

# The HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF HARFORD COUNTY, Inc.

*Preserving Our Past For Your Future*



143 N. Main Street  
Bel Air, MD 21014



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

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## Society News

January / February 2026

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### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As your new Society president for the next two years, I would like to wish you a Happy New Year and Happy 250th Birthday to the United States of America!

It's an honor to be the president of our Historical Society, which is the oldest in the State of Maryland. We are in a "good place" thanks to the work done by the gentleman who preceded me for the last five years, Bill Walden. Bill has the ability to identify excellent people who share his goal to make us a premier organization. Our Board of Directors, along with our excellent Executive Director, Chris Potts, Associate Director Chelsea Cline, and the Manager of Operations, Mary Schweers, are working to make this happen.

Our bylaws state that we must limit Board members to two, two-year terms. As a result, we are incurring some turnover. We say farewell and give an enormous "Thank You" to both George Harrison and Jackie Seneschal, both past presidents. Chris Smithson, a genealogy specialist who has been a member of the Society since he was 14, is also timing out.

In their stead, we welcome Nicole Barnwell, MSHRM/OD, SHRM, CP, Joe Snee, Esq, Frank Hajek, CPA, MBA, and Sandi Wallis, Ed.D. They will bring an enormous amount of energy and experience to the Board.

A reminder that your Historical Society is an independent non-profit. One of my responsibilities, as president, is to ensure FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY. To this end, some of my goals for 2026 are to INCREASE MEMBERSHIP and encourage donations in the form of many small MONTHLY GIVING amounts. Please go to [www.harfordhistory.org](http://www.harfordhistory.org) for details.

For the past several years, we have received gifts from member estates. These are enormously helpful. To help you make a LEGACY  
*cont'd on page 2*

The Historical Society of Harford County newsletter is funded in part through  
a gift from Harford Mutual Insurance Group.



**HARFORD MUTUAL**  
INSURANCE GROUP

*cont'd from page 1 ...*

PLANNED gift to your Society, please contact me at [president@harfordhistory.org](mailto:president@harfordhistory.org).

The Society is very fortunate to have Carol Deibel, a consummate Harford County historian, continue as the editor of this Newsletter. In the following sections, she will cover many of the EXCITING EVENTS scheduled for the entire year, celebrating America 250. Our staff and volunteers work hard to bring you great programs and learning opportunities.

I look forward to seeing many of you in 2026!

Regards,

Charles (Chuck) Castoro, M.D.

## AMERICA 250

### Commemorating 250 Years of American Independence

In 2026, Harford County will join the nation in commemorating the 250th anniversary (Semi-Quincentennial) of the signing of the Declaration of Independence! The America 250 Harford Committee, a joint initiative of the Historical Society of Harford County and the Harford County Government, invites everyone to join in honoring who we are and how far we've come together as a county, a country, and a community. The commemoration will kick off in January 2026 with the premiere of a short film featuring local history experts, produced in partnership with HarfordTV.



Organizations across the County are planning exciting events and activities for all ages to celebrate the themes of service, civics, and history. Find out what is being planned locally by visiting the America 250 Calendar at <https://www.helloharford.com/calendar> and across Maryland by visiting the MD Two Fifty Commission Calendar at <https://mdtwofifty.maryland.gov/experience/events/>.

Know of something being planned to celebrate America 250? Events can be submitted online to Hello Harford at <https://www.helloharford.com/FormCenter/General-Forms-4/Submit-an-Event-49> and to MD Two Fifty at <https://mdtwofifty.maryland.gov/share-your-story/>.

For questions email [historic@harfordcountymd.gov](mailto:historic@harfordcountymd.gov).

