



Winter 2023

NEWSLETTER

P. O. Box 102
Laurel, DE 19956

laureldehistoricalsociety.org



President's Corner

George Denney


This money will be utilized to pay our ever-increasing costs to appropriately operate the society. If you've not had the opportunity to send your annual appeal donation, please consider giving a gift this week!

See you at the annual meeting—2:00 p.m. at Abbott's Grill on **January 22, 2023**. All are welcome. 🌸

Happy New Year! This edition includes many pictures taken at what I consider to be our finest event to date. Rosemont was adorned with beautiful decorations for the holiday season. Each decoration was carefully placed by the hands of Ned Fowler and Snicky Davis. Ned and Snicky collaborated on this project and produced a stunning setting for the Yuletide gala. They transformed the garage into a winter wonderland with Rosemont's 18th-century paneling as the focal point. The two months of work culminated in turning Rosemont into Laurel's show place for the holidays.

Many thanks go to those members who gave untold hours to make the event a huge success. They are: Ned Fowler, Snicky Davis, Brian Seeba, Brian and Pat Shannon, Dee Cross, Doug Marvil, Chris and Crystal Slavens, Jared and Jeff Allen, Woody Disharoon, Will Parker, and many more. We owe Matthew Whaley a special thank-you for once again making the delicious meal. Please mark the first Saturday in December on your calendar for 2023 Yuletide.

We would like to thank all individuals for your generosity in making the first month for our annual appeal so successful. To date we have collected \$39,825.00!




**Laurel
Historical Society**

Annual Meeting
January 22, 2023
2:00 pm

**Abbott's on Broad Creek
{Banquet Room}**
*111 Delaware Avenue
Laurel, DE 19956*

Lunch/Dinner served off menu
Drinks served by request



Please contact **George Denney** if you
plan to attend so the staff can
prepare the room for the event.
(302) 745-1963

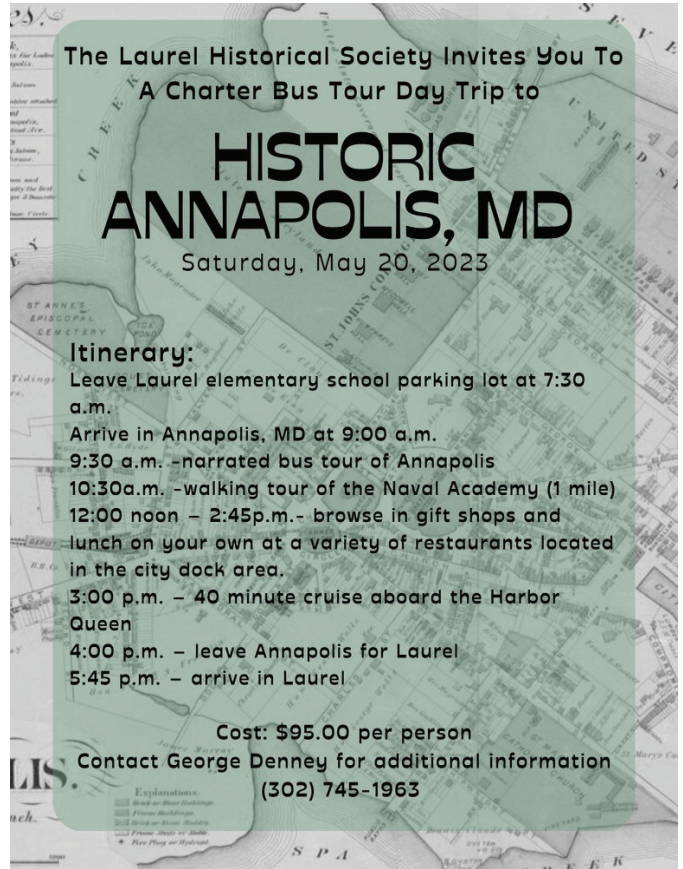
IN THIS ISSUE: News, Upcoming Events, "Yuletide at Rosemont" Photos, Annual Appeal Donors, Membership Renewal Form, Old News, and more! →

ANNUAL MEETING & ELECTION

The nominating committee is pleased to announce the following slate of candidates for election at the society's annual meeting and election at 2:00 p.m. on January 22, 2023, at Abbott's on Broad Creek:

- President.....George Denney
- Vice President.....Artez West
- Treasurer.....Dee Cross
- Secretary.....Emily Whaley Spicer
- Corresponding Secretary.....Crystal Slavens

At large: Doug Marvil and Jared Allen.



