



THE LEGACY

NEWSLETTER OF THE HOWARD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Spring 2023, Volume 60, Number 2

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE ELKRIDGE FURNACE

BY ELLEN KWAN LEWIS

On the north side on Furnace Avenue, near Race Road that parallels the Patapsco River, sits two buildings flushed side by side now operating as the “Elkridge Furnace Inn,” the farm-to-table restaurant. To the west of the Inn and across the Avenue, four more buildings dot the property which in total, make up the remaining existing structures of the 18th century forge and furnace now known as the Elkridge Furnace Complex (MHT #HO-367). It was founded by Alexander Lawson, Caleb Dorsey Jr., and his son, Edward Dorsey in 1755 under a writ on Dorsey’s own property. Caleb Dorsey Jr. was an ironmaster and later built Dorsey’s Forge (also known as Avalon Company). It was characterized as an air furnace, according to an advertisement calling for, “Five or six potters [were] wanted immediately for the Air Furnace at Elk Ridge Landing by Daniel Hughes and William Russell” in Maryland Gazette, March 7, 1780. Although it has been confused with a tilting furnace located in Elkridge village of Montgomery County, Dorsey’s air furnace used a natural draft to fan the flames rather than by water-powered bellows.

The furnace is an important example of the first generation of industrial development, particularly the iron industry, along the Patapsco. Initially to provide raw materials for British factories, this network of iron manufacturing later became an economic challenge to the British mercantile system, as they started to produce and finish the goods for domestic use. The Elkridge Furnace and others such as Dorsey’s Forge and the contemporaneous Hockley Forge (also built by Caleb Dorsey Jr.) that are situated along the Patapsco made up part of the challenge to British authority.



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

ELLEN FLYNN GILES



The Society opened its 2023 Annual Meeting in February with the introduction of Dr. Mark Stout, our new Executive Director, to the membership, the election of officers and a new Board Member class for 2023-2025, the approval of a Bylaw amendment to align the Society's membership year with the calendar year, and an exciting and engaging keynote from MDOT's Chief Archaeologist Dr. Julie Schablitsky and Consulting Archaeologist Sara Janesko exploring "Another Piece of the Puzzle: Harriet Tubman Homesite Discovery." We learned about not just the 2021 discovery of Ben Ross's cabin on Ben's Ten on the Eastern Shore that – for a time – was also the home of his daughter, Underground Railroad conductor Harriet Tubman, but the discovery mere weeks before of a West African spirit cache in front of the remains of a fireplace at the buried ruins of a 19th century brick building on adjacent site of the Anthony Thompson farm.

Students attending our 2023 First Saturday Children's Classes have already celebrated "Love in the Museum," learning about the role of birds in the history of Valentine's Day while creating personalized valentines in February, and had the opportunity to "Meet Benjamin Banneker," the famous scientist, farmer, and writer while exploring his interests and trying their hands at some of his favorite activities in March.

The Society also kicked off Women's History Month with the return of our First Friday Lunch Date with History lecture, "Under the Radar: Women of the Civil Rights Movement," with Professor Lester Brooks, Ph.D., from Anne Arundel Community College. Dr. Brooks' presentation explored the contributions of selected women supporters, advocates, and activists in the Civil Rights movement whose significance has been neglected in the past. Registration for these regular monthly events and reserving a seat for the upcoming May 10th HC Recreation & Parks/HC Historical Society bus tour "Honoring a Hero" at the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center with our own Dr. Stout providing leadership and commentary, is available online at hchsm.org/calendar.

Please check out our website (hchsm.org) to keep up with the latest Society news and new events and feel free to contact us with advice, questions, and any concerns. We look forward to seeing you – and your children and/or grandchildren – over the next several months at one of our upcoming events: First Friday Lunch Dates with History, First Saturday Children's Classes, Miller Library lectures, the "Honoring a Hero" tour to the Eastern Shore, at the opening of the Pue-Fulton Farm site, and at the Howard County Fair.

Thank you for your continued support. ♣

EDITOR'S NOTE

JANET KUSTERER

Three years ago I started a journal, noting how our daily lives had changed quite drastically due to COVID-19. Rereading it now I have relived the shortages of supplies, the fears that accompanied the masks and sanitizers, and just the general lack of confidence that anyone knew what was going to happen next. Now, amazing historic events are unfolding around us every day. I encourage everyone to record your impressions of some of these events, whether they are personal or of greater significance, to help future generations understand how "everyday people" dealt with it all. ♣

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Anyone interested in contributing articles
or photographs or anything of interest
to the Society, please call the Library at
410-480-3250 or email Janet Kusterer at
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MESSAGE FROM THE NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MARK J. STOUT, PH.D.