## NEW MEMBERS

Charla Rothwell

Karen Brauer

## COMING EVENTS

- **Paranormal Night at the Historical Society**



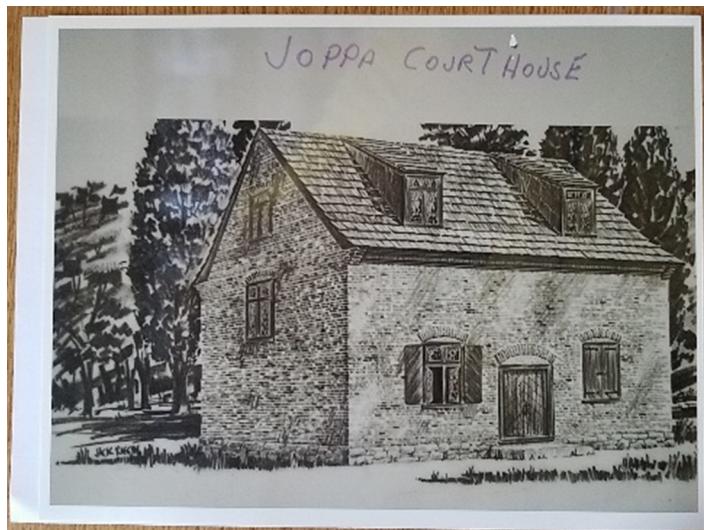
January 17, 2026 @ 7:00 pm - January 18, 2026 @ 2:00 am \$60

Ever wanted to experience a real-life ghost hunt? Research so far confirms that spirits are roaming the Historical Society Headquarters. You are invited to join Above and Below Paranormal Investigation's team of professional paranormal investigators on Saturday, January 17, 2025, at 7 pm. Be a part of the search.

Participants must be at least 18 years of age. The event will be limited to 24 guests. Light refreshments will be available. Participants may bring their own investigation devices, but they must be cleared by the Paranormal Investigation Leader. Please note that tickets are limited and will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration on the Society's website, [www.harfordhistory.org](http://www.harfordhistory.org), is required. Join us for a unique experience, a haunting in old BelAir.

Note: Participants must bring identification to the event. No alcohol, drugs, weapons, spark or flame-producing items, or Ouija Boards will be permitted.

- **400 Years of History: Joppa Exhibit Grand Opening**



Saturday, February 7, 2026 @ 1 pm

**The Historical Society of Harford County, 143 N. Main Street, Bel Air, MD 21014**

The Historical Society is excited to announce the opening of a unique exhibit at the Society's museum, celebrating 400 years of life in Joppa. The land now known as Joppa provided an ideal location for Native Americans to hunt, fish, and cultivate crops. These same qualities brought colonists to the area. In 1661, John Taylor received a 300-acre land grant from King Charles II. This land later became the town of Joppa. Tradition holds that the name derives

from the biblical Jaffa, meaning "beautiful."

Over time, Joppa served as the county seat of Baltimore, a major shipyard, a horse racing mecca, the home of British spies during the American Revolution, farms worked by Prisoners of War during World War II, the present-day residential community of Joppatowne, and so much more.

Join us to view artifacts tracing Joppa's history and learn about the incredible stories behind this beautiful waterfront community and its role in county history.

This is a free event. Donations are appreciated. Parking is available at the rear of the building off Gordon Street.

- *The Ma & Pa Comes to Harford - Guest Speaker Walter Holloway*

**Saturday, February 21, 2026 @ 2 pm**

**The Historical Society of Harford County, 143 N. Main Street, Bel Air, MD 21014**

The Ma & Pa Railroad stretched between Baltimore at North Avenue & Howard Streets, on to Towson, and through Long Green Valley into Harford County. It ended at Market Street in York, Pennsylvania. Even by the day's standards, it passed through some of the East Coast's most wooded, curvaceous, and beautiful scenery.



The Ma & Pa Railroad was an important part of life in Harford County, especially for the towns between Baltimore and York. The early morning run from Harford County to Baltimore City carried so much milk that locals called it "The Milky Way." For the owners of the County's many canneries, quarries, and mines, the railroad was an essential part of their livelihood. The trains chugged through 23 miles in Harford County at an average speed of only 15–20 miles per hour because of the route's many grade changes and curves. At the turn of the twentieth century, the railroad trip from Baltimore City to Sharon (north of Forest Hill) took about 1 ¾ hours.

In addition to mail and a wide range of Harford County products, the Ma & Pa also carried people—travelers, shoppers, theatergoers, and relatives. They welcomed the screeching whistles and billowing steam clouds of the Ma & Pa Railroad as a way to see what lay beyond their hometowns. Like other railroads of the time, the Ma & Pa began a slow decline as buses, trucks, and Model Ts carried people and products between Baltimore and Bel Air on Rt. 1.

