



ABERDEEN MUSEUM REVIEW

Volume 11, No. 3

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Our Volunteer Newsletter --- A Link to the Past and Present

Journey Stories at the Aberdeen Room

Our Harford County Public Library was given an opportunity to expand its "Journey Stories" partnership with the Maryland Humanities Council and the Smithsonian Institution by participating in the "Journey Stories Youth History Project," a national pilot program to empower youth to collect, record, and share local oral histories.

The Aberdeen Room was pleased to be asked to be a part of this project, and for the past weeks we have worked with Iris Leigh Barnes and Christine Tolbert. Some of our publications, including our own book, "Sketches of Village to Town to City," have been used for their research. Copies of some of the pages of "American Methodist Pioneer: Freeborn Garrettson" were made for the research.

The Hosanna School Museum is collaborating with the library and has focused on an interesting and untold story in Harford County of the migration of farmers and families that formerly dwelled on the nearly 73,000 acres now occupied by Aberdeen Proving Ground. These families, occupying a 20-mile strip along US Route 40, were forced to make way for what some called "government intrusion," and others called a "patriotic sacrifice."

How they rebuilt their ties and communities will be explored by participating teens and adult mentors, and presented as part of "Slave, Farmer, and Artisan. The Paths of African-American-Americans in Harford County," a Hosanna School exhibition.

A map of the farms purchased by the federal government to build Aberdeen Proving Ground in 1917 is another point of interest in this project. This large map is a part of the Aberdeen Room's Aberdeen Proving Ground display.

The resulting oral histories will also be made available to the public through the Smithsonian's "Journey Stories" web site <<http://journeystories.org>>, go to <www.hosanaschoolmuseum.org> for more details.

Teen participant and "youth curator" Julius Halstead visited the Aberdeen Room on April 21, 2012 to collect family histories to contribute to the exhibition.

Celebrations in Aberdeen Remembered

Oh, those memories of past celebrations in Aberdeen! Flags were flying. Everyone was wearing vintage clothing. Men were sporting beards.

Yes, those were the days when we celebrated the 1967 Aberdeen's anniversary of the Incorporation of 1892. Carolyn Asher Rouse visited the Ab-

erdeen Room, and brought with her some excellent photos of the big "Diamond Jubilee." Many can remember her father, "Pete" Asher, who ran the news-stand on the corner of Route 40 and West Bel Air Avenue, and these are photos he had saved. She also included a Diamond Jubilee Belles pin that all the ladies wore for the celebration.

Recalling a much less wonderful event on that West Bel Air

Avenue corner, she also had the clipping of the explosion and fire on that cold day in January of 1976. It was a tragic scene with fire fighters battling the fire that destroyed the Odd Fellows Building, that was rebuilt as we know it today.

*Celebrations Remembered
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Mayor Henry J. Loeblein purchases an Aberdeen Jubilee commemorative plate from John S. Mitchell and William Cooper, Jr. at Aberdeen's Jubilee Headquarters in downtown Aberdeen.

Baseball Memories at the Aberdeen Room

In April, baseball was the topic of the day! At the Aberdeen Room, memories of great past baseball events are always welcome.

Talk about memories! We all recall Cal Ripken, Jr. back in 1995. "Cal's Streak" was top news.

We got a letter from Bettie Krouse McMullen in Port Orange, Florida, and in it she included the pink advertising sheet about the events during that September of 1995. There was number 2130 on September 5 and number 2131 on September 6. A big celebration was held at Aberdeen High School Stadium, and the proceeds were to go to the AHS Empty Goal Post Fund. Sit on the "new bleachers or bring lawn chairs and blankets" read the pink sheet.

Dorothy Litzinger came in with some of the collections from her son, Police Officer Litzinger. Included are

two autographed photos of Cal Ripken, Jr., an Oriole hat, three "Sports Illustrated" magazines from 1983, and a "Baseball Sticker Album" from 1980.

Robert Viele visited with an old photo of students on the high granite steps of the old 1908 Aberdeen High School Building. It was found in Catherine Viele Mitchell's old house in Aberdeen, and is quite a treasure. There is no date, but from the names of the students on the back, it must have been about 1923 or so. The group included Catherine Viele, Emerson Baker, Roger Gilbert, Norman Mitchell, Ralph Morgan, Vincent Gerdorn, and Eldon Budnick. There were also other early school pictures and one of three men sitting in front of Strasbaugh, Steckle, Hewitt Company circa 1905.

