

THE CLAMSHELL

A Quarterly Newsletter of the Maryland State Archives

Box 5, Folder 4

Fall 2024

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DOCUMENTING GOVERNMENT • PROMOTING HISTORY • SECURING RIGHTS

Council of State Archivists (CoSA)- A Definition

The Council of State Archivists (CoSA) is a non-profit professional membership organization of the state and territorial government archives of the United States, representing fifty states, five territories, and the District of Columbia. CoSA offers educational, professional development, and networking opportunities for the staff of member institutions, as well as advocating on issues relating to sound policy, broad awareness and fiscal support for government archives. Staff of the MSA serve on committees and workgroups of this organization.

Letter from the Assistant State Archivist

Mr. Vincent Leggett, a partner and friend of the Archives for many years, recently passed away. As historian and founder of Blacks of the Chesapeake Foundation, his is a loss for all Marylanders. Vince was a tireless advocate for preserving African American history on the Chesapeake Bay, and his enduring legacy will continue to live through those who knew him and the invaluable body of work he left behind.

Vince made an indelible impact, both in our agency and in the community at large. His commitment to working with our interns to document the intellectual content of his extensive collection—content that vividly humanizes the people and places it represents—left a profound impression on us all.



Preserving Maryland's history goes beyond government records; it is an integral part of our mission. Since its establishment in 1935, our Special Collections Department has been dedicated to the care, preservation, accessioning, and description of non-government records, as charged in Maryland law. Community archiving is central to this effort, ensuring that Maryland's historical record represents all people, regardless of ethnicity or background. We encourage Marylanders to challenge the notion that only the histories of prominent individuals or organizations deserve preservation.

Our commitment to supporting community archiving extends beyond adding collections to our institution. We aim to educate and empower communities to create sustainable archives that can thrive independently. This work requires collaboration, partnerships, and a shared passion for inclusive historical preservation. Vince Leggett understood the importance of this vision, and we honor his legacy by inviting communities to join us in ensuring that all of Maryland's history is preserved and accessible for generations to come.

Corey A. Lewis
Assistant State Archivist

Staff Updates

Welcoming New Staff to the Archives Team

In September, we welcomed our new cohort of Department of Service and Civic Innovation Maryland Corps Service Year Members. They started their service with us on Wednesday, September 11 and work through June 24, 2025 rotating through many core archival functions with department mentors. We are so pleased to be hosting them and to provide professional development along their career journey and we are thankful for all the managers and staff who are supporting the DSCI program through supervision and training.



From Left to Right:

Adrian Ramallosa is a first year member who will be beginning in the Reference Services rotation. Adrian is an Annapolis-born Marylander and a graduate of Annapolis High School. He looks forward to working hard with everyone and learning as much as he can.

Rebecca Scarborough is a first year member in the IT department. She grew up in Cecil County, moved around a bit, and has ended up right back in Cecil County again. IT is a career change for her, and the Archives is the perfect fit, as she has a Masters of Library Science from Indiana University, a Bachelor's in English from Washington College in Chestertown, and an Associate's degree in Computer Programming from Cecil College in North East. She is already enjoying her time in the Archives and is looking forward to learning as much as she can.

Favour Ijaola is a first year member in the IT department. She is a recent graduate from Prince George's Community College with an Associate's Degree in Cybersecurity. A native of Prince George's County, Favour is passionate about technology and eager to learn more about the field. During her time with us, Favour is excited to not only expand her technical knowledge but also to deepen her understanding of history and Maryland's rich heritage.

Alexander Callahan is a first year member who will be beginning in the Special Collections/Conservation rotation. Alexander may look familiar because he is a former volunteer at the Maryland State Archives in the Digital Acquisition, Processing, and Publication; Appraisal and Description; and Reference Services departments. Alexander earned his Bachelor's degree in Global Affairs at George Mason University. He is currently pursuing an MLIS degree at the University of Maryland.

Emerson Borghardt is also a first year member who will be beginning in the Special Collections/Conservation rotation. Emerson grew up in a Navy family and moved around a lot, but they spent the most time on a farm in Southern Maryland where they were born. They have had a wide range of experiences and are excited to collect one more here.

Kendall Hahn is a second year member who is a participant in the Leadership Program, having been a successful member of the first cohort of the Maryland Corps Service Year. Kendall is spending full time in the Digital Acquisition, Processing and Publication department, and she will also be helping the new members in the Maryland Corps get acclimated at the MSA.

In addition, we also welcomed three new staff members.



Alex Aboagye will be working in IT as a Database Specialist II. Alex comes with years of experience working in different programming languages, and he looks forward to becoming familiar with MSA's many information technology initiatives and systems. One of his first projects with us is working on adding searchable materials to the Mayis website in collaboration with the Special Collections Department.



Suzanna Codd joined us as a contractual Archivist Trainee who started in Reference Services in September. A native Marylander, Suzanna graduated from Hood College with a Bachelor of Arts in Public History. Her previous experience includes working as a museum assistant and history camp assistant director for Rose Hill Manor Historic Site in Frederick County, and as the 2023 Reference summer intern here at the Maryland State Archives. Along with her experience in retail, Suzanna's love of Maryland history and skills in working with the public make her a valued addition to the Reference Services team.



Andrew Forschler joined our staff in October as a contractual Archival Trainee in the Appraisal Department. Andrew will be specializing in supporting digital transfers. Andrew recently graduated from the University of Maryland with an MLIS and an MA in History. In 2021, he was named the undergraduate researcher of the year. During this summer, he worked as an intern at the Archives, supporting various community collections such as the Blacks of the Chesapeake, Venice Beach, and currently the Friends of the Crownsville Hospital. Professionally, Andrew is interested in community collections and serving the state and communities of Maryland.

Awards

On October 29, 2024, Director of Research, Education and Outreach Chris Haley was awarded the Patricia Barland Heritage Leadership Award from the Chesapeake Crossroads Heritage Area.