It has been a busy first two months for me, but the support of our Board, Society members, and staff has made the transition a smooth one. I will begin this report with an update on our sites. The exhibits in the 1865/1905 farmhouse at the Pue-Fulton Farm (HO-859) are nearing completion. We are finalizing the fabrication and

installation of an agriculture-themed timeline, period-appropriate artifacts, and information panels. We are hoping to have an official ribbon-cutting ceremony for our members, our partners, and the public in late May or early June. At the Museum of Howard County History, we are looking to update and refresh some existing exhibits and panels, as well as create new ones. Our first two 2023 *First Saturday Children's Classes* at the Ellicott Mills Children's Museum (EMCM) / Museum of Howard County History (MHCH) went well, and we will be adding an herb garden as part of the EMCM and making improvements to the museum complex grounds under the guidance of Board Member Robert Glascock.

Much of my time has been spent reaching out to local organizations and individuals to build relationships and strengthen partnerships. As I shared at the Annual Meeting, this is the first of the five themes that I identified as key goals — Relationships, Presence, Education, Representation, and Relevance. I continue to meet with local businesses, and we will be establishing a permanent exhibit at the Welcome Center in order to expand our visibility in downtown Ellicott City. I also spoke and presented to HCPSS social studies teachers on April 21st to share the benefits of Society membership for both teachers and their students.

Our *First Friday Lunch Date with History* lecture series is tentatively confirmed for the year, but I am still awaiting a final response from two proposed speakers. The ever-popular Laurel History Boys will be returning on May 5th with previously unknown police and FBI details surrounding the infamous 1972 shooting of then presidential candidate George Wallace in the Laurel Shopping Center. On June 2nd, doctoral candidate Sophie Hess will be presenting her research on the industrial history of the Patapsco Valley and its environmental consequences with "Hollow Ground: Industry, Ecology, and Climate Change in the Floodplains of Early Maryland." And, our *First Saturday Children's Classes* will be returning with "Spring Planting" on May 6th and "Childhood Pastimes" on June 3rd.

Other upcoming events will include reviving our evening lecture series at the Miller Branch Library, and May 10th will see us embark on a bus tour/field trip with our partners at Recreation and Parks and to visit the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center in Cambridge on the Eastern Shore. This summer, we'll host a Pop-Up Research Office in collaboration with Preservation Maryland on June 2nd, and, of course, return to our booth at the *Howard County Fair* from August 5th-12th with exhibits and displays.

Finally, we are excited to welcome our newest staff member — Lauren Cramer — as Archives Manager. Lauren has a Master of Library and Information Science degree, with a concentration in Archival Studies. In addition to these impressive credentials, she brings experience in records management, event planning, and social media to the Society's operations. ♣

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A SHORT HISTORY OF THE ELKRIDGE FURNACE

The furnace complex operated from the mid-18th century to mid-19th century and the exponential increase in iron demand can be seen in the following data. During Dorsey's management, "The amount of pig iron made at ElkRidge Furnace from 1761 to 1766 ... 2974 tons," as documented in Chancery Papers No. 4549, October 15, 1766, Maryland State Archives. In 1826, about 4 years after the Ellicott brothers (sons of famed surveyor, Andrew) acquired both the furnace and forge, the newly named Avalon Company produced 16,000 tons of pig iron.

According to the Maryland Historic Trust, "the still standing buildings comprising the present Elkrige Furnace Complex were in all likelihood constructed during the Ellicotts' tenure. Stylistic features in conjunction with construction technology suggest that the main house, [2] outbuildings, [brick duplex on Race Road,] manager's dwelling and store/dormitory were all built within a fairly close time frame centered on the mid-1830s." Stylistically,

Greek-Revival was immensely popular in America between the 1830s and 1860s and one can recognize its features on the extant buildings: diminutive, archetypal renditions of the Greek temple which have boxy main bodies, pronounced triangular pedimented roofs, and projected front porches.

The Ellicotts sold the furnace operations, announcing in the *Howard Gazette*, January 24, 1849, that "The furnace has considerably contracted its operations, most of our mine-banks are suspended, and business generally is at a stand ... the present low price of iron not compensating for its manufacture." The Martenet's 1860 map of Howard County shows a dozen or so buildings, probably workers' housing, at the general site on Furnace Avenue as belonging to the Great Falls Iron Company, the last owner. The Patapsco River flooded in 1868, and destroyed the furnace and almost all the buildings. ♣

HOWARD COUNTY DURING THE CIVIL WAR

THE SECESSION CRISIS OF 1860-61

BY GERALD W. UECKERMAN, JR.

