



THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
of
KENT COUNTY

UNLOCKING OUR PAST

2020 Fall Newsletter

Society Supports Racial Justice

At a special meeting of the Board on July 20, the Society adopted a resolution in support of racial injustice and police brutality against the African American community. See our [website](#) for the full text. The resolution is proudly displayed in our High Street window as part of our ongoing support for Legacy Day with a special Legacy Day window.

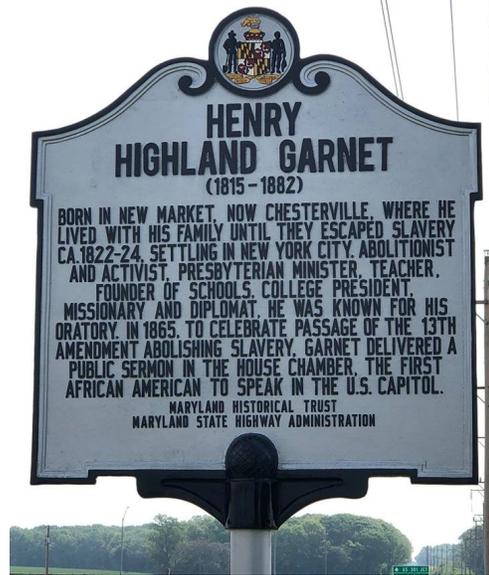
CARES Grant for New Virtual Program

We received a \$5,000 CARES grant from Kent County for a new “virtual” project, titled “Inside the Bordley.” This series of one-on-one interviews will feature guest moderators speaking with local residents about a wide range of topics. Our first topics will focus on the African-American history in Kent County. Interviews will be live-streamed and made available on our website. Gibson Anthony is the executive producer. Look for more on this project shortly.

Garnet Now Part of Network to Freedom

Kent County’s own Henry Highland Garnet, African-American abolitionist

and fiery orator, is now included on the National Underground Railroad *Network to Freedom*. The Society was instrumental in obtaining a state historic marker erected on the corner of Maryland Routes 290 and 291, near the Chesterville site of Garnet's birthplace and boyhood home. The *Network to Freedom*, a National Park Service program, includes only locations with a verifiable connection to the Underground Railroad. Special thanks to Amanda Tuttle-Smith, who wrote the Society's extensive application for this project and to members George Shivers and Jeanette Sherbondy for their early research on Mr. Garnet.



Celebrating 100 Years of Women's Suffrage

In support of the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage, we have a wonderful window exhibit featuring photos of some of the first Kent County women to register to vote, along with a vintage suffragist dress and the Kent County voter registration book from 1920. Many thanks to Stephanie Gosman for her research and her design. In the spirit of community cooperation, the League of Women Voters is using our High Street sidewalk on Saturdays to register voters and have hung their 100th anniversary banner under our sign on High Street.

Round Oak Stove Moves to Cannon Street

Our beloved round oak stove, located in the Bordley Center since after the 1910 fire, has moved to a foster home at Maryland Heritage Properties thanks to the generosity of member Nancy McGuire. Gibson Anthony and Erik Gulbrandsen literally rolled the stove down Cross Street to its new location at 306 Cannon Street. Visitors welcome!



Installed



Kent County native Mark Bramble, who became a Broadway producer, bequeathed us his collection of antique tea caddies, a collection started by his mother, Marnie. A lighted cabinet, custom made for Mr. Bramble, houses the collection. A formal “grand opening” will take place when we are able to reopen the Bordley History Center. Duplicates from the collection were

culled for us by the executor of Mr. Bramble’s estate. These duplicates were recently auctioned by Stair Galleries in Hudson, N.Y. The proceeds from the sale will fund future museum exhibits.

Bordley Facelift Complete

Our exterior renovations are complete. Our rear and front facades are now stable. Our High Street windows now have UV-resistant glass with no bullet holes! (You may recall one of the windows had a bullet hole of unknown origin.)

Our window display areas also have new interior lights and a new ceiling track system for hanging exhibits. Special thanks to Stephanie Gosman and Amanda Tuttle-Smith for their selection of the lights and track systems and to Erik Gulbrandsen for overseeing their installations.

In addition, the Bordley Center’s exterior has a fresh coat of paint and the interior has some repairs. Many thanks again to Erik Gulbrandsen for overseeing these—as well as rebuilding and repainting the bookshelves in the museum shop.

Other additions to the museum include a beautiful, very large Oriental rug donated by Mrs. Julia Sause upon the sale of her magnificent Centreville, 18th century home. Mrs. Sause also donated another lovely, large Oriental rug, destined for under the library table on the second floor.



Reopening the Bordley?

The Board will have a virtual meeting on October 13. Topics for consideration will include when our museum may reopen to the public and when to bring back our employees, furloughed since the end of March. More on these topics soon.

In Memoriam

Charles “Pat” Patterson, a longtime Society member and friend, died September 18. A noted local Thespian, Pat loaned his talents to the Society on many occasions. Notably, dressed in full 18th century attire with knee britches and tri-corner hat, Pat presided over the Society’s final party at the Geddes-Piper House and was able to raise the famous ghost of the little girl said to haunt the third floor. (He drafted a granddaughter as the ghost.) Pat also inaugurated the now annual Society tradition of the reading of *The Chestertown Resolves* at the Tea Party Festival. The Society remembers Pat fondly and gratefully and extends its sympathy to Pat’s partner, Sheila Austrian, former Society president and board member, and to his and Sheila’s families.

This year we are combining our membership drive and annual fund drive, so expect a compelling letter asking for your support soon. In the meantime, you can always donate securely online. If you donate online before the end of September, we won't clutter your mailbox with yet another fundraising letter. Any gift you are able to make is greatly appreciated!

Donate Securely Online via PayPal

If you need to reach the Society for any reason
please send an email to
director@kentcountyhistory.org