Join Ma & Pa expert Walt Holloway as he shares his photographs and stories of the heyday of the Ma & Pa. Registration is available at [www.harfordhistory.org](http://www.harfordhistory.org). The fee is \$15.

### WHAT'S NEW AT THE HAYS HOUSE

Following the last holiday Open House of 2025, the Hays House is beginning its long winter nap. There are no programs at the house in January and February, so we will use the time to continue with improvements.

A lot was accomplished this past year. The north wall is beautifully restored to its 1788 appearance. The hand-hewn white oak planks were repaired or replaced with wood of identical construction. This siding is apparently very rare to find still in existence today. We hope to place an informational plaque by the north wall to point out its uniqueness to visitors.



Additional repairs are needed to the west and south walls. Although not as historic, these walls also have siding in poor condition. A section near the electric meter has pulled away from the underlying wall and needs extensive repair. A grant has been received from the Maryland Historic Trust (MHT), and the Trust is working with us to expedite these repairs. Additional external repair needs are also covered in the MHT grant and will be handled at the same time.

Several diseased trees were removed, and others were removed to create more open space for outdoor events and garden interpretation. We are very grateful to the Evergreen Garden Club of Churchville for their beautiful natural holiday decorations and for their ongoing efforts to better interpret our herb garden. Look for changes in the herb garden this spring!

Please make plans now to join us for our 2026 programs. We will continue the Revolutionary Harford programs, which focus on how the road to independence passed through Harford County and how Harford citizens reacted to events across the colonies. In addition, we will do a series of programs focused on Daily Life in Days Gone By. Our year will kick off on March 8 with *Let's Get a Goodnight's Sleep*, which will showcase historic bed coverings and coverlets from the Historical Society's textiles collection.

We will continue to offer special programs for holidays, including our annual July 4 Open House, which follows the Pancake Breakfast at Bel Air High School, and our Christmas Open Houses, which will feature the Hays House decorated for the holidays. We are also planning fall events for families and children, including a reprise of Apple Butter Making and Spooky Season at the Hays House.

If you would like to volunteer at the Hays House, we will hold volunteer training in February. Please email this Chairman to be added to our volunteers list and receive an invitation to the training (swallis1776@gmail.com).

*Sandi Wallis, Hays House Chairman*

### RICHARD'S CORNER

#### **A History of the Havre de Grace Newspapers**

Tydings Papers: Excerpt from speech given at the Havre de Grace Chamber of Commerce in 1964 by Stanley M. Barrett, editor of The Record. Mr. Barrett was a long-time editor of The Record in its various iterations and provides a fascinating history of county newspapers, when everyone read the daily news and numerous papers were printed locally and nationally.

*The period from 1837 to 1841 was a very important one to Havre de Grace. Both the railroad and canal were completed within the time named, and strangers thought they saw in our town the nucleus of a great city and rushed here in numbers prepared to take advantage of the tide, which it was fondly hoped would bear them onto fortune. Wharves were built, great warehouses erected, new avenues opened, a better class of homes constructed, a bank flourished, and an air quite metropolitan was assumed. In brief, there was a veritable business boom that, however, died out after a little while.*

*It was at the height of this boom that the Susquehanna Advocate appeared, and now we will turn to it and see what we can gather from its pages.*

*One of the first articles that caught our eye was by the editor, John G. Wilson, about boardwalks. A correspondent wrote at greater length on the same subject. They had no boardwalks here then, but wanted them badly. Town meetings were considered the panacea for all ills in those days, and a citizen writer wanted one called right away to consider the important question of footpaths.*

*The leading editorial was upon the currency question, then agitating the nation, as it is today.*

*Then the editor turns to Havre de Grace and maintains that this town must become a great place, reasoning as follows: "The grand object is locality, situation, and natural facilities, and the place where*

*they are found is that pointed by Nature."* How many times have we heard that since Editor Wilson first wrote it in 1839?