The 1860 election victory of Abraham Lincoln – the candidate of a Northern party that was hostile to slavery – triggered a secession crisis throughout the South.

Howard County's only newspaper, the *Patapsco Enterprise*, had supported John Breckenridge in the election, unlike 66% of the County's voters. In mid-November it became one of the first newspapers in Maryland to urge the state to secede from the Union.

In order for Maryland to secede, the state legislature needed to authorize a special convention, but the legislature would not meet again until 1862 unless Governor Thomas H. Hicks called it for a special session.

After South Carolina seceded on December 20, 1860, intense pressure was placed on Gov. Hicks to convene the legislature. Hicks was a Unionist from the Eastern Shore who had been elected governor in 1857 on the American Party (Know-Nothing) ticket. He claimed to know of a plot to take Maryland out of the Union if the Democratic controlled legislature met, and he refused to call it into session.

Maryland's citizens split into two opposing factions: those who wanted Gov. Hicks to convene the legislature (those in this group were called "secessionists" by their opponents, a description that they denied), and Unionists who supported Hicks' refusal to call it.

In January 1861 at least three large, impassioned, meetings were held in Howard County in response to the crisis, two dominated by Unionists and one by secessionists.

On January 1, 1861, over 200 men met at the County Courthouse in Ellicott's Mills. After hearing speeches from Unionists and secessionists, resolutions were overwhelmingly adopted that recognized that secession was not



LEFT: GOVERNOR THOMAS H. HICKS; RIGHT: HOWARD COUNTY COURTHOUSE

then warranted, but that Northern states needed to take actions that would protect slavery. A proposed resolution that called for Gov. Hicks to convene the legislature was also rejected by a wide margin. The pro-Union Baltimore American ended its report of the meeting by declaring that "Secession is at a discount in Howard County."

Howard County's secessionist faction held a convention at the courthouse on January 8. The convention, to which 166 delegates were given credentials, approved resolutions declaring that Maryland was a Southern state and that the Southern states should secede unless the Northern states ended their hostility to slavery and provided guaranties for the future. Another resolution condemned the use of force by the federal government to maintain the Union. Finally, and most relevant to the crisis at hand, a resolution was approved calling for Gov. Hicks to convene the legislature.

Howard County Unionists attacked the legitimacy of the January 8 convention by asserting that men opposed to the convening of the legislature were not permitted to participate in it even though they comprised a significant

majority in the county.

Two weeks later, on the evening of January 22, 1861, a large meeting of the workingmen of Howard and Baltimore Counties was held at the Courthouse in Ellicott's Mills. The Courthouse quickly filled to overflowing, and hundreds were unable to obtain admission. At least two hundred of those in attendance were women. The resolutions adopted at the meeting were more pro-Union and less sympathetic to Southern complaints than the resolutions adopted at the earlier meetings. While some resolutions called for further actions to protect slavery, others faulted both the North and South for causing the current crisis.

By February, no state from the Upper South had seceded and tensions in Howard County appear to have subsided to a degree. Nevertheless, by the time Lincoln was inaugurated as President on March 4, 1861, no fewer than four local militias to which Howard County men belonged had also been formed.

By this time, seven states in the Deep South had already seceded. Maryland remained a tinderbox that would ignite in April. ♣

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

BY AIDAN CONNOR (MUSEUM MANAGER)

Howard County, and Ellicott City in particular, has its share of splendid churches. Though no longer a religious center, the Museum of Howard County History has its origins as the First Presbyterian Church of Howard County. Built in 1894, it replaced an older church of the same denomination that was undergoing reconstruction when a wall collapsed. This required a new building for the congregation to use, and in eight months, the new First Presbyterian Church was built. In 1959, after the congregation had grown so much that the church was getting too crowded, First Presbyterian moved to a new facility off of Route 108. Through the efforts of Alda Hopkins Clark, founder of the then new Howard County Historical Society, it became the headquarters and museum for our organization.

