

Maryland's First Family

*Governor Tawes and His Wife
Are Finding Government House
a Big Change from Their Modest
Ranch-Style Home in Crisfield*

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WHEN J. Millard Tawes and his pretty wife, Ayalynne, moved from Crisfield to Annapolis two months ago, they exchanged the serenity of a modest ranch-style house (seven rooms, two baths, one servant) on the Little Annesmessex River for the bustling, hotel-like atmosphere of the three-story mansion (33 rooms, 12 baths, 9 servants) that for almost a century has been the residence of Maryland's governors.

The difference in size between Governor and Mrs. Tawes's real home and their official one is some indication of the vast difference in their daily routine since they became Maryland's First Family.

Despite the many comforts and conveniences of Government House, as the executive mansion is properly called, life there is not easy. Regardless of how hard a governor and his

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wife may try to preserve a normal amount of privacy, the fact remains that privacy is the price of occupancy.

Part of Government House is shared with the public. Student, club and civic groups swarm through its first-floor rooms on the average of twice a day—and the First Lady is expected to greet all of them.

MRS. TAWES has inherited a rigid and taxing social schedule into which she was initiated at once. During her first weeks in Annapolis she held a series of eight breakfasts for the members of the State Legislature—who were invited in twenty in staffs.

Henceforth she will also entertain a multitude in the mass. Hundreds of people, for example, will attend the buffet supper that will precede the inaugural ball at the end of this month. The next four years will bring an endless succession of afternoon teas and receptions and a dearth of evenings when she and the Governor will be home alone and can read, watch television or talk leisurely.

Built in 1867 in a style characteristic of the period, Government House was modeled inside and out in 1965. The mans-

roof and other mid-Victorian features were replaced by broad gables, a sloping Colonial-type roof, Palladian windows, and end chimneys more in harmony with those on older Annapolis buildings. Prior to 1867, Maryland governors lived in a building on the Naval Academy grounds.

The front door of Government House opens onto a large central hall with a polished parquet floor, handsome chandeliers and winding stairway with walnut rail that runs up the entire three floors.

The hall serves as a divider between state and family rooms. To the left are state reception rooms, the state drawing room, the music room and a powder room. To the right are family reception and sitting rooms, the Governor's private dining room and his office.

At the rear of the hall are the main entrance to the state dining room and a hallway that leads to the butler's pantry, housekeeper's office and a back staircase.

There are six bedrooms and five baths on the second floor, also a library and sitting room. The third floor has four bedrooms, two baths and four storage rooms. Down in the basement are the kitchen, laundry, freezer locker and storage rooms, a

cloakroom, servants' quarters, a gardener's workroom and a bedroom for the three State policemen who are assigned to Government House.

Since the house is completely furnished even to linens and silver, Mrs. Tawes brought only a few things from her home in Crisfield. Among them were two rockers and a lounge chair for the upstairs sitting room, baby pictures of her son and daughter, pictures of her four grandchildren, a couple of lamps and her electric organ.

MUSIC has long been important to the Tawes family. Mrs. Tawes, who studied at the Peabody, sings as well as plays and was in the choir of Ashby Methodist Church in Crisfield for many years. Her mother-in-law, Mrs. James B. Tawes, is still singing with that choir at the age of 90. The Governor was once a member of the Crisfield Volunteer Fire Company band, playing trumpet and saxophone. Both the children, Jimmie Lee, now Mrs. William R. Wilson, and Philip, are musical.

In running the Government House, Mrs. Tawes is assisted by a housekeeper, butler, one full-time and one part-time cook, three maids, a handyman and a gardener.

The only member of the staff "living in" at present is the housekeeper, Mrs. Gertrude Cooper, who formerly was a hotel manager on the Eastern Shore. Several of the servants are old retainers wise in Government House protocol. One of the maids has been on hand since Herbert R. O'Connor's administration.

The regular cook prepares all of the food served in the family dining room and some of the meals for the state dining room. A Baltimore caterer handles large dinner parties and receptions.

Mrs. Tawes, who loves to cook, no longer has time to spend in the kitchen, but she does plan to make some of her specialties for small dinners. Her terrapin soup is the Governor's favorite and she is famous for oyster stew and a crab casserole. For the stew, she insists on doing the shucking herself.

Since she moved into Government House she has been deluged with mail, including, of course, a lot of requests for contributions to philanthropic projects. She has made a valiant attempt to answer letters personally but she cannot hope to acknowledge all of them.

Whenever she has an opportunity she

reads up on the history of the house and on interesting facts about its furnishings—partly out of curiosity but also because she wants to be prepared for questions that visitors may ask her. She also is working hard at curbing her habit of turning out the lights when she leaves a room.

"Maybe my Somerset county thrift is showing," she explains, "but after 43 years as a housewife my fingers automatically reach for the light switch. Fortunately, the servants have been doing a good job of covering up for me."

THE amount of hand-shaking that Mrs. Tawes will have to do between now and 1963 doesn't worry her as much as the prospect of standing for hours during formal receptions.

"I survived inauguration day beautifully as far as shaking hands was concerned," she says, "but my feet hurt me so badly before it was over that I was tempted to kick off my shoes. The only thing that prevented me from doing it was fear that a photographer would catch me in the act. I didn't want a picture of my stocking feet turning up in the newspaper."

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