Staff Development

Connecting State Archives and NARA

In October, Assistant State Archivist Corey Lewis and members of the Appraisal and Description staff including Kathryn Baringer, Rachel Rabinowitz, Chris Schini and Andrew Forschler, attended a meeting of regional archives at the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington DC to share knowledge and discuss the transition to paperless records. This was the first in a series of quarterly meetings of archivists from the DC, Virginia, Delaware and Maryland area to come together to talk about common issues for the benefit of the collections and the public.

MML

In November, Director of Appraisal and Description, Kathryn Baringer, was honored to attend Maryland Municipal League’s (MML) 2024 Excellence In Leadership Fall Conference in Cambridge, Maryland. The MML has the mission to advocate, empower and protect the interests of their 160 local governments members and elevate local leadership, deliver impactful solutions for our communities, and build an inclusive culture for the Marylanders they serve.

MARAC

Also in November, staff virtually attended the Fall Maryland Mid Atlantic Regional Archives Conference including Christine Alvey, Alexander Callahan, Maria Day, Camille DiMarco, Joyce Phelps, Rebecca Scarborough, and Emily Oland Squires. Director of Library and Government Publications and Deputy Director of Special Collections Megan Craynon served as co-chair of the programming committee for the event, and Reference Services Archivist Morgan Miller led a panel discussion on Empathy in Archiving with participants Director of Reference Services Rachel Frazier, and Archives' staff alumni Krystal Appiah of University of Virginia, John Gartrell of Duke University, and Dr. Joni Jones Floyd of University of Maryland.

SAA and CoSA

Meet Me in St. Louis (and Chicago): The Value of Conference Attendance for Modern Archivists

By Rachel Frazier, Director, Reference Services, Maryland State Archives

“If we don't understand the deeper purpose of our focus, we'll just be pushing around paperwork... True intelligence goes beyond computers: true intelligence is serving the people and the land.” Keynote speaker Manulani Aluli Meyer spoke these words at the plenary for the Chicago 2024 Society of American Archivists (SAA) Conference, with the impactful theme of bringing not only ideas together, but a shared purpose.

This year, I was fortunate to travel to the amazing cities of Chicago and St. Louis for conferences that brought together archivists from our states and territories. We enjoyed an exceptionally vibrant conference and awards season this year, with meetings full of educational sessions, round table discussions, networking, and repository tours. Staff is grateful to the Friends of the Maryland State Archives 501(c)(3) organization for supporting employee professional development throughout the year.

Chicago: Society of American Archivists 2024 Fall Conference

In August 2024, Director of Research Chris Haley and I attended the Society of American Archivists' conference in Chicago, Illinois. This opportunity meant I was able to cheer Chris on as he received the prestigious Society of American Archivists Diversity Award for his work as the director of the Study of the Legacy of Slavery in Maryland.

I was excited to present a professional poster on Maryland's Role in the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. Much of this centered on an 1892 letter in our collections from Joseph Seldon Davis, a Black lawyer from Baltimore who advocated for representation at the fair. One of my goals as a reference archivist is to help users connect with the stories and lives depicted in archival records, and see the value in even our lesser-used collections. We hold a single clamshell of administrative files documenting Maryland's involvement with the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, allowing us to glimpse our triumphs of industry, art, and agriculture, while also exploring a time capsule of social, racial, gender, and cultural issues affecting Marylanders' lives. At the conference, this also let me connect with other archivists

not only over this unique history, but also on the value of using unique collections as a form of outreach to make archives more accessible and less intimidating.

In fact, the Hilton Chicago where the conference was held is located only a ten-minute drive from historic Jackson Park, the location of the 1893 World's Fair. Most of the buildings have long since been torn down. However, a small number still stand, like the Museum of Science and Industry, whose exhibitions weave through the fair's original Palace of Fine Arts. The museum stands directly across the street from the site of the fair's Maryland Building, now a stretch of green lawn in front of the museum. Exploring the museum and its grounds and interior reminded me how impressive an undertaking the fair's designers had accomplished.



Another benefit of attending conferences is gaining appreciation for the history and culture of the area. I was fortunate to arrive a day early and enjoy a tour of the Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio in Oak Park, just outside Chicago. Wright's designs have always struck me as a bit midcentury-modern, so I was fascinated to learn that he existed in the Victorian era and simply had a vision that was ahead of his time.

Thanks to funding from the Friends of the Maryland State Archives, I also attended additional educational sessions, and was able to share notes and materials with my colleagues here at the Archives. Sessions ranged from the impact of artificial intelligence on archives, reports from projects archiving Black life, preservation of LGBTQ+ archives, reparative description when describing Down Syndrome in records, and decolonization through virtual repatriation of Indigenous records. Chris Haley and I also reconnected with a former MSA intern, Krystal Appiah, now the Head of Collection Development for the Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library at the University of Virginia.

One of the most impactful conference sessions I have ever attended was a two-hour workshop: Culturally Responsive Approaches Towards Indigenous Materials. The workshop was led by Indigenous archivists Selena Ortega-Chiolero / Nay'dini'aa Na' Kayax from Chickaloon Native Village), Vina Begay from Arizona State University Libraries, and Melissa Stoner from University of California, Berkeley. It was a powerful reminder that for Indigenous communities, archives are not seen as the natural form of knowledge, and Indigenous peoples are the rightful owners of all of their information. We also trained on recognizing culturally sensitive materials, and material that could potentially lead to secondary trauma.