The church itself is magnificent, built in a Gothic style with a steep roof and a high bell tower. The bell can still be heard at noon by anyone in Old Ellicott City. As one enters, the largest part of the Museum is in the former Sunday school room. Throughout the old church, recently-renovated stained glass windows bring sunlight into the old building, including two large windows in the sanctuary. Also featured prominently in the sanctuary of the church is the organ, currently undergoing electrical work. Above the open sanctuary, where lunch lectures are held on the first Friday of every month, the original chandelier hangs from the ceiling.

Local stories like this await visitors to the Museum of Howard County History, including even more information about the church! ✦



YOU ARE A GOLD STAR... AND WE NEED YOU!

PHYLLIS M. RUDZ (HCHS EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEMBER)

You become a member of an organization because you have an interest in what the organization does and is about. You know that HCHS has a mission of community outreach as noted in your Flag. It is mainly white, red, black and gold representing Maryland's State Flag. Gold stars are arranged so that a point of a star reaches in all directions, symbolizing the society's desire to reach out to future generations! You have an interest in history, preserving the past and an interest in the community where you live.

With this in mind, the addition of the Ellicott Mills Children's Museum opened in April of 2022. Its mission statement is that visitors of all ages will experience life in a mill town two hundred years ago through hands on activities offered in a family's Great Room, a Quaker Schoolroom, a General Store, and a Period Garden.

Our Educational Committee Members and volunteers have been busy spreading the work of the museum by outreach programs to schools, special programs offered each first Saturday of the month since November. We are pleased that attendance has increased,

and many come back the following month. Due to fire codes, we are limited to 18 at one time, and children must register to attend. Saturdays and Sundays, the museum is open from 1:00 to 5:00 pm with free admission and increasing number of visitors. Docents explain life and articles used in that time and timely craft projects are changed each month.

We know that the historical Society is sincere with its goal of educating and inviting future young people to love history. People are busy these days, but we are asking if you would be a Gold Star who has the desire to share your love of history one Saturday or Sunday a month as a docent. I can sincerely say young people make you feel tremendous joy watching their eyes as they stare in awe of the past.

Yes, you might feel a bit tired when you leave, but I know you will have a smile too!

If interested in sharing one weekend day, contact us at info@hchsm.org ✦

THE LEGACY OF VIVIAN CORBETT BAILEY

BY DEBORAH PIEL (HCHS FRONT DESK VOLUNTEER)



I first learned about Vivian Corbett Bailey, affectionately known as “Millie,” while browsing the surname files in the Howard County Historical Society Archives. The following quote from her interview for *Wellness Matters* magazine (2020) made me want to learn more about her. “Today, I tell people, try to find something, a cause that is important to you and support that cause. Some people think you must have a lot of money to do something but they forget that small amounts add up to large amounts. Doing things to help others equals volunteering.” Within a month, I read in *The Baltimore Sun* (26 Feb 2023) that the Columbia Art Center (CAC) had an exhibit on her life and plans to publish a digital replica of the exhibit in March 2023. I visited the exhibit and found her life mirrored her quote through photos and information on her childhood, WWII service, community service activities, philanthropic work, lifetime achievements and joy with new adventures. There was a scrap book where people could write their personal snippets about her, but the highlight of my visit was meeting a couple who knew her personally, Mr. and Mrs. John W. Franklin. The Franklins happily shared their personal experiences agreeing that she was always eager to help others, fun loving, ready to experience new adventures, and meet new people.

“Millie” was born in Washington, D.C. on 3 Feb 1918 and raised with her sister, Dr. Ione T. Corbett Morrison, in Tulsa, Oklahoma by a single mother, Leona Bell Corbett. Her mother was a seamstress and native of Tulsa. After graduating from Tulsa’s Booker T. Washington High School as class valedictorian, she worked locally in Tulsa for eight years as a stenographer and

medical records clerk.

She entered the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC), later known as the Women’s Army Corps (WAC), in December 1942 and while stationed in GA was selected and attended the Adjutant General School Officers’ Administration Course (Nov-Dec 1944) Fort Sam Houston, TX. “Millie” was one of only two African American women in the class, graduating with a superior rating, and went on to serve for the first time with an unsegregated unit. 1st Lieutenant Bailey was honorably discharged from WAC of the US on 8 Jan 1946. She met her husband, William Harrison “Bill” Bailey, the day she was commissioned 10 Apr 1943.