The first advertisement of a public sale is by Lyttleton Green as executer of certain personal effects of his father, Joshua Green, deceased. George and Coleman Yellott tendered their services to the public as lawyers. Thomas Sadler, R W Grossett, and Alexander Hughes were commission merchants. James H. O'Neill was a coal dealer who advertised it at prices ranging from \$5 to \$6 a ton. Morning Str Lodge, I.O.O.F., met on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month. Stephen John Magraw was the Postmaster and advertised 86 letters as uncalled for. J.W. O'Neill kept a public wharf. Thomas B. Lofman built and repaired boats. W.L. Nicoll was clerk to the town Board, which met on the first Saturday evening in each month at the town schoolhouse. A Mr. Seymour conducted a hotel. George Brtel wanted to sell a cookstove. William Thompson kept a cigar and tobacco store and advertised his business as next to the Barber Shop. S. Daugherty and Samuel Reasin were merchant tailors.

I am sure that many of us here today will recognize the names mentioned above. For instance, the Sadlers, Thompsons, Greens, Reasins, Daughertys, O'Neills, and so forth.

The next paper we have is dated January 22, 1842. It is still the Susquehanna Advocate, and it has changed publishers, Messrs. Veasey and Rochester succeeding Mr. Wilson.



It claimed to have a larger circulation than any other paper published in Harford, Cecil, Kent, or Queen Anne's counties and was therefore commended as an advertising medium. It had a circulation of 300, and the subscription price was \$2.00 per year. It contained four pages. That is a far cry from the Havre de Grace Record of today, which averages 18 pages and sells for only \$3.00 a year. And incidentally, Editors Veasey and Rochester stated that if the \$2.00 subscription fee was not paid in advance, the price would be \$3.00 a year.

The next paper was established in 1868 by Mr. Abraham P. McCombs. This paper was then known as the Havre Republican. In addition to his office as editor and general manager of the paper, he was also general manager and one of the owners of the Havre Iron Company. He was born in Coventry, Chester County, Penna., June 16, 1824. His grandfather, William McCombs, was born in the city of Armagh, Ireland, in 1765, to Scotch parents, and his wife, Elizabeth McCombs, was born in 1769. Both immigrated to the

*United States in 1787, landing at New Castle, Delaware. The McCombs name was closely associated with Methodism in its early days, both in this country and in the Mother Country.*

*Abraham P. McCombs, who established the Havre Republican, attended the public schools of his native County in Pennsylvania and spent two terms at Loller Academy in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. His opportunities for improvement were few, but his natural taste inclined him to reading and general literature, and at an early age he wrote songs and essays that were published in the Philadelphia Weekly Ledger, the Saturday Evening Post, and other papers.*

*In 1868, Mr. McCombs advocated the principles of the Republican Party and the election of General Grant. He organized in 1862 a company of the Militia Home Guard, for which he was commissioned captain by Governor Bradford. In May 1869, he was appointed Deputy Collector of the Port of Havre de Grace and was elected one of the Town Commissioners in 1877. In the fall of 1878, against his expressed wishes, he was made the Republican Party's Congressional nominee. He was defeated but carried his home district by a handsome majority over all opponents.*

*In founding the Havre Republican, Mr. McCombs had the able assistance of his son, William Sivard McCombs, who took full charge of the paper upon his father's death.*

*William McCombs was elected Mayor of Havre de Grace in 1894 and served four terms as City Councilman before being elected Mayor.*

*And now, here is where I come into the picture.*

*On my return from World War I, it was Mr. G. Taylor Lyon who first proposed a partnership to purchase the Havre de Grace Republican. We were both Republicans. I suppose because our fathers before us were Republicans. He was in his drug store, and I was employed by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company as an assistant freight and passenger agent.*

*Neither of us had a dime because we had just returned from the Army, so we borrowed the money in 1921 and bought the paper - \$6000 worth of junk. We wrote the paper at night, and it was printed by a skeleton force each Friday. At that time, the only newsstand in town was operated by Mrs. Pat Robinson on St. John Street. Each Friday, six papers were placed for sale there. Of the six papers placed weekly at Mrs. Robinson's newsstand, four were usually returned unsold. Local merchants advertised in the paper, but hardly more than two to four inches of space. The circulation was less than 300, and it sold for \$1.50 a year, paid in advance. The paper began to grow; the format was changed to conform to the size of daily papers; progress was being made in advertising and the job printing department. A new typesetting machine and a new printing press were purchased, and the number of pages was increased.*

*A little later, we took William D. Leithiser in as a partner, and he became the full-time editor, while Mr. Lyon continued with his business, and I remained at the railroad office.*