St. Louis: Council of State Archivists Annual Meeting

In September 2024, Assistant State Archivist, Corey Lewis, received the Council of State Archivists' Victoria Irons Walsh Emerging Leader award for epitomizing the philosophy that communities should be empowered to tell their own stories by conducting outreach to underserved communities and fostering trust. I also was humbled to receive the CoSA Ancestry Leadership Award, recognizing a complete redesign of our Search Room to meet Society of American Archivists and ADA standards, as well as continual work on building a specialized reference team and research guides. These awards included funds to travel to the 2024 Council of State Archivists' conference in St. Louis, Missouri, to continue professional education and development. The venue, the Angad Arts Hotel, immersed guests in interactive modern arts exhibitions, and as their executive director Joy Banks pointed out, the Council of State Archivists is a unique organization, so it was fitting to select a unique hotel.

The Council of State Archivists “provides leadership to strengthen and support state and territorial archives leaders and staff in their work to preserve and provide access to government records,” as their mission statement expresses. Although the conference included informative educational sessions, one of my favorite features was participation in affinity groups: a series of hour-long round table discussions organized by topic. Just a few of these topics included advocacy, AI, cultural competency, disaster preparedness, education and outreach, records management, and reference.

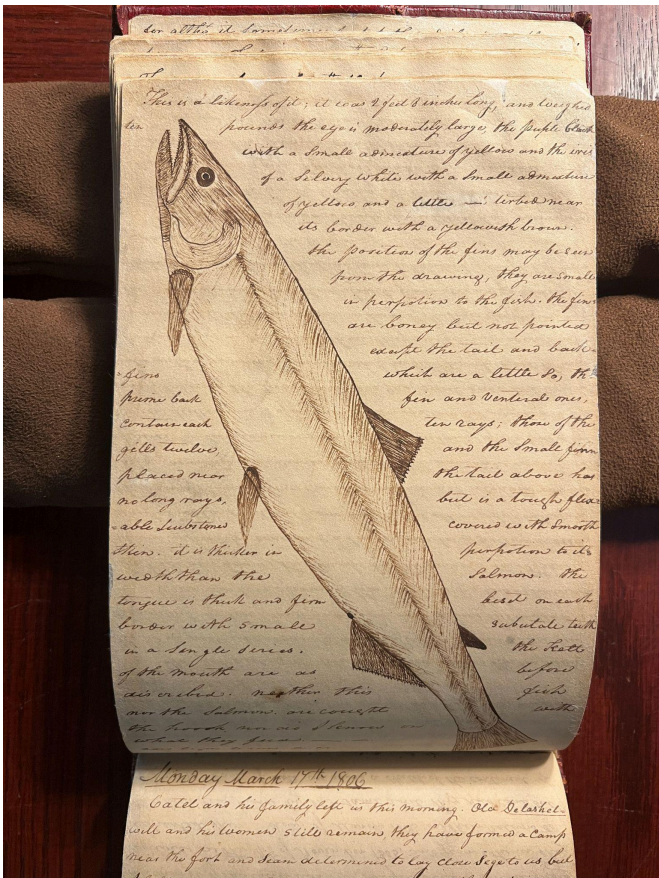
We heard from archivists not only from many states, but also from the territories. The challenges faced in the territories were sobering:

- In Alaska, it is so hard to find vendors who can repair scanning equipment that archivists have learned to keep the crates in which equipment arrives, and ship it back to the vendor in the country of origin. Even if this means shipping a scanner all the way back to Germany, paying the hourly rate for repairs is more feasible than searching futilely for a local vendor.
- In Puerto Rico, high winds forced an air conditioner from a window, damaging a ceiling inside their building. They now have to find another place to store their server that maintains electronic records, and they cannot afford the cloud.
- In Guam, regulations require six contractors to apply for a contract, when only three elevator contractors exist in all of Guam. This means getting an affidavit allowing the archives only three vendors to compete for the contract. This delay can result in missing a grant's deadline, in turn resulting in a reprimand or even a loss of that funding.



The Missouri Historical Society graciously served as the venue for the conference's reception. The society is located in a 1920s building that once served as the temple for a Hebrew Congregation before it outgrew the space in the 1980s. The building has a storied history, hosting Martin Luther King Jr. as a speaker in 1960. The exquisite gilded details on the interior of the dome required specialists for restoration, a skill in danger of being forgotten if not continued with future generations.

Staff brought out fascinating (and fragile!) records for display, including a notebook from William Clark of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, a yearbook of Anna Mae Bullock (the incomparable Tina Turner), and a chart hand drawn by Charles Lindbergh. The drawing of a fish in the journal of William Clark shows the detail Clark was attempting to convey in an era before photography would have allowed him to relay the image of the animal and plant species the expedition encountered.



Although I had to fly out Friday night, Corey Lewis enjoyed other wonderful outings planned for conference attendees in the area, including a baseball game, and tours of the Lincoln Presidential Library, the Illinois State Archives, and the Lincoln Museum.

Through conference attendance, archivists learn from each other, share ways we work to meet their users' needs even in times of budget shortages, and remind each other of the many reasons we love our profession, our collections, and our communities.

Events and Outreach

Community Preservation Day

By Owen Lourie, Research Archivist and Outreach Coordinator, Maryland State Archives

On October 19, staff from the Maryland State Archives conducted a community preservation day at the Hyattsville Public Library. The event was an opportunity for members of the public to have personal items be digitized. This allows people to get digital copies of important items, and to have them preserved in the Archives' Community Collection, which preserves them for the future. These kinds of events are a good way to introduce people to the Archives, and to help the public understand that their history is important and has a place in our collections.

This event was the first time the Archives held a preservation day at an external site, and it was a great success, attracting more than 20 visitors. People brought items that included birth certificates, family photos, discharge papers from ancestors who were Black Civil War soldiers, an ornate marriage certificate from the early 1900s, and an autograph from Count Basie and his band!

We were able to transport one of our Scanmaster scanners for the event, allowing participants to have their items imaged with state of the art equipment and to allow for larger documents to be scanned.



Caption: Reference Archivist Rhys Burns helps a community member compile information about her items, while others wait for their items to be scanned.