After her discharge from the Army WAC, Millie moved to Chicago where she worked for the Veterans Administration and later the Social Security Administration (SSA). In 1970, she and her husband moved to Howard County where she was a Division Director for Social Security Administration managing over 1,100 employees before retiring in 1975. She was a member of American Legion Post 156, organized “Bailey’s Bundles” a program to send care packages to soldiers stationed overseas, and raised monies for in-need elementary schools in Howard County where she was known as “Guardian Angel.” Her volunteer service also included being the longest serving member of the Howard County General Hospital Board of Trustees (23 years); Howard County Police Department Citizens Advisory Council (26 years); and governor

appointed positions including: A Judicial Nominating Commission for Howard County and the Maryland Health Resources Planning Commission.

She received many awards including: Howard County Volunteer of the Year presented by County Councilman Darrel Drown (1998), Reverend John W. Holland Humanitarian Award for her lifelong commitment to serving others (2018) and Howard County Executive Calvin Ball officially opened Neighborhood Square named for her located near Lake

Kittamaqundi (2020). In May 2015, she was invited to the White House to meet with then-President Barack Obama and then-First Lady Michelle Obama.

She achieved much in her life and left memories as we see from the following quotes:

- **Mr. & Mrs. John W. Franklin were with her on her skydiving adventure at the age of 102, agreeing her love of life and adventurous spirit shown in her face once she landed. When he asked if she was ready to do it again, Mrs. Bailey replied, “Once is enough.”**



- Ms. Elizabeth Bobo, former HC Executive who later served in the House of Delegates, “Loved life and was very clear in her opinions having served in the military and I never saw her treat anyone with disrespect. All around good loving human person.”
- Julie Girardini, Sykesville artist and friend of 35 years, “[Millie’s] superpower was collecting people close to her, and she loved the local political scene and being involved with people making positive decisions.”
- Victor A. Broccolino, former president and CEO of HC General Hospital, “Fireball . . . maybe even a meteor shower that rains down from every direction.”

- Retirement from HCGH Board - “When I worked for the SSA, I was known as the toughest reviewer & I transferred that to my work when I was on the HCGN Professional Committee.”

“Millie” achieved a great deal in her 104 years, which is a much different view from her statement in the Howard County Times (5 May 2022), “As a little girl in OK, I never imagined I would be able to do anything of real significance for anybody else.” Her final resting place is the Calvary Cemetery in Tulsa, OK beside her family members and close to her last living relative, a niece – Mildred Gayle Blocker. ✦

A TREASURE TROVE FROM LARRY MADERAS

BY GEETA SHANBHAG (RESEARCH MANAGER)



L-R: DONNA KIRKLEY, VLADIMIR MARINICH, DAN FREIDMAN, LARRY MADERAS AND FIRST PRESIDENT, DR. AL SMITH.

At HCHS, we are very excited to have received this set of ephemeral materials from Larry Maderas, a retired professor who taught American History at Howard Community College (HCC) for a number of years. He also is the co-author of “Taking Sides: Clashing Views in United States History.” This collection (2016.6), donated by his fellow professor Robert Bailey, includes much of his professional papers, notes and other items; and it is currently being processed for public access. It’s been fascinating to go through and see his thoughts on Howard County-centric history and the multiple papers he’s written on topics, and topics that he’s advised on, such as school desegregation within the Howard County Public School System along with teaching materials related to HCC courses highlighting the county’s history up to 1877. Additionally, some of the other materials that we have include a multitude of video cassette tapes with materials that Professor Maderas contributed to, including some interviews with Columbia founder James Rouse. ✦

Upcoming Events

May 5

Lunch Date With History:

Laurel History Boys - The 1972 shooting of then presidential candidate George Wallace in the Laurel Shopping Center
12 PM

MHCH 8328 Court Ave. Ellicott City, 21043

May 6

Spring Planting

1st Saturday Children’s Class - 10 AM-12 PM

First at MHCH

8328 Court Ave. Ellicott City, 21043

May 10

Harriett Tubman’s Visions of Freedom Adult Field Trip

8:30 AM - 5:30 PM

Howard County Recreation & Parks, in collaboration with the Howard County Historical Society, is proud to bring you this exciting day tour! Please join us at The Harriet Tubman Cultural Center for a light continental breakfast before departing for The Harriet Tubman Museum in Cambridge

June 2

Lunch Date With History:

Doctoral candidate Sophie Hess - “Hollow Ground: Industry, Ecology, and Climate Change in the Floodplains of Early Maryland.”

12 PM

MHCH 8328 Court Ave. Ellicott City, 21043

Please check our Facebook page and our website for the most updated information, or feel free to call us at **410-480-3250** or email us at **info@hchsm.org** for more information. Our speakers and topics for the remaining **HCHS Lunch Date with History series** will be announced soon.



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