The Laurel Historical Society Invites You To
A Charter Bus Tour Day Trip to

HISTORIC ANNAPOLIS, MD

Saturday, May 20, 2023

Itinerary:
 Leave Laurel elementary school parking lot at 7:30 a.m.
 Arrive in Annapolis, MD at 9:00 a.m.
 9:30 a.m. -narrated bus tour of Annapolis
 10:30a.m. -walking tour of the Naval Academy (1 mile)
 12:00 noon - 2:45p.m.- browse in gift shops and lunch on your own at a variety of restaurants located in the city dock area.
 3:00 p.m. - 40 minute cruise aboard the Harbor Queen
 4:00 p.m. - leave Annapolis for Laurel
 5:45 p.m. - arrive in Laurel

Cost: \$95.00 per person
 Contact George Denney for additional information
 (302) 745-1963

Society helps out with Bike & Brew

On Saturday, September 17th, members of the Laurel Historical Society manned a rest stop for the 10th annual Broad Creek Bike & Brew, an event which routes hundreds of cyclists through western Sussex.

The society's stop, located at Old Christ Church, was praised for its large crowd of volunteers and generous selection of snacks. Many participants took advantage of the opportunity to tour the historic church. 🍷

Photos courtesy of Woody Disharoon.

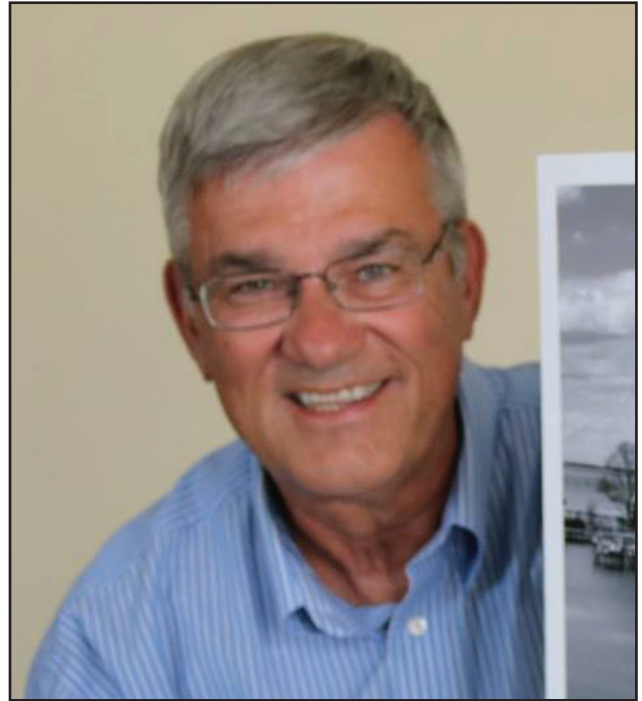


Brice Stump to speak at March dinner

The Kendal T. Jones Lecture Series returns in 2023 with a guest lecturer who needs no introduction among local history buffs: Brice Stump, an award-winning journalist, author, and photographer who has devoted decades to chronicling and preserving the history and folklore of the Delmarva Peninsula.

In addition to writing for newspapers such as the *Daily Times* and the *Salisbury Independent*, Stump is the author of a number of books including *It Happened in Dorchester* (1969), *Somerset County: A Pictorial History* (1985), *Unforgettable Treasures: People, Places and Culture of the Eastern Shore* (2000), and *Working Skipjacks of Deal Island* (2016).