The Archives staff who made the event possible were Reference Archivist Rhys Burns, Imaging Specialist Robert Gasperino, Assistant State Archivist Corey Lewis, Outreach Coordinator Owen Lourie, and Serve Member Kendall Hahn. We are so grateful to our partners at the Hyattsville Library: Hannah Erickson, Heather Jackson, Paul Moreno, and former MSA staffer Dan Ramirez! We also received great assistance from several University of Maryland students, Kavya Kinjalka, Nizar Ghomari, and Arnab Sanyal, who volunteered their time to work with visitors. The Archives is looking forward to conducting similar events with other community partners in the future!

Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission Convenes Public Hearings

The Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission (MLTRC) held four public hearings this fall. Established in 2019 by House Bill 307 of the Maryland General Assembly, the Commission is authorized to convene open hearings in the communities where a racially motivated lynching of an African American by a white mob has been documented. The Maryland State Archives Director of Research, Education and Outreach Chris Haley serves as a Commissioner and the MSA serves as a supporting agency for the MLTRC by hosting its website.

On October 5, the MLTRC hosted a county hearing for Montgomery County at the Universities of Shady Grove in Rockville. This event documented the life stories and the lynchings of [George Peck](#) in Poolesville on January 10, 1880, [John Diggs-Dorsey](#) in Darnestown on July 27, 1880, and [Sidney Randolph](#) in Rockville on July 4, 1896.

On October 26, the MLTRC hosted a regional hearing for Cecil and Harford Counties at Ames United Methodist Church in Bel Air. The meeting shared the biographies and subsequent murders of [Frederick Pearce](#) in Cecilton on September 26, 1861, [Isaac Moore](#) in Belair on July 22, 1868, [Jim Quinn](#) in Whitehall on October 2, 1869, [John Jones](#) in Elkton on July 29, 1872, and [Lewis Harris](#) in Belair on March 26, 1900.

On November 16, the MLTRC hosted a regional hearing for St. Mary's, Calvert and Charles Counties at the St. Mary's County Public Library in Leonardtown. The hearing focused on the lives of [Charles Whitley](#) who was lynched in Prince Frederick on June 6, 1886 and [Benjamin Hance](#) who was lynched in Leonardtown on June 17, 1887.

On December 7, the MLTRC held a regional hearing for Kent, Caroline and Queen Anne's Counties at Minary's Dream Alliance, Inc. in Chestertown. This hearing told the stories of [David Thomas](#) who was lynched in Denton on October 9, 1854, [Jim Wilson](#) who was lynched in Oakland in November 1862, [John Fields](#) who was lynched in Queenstown on April 24, 1863, [Asbury Green](#) who was lynched in Centreville on May 13, 1891, and [James Taylor](#) who was lynched in Chestertown in May 17, 1892.

Registration for the upcoming public hearings is available online, including Howard County on January 11, Prince George's County on January 25 in Bowie, and Carroll County on February 1. There will also be a concluding hearing on February 8 to address institutional complicity in racial terror lynching in the state focused on government agencies, the press, and law enforcement. Descendants of the victims and descendants of perpetrators, expert witnesses, community members, scholars, and archivists will have the opportunity to provide testimony and make recommendations for achieving racial healing. These are free, public events and you can get further details, view recordings of past meetings and hearings, register for upcoming hearings, read biographies and follow the work of the MLTRC on the Commission's [website](#). Anyone interested in giving testimony or who has questions or comments can contact the Commission staff via email at mltrc@maryland.gov.

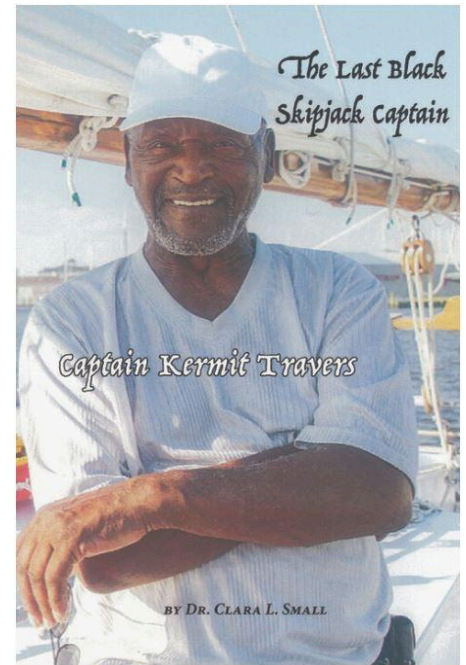
Collection Highlights

Book Notes

By Christine Alvey, Librarian, Maryland State Archives

Featured in this month's Book Notes is a new MSA Library acquisition: *The Last Black Skipjack Captain: Captain Kermit Travers* by Dr. Clara L. Small. This pamphlet size softbound book, measuring only 8 inches x 5 inches, tells the larger than life story of a remarkable Chesapeake Bay Waterman, from his boyhood of poverty to the top of his profession as captain of a traditional workboat, oystering while under sail. In just 81 pages Dr. Small provides a window into an old fashioned way of working that has all but disappeared from the Bay. At the same time it teaches us what it was like to live and succeed as an African American in a world without advantages.

It is a beautiful, moving story.



