC.

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

www.charlescountyhistorical.org