

# THE RECORD



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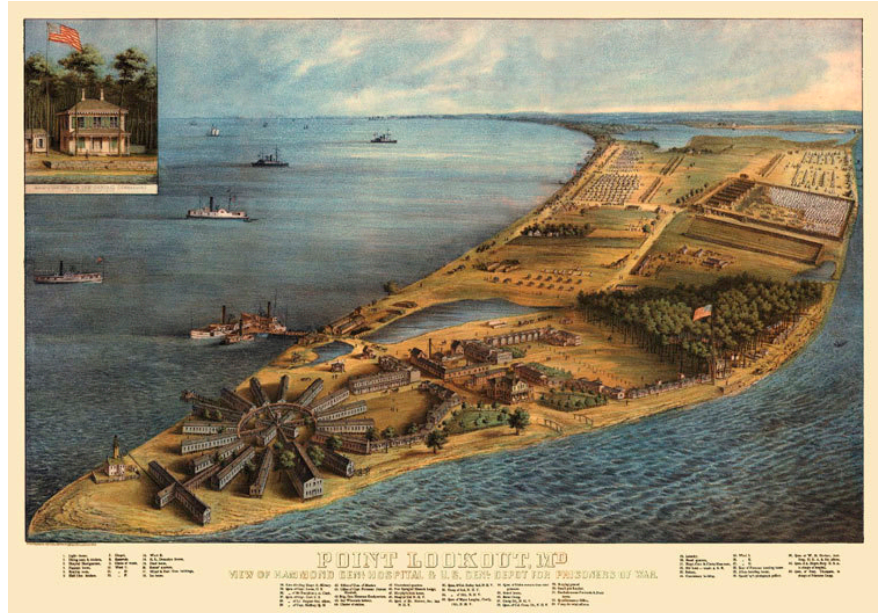
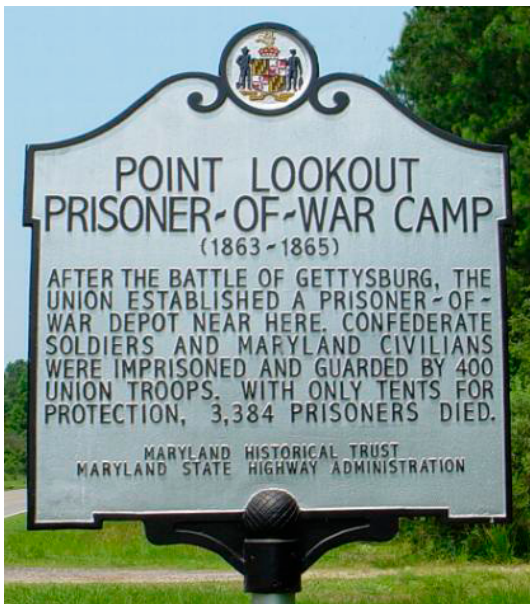
Ronald G. Brown, President

Mary Ann Scott, Editor

## Annual Fall Membership Meeting

Saturday, October 21, 2017 – 6:00 p.m.

Durham Church Hall – Ironsides, Maryland



### *Point Lookout Prison Camp*

*Presented by Dr. Brad Gottfried*

#### Menu

*Chicken Divine • Noodles • Green Beans • Carrot Souffle  
Homemade Cranberry Sauce • Bread • Tea/Coffee • Dessert*

\$25.00 per person - Please R.s.v.p. no later than October 13, 2017 to:  
Carol Donohue ~ 16401 Old Marshall Hall Road ~ Accokeek, MD 20607

*Checks payable to the Historical Society of Charles County*

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# A Tribute to J. Richard Rivoire

## 1947-2017

*Noted* Historical Architect, J. Richard Rivoire, passed away May 5, 2017, in Raleigh, North Carolina. A native of Charles County, and life member of the Historical Society of Charles County, Rick was the first to do extensive documentation of historic structures in Charles County.

It was through his love of history and architecture that he became one of the most noted Historical Architects of the region. Of the 45 Charles County places on the National Register, 34 structures and 2 Historic Districts were originally surveyed, documented and nominated by Rick Rivoire.