He will present a lecture about “Grave Tales and Incredible Tombstones” of the Eastern Shore at the Laurel Historical Society’s annual spring dinner, scheduled for March 18, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at St. Philip’s Church. Additional details to be announced. ❀



The Grand Illumination at Hitchens Homestead

On the night of December 2nd, as the Laurel Christmas parade wrapped up, a bonfire blazed like a beacon at the Hitchens Homestead, beckoning to all who would walk or drive up the hill. A small but cheerful crowd sang several Christmas carols, closing with “Silent Night.” The house, which dates to 1878 and is undergoing restoration, was illuminated towards the end of the event. ❀



Photos courtesy of Paula Shannon.

Yuletide at Rosemont

The second annual “Yuletide at Rosemont” gala, held on the evening of Saturday, December 3rd, was a smashing success with more than one hundred people in attendance.

Chef Matt Whaley returned and masterfully dished up a variety of culinary delights, assisted by smiling servers Jessica Mecouch and Tyler Keeler. At one point, a bit of a line formed near the kitchen as some attendees hoped to intercept fresh platters of scallops! Matt and Ben Parker tended bar, while pianist Earl Beardsley entertained the merry crowd with cheerful tunes. The

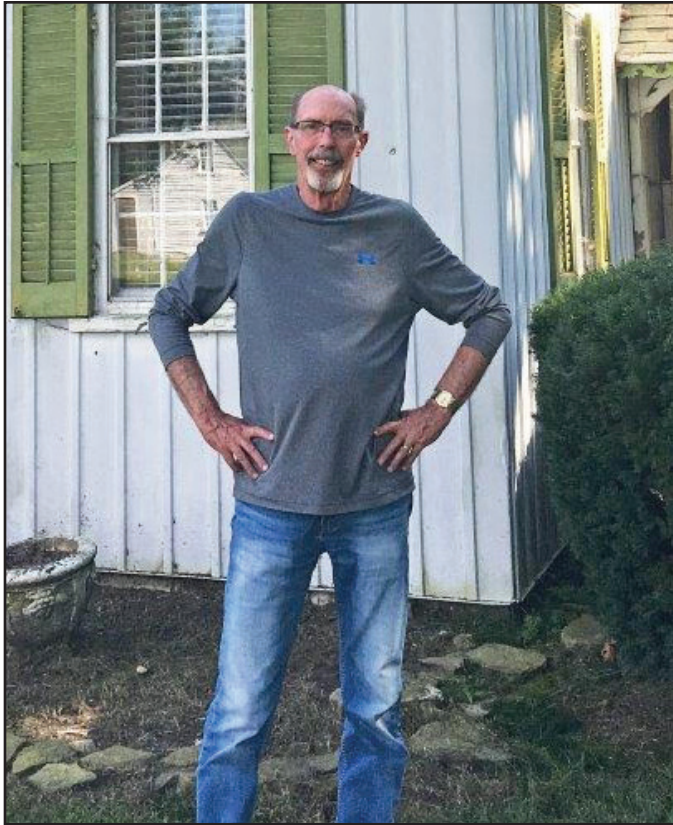
mansion had been beautifully decorated by Ann “Snicky” Davis and Ned Fowler. Many guests praised the bistro-like set-up in the garage, a new feature this year.

The popular event yielded a profit of \$5,000. Plans are underway for its highly anticipated return in 2023. ❁