*A few months passed when our Mr. Leithiser got into an editorial discussion on city matters with the late Leo M. Moore of the Democratic Ledger, and Mr. Leithiser left the firm, partly because of the Ledger discussion but mostly because the job wasn't paying too well.*

*In 1932, I was appointed Postmaster of Havre de Grace, and my name appeared as editor of the Havre de Grace Republican. Halfway through my four-year term as Postmaster, Franklin D. Roosevelt defeated*

*Herbert Hoover for the Presidency. I, as Postmaster and editor of a Republican newspaper, was charged with political activity and fired.*

*In 1946, a new home was built for the paper on the bank of the river on Green Street. The plant was moved to its new home. The paper's name was changed to The Havre de Grace Record. A corporation, known as the Havre de Grace Printing and Publishing Company, now publishes The Record. Stockholders included myself, G. Taylor Lyin, my former partner, and Mr. S. Arnold Pfaffenbach.*

*Each Thursday, more than 400 papers are placed on the shelves of McLhinney's News Depot. In addition, The Record is placed on the counters of 18 Havre de Grace business establishments for sale throughout the city, totaling another 800 papers. In addition, 15 newsboys come to The Record every Thursday afternoon to pick up their papers and to sell them in all shopping areas. This is on a 50-50 basis. The boys get five cents for each paper sold, and The Record gets five cents. At Christmas time, the boys keep all the money.*

*The Record is placed weekly on the counters of five places of business in Aberdeen, four in Perryville, two in Bel Air, and one in Port Deposit. Four newsboys sell The Record in Aberdeen each Thursday.*

*The above distribution is in addition to the hundreds of subscribers who receive The Record each Friday through the Post Office or paid-in-advance delivery.*

*[In 1946] There are eight full-time employees besides myself. They are Virginia Colburn, associate editor; Annette Colburn, social editor; Kathryn Nuke, advertising manager; Charles Pasqualine, Sr. sport editor; Harold M. Taylor, foreman of the commercial printing department; Fred W. Stiehls, inter-operator mechanic; Clyde R. Brown, Intertyke operator and compositor; and Perry Dishmon, compositor and pressman.*

*I think it is important to note that in the first year following the renaming of the paper to remove its political significance, more than 2,000 new subscribers were added without the aid of any drives, prizes, or gimmicks. Thus, the political significance was removed from the masthead, and that proved to be a very important move financially and otherwise for the paper in this predominantly Democratic city and County. I would like to point out that The Record places more papers on the shelves of a single newsstand today (1964) than there were in the entire circulation of the paper when it was purchased in 1921. And the 20 pages in The Record last week is a far cry from the four pages in those days.*

*The story told by these newspapers of a hundred and thirteen years ago has been rehearsed, and my task is done. The publication business has vastly improved over the years. Where a single small journal then found a precarious existence, four newspapers in Harford County, all well-equipped now, send their weekly editions to thousands of homes, filling a larger space in the public welfare than they are generally credited with.*

*In closing, I maintain that if all the newspapers in Harford County should suddenly cease publication and could not be replaced, the public interest, public good, public and private morals, public and private property, and public health would suffer, our march in the path of progress would be retarded, and our County would soon become retrograde, instead of forward.*

Story discovered in the Society Archives, Mary Cardwell, archivist

## ON DOING HISTORY

There's no stopping him - - and residents of Harford County, family historians, and researchers should be delighted. Henry Peden, our nationally renowned researcher/writer, continues to add to his astonishing list of printed contributions to the understanding of Harford County's rich cultural heritage.

In the not-quite two years since I last addressed this subject (see the *Newsletter* of July/August 2024), Henry (with the recurrent aid of his wife Veronica and Jack Shagena, his friend and partner) has added at least 16 books to his 200-plus, mind-boggling collection of historical and genealogical resources for studying the County's history and genealogy. Unless otherwise noted, titles should be assumed to include the phrase Harford, County, Maryland.

Jack Shagena, aside from his relationship with Henry Peden, has produced about a dozen books on his own. A retired professional engineer and retired aerospace electronics executive with a skill for photography, he has authored some ten or more books, including those on coopers, Robert Fulton, the Wright Brothers, and Harford County mills - -Jerusalem Mill, Eden Mill, Harford Glen, Record Mills, and Rock Run Mill. In 2007, he became associated with Henry Peden in creating a series of sixteen books collectively dubbed *Harford's Rural Heritage*, that deal with such interrelated subjects as barns, bridges, churches, blacksmiths, country stores, heavy industries, tinsmiths, and spring houses. The Historical Preservation Commission of Harford County awarded the authors its prestigious Preservationist Honor Award.