Friends of the Crownsville Hospital Patient Cemetery

By Andrew Forschler, Archivist Trainee, Maryland State Archives

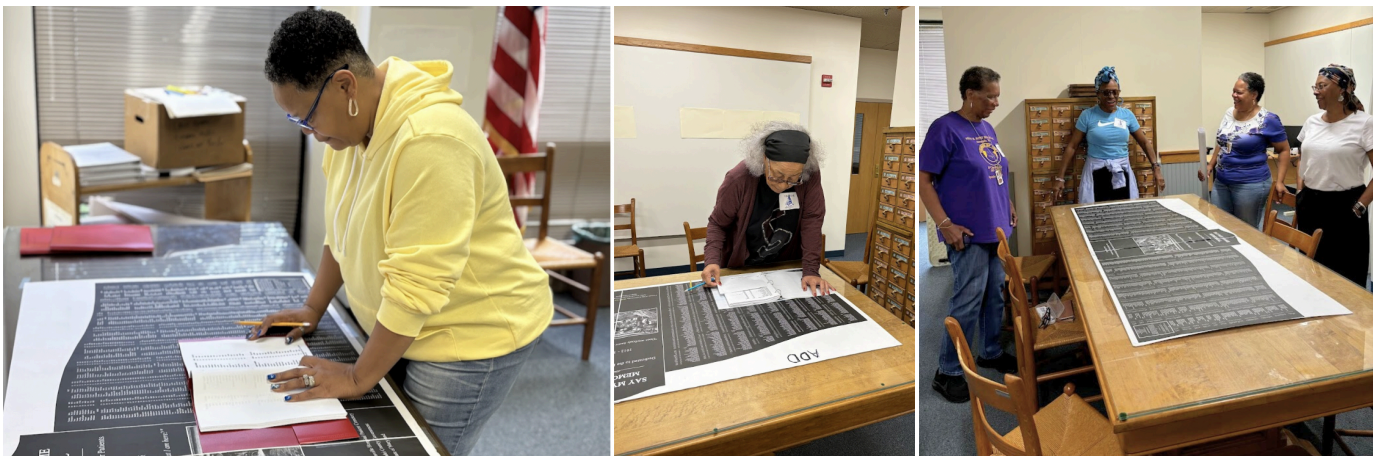


Captions: (Left to Right) Cynthia Dark, Shana Brown, and Alva Chastain (left image) and Bernadette Pruitt (right image) reviewing the Crownsville Hospital Patient Cemetery Memorial at Maryland State Archives.

In 1911, twelve Black men who were psychiatric patients at Spring Grove Hospital in Catonsville, Maryland, were transported to Crownsville.. Upon arrival, the patients were directed by white doctors to build a new hospital. This new hospital was named the Hospital for the Negro Insane of Maryland¹—later called Crownsville State Hospital. This hospital was the only psychiatric asylum for Black patients in Maryland until it was desegregated in 1962. The hospital closed in 2004. Now the campus is home to non-profit organizations and local government offices.

Despite the new use of the hospital campus, the patient cemetery located on the grounds is a stark reminder of the property's history. Few of the grave markers in this cemetery have names. Most of them only have numbers. There was little clue as to who was buried in the cemetery until local historian Janice Hayes-Williams gathered a group to research the cemetery and recover the names of the patients buried there.

Janice Hayes-Williams visited the Crownsville State Hospital for the first time in the early 2000s with her uncle, George Phelps, the first Black law enforcement officer in Anne Arundel County. After visiting, Hayes-Williams wanted to dig deep into its history, eventually forming Friends of the Crownsville Hospital Patient Cemetery as a means to do so. The first priority of the Friends was to discover the names of the people buried in the cemetery. To that end, the Friends of Crownsville began researching at Maryland State Archives. They poured through every death certificate from Anne Arundel County from 1911-1970 and compiled a list of over 1,500 people who had died at Crownsville State Hospital between 1911-1965. They have continued to meet and research at the Maryland State Archives since 2022.



Captions: (Left to Right) Shana Brown (left image), Cynthia Carter (middle image) and Cynthia Dark, Janice Hayes-Williams, Shana Brown, and Bernadette Pruitt (right image) reviewing the Crownsville Hospital Patient Cemetery Memorial at Maryland State Archives.

With their new list of names, the Friends of Crownsville began conducting *Say My Name* ceremonies at the patient cemetery. At these ceremonies, attendees stand in a circle and read off names of people buried there. Over the years, the attendance at the ceremonies has increased, and awareness of the history of the Crownsville State Hospital has grown as well. All the while, Janice Hayes-Williams has advocated for a memorial to be erected at the patient cemetery to remember those buried there. Anne Arundel County Executive Stuart Pittman announced that a memorial

¹ The name “Hospital for the Negro Insane” is a reflection of the time at which the institution was created; it does not reflect current language or best practices but has been preserved for historical context and accuracy.

would be built on the Crownsville State Hospital campus in 2025. The memorial will be a large granite wall chiseled with the names of the patients buried at the cemetery, their age at death, and what state or country the patient was from, all organized by the patient's year of death.

In September and October of 2024, the Friends worked in shifts at Maryland State Archives to review and proofread a draft of the memorial. Going name by name, checking for spelling errors and standardization, the Friends of Crownsville worked hard reading and re-reading the text of the memorial.

Reviewing the memorial brought up emotions and provoked discussion amongst the Friends group. Shana Brown, one of the members, said she felt a major sense of accomplishment while reviewing the memorial and remembered all the work the Friends of Crownsville had done over the years. The massive loss of life and the humanity behind the names was of constant discussion. The sorrow behind the presence of an "unknown male" who died at the hospital was brought up numerous times as well. Reading over the "S/B"--the way of representing "stillborn" in the "age" column on the memorial--was a solemn moment every time. Janice Hayes-Williams focused on the relationship between the numbers on the grave markers and the names and wondered if there was a way to connect the two. Former Annapolis Alderwoman, former employee of the hospital, and one of the Friends of Crownsville Cynthia Carter began a discussion while reviewing the memorial about the inequity and racism in medicine which she continues to see affect her family and the Black community. Reviewing the memorial was not simply about proofreading to the Friends of Crownsville--it was a moment to remember the patients, discuss the echoes of history they see today, and recognize their hard work.

