

hundredth anniversary of the founding of Maryland. More recently, a number of county historical societies have been organized.

As might be expected, Annapolis has been the center of attention among those interested in our colonial heritage. Historic Annapolis, Incorporated, the local historical society, has undertaken to preserve the old buildings and to persuade those constructing new ones to maintain the distinctive character of the "Old City", an area which was just recently designated a National Historic District by the Department of the Interior. The State House, the Hammond-Harwood House and Whitehall, about five miles out of the city, have likewise been designated National Historic Landmarks. Plans to tear down the Paca House were thwarted when Historic Annapolis and the State combined to purchase the building. The Maryland Historical Trust and Historic Annapolis are working together to develop gardens, an art and cultural center and a visitors' hall at this site. The Shaw House was also purchased by the State to save it from possible destruction. It now provides additional office space for members of the General Assembly.

### Government and Politics

On June 16, 1965, Governor J. Millard Tawes established by executive order a 27-member commission to examine the nearly century-old Constitution of Maryland and determine whether it would be advisable to hold a convention for the purpose of preparing a new constitution and how it might be accomplished. In the course of events, a Constitutional Convention, composed of 142 members elected by the voters of Maryland, assembled in the State House in Annapolis on September 12, 1967 to undertake the task of drafting a new Constitution. The formal signing of the document prepared by the Convention occurred on January 10, 1968. In spite of all the careful preparation and hard work that had gone into drafting it, the proposed Constitution was overwhelmingly rejected by the voters at the election held on May 14, 1968, the vote being 367,101 against and 284,033 for ratification.

Although the document was defeated in its entirety, some of the provisions of the proposed constitution have since been enacted by the Legislature. One was the reorganization of the executive branch of government, which consolidated numerous departments, commissions, bureaus and other State agencies into eleven new major departments, each headed by a cabinet-level Secretary. Another proposal adopted was the establishment of the district court system,