The recent title that readers would probably consider the most immediately relevant is their *Harford County, Maryland, in the Revolutionary War* (2025). This handsome volume combines a general narrative that connects the local scene to the national picture with a series of appendices that provide a variety of data for more serious students. Likely of great interest to today's mobile Society is the chapter on "A Tour of Revolutionary War Sites" in Harford County. The hardback book encompasses 188 pages with scores of biographical sketches and a great variety of full-color illustrations.

Of the total sixteen new offerings, six books appeared in 2024. The first, Peden's *Almshouse Deaths and Burials, 1874 – 1974*, includes a short general history of the Tollgate Road facility and 100 pages of biographical sketches of its racially integrated residents. Paperback, 124 pages, this valuable little book goes a long way in returning to life one of the most forgotten segments of the County's population.

Two new 2024 books deal with agriculture. Within its 205 pages, Peden's 5 x 11 *A Farm Directory, 1774 – 2024* provides alphabetically listed historical sketches of the farm by their names (e.g., Bonita Farm, Emory Knoll Farm, Indian Spring Farm). A similar, more substantial, and wide-ranging publication with a wide variety of black & white and full-color images is Peden and Shagena's aptly titled hardback, *History of Farming in Harford County, Md.* Its 188 pages cover the many interrelated aspects (e.g., farmers, veterinarians, farriers, and blacksmiths) of the County's agricultural history. As always, the authors include helpful sketches of persons and places, past and present.

Using his typically biographically-oriented style, Peden's *Inventions and Their Inventors* (198 pp) provides descriptions, sketches, and photos of innovations patented by Harford County residents in the late 20th and early 21st century. In *Restaurants and Inns: Gone but Not Forgotten*, he provides a compilation of past eateries, formal and functional (e.g., Kenmore Inn, Chat' N Chew Restaurant, the Flying Clipper, The Edgewood Diner, and Gabler's). When possible, the alphabetical descriptions include titles, owner

names, years of operation, long-time employees, and locations. A series of black-and-white images helps evoke thoughts of nostalgic times of go-to places for fine and lesser dining.

Visually, perhaps the least interesting, but genealogically the most significant title Henry produced in 2024 is the *War Service Honor Roll, 1756 – 1973*. Here he lists the names (and the war with which they are associated) of over 17,000 men and women who served in the military from the French & Indian War of the 1750s through Vietnam. Peden's basic requirement for being included in this database is that the veterans either must have been born or have spent the greater part of their lives in Harford County. Among the latter is F. Wayde Chrismer – World War II.

Amazingly, Henry Peden and company produced ten titles in 2025. They are *African-American Horsemen (and one woman) in Harford County, Maryland* (trainers, jockeys, stablemen, and hot riders), 74 pp; *Architects and Builders: Harford County, Maryland, 1774-1974* (the most noted being Jerry Baxter, J. Edmund Bull, Poldi Hirsch, and Jim Wollon), 251 pp; *Auctioneers Directory, 1855 – 2025* (88 pp) and *Automobile Dealers Historical Directory* (119 pp).

*Funeral Homes and Undertakers Directory: Past and Present* (159 pp) covers the men and women associated with the mortuary industry. These include licensed morticians, carpenters and cabinet makers, sales personnel, and grief counselors. *Jackson Guards, Company D, First Regiment, Maryland National Guard, Bel Air, Maryland, 1887 – 1899*. This short book (115 pp) presents a short history of Bel Air's regiment in the state militia and provides biographies of the members of the unit. Mustered into the United States Army, the regiment served during the Spanish-American War.

*Postmasters Directory, 1777 – 1927* (277 pp), as the title indicates, refers to the men and women who served as postmasters in Harford County during the first 150 years of postal service in the United States. Attorneys, medical doctors, farmers, and members of other professions received appointments as Postmasters, though storekeepers and railroad station agents dominated the profession. The eponymously entitled *Sheriffs Directory, Harford County, Maryland, 1774 – 2024* (90 pp, down to Gather) concludes the alphabetical listing of historically oriented works by Henry Peden during the last two years. As in all the historical works associated with Mr. Peden, *Sheriff's Directory* reveals that our noted friend remains a master purveyor of the lives and times of persons and organizations that have impacted Harford County in its 250 years of existence.