His own historic home, Johnstontown, near the fairgrounds, tragically was destroyed by fire from a lightning storm in 2005. Since then he had made his home in Raleigh, North Carolina where he was actively engaged in research and documenting historic structures of that region.

As a tribute to Rick's memory, the Forward to his book *Homeplaces, Traditional Domestic Architecture of Charles County* is written here in its entirety:

*Real pros see architecture through the ends of their fingers. They are easy to recognize. As they walk from room to room in an old building that they have never seen before, their hands instinctively reach out to touch the backbands on door frames or the reeded pilasters of a mantelpiece. An architectural historian's eyes are working too, drinking in the visual clues that reveal the complicated histories of buildings that have undergone successive changes. But it is the fingertips that record with the speed of a bar-code reader the telltale molding profiles and worked surfaces that date old buildings.*

*J. Richard Rivoire was already a pro when I first met him twenty years ago. We were examining an abandoned farmhouse in Anne Arundel County, a prosperous planter's dwelling house when it was built 150 years earlier. Hard times had reduced it to a winter shelter for hunters judging from the remains campfires in the middle of the parlor floor and the spent cartridges in the yard behind. It was bitterly cold, so cold that we warmed our hands on the mouth of a thermos bottle as we wandered from room to room finding clues to the history of the house and trying, out loud, theories about its development. When Rick wasn't clutching the thermos, his fingers habitually sought out architraves and beaded moldings. I noticed that right away. Later I learned that those hands and eyes were just as good with a draftsman's pencil. The two of us spent several days that November and December taking measurements, making drawings, and sorting out one of the earliest surviving frame houses in Maryland. We had only a few loose ends left to tie*

*up when Rick telephones one evening shortly after Christmas to say that the hunters or vandals or somebody had burned Brandy down to its footings.*

*Attentive readers of this book will find that Rick Rivoire has administered last rites to more than a few moribund buildings in Southern Maryland. He can console himself in the knowledge that he has also saved many other historic houses where his interest and enthusiasm have awakened an owner's sense of responsibility or ignited a prospective buyer's dreams. All the while he keeps adding drawings and photographs to a collection of records that now documents the architectural heritage of Charles County more completely and more intelligently than any other county in the state.*

*What do I mean when I call architectural drawings intelligent? Can the opposite be true? Can renderings be reasonably complete, accurate, and attractive, and yet also unintelligent? Not only can they be, but most great collections like the Historic American Buildings Survey at the Library of Congress contain tens of thousands of drawings that are no smarter than the architects who drew them. Only a few of them saw the buildings they recorded through their fingertips. They never knew that a bold ogee molding with a kicked up leading edge always indicates work right around 1800 or that a plumpish Greek ovolo will add another twenty years or so. Because they never learned the obvious things buildings could tell them, they neglected to put that information in their drawings. Consequently, unless later users can revisit a building to collect the evidence that was overlooked, they can never know more about the structure than the uninformative renderings show.*

*Rivoire's architectural drawings plainly show the mind of a professional architectural historian at work. They are testimony to that special hand-eye coordination that I spotted the first day in the field. You can see it too. Look carefully at the plans in this book. Notice how some of the walls are shaded or stippled to show not only different building materials, but different building periods. If you went back to his fieldnotes, now preserved in the Southern Maryland Studies Center at the Charles County Community College, you would find a meticulous record of the architectural evidence—molding profiles, nail types, and other diagnostic features—that led him to conclude that such-and-such addition or alteration to a building belonged to this period or that period, but not earlier or later. His thinking leaves a well-marked trail through his work. Intelligent architectural drawings always tell a comprehensive and comprehensible story about the original buildings they depict and all their vicissitudes since.*

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*A book full of such drawings, as this one is, becomes an ever more valuable primary source as the buildings it documents fall victim to accidents or neglect or overzealous restoration. There is no question that Homeplaces will be an immediate and enduring hit with history lovers in Southern Maryland. They and other general readers may not appreciate, however, that scholars too will eagerly add the book to their libraries. The excellent drawings and photographs and the historical information that accompanies them form a record that will be used and reused for years to come in ways that historians now cannot foresee.*