An interesting set of clippings from

"The Aegis" of November 1992 that told of the history of "Harford's Hospitals." Jim Lindsey added another current clipping from the "Sun" of March 25, 2012, "Top Secret Rosies" about the women who first worked on the ENIAC at Aberdeen Proving Ground. There is a clipping from the "Aegis" of March 7, 2012 about Robert Jansen's "59 Years" in the Level Fire Department.

And more books have been added to the museum library. Barbara Baker donated "Churches - an Illustrated History of Harford County's Rural Heritage" by Henry Peden, Jr. and Jack Shagena, Jr.

Ed Illick has added more cook books to the museum library, "Serve It Cold" and "Rumford's Complete Cook Book." We also have the latest "On Patrol."

The Aberdeen Room Archives & Museum

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Aberdeen, Maryland 21001-0698

Phone: 410-273-6325

Web-Site: www.aberdeenroom.org

Email: sayhello@aberdeenroom.org

The Aberdeen Room acquires, records, and displays memorabilia and artifacts that relate to the social, economic, and cultural development of the City of Aberdeen.

All interested persons are welcome and are invited to visit, utilize, and enjoy the museum and archival facilities provided.

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**Tuesdays & Thursdays:** 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.  
**First Saturday of Month:** 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 pm

**No Admission Charged**  
**Your Donations are Appreciated**  
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Current Museum Officers and Board of Directors

Charlotte G. Cronin, *Curator*
Ruth Peters, *Secretary*
Jon Harlan Livezey, *Treasurer*

Catherine Adams	Trudy De Forest
Barbara Baker	Ed Illick
Mary Clary	Ann M. Kelly
William R. Cronin	Peggy Malson
Ruth Elliott	Mary Lee Plummer

Kenny Wilson
James Lindsey, *Resource Manager*
Tom Baker, *Consultant*

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Articles written by Charlotte and William Cronin unless otherwise noted.  
Edited by Jim Lindsey  
Layout by Ruth Peters  
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# 50 Years Ago in Aberdeen

Springtime 50 years ago was alive at the old Aberdeen Elementary School on North Philadelphia Boulevard.

The playground (now Festival Park) was filled with children practicing for athletic events and the upcoming May Day. There were violets growing in the same spots where we picked them many years before. Mr. Aaronson's livestock were long gone,

, sliding board, and the hand over hand bars were still in use.

Around town, election time was heating up. Mahoney's team was touring Aberdeen, Bel Air and Havre de Grace. Tawe's "Team Mates" were also making their way through Harford County. Newspapers read, "Candidates Heat Up" names like Blair Lee appeared. The County Commissioners were also busy campaigning.

The PEOs met with Mrs. Richard Cronin. Former teachers were honored at Miss Helen Cronin's birthday party. Mrs. Helen Fisher and Miss Bessie Forwood were there.

The Aberdeen Firemen's Ball was held at the Aberdeen Recreation Center (the former USO building) with music by Frederick Foster.

"The Freedom Riders" visited the A&P Restaurant, the Mayflower Restaurant, the Ideal Diner, Aberdeen Restaurant and Musical Bar.

The 6<sup>th</sup> District Women of the Moose visited the local chapter of the Moose.

Charles W. Grinage, custodian of the First National Bank of Aberdeen, was honored at the Drive-In branch of the bank on his birthday. He talked of his memories of the 1918 fire, and when Route 40 was just a dirt road through town.

Mrs. Ethel Gaul of the Aberdeen Ladies Auxiliary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars was chosen a State page for the State of Maryland.

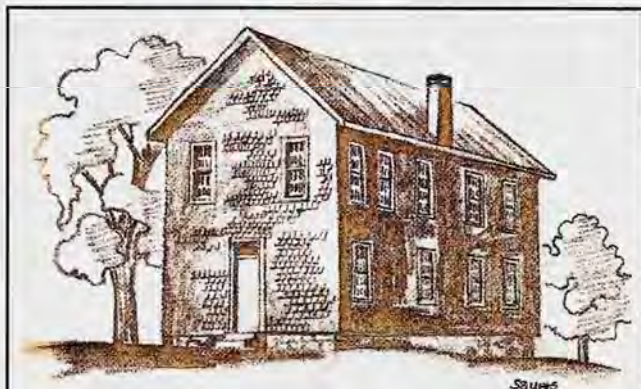
At Aberdeen Proving Ground, General Peters was honored before his departure from the post. New barracks were completed at Edgewood Chemical Center.

APG Basketball Team had a 15-8 season, and APG Players presented "A Visit to a Small Planet."

In Perryman, Little Acres Riding Club had a full season with Molly Lee Maslin. Molly wrote a weekly column telling of all the club's activities.