*All photos courtesy of
Paula Shannon.*

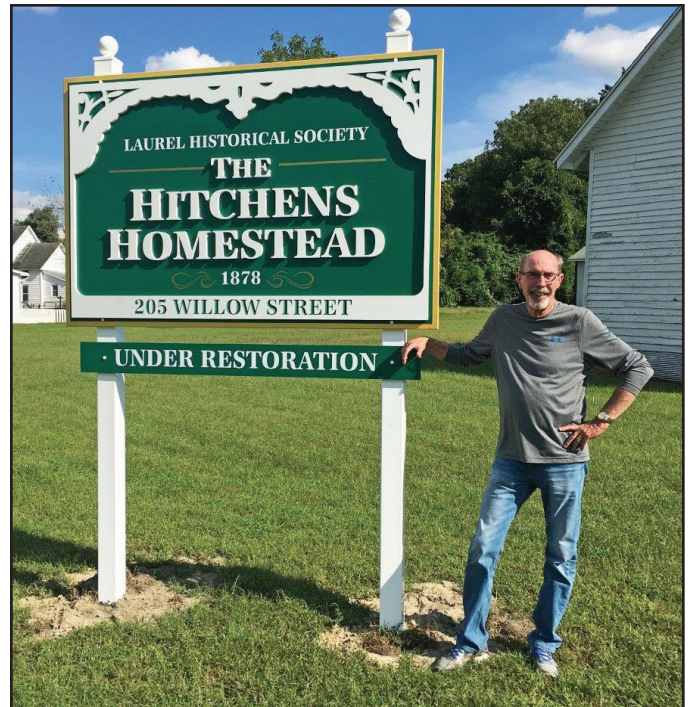


IN MEMORIAM

Daniel Risdon Twilley
(1953 – 2022)

We are saddened by the news of the sudden death, on December 24, of society member and supporter Dan Twilley, of Sykesville, MD, last living descendent of Emanuel Twilley, builder of our 1878 Hitchens Homestead and its adjacent mill. It was only a few months ago that Dan presented us with the Twilley family vintage canoe, in which he and his Dad's life-long best friend and classmate, Paul Robinson, paddled all over Laurel Pond. His father's recollections of growing up in Laurel have been published in our society newsletters. Our condolences go out to his wife, Michele.

Dan was born in Baltimore on April 3, 1953, to John Emanuel Twilley and June Moog Twilley. He is preceded in death by his parents, his Aunt Francis "Dee" Moog Venema, and his cousin and best friend Charles Venema. His career in insulating and environmental engineering took him from Salisbury to places such as Florida, Los Angeles, and the Panama Canal, where he was the third generation of his family to work on the canal. In recent



years, Dan had enjoyed following the society's progress in the restoration of his great-grandfather's home.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in Dan's memory can be made to the Laurel Historical Society at P. O. Box 102, Laurel, DE 19956, or laureldehistoricalsociety.org. 🌸

Old News

THREE BITTEN BY A DOG.

Ran Amuck in Laurel Streets, but Was Finally Shot.

Special to "The Morning News."

LAUREL, Del., Dec. 14.—A dog belonging to Victor Wright ran a muck here last night creating much excitement and alarm. Three persons were bitten.

Ira H. Melvin, the last victim, shot the dog, but it is not known whether he killed it or not. It limped away yelping. Mr. Melvin's wounds were cauterized. The dog was not believed to be mad.

The Morning News,
December 15, 1897.

LAUREL

LAUREL, Del., Jan. 29.—It has been more than one month since an oyster boat has been able to come up the Laurel river, and some people have almost forgotten the taste of an oyster.

Dr. William S. Hitch, who is critically ill from an attack of paralysis, was for a number of years a practicing physician in Wilmington.

Henry Fluers, aged 62 years, who moved from here to Princess Anne ten years ago, is dead.

Chicken raisers complain that dogs are killing their fowls and several dogs have been shot.

William J. Crocket fell on the ice and broke his knee cap and is now in the Peninsula Hospital.

A range light has been placed on the site of Benoni Light, off Oxford which was made useless by the ice.

The Wilmington Morning News,
January 30, 1918.

Influenza in Laurel

Epidemic Interferes With Operation of the Postoffice.

LAUREL, Del., Jan. 29.—Local route No. 1 is without mail service, owing to the serious illness with influenza of Charles S. Workman, the carrier, and the inability of the postal authorities to secure a substitute. John A. Adams, carrier on route No. 6, is also sick, but a substitute has been secured for his route. There has not been a day since the appearance of the influenza last autumn when some one connected with the local postoffice has not been sick with the malady.

There are still about 70 cases of the disease here, but physicians say the epidemic is subsiding.

The Wilmington Morning News,
January 30, 1919.

New WPA Job Started

The WPA has started a new land drainage project near Laurel. The project, for which \$11,327.50 in Federal funds is provided, is resulting in the employment of 73 men. The project is divided into three sections, Wright C. Dizer, publicity director of the WPA said. The first is the enlarging of the Rossakatum ditch; the second the deepening of Gum Branch, and the third consists of enlarging Holly Branch west of Laurel.

The Journal - Every Evening,
January 1, 1936.

• SAVE THE DATE! •

| | | | | | | |
|----------------|---|---|---|--|---|------------------|
| January 19th | • | Life in Laurel Roundtable Discussion | • | Rosemont 121 Delaware Ave | • | 10:30 a.m. |
| January 22nd | • | Annual Meeting | • | Abbott's on Broad Creek | • | 2:00 p.m. |
| February 16th | • | Life in Laurel | • | Rosemont | • | 10:30 a.m. |
| March 16th | • | Lecture and Dinner Speaker: Brice N. Stump | • | St. Philip's | • | 6:00 p.m. |
| April 8th | • | Walking Tour | • | Laurel Hill Cemetery | • | 1:00 p.m. |
| April 20th | • | Life in Laurel | • | Rosemont | • | 10:30 a.m. |
| May 7th | • | Museums Open | • | Rosemont, Train Station, Hitchens Homestead | • | 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. |
| May 20th | • | Bus Trip | • | Annapolis, Md. | • | 7:30 a.m. |
| June 4th | • | Museums Open | • | Rosemont, Train Station, Hitchens Homestead | • | 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. |
| June 15th | • | Life in Laurel | • | Rosemont | • | 10:30 a.m. |
| July 2nd | • | Museums Open | • | Rosemont, Train Station, Hitchens Homestead | • | 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. |
| July 4th | • | Open House — Celebrate Nathaniel Mitchell | • | Rosemont | • | 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. |
| “ | • | Society Picnic | • | Hitchens Homestead | • | 6:30 p.m. |
| August 6th | • | Museums Open | • | Rosemont, Train Station, Hitchens Homestead | • | 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. |
| September 3rd | • | Museums Open | • | Rosemont, Train Station, Hitchens Homestead | • | 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. |
| September 10th | • | Lecture on the Lawn | • | Ship-Carpenter's House Bethel, Del. | • | 4:00 p.m. |
| September 21st | • | Life in Laurel | • | Rosemont | • | 10:30 a.m. |
| October 1st | • | Museums Open | • | Rosemont, Train Station, Hitchens Homestead | • | 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. |
| October 14th | • | Lecture and Dinner Speaker: Chris Slavens | • | St. Philip's | • | 6:00 p.m. |

Our 2022-2023 Donors

RECORDS' POND — \$10,000+

Paul & Pat Downes
Sharon McDonald

TRAP POND — \$5,000 - \$9,999

Janosik Family Charitable Foundation

CHIPMAN'S POND — \$1,000 - \$4,999

Ned & Norma Jean Fowler
Carol O. Hammond
Gary Leslie
Louis & Shirley O'Neal
Scott & Darlene Phillips
Brian & Pat Shannon
Melinda Tingle

TRUSSUM POND — \$500 - \$999

Activ Pest Solutions
Karl & Triss Holland
Daniel & Mary Lecates
Vern & Maggie Proctor
Wash 'N Vac Car Wash
Reid Williamson

PORTSVILLE POND — \$250 - \$499

Mark & Dawn Collins
Marlene Collins
Dee Cross
Richard Gabriel
Kendal Jones
Doug & Edna Marvil
Billie Jane Wheatley

HORSEY'S POND: \$100 - \$249

Briane & Diane Calloway
William & Carlene Campbell
Denise Carmine Crowe
Jerry Eller & Faye Jones-Eller
Barbara Joseph & Lee Ann Geist
Rachelle Hill
Dave & Yancey Hillegas
Laurel American Legion
Nelson & Linda Justice
Gary & Loretta Owens
Tom & Joy Slavens
Dave Smith's Exterminating
Penny Lewis Ward
Tammera Ward
Cindy Whaley
James & Janet Windsor
Thomas & Mona Wright

*Thank
you!*

TUSOCK POND: \$25 - \$99

James & Nancy Brock
Edwin Connor
Shirley Diefenderfer
Wendy Dolby
Ray & Ellie Guest
Nancy Linton
Cheryl Martin
Ruth O'Neal
Chris & Crystal Slavens
Fred & Donna Sponseller
David & Janice Tranberg



P. O. Box 102
Laurel, DE 19956

Annual Appeal

| CATEGORY | LEVEL | SELECT YOUR LEVEL OF SUPPORT |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Records' Pond | \$10,000+ | _____ |
| Trap Pond | \$5,000 - \$9,999 | _____ |
| Chipman's Pond | \$1,000 - \$4,999 | _____ |
| Trussum Pond | \$500 - \$999 | _____ |
| Portsville Pond | \$250 - \$499 | _____ |
| Horsey's Pond | \$100 - \$249 | _____ |
| Tussock Pond | \$25 - \$99 | _____ |

It's never too late to give! Please mail your 2022-2023 donation to the address shown above, or you can make a donation via PayPal by visiting our website at laureldehistoricalsociety.org and clicking on the Donate button.



A Laurelite Goes to London

by Artez West

She may have not been our queen, but she was just simply “*The Queen!*”

For “many-a-year,” as the old people would say, I have been a fan of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. Borrowing a portion of the Royal Standard, I have used it as my business’s logo, and, yes, it was secretly in her honor. I often have mentioned that I want to go to England before the Queen leaves. She at 96, I definitely had more yesterdays than tomorrows for the dream to come true; and suddenly she was gone! It was now or never, and “now” won the battle. As a historian, I was greatly moved to see world history unfold before my very eyes. I am indeed privileged to share some photos of my trip with you, to the queen’s funeral in September 2022. 🌹



The Royal Family, including the king.



Westminster Abbey the evening before.



The moment the Queen passed by.

Thank you to Jared and Jeff Allen, Laurel natives and owners of Allen Irrigation & Landscape Lighting for providing landscape lighting at Rosemont, a contribution valued at \$4,250. They install and service residential irrigation systems and architectural lighting, and offer a full range of hardscaping services.





Cook House



Heritage Museum



Hitchens Homestead

Complete this form and mail with check payable to:
Laurel Historical Society

P O Box 102
Laurel, DE 19956

or pay online at:

www.laureldehistoricalsociety.org



LAUREL HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2023 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

By becoming a member of the Laurel Historical Society you are part of a living, vital organization that is giving back to its community. As a member, you show you care about greater Laurel and publicly support the goal of protecting and preserving our heritage for generations to come.

Learn about Laurel's past, have fun in the present, and prepare for the future!

WHAT WE ARE WORKING ON FOR YOU

- Website updates Creating new exhibits
- Hitchens Homestead preservation and restoration
- Continued cataloging of our collection items
- Creating new and interesting programs and experiences
- Documenting day to day life in Laurel for future generations
- Building community relationships
- Assisting at Rosemont
- Print and emailed newsletters

MEMBERSHIP TYPES AND RATES JANUARY - DECEMBER

Individual (\$30.00) _____ Family (\$50.00) _____

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____

Type of Membership: New _____ Renewal _____

WE APPRECIATE VOLUNTEERS!

What special skills can you offer the society?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance and repair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> House cleaning | <input type="checkbox"/> Baking/ Food preparation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Research |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yard maintenance | <input type="checkbox"/> Carpentry/plumbing/electricity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity | <input type="checkbox"/> Museum Hosting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Officer or Board member | <input type="checkbox"/> Program Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telephoning | <input type="checkbox"/> Cataloging and Accessioning |

Other: _____



P. O. Box 102
Laurel, DE 19956



It's time to renew your membership!

Please complete and mail in the enclosed membership renewal form.*

Forms are also available online at laureldehistoricalsociety.org.

*Excluding lifetime members.