*An intimate knowledge of regional architecture is not something learned from books. Nor is fieldwork a skill taught in classrooms. Rick Rivoire has spent half a lifetime*

*recording houses, barns, and outbuildings in Charles County and studying the histories of their builders and owners in the county records. He has made himself the expert that only a native son can be. At the same time, he has always raised his sights and stayed in touch with the latest survey and recording practices followed by the Maryland Historical Trust and other professional architectural historians and preservation agencies across the country. His work, therefore, combines the best of two worlds, and Homeplaces provides a feast for readers both nearby and far away.*

*Cary Carson  
Colonial Williamsburg Foundation  
1990*



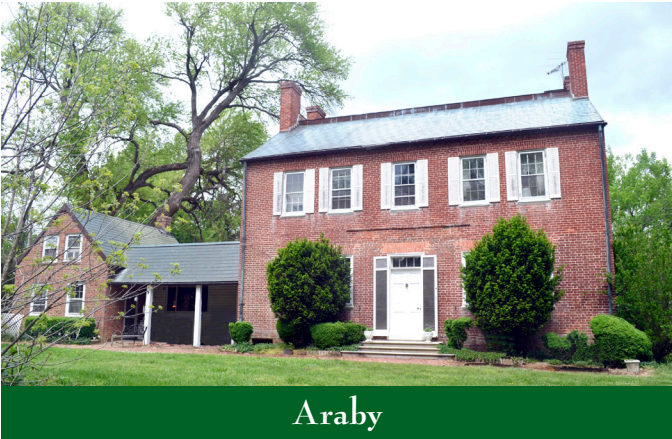
The Exchange

*Charles County Properties on the National Register of Historic Places  
Nominated by J. Richard Rivoire*

DATE OF NOMINATION	PROPERTY
1970	Pleasant
1973	Araby
1973	Sarum
1973	Mt. Carmel Monastery
1973	St. Catharine
1973	Maxwell Hall
1975	La Grange
1975	Waverley
1975	Marshall Hall
1976	Linden
1976	Green's Inheritance
1976	Rich Hill
1976	Timber Neck Farm
1977	Mt. Air
1977	Locust Grove
1978	Ellerslie
1978	Cedar Grove
1980	Mt. Aventine
1982	Oakland
1983	Oak Grove
1984	The Exchange
1984	McPherson's Purchase
1984	Bryantown Historic District (19 structures including Bryantown Tavern, Brick House Lot, Evergreen, Smith House)
1987	St. Thomas Manor
1987	The Retreat
1987	Truman's Place
1988	Stagg Hall
1988	Port Tobacco Historic District (including Stagg Hall, Chimney House, Port Tobacco Courthouse, Burch House, Boswell-Compton House, Mt. Bleak, Port Tobacco School, Wilmer Office and numerous archaeological sites)
1989	The Lindens
1989	Thainston
1990	St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church, Newport
1990	Spye Park
1990	Johnsontown
1991	Acquinsicke
1991	Rosemary Lawn
1997	The Hermitage

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*Charles County Properties on the National Register of Historic Places  
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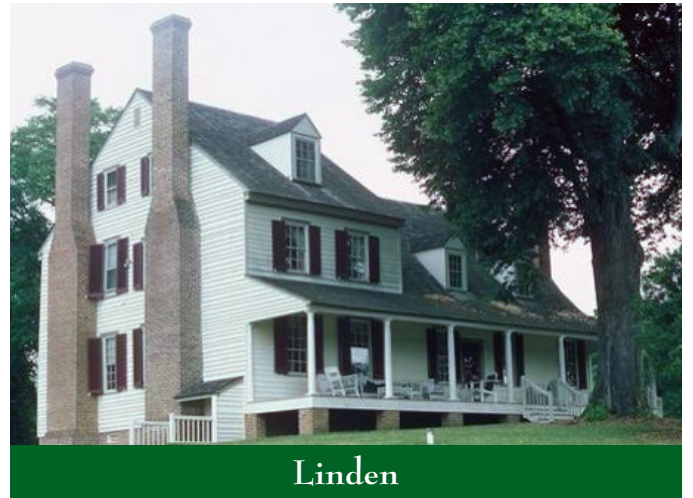
Araby



