



THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
of
KENT COUNTY

UNLOCKING OUR PAST

2021 Winter Newsletter

HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S WINDOWS ARE OPEN!

Although the doors to our Bordley History Center museum and library are closed, our fabulous High Street windows are always open. Walk by, day or night, and see our latest exhibits. The window exhibits change every 4-6 weeks and are filled with information, artifacts, and photographs so there is always something new to see. These windows are funded in part by a grant from Stories of the Chesapeake.

Currently, the South window (next to Cross Street) honors Kent County's waterfowl hunting heritage.

The North window pays tribute to Kent County's African American residents, with an exhibit put together by Sumner Hall, as guest curator. Don't forget to pick up the brochure for the African American walking tour in the box on our front wall.

As is our custom, the Bordley History Center will be closed to the public until sometime in the Spring. While we hope to be able to open our museum at least part-time in April, COVID-19 remains in charge of the timetable this year. If you have research questions, please feel free to email our librarian, Joan Andersen, who is working part-time. Joan can be reached at library@kentcountyhistory.com.



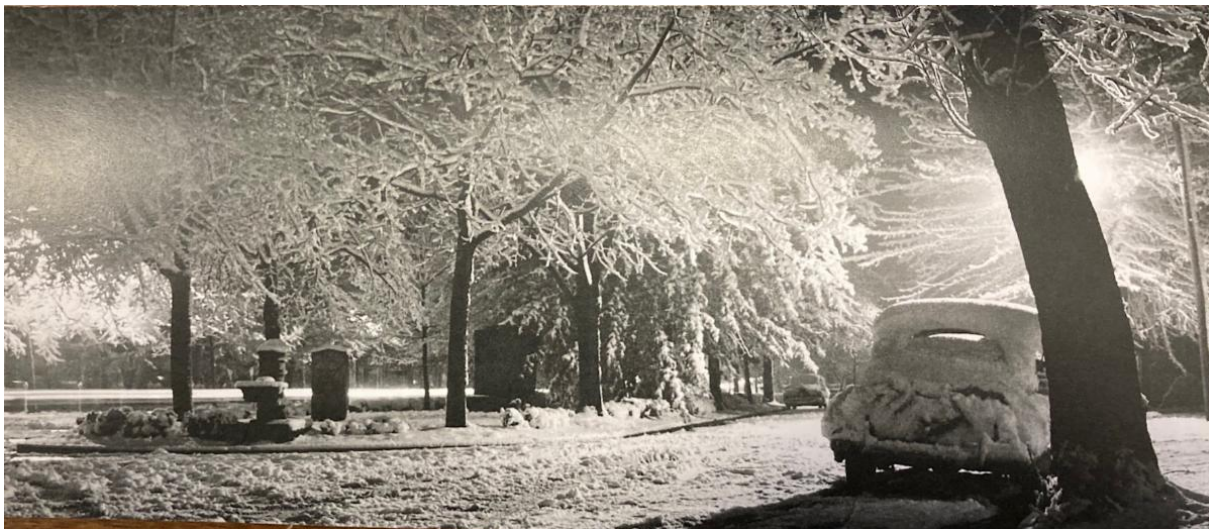
NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER WERE BUSY...

We were very pleased that the Bordley museum and gift shop were able to be open every Saturday from November 7 through Boxing Day 2020. We followed strict COVID-protocols with masks, social distancing, and lots of hand sanitizer. We had feared we might have problems with “anti-maskers” but none appeared. Everyone was polite, friendly, and pleased that we were open. Ironically, we actually had record numbers of visitors each Saturday—many more than we had on any typical Saturday in 2018 or 2019.

We were pleased to premier The Bramble Collection, a very beautiful collection of antique tea caddies bequeathed to the Society by the late Mark Bramble in honor of his mother, Margaret “Marnie” Bramble, a longtime Tolchester resident. Marnie started her collection with the purchase of a small porcelain bottle at our own Crumpton auction. She later learned this little bottle was a tea caddy. We also have Mark’s beautiful coffee table book about tea caddies.

We were also very fortunate to feature a collection of books by local historian and author, Kevin Hemstock, including the very first public look at his new book about famed Kent County photographer, John South.

And most charming of all, we had a new holiday card this year (pictured below), featuring a 1930s era photo of a snow-covered Westcott Fountain in Chestertown’s Memorial Park. The Bramble Collection and Hemstock’s books will be available when we reopen, as will



BEHIND THE SCENES

Behind the scenes, Society president and local videographer Gibson Anthony and Society board member Nivek Johnson are working on a new video series, “Inside the Bordley,” which will delve into local African American history. This project is funded in part through a grant from Kent County.

Also, behind our closed doors, our volunteer photography curator, Stephanie Gosman, has been working with “Chesapeake Heartland: An African American Humanities Project,” which is a joint project of the Smithsonian Institution and Washington College’s Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience. Stephanie is sorting through our photograph and document archives to identify materials in our collection to be digitized as part of the Heartland Project. The Heartland Project will soon park its mobile scanning studio in front of the Bordley and scan our materials on the spot!

And local high school seniors, look for an announcement soon of the details for the new Roger Brown Scholarship, named for the Society’s longtime treasurer now retired.

In Memoriam

On January 24, 2020, Society member and friend, Camille Olinick, died. Camille, mother of Board member Tim Olinick, was the first Society volunteer when the Bordley museum and gift shop reopened November 7. It was a good day for all of us. We talked with old and new friends, we laughed, we made a few sales for the Society. Camille will be missed

—she was always cheerful and always willing to lend a hand. And she loved our mascot, Lucy the Goose!

Carolyn Cooper, lifetime Kent County resident and well-known Chestertown resident, died January 15. Carolyn was the “squeaky wheel” who never let us forget that our beloved Geddes-Piper House was not accessible to her motorized wheelchair. When we moved to the Bordley History Center, Carolyn was the first visitor to use the new elevator/wheel chair lift. Carolyn was an avid, amateur historian. She was the author of “Descendant’s Day,” a painstakingly researched history of her native Worton. Her book stands as the definitive history of that part of our county. We will miss seeing her dashing around downtown and popping in to the Bordley to share history tidbits.

We count on your generosity to fund our museum, library and programs. 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**