Real Estate firms of Baker and Baker, Cooper, Chalone, Shields, Eck, Vaught and Wallett, Phillip Webster, Landbeck and Cronin were advertising homes and businesses for sale.

It was 1962, and Aberdeen was observing its 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its incorporation as a town in 1892. Civic leaders were looking to the future Diamond Jubilee to come in 1967.



The Hosanna School Museum, located at 2424 Casleton Road in Darlington, is hosting "Lost & Found: The Forgotten Communities of APG" of the *Journey Stories* from June 6 - July 25.

but memories of the old farmyard were still very vivid.

The library building at 58 North Parke Street was open for youngsters after school hours. Yes, children still occupied that school complex for another decade. The cinders back of the school were still there, and the swings

## Celebrations Remembered

*Continued from page 1*

Susan Osborn also brought photos of another downtown scene of the past. These were taken when Aberdeen was preparing for the nation's celebration of the Bicentennial in 1976. Flags were being hung on Route 40. The photos show the former Redwood Inn on North Philadelphia Boulevard, which was a popular meeting place for reunions and civic meetings.

Barbara Baker brought in an old map from 1965 of the development of

the McGrady Construction Company known as Hillcrest Manor.

Other memories of past residents that have been added to family files are photos of Dr. Barry Plunkett; also Ralph Cooper and Lynn Tanner, and the death notice of John Bennett Spang.

John Livezey brought the business card of the popular Prost German Restaurant, that is also a part of the past. Mary-Lynne Livezey donated an employee's pass from the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad in 1923!

Mary Lee Plummer brought in her decal for the Hatem Susquehanna Bridge.

More books from the Harford Press and Harford Democrat newspaper are being added to the Aberdeen Room Library: "Harford County Subdivision regulations," an APG publication "Coming Clean, a Citizens' Coalition Community Update" in October of 2001, a "Department of Geology Water Resources Bulletin 12," and "The Sediments of the Chesapeake Bay" by Donald Ryan.



## Remembering the Strasbaugh, Steckle and Hewitt Company: Canned Goods Brokers



These three men are sitting just off of the porch of the Strasbaugh, Steckle and Hewitt Company with their feet touching the cement sidewalk on the south side of West Bel Air Avenue.

The man at the far right has been identified as Charles H. Jacobs. Most likely, the other two men are William Silver and Harry Strasbaugh.

Photo is circa 1905. This picture is from a group of photos given to the Aberdeen Room Museum by Mrs. Jane B. Viele.



The Strasbaugh, Steckle and Hewitt Company's building stood next to the Odd Fellows building which was on the corner of Front Street (now Route 40) and West Bel Air Avenue. The building burnt to the ground in the February 5, 1918 fire which consumed many of the business district structures

on the south side of West Bel Air Avenue.


The original building used by the firm of Strasbaugh, Steckle and Hewitt Company opened in Aberdeen, Maryland in 1903. They were a Baltimore based business as early as 1901.

In 1905, William Silver of "Meadow Farm" in Darlington, Maryland, bought the half-interest in the company from partners Steckle and Hewitt, thus forming the Strasbaugh, Silver & Company.

In 1911, the company was dissolved, but William Silver & Company continued to use the building, until it was destroyed by fire in 1918. During the fire which began next door in the Adams & Rigdon Grocery Store meat shop, the safe in William Silver & Company became so hot that it exploded.

Due to the fire, William Silver & Company changed locations to 115 West Bel Air Avenue.

Below is a business card ad from the 1920 Aegis directory. It advertises an insurance company that Mr. Jacobs owned.



**CHAS. H. JACOBS**  
ABERDEEN, MD.  
**General Insurance**

Writing Practically Every Form of Insurance  
Except Life.

|            |             |                |
|------------|-------------|----------------|
| Fire       | Bonding     | Auto Fire      |
| Hail       | Tourist     | Auto Theft     |
| Boiler     | Burglary    | Auto Liability |
| Wind Storm | Plate Glass | Auto Collision |

Workmen's Compensation, Auto Property Damage  
**PROMPT AND EFFICIENT SERVICE**

He was also at one time associated with the Michael & Jacobs Coal Yard business which sold fire insurance. This latter information comes from an article in a 1921 Industrial Edition of the Aberdeen Enterprise Newspaper.

WM. SILVER & COMPANY, Inc.  
CANNED FOODS



ABERDEEN, . . . . . MD.

Above is an ad from the 1920 Aegis Directory showing the Silver office at 115 W. Bel Air Avenue.

### Thank You!

The staff of the Aberdeen Room wishes to thank Charles Bennett for filling our two exterior planters with beautiful gold and red Gerbera daisies, Real Community effort!