The memorial will impact all who see it. The mass of names permanently etched into rock will force viewers to reckon with the significant loss of life that occurred at the Crownsville State Hospital. It will raise questions--such as how could a patient at the hospital have a stillbirth? It will provoke discussion on racism and inequity in medicine. The memorial will also help to bring respect and humanity to the people buried at the patient cemetery. Instead of being known by numbers, the memorial will remember those buried at the cemetery by their names. It also suggests that there is more lurking in the history of the Crownsville State Hospital waiting to be discovered by researchers. This sentiment was echoed by Shana Brown who is hoping to do more research into the history of Crownsville after reviewing the memorial. In this sense, the memorial is as much a final capstone as it is a beginning. As the memorial marks an end of one phase of researching, it has the potential to bring forth new lines of research and new thought once the public is able to view it in context at the Crownsville State Hospital patient cemetery, hopefully sometime in 2025.

For those who are further interested in the work of the Friends of the Crownsville Hospital Patient Cemetery, see [SC6395](#) and the [Digital Maryland Online Collection Friends of the Crownsville Hospital Cemetery and Our Local Legacy](#)

Research Reflections

Voices of the Eastern Shore's Indigenous Tribes Shared on *Mayis*

By Maria Day, Senior Director of Special Collections, Conservation, & Library Services, Maryland State Archives



Caption: Black Corn/Pekatawas MaKaTaWai'U (Drew Shuptar-Rayvis) showing children a duck made from the weaving of cattail plants, digital photograph by the Pocomoke Indian Nation, 2023. [MSA SC 6396-1-2, Pocomoke Indian Nation Photograph Collection]

You can now listen [online](#) to Tribal Council leaders of the Pocomoke Indian Nation and the Nause-Waiwash Band of Indians sharing about their traditions, perspectives, and personal stories. These recordings are part of a series of oral history interviews organized by a team from the Maryland State Archives who are interested in preserving Native American community cultures. In the summer 2023, archivists built the Indigenous Archive Project for the Eastern Shore of Maryland with support from a generous grant from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority. The team hired Drew Shuptar-Rayvis, a cultural anthropologist, living historian, and Northern Cultural Ambassador of the Pocomoke Indian Nation, to be the principal researcher and project consultant. Mr. Shuptar-Rayvis recently completed his field work, recording 20 oral history

interviews from not only the Pocomoke Indian Nation, but other Native communities on the Delmarva Peninsula including the Nause-Waiwash Band of Indians, the Accohannock Tribe, and the Nanticoke Indians.

Project staff transcribed the audio files. First the draft transcriptions were created using AI software, and then the resulting text was manually corrected by archivists, in cooperation with each of the interviewees. MSA recently debuted the first group of seven interviews on a new “oral histories” tab on the Indigenous Records website, [Mayis](#). (“Mayis” is a word meaning “path” in Renape, an Algonquian dialect once spoken by some tribes on the Eastern Shore.)

Meanwhile, archives staff are working with the remaining interviewees to review their transcripts. Project Director, Maria Day, remarks, “We are sensitive to community members’ input, offering interviewees an opportunity to correct any misinterpretation in our transcripts or to edit segments that they prefer to keep private.” The Archives is planning to make additional oral histories live for public access before the end of 2024. The new releases will include interviews with Elders of the Nanticoke Indian Association.

Finally, there is great news for K-12 teachers and educators: The Archives’ partners at Maryland Humanities released Indigenous Inquiry Kits focusing on October 1, 2024. These primary source

teaching kits empower teachers and students to interact with authentic sources about and created by Native communities of the Chesapeake region. Maryland Humanities received support to create the inquiry kits from a grant awarded by the Library of Congress. The kits offer primary source documents, recordings, videos, and classroom-ready information about and by Indigenous cultures living in this region. The Maryland Humanities team is partnering with Maryland Public Television to produce accompanying Indigenous Education teaching modules, featuring videos with Tribal leaders, the Maryland State Archives' team, and a social studies teacher who participated in the Archives' Indigenous Education teacher cohort (summer 2023). The kits can be found on the MPT website [Thinkport](#), as well as on the *Mayis* [Resources](#) page.

Battle of Brooklyn Anniversary

By Owen Lourie, Research Archivist and Outreach Coordinator, Maryland State Archives

This August marked the 248th anniversary of the Battle of Brooklyn, the Revolutionary War battle where soldiers now called the Maryland 400 held back the British, allowing the rest of the Americans to escape off the battlefield. The Marylanders lost 256 men killed or captured, about 25 percent of their total strength.



Caption: American and Maryland flags, representing the 256 Maryland soldiers killed or captured at the Battle of Brooklyn in 1776, on display at the Old Stone House during the ceremony honoring these soldiers.

While the anniversary usually passes without much notice in Maryland, the tale of the Maryland 400 is commemorated with a large ceremony in New York, at the Old Stone House museum, close to where the Marylanders fought so bravely. Thanks to the generous support of the Friends of the Maryland State Archives, I was able to attend this year for the first time and got to witness how strong the memory of these soldiers is. There were close to 200 people in attendance, with plenty of guests from Maryland and many locals as well. At the ceremony, they read the names of the nearly 900 Maryland soldiers we know fought at the battle, drawing on research conducted by the Archives' long-running project, Finding the Maryland 400.

While I was there, I was able to give brief remarks about the soldiers and also make a plea for donations to help support the publication of the forthcoming book about these soldiers. This book, which explores their lives during and after the war, helps tell the story of all Maryland's soldiers in the War for Independence. Publication is dependent on outside funding.

To make a contribution through the Friends of the Maryland State Archives, go to <https://donations.msa.maryland.gov/pages/donate.aspx> and designate if for MD400. Thank you for your support!

Maryland250 Musings



On July 4, 2026, America will commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence with many events, displays and activities. The Maryland State Archives serves on the MD250 Commission and will join the semiquincentennial celebrations by sharing a number of reflections and projects over the next few years. Our focus is to raise up the contributions of all people, document the untold and underrepresented stories of Marylanders, and to preserve their rich legacy for future generations.