La Grange



Ellerslie



Linden



Evergreen



Maxwell Hall

*Charles County Properties on the National Register of Historic Places  
Nominated by J. Richard Rivoire*



Mount Carmel Monastery



Rich Hill



Spye Park



Stagg Hall



The Hermitage



The Retreat

# Rediscovering Historic Rich Hill

On Sunday, April 23, 2017, the Friends of Rich Hill hosted a very successful open house at Rich Hill. Costumed docents, Historical organizations displays, Sons of the Confederate Veterans encampment, tours, exhibits and the Charles County Archeological Society helped to make this a very informative and successful day.



Over 50 descendants of Lucy Cox Neale, the daughter of Samuel Cox, Jr., attended this event.



# Rich Hill Website

[www.richhillfriends.org](http://www.richhillfriends.org)

Have you been to the Rich Hill Website lately? If not, check out the many links to learn about the history, the progress and how to become a "Friend of Rich Hill."

- Events
- History of Rich Hill
  - ❖ Tract History
  - ❖ Dr. Gustavus Brown
  - ❖ Colonel Samuel Cox

- Images
- Interpretive Plan
- Preservation Matters
- Rehabilitation
  - ❖ Time Line of Activities at Rich Hill
  - ❖ Structural Report
  - ❖ Conditions Assessment
- Rich Hill Virtual Tour



*The Charles County Archaeological Society of Maryland hard at work (above); the Wallace Bowling Camp of the Sons of the Confederate Veterans (left).*

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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.

## Friendship House Committees

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### Cellar Museum & Shop

James H. Berry, Jr.  
 Mary Pat Berry

### Ways & Means

Ruby Dyson  
 Sandra Mitchell

### Furnishings

Joyce Candland, Chair  
 Madelyn Irish  
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## Barbara Jean Wright Griffin

Barbara Jean Wright Griffin, age 78, died May 13, 2017 in Stevensville, Maryland. Barbara was a life member of the Historical Society of Charles County and the first coordinator of the Southern Maryland Studies Center at the College of Southern Maryland.

She was the daughter of Shurbey A. Wright and Gertrude Carpenter Wright McWilliams, former Register of Wills for Charles County.

Barbara graduated from Lackey High School in 1956, then attended the University of Maryland, graduating with a degree in Education. She taught first grade in Prince George County.

Barbara was an avid golfer and maintained homes in both Stevensville and Hobe Sound, Florida.

Services were held at St. Peter's Catholic Church, Queenstown, Maryland.

In her Will, Barbara made a generous bequest to Friendship House.

## Mark Your Calendar

- **Saturday, October 21** – Fall Dinner Meeting, at Durham Church. Dr. Brad Gotfried will present *“Point Lookout Prison Camp.”*
- **December 2 & 3** – Charles County Holiday Trail.
- **Saturday, January 20, 2018** – Winter Meeting, Port Tobacco Courthouse. Dr. Julia King will present *“The Search for Josiah Henson.”*

## Friendship House Wooden Model



The Friendship House Foundation is selling wooden models produced by the “Cat’s Meow Village” company. The finished dimensions will be 4” H x 7” W and will sell for \$15.00 each or \$18.00 by mail. They are currently in production and will be available at our October dinner meeting. What a great stocking stuffer!

If you would like to place a mail order, please make checks payable to the Friendship House Foundation and mail to the Historical Society of Charles County, PO Box 2806, La Plata, Maryland 20646. If you would like to pick up locally, please email Mike Mazzeo: [mjmazzeo55@gmail.com](mailto:mjmazzeo55@gmail.com).



## THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CHARLES COUNTY, INC.

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

[www.charlescountyhistorical.org](http://www.charlescountyhistorical.org)