Listed last for emphasis is, in my belief, the most outstanding title Henry Peden and Jack Shagena produced in 2025: *Canning Labels and Canners Directory, Harford County, Maryland*. In fact, to attribute this marvelous book solely to the renowned Peden and Shagena would constitute a grave injustice, as they fully admit in the section on Acknowledgments. Here they proclaim that this extraordinary, 390-page publication "has primarily been the effort of a single individual, C. Bernard Bodt, Jr., whose lifetime pursuit has been dedicated to assembling a vast collection of canning memorabilia that has made this book possible."

Bernie" Bodt, the great-grandson of canner William Archer Bodt of Churchville, used his collection of ledgers, business records, newspaper ads, notes, crates, pay tokens, stencils, and labels to assemble a vast database that Peden and Shagena were able to utilize in constructing this delightful tome. Despite its distinctive subject matter, this gorgeous hardbacked book will appeal to a very wide range of readers. Given Harford's significant involvement in America's canning history, *Canning Labels and Canners Directory* is a particularly valuable work for a national audience, especially canning researchers.

In the introductory remarks to their book on Harford Canners, Henry Peden and Jack Shagena maintained that "We are most fortunate to have Bernie Bodt help with this project." The Historical Society of Harford County takes pride in the successes of its efforts in the last half century or so to broaden its holdings, to build a collection of source materials that reflect the demographics of the County since 1774, and to produce publications and exhibits that depict the "real history" we are charged to preserve and promote. We are most fortunate to have Henry Peden and Jack Shagena in advancing that effort.

*Jim Chrismer, Society Researcher and Historian*

### FORTY-ONE FACES AND COUNTING

by Tara Sewell

It has been a year since Mom moved out of the house that had been in my father's family since 1870. You can imagine the goodies that were found. Some of you probably even came to the house sale. Unlike most families whose stuff goes far and wide, ours consolidated to one unused bedroom in Fallston.

Among the letters and cards and photo albums from my childhood lay boxes and albums of other childhoods a century-plus past. Books and boxes of faces past all staring back at me from their cardboard cards. One after another. Strangers who used to be friends and relatives. Until the last one, the smallest, about 3.5" x 2" carte de visite portraits from 1860-1870. Someone had written on almost all of them! Probably long after the photos were taken and placed in the album, but with labels all in one hand, across 40-odd photos.

I know them, or some of them. I know how the book got into the house. Rebecca Hawk Wetherall, I have decided the book was hers. She is the one person in the book who appears in multiple group photos. She never married and was the 'ward' of my g-g grandfather, who built the house where the album was stored for all those years. Rebecca Hawk, her name is on the photo. Who are her friends, relatives, and people she knew who would have given a picture to a 20-year-old young lady? Her sister's boyfriend (later husband), her cousins, and her neighbors would have given her their pictures. For the most part, they are all there on the family tree or buried around her at William Watters Cemetery. A little sleuthing identifies them. There's her first cousin, Dr. Wolford Wetherill, looking very fine in his Civil War uniform. Who are Mr. and Mrs. Reed? Well, Annie E. and Thomas Wilson Reed are buried in the William Watters Cemetery, too. Friends from church or neighbors? Are we going to argue that's them at this point? There's Rebecca and her bestie, Eve Supplee, a cousin of sorts, and both Eve's parents.

In a recent Harford County Library talk, Lisa Lisson said folks want photos to see how much they might look like their ancestors. These folks don't look like me. They are all cousins of cousins. But maybe they look like YOU! Are these your relatives? Whether or not they look like us, I want to thank my unknown writer, whether it was Rebecca or someone else; these pictures have meaning and purpose beyond cheap décor because someone bothered to remember that many, many years in the future we might not know to whom all those faces belonged.

To peruse the forty-one photographs, please visit the Society's Bel Air headquarters.

The Historical Society  
of Harford County, Inc.  
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***Past President***

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*Nancy Kroupa  
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*Nicole Barnwell*

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**TRUSTEES 2026-2027**

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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.