The Shifting Tides: Attitudes Surrounding the Burning of the Peggy Stewart, 1774-2024

By Robin Gower, Curator, Maryland Commission on Artistic Property, Maryland State Archives

“No other single act in Maryland played a greater role in shaping the attitudes individuals adopted toward the political conflicts both within the empire and at home”²

Here are the facts. On October 14, 1774, the brigantine *Peggy Stewart*, owned by Anthony Stewart and his father-in-law James Dick arrived in Annapolis after a three month journey from London, England. Onboard were “European & East India Goods,” 53 indentured servants, and about 2,000 pounds of banned tea.³ As early as the 16th, an ad hoc committee, with members from across Maryland, was formed to decide the *Peggy Stewart*'s fate. Four days later, on October 19, 1774, Stewart and Dick were rowed out to where the ship was docked in the Annapolis harbor and were forced to burn the *Peggy Stewart* and all its cargo.

Tensions around tea had been building in Maryland for weeks; the ship *Mary and Jane* was forced to leave the Frederick County port without unloading her cargo of tea just two months before.⁴ Many

² Hoffman, Ronald. *A spirit of dissension: Economics, politics, and the revolution in Maryland*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975, pp.133

³ Port of Entry Record, Annapolis, Inward Vessels, 14 October 1774 [Maryland State Archives, SE71-1]

⁴ Skaggs, David Curtis. *Roots of Maryland Democracy: 1753-1776*. Westport: Greenwood Press, Inc, 1973, pp.143

knew that Stewart and his partners were deeply in debt and thought they hoped to profit off the tea to recoup their losses, especially since they had a history of attempting to land banned goods. While some called for the tea to be stored in a warehouse, or burned in the street, a more radical faction called for the destruction of the ship and the tea, threatening to tar and feather Stewart and destroy his family's house, occupied by his wife, Jean, and their newborn daughter. With no recourse, Stewart set fire to his ship, after being forced to read a public apology.

The events surrounding the burning of the *Peggy Stewart* are as murky as the waters of the Severn River, but the purpose of this article is not to untangle them here. As Marylanders recently commemorated the burning with special events in 2024, including an aerial show performed by drones 250 years after they occurred, one might wonder how we got here. The story of the doomed vessel seemingly continues to find new life as it is retold, and at times reenacted, for the next generation.

Opinions and documentation surrounding the burning itself in 1774 are varied. As historian Jane McWilliams poignantly notes, “Witnesses do not always concur, some details may be rumor not fact,

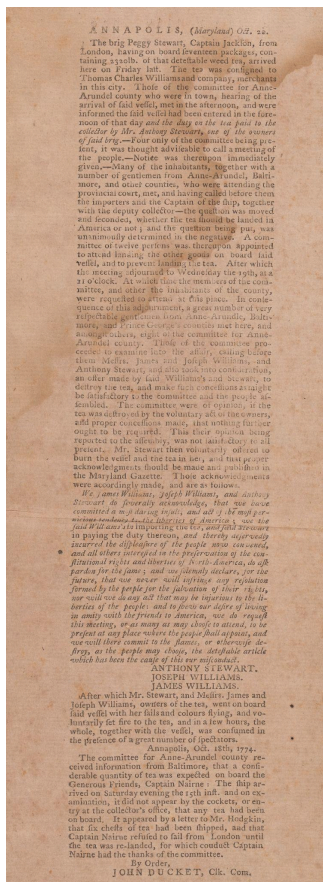
Maryland Gazette’s reporting is frustratingly incomplete.”⁵ While few written accounts of those in support of the actions survived, a letter from Charles Carroll of Annapolis to his son Charles Carroll of Carrollton hailed the action a bold step:

I find the People were in no disposition to harken to the Moderate measures you intended to propose. The Example will I hope deter others from the like offense [of importing tea], & the Enemies of America will be instructed by it not to expose their Slavish principles by their weak, imprudent, Silly & I may justly say impudent, Endeavors against the sentiments & interests of the whole Continent.⁶

Annapolis’ merchants universally condemned the burning for reasons that went beyond politics. One witness said he saw, “my Liberty destroyed which was done when fire was put to the brig [...] none but madmen could do such a thing”⁷ and another claimed, “the merciless mob would not spare his property. I begin to be out of love with patriotism.”⁸

The *Maryland Gazette*, the local and broadly distributed newspaper, mentions the *Peggy Stewart* several times. Its first appearance was in a broadside (left) was printed on October 20, 1774. A broadside was the 18th century equivalent of “breaking news”; it was a single-sided article,

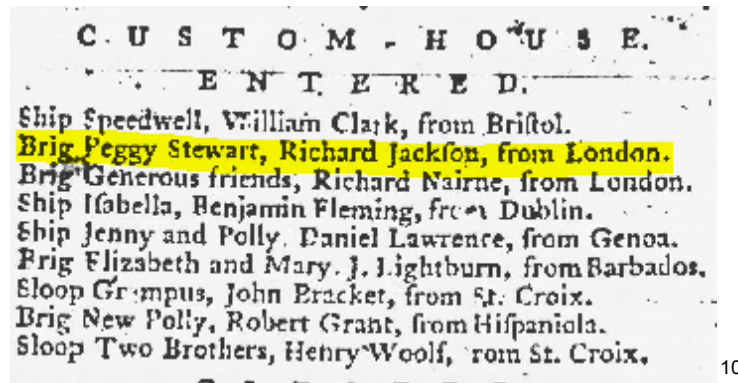
published before the next issue of the *Maryland Gazette* to be quickly and easily distributed. Although the full issue of the *Maryland Gazette* would be published the same day, this highlighted the sensational story of the events from the day before, reporting:



⁵ McWilliams, Jane Wilson. *Annapolis: city on the Severn: a history*. Baltimore, Crownsville: Johns Hopkins University Press ; Maryland Historical Trust Press, 2011.
⁶ Carroll, Charles (Annapolis). Hoffman, Mason, and Darcy Editors. *Dear Papa, Dear Charley: The Papers of Charles Carroll of Carrollton*. University of North Carolina Press, 2001, pp. 749-750.
⁷ John Galloway, letter to Samuel Galloway, October 20, 1774 (SC 125-1)
⁸ Adam Leverton, letter to Anne Galloway Cheston, October 20, 1774 (SC 5991-1-21)

“This their opinion being reported to the assembly, was not satisfactory to all present [...] and that proper acknowledgments should be made and published in the Maryland Gazette [...] There acknowledgments were accordingly made [...] After which Mr. Stewart, and Messrs. James and Joseph Williams, owners of the tea, went on board said vessel with her sails and colours flying, and voluntarily set fire to the tea, and in a few hours, the whole, together with the vessel, was consumed in the presence of a great number of spectators.”⁹

Interestingly, just one column over from the report of the vessel’s burning in the October 20, 1774 issue of the *Maryland Gazette*, the arrival of the ship is listed alongside other ships that arrived that week.



The events of the *Peggy Stewart* are retold with additional details in the October 27, 1774 *Maryland Gazette*, but the ship’s burning is not mentioned again until the April 13, 1775 issue five months later. The paper reprinted a letter originally published in *Public Ledger* (London, UK) entitled “Facts Relative to the Riot at Annapolis in Maryland.” It is clear from the tone of the letter that the author is a Loyalist and they find injustice in the mob’s actions against Stewart and Thomas Charles Williams & Co.

The *Peggy Stewart* is not mentioned again in the press until June 4, 1812, just weeks before the War of 1812 with Great Britain. In an open letter “To The Public”, James Williams, one of the consignors for the tea, provides his versions of the events from 38 years ago. Williams claimed it is his, “duty to myself to come forward and give a clear statement of the facts, as to remove any unfavourable impressions which may have been excited in the minds of those who are acquainted with the whole circumstances of the case” as he felt the editors of the *Maryland Gazette* had lately been unfairly slighting him.¹¹ Perhaps too, public sentiment surrounding those involved with the *Peggy Stewart* was changing with a possibility of another war with England looming. Williams goes on to state, “Little did I think, after having lived among them for fifty years, after having so long identified my interests with theirs, that I should be reproached [...] little did I think that I should now be stigmatized with a charge of disaffection to their country [...]”¹²

Another 15 years pass in silence, with no mention of the *Peggy Stewart*, but that changes in September 1827, when the *Niles’ Weekly Register* publishes a biography of Charles Carroll of

⁹ “Annapolis, (Maryland) Oct. 20.” *Maryland Gazette* (broadside), October 20, 1774.

¹⁰ “Annapolis, (Maryland) Oct. 20.” *Maryland Gazette* (broadside), October 20, 1774.

¹¹ “To The Public.” *Maryland Gazette*, June 04, 1812.

¹² Ibid.

Carrollton. In it, for the first time in print, Charles Carroll of Carrollton is attributed with advising Anthony Stewart to burn his vessel. Reportedly, Stewart and his supporters went to Carroll to ask for his protection, to which he replied:

It will not do, gentlemen, to export the tea to Europe of the West Indies. Its importation, contrary to the known regulations of the Convention, is an offense for which the people will not be so easily satisfied; and whatever may be my personal esteem for Mr. Stewart, and my wish to prevent violence, it will not be in my power to protect him, unless he consents to pursue a more decisive course of conduct. My advice is that he set fire to the vessel and her, together with the tea she contains, to the water's edge.¹³

This response is listed among Carroll's other notable actions during the course of the Revolutionary War, implying that this act too, was a patriotic act worthy of acclaim and remembrance. This quote is repeated in several papers the following month and even in a biography of Carroll published in 1856.¹⁴

It appears that once the *Peggy Stewart* was no longer part of living memory it disappeared from the general consciousness, at least in the press. Rarely mentioned for almost 30 years, the *Peggy Stewart* was thrown back into the spotlight of conversation at the beginning of the Civil War. Published on the front page of *The Baltimore Sun*, John C. LeGrand pens a two-and-a-half column letter advocating for Maryland to secede from the Union. Citing the burning of the *Peggy Stewart*, it's clear he viewed the actions of Marylanders that day as a bold act against the tyranny of the Crown as part of the revolution, ultimately making comparisons to what South Carolina had just done by seceding from the Union. LeGrand praises Marylanders for burning the ship claiming it, "illustrates what at that time was the difference between the tempers of the people of Maryland and Massachusetts" before criticizing Maryland's current inaction by "Union-savers".¹⁵

Others disagreed and thought the interpretation of events inapplicable to the current conflict. In a published response, James Touchstone decries:

"Your historical reference to "Peggy Stewart" and the respective "tea parties" will hardly be regarded as argumentative or as tending to "settle our difficulties"; neither will your analogy of the intolerable oppression heaped upon the colonies by the Crown of Great Britain, and that heaped upon South Carolina by the North, be admitted. It was not the *people* of England that the Colonies resisted [...] it was the British Government [...]"¹⁶

By the Civil War's end in 1866, perspectives were once again changing. One author felt the history was unworthy of commemoration, saying the burning was, "nothing more than a lust for power and place, and an anxiety to profit even at the expense of the prosperity and happiness of others."¹⁷

¹³"Charles Carroll of Carrollton." *Niles' Weekly Register*, September 29, 1827. pp. 15

¹⁴ See "Memoir of Charles Carroll of Carrollton" in *The Boston Pilot*, Vol. 19, No. 35, August 30, 1856.

¹⁵ "Letter to the Hon Reverdy Johnson." *The Baltimore Sun*, January 14, 1861.

¹⁶ "Letter to the Hon John C. LeGrand." *Port Tobacco Times and Charles County Advertiser*