

THE GERMANTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER



Volume XXX Number 2

Spring 2021

Have You Heard?

We are about to be invaded by little green monsters.

Very loud, very annoying little green monsters.

Be Prepared!



“Periodical Cicadas in Montgomery County: An Intersection of Human History and Natural History”

with Clarence Hickey

A free virtual program on Zoom

Friday, April 16 at 7:30pm

Register for this free program at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/periodical-cicadas-in-montgomery-county-an-intersection-of-human-history-tickets-142790392909>

Every 17 years

Montgomery County has some lesser known, yet very numerous, native residents: the 17-year periodical cicadas that visited us with great gusto in 1987 and 2004. The reappearance of the periodicals every 17 years suggests a certain measure of stability in our local environment, a natural sign for us. As these cicadas offer a unique opportunity for observing and studying nature in our own backyards, this presentation will demonstrate the intersection of cicada natural history and human history as we look forward to welcoming these native Montgomery Countians back to our neighborhoods this spring.



Clarence Hickey

Clarence Hickey is a retired biologist and environmental scientist who has more than 150 science, nature, and environmental publications in many print media sources. He volunteers with many community organizations, public and private, offering programs in local history and 19th century medical history, in natural resources, and how to be your own scientist studying nature in your own backyard. Clarence has been observing and studying cicadas since the 1950s.

SPOTLIGHT on a Germantown Historic Site



Pumphrey-Mateny House

Continuing the story of Germantown Historic Sites, The Pumphrey/Mateny House and Store is one that many of you have seen, especially if you ride the MARC train or attend the Germantown Community Flea Markets. It sits on Walter Johnson Drive at the corner of the upper (north) parking lot for the train commuters.

In 1883 Robert Pumphrey purchased the property and built the house soon after. It is a very good example of vernacular (unique to location) architecture as the three windows on the left side of the house facing the road are closer together than the other windows. These windows were the showcase for the store that occupied the large room behind them. There is a horizontally paneled storeroom behind this large room. The family lived upstairs. For a while there was also a blacksmith shop in the basement that opens out at ground level on the south side of the building.

Robert's son Clyde, along with his wife Evelyn, ran the store after his death, and they built another store next to the house. This store is now gone, but it was purchased by the Selby brothers in the early 20th century who ran it as a clothing store until they had to close because there was no parking lot and the traffic increase on the road made it difficult to park on the road. This is quite ironic seeing that the building was replaced by a huge parking lot.

Henry "Mac" Mateny married the Pumphrey's daughter. Mac ran a stockyard on Mateny Road (now Mateny Hill Road) where he kept cattle that he had purchased from local farmers to ship to Chicago. The cattle awaiting shipment grazed on the hill above the stockyard, called Mateny Hill. Mac was the unofficial "mayor" of Germantown, and held office at the King General Store, where he could be found most days sitting on the porch smoking a cigar.

The house had been abandoned for many years and was in poor condition when the County bought the property in the mid-1980s to build a train commuter parking lot. The County was going to tear down the dilapidated house, but it was just at that time placed on the County's "Master Plan for Historic Preservation." So in 1990 the county formed a committee to choose someone out of 32 applicants to take over the house and restore it. Robert Albiol, who had restored the Seneca Stonemaster's house near Poolesville, was chosen. He brought the house back to its former appearance and has owned it ever since, renting it out to local businesses. If the house is destroyed, the property reverts back to the county.

News and Notes

Cider Barrel Update

Laura Richman will be receiving an award from Montgomery Preservation for "Rehabilitation of a Roadside Attraction for Original Use." As with last year, the awards will be presented in a video format. Check the GHS website and Facebook page for a link to the video when it is completed in May.

For a complete history of the Cider Barrel by GHS Board member Karen Ahjai see <https://mocoshow.com/blog/a-complete-history-of-the-cider-barrel-and-details-on-its-re-opening/>

Bank Museum Update

The Bank Museum Committee has been meeting with consultant Elizabeth Lay and has so far chosen a mission statement and answered questions about the goals, form, audience and educational materials for the Museum. They are now working with another consultant to design a logo.

FLEA MARKETS ARE BACK!

Starting **May 1** and continuing on the first Saturdays of the month through November, the Germantown Community Flea Markets will take place in the MARC commuter parking lot 118 and Bowman Mill Rd., from 8am-1pm

Because of the Covid-19 restrictions there will be a few changes in the rules. **EVERYONE** must wear face masks and stay 6 feet from one another.

To see all the rules for vendors go to our website: germantownMDhistory.org

There is no parking or entrance fee for customers.

LOCAL HISTORY CALENDAR

IN PERSON

Unfortunately, there are no in person historical programs planned for the near future due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

VIRTUAL

April 14, 7:30pm -- “Glen Echo’s Two Great Carousels: Coney Island versus Philadelphia Style” with Barbara Fahs Charles. Find out more about the first carousel and the 1921 Denzel carousel that is restored and in place now. The program is free but you must register at <https://montgomeryhistory.org/2021-mchc/>.

April 28, 7pm -- Mobtown Massacre: Rockville’s Alexander Hanson & the 1812 Newspaper War with author Josh S. Cutler. Join Peerless Rockville and **Mobtown Massacre** author Josh S. Cutler for this illustrated lecture on Rockville resident Alexander Hanson, a 19th century Federalist newspaper editor whose anti-war writings provoked a bloodthirsty mob, a midnight jailbreak and a brutal massacre in the city of Baltimore that stunned the nation. **Free on Zoom**
<http://www.peerlessrockville.org/events-and-programs/>

April 29, 6:30-7:30pm – “U. S. Botanical Garden (Part I), Deeply Rooted” with Devin Johnson and Susan Pell of the USBG. Look back at the first 200 years of the U.S. Botanic Garden through historic photos and documents. The U.S. Botanic Garden is the oldest continuously operating botanic garden in the United States. Pre-registration required at <https://app.livestorm.co/u-s-botanic-garden/usbg-at-200-part-1-deeply-rooted?type=detailed>

June 19, 2pm -- “Potomac, a History of the River and the Land” with Jim Johnston
The Potomac River, the dominant geological feature of Montgomery County, has also played a dominant role in American history. The program is free but you must register at <https://montgomeryhistory.org/2021-mchc/>.

The Maryland Historical Society, now renamed the **Maryland Center for History and Culture**, continues to present a series of fascinating and informative lectures – for free! For a listing and to register (required) go to:
<https://www.mdhistory.org/events/>

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (1 year)

Mail to: The Germantown Historical Society, P.O. Box 475, Germantown, MD 20875

Single: \$20

Senior: \$20

Family: \$25

Corporate: \$100

Supporting: \$100

Non-profit organization: \$30

Additional tax-deductible contribution

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone(s) _____ Date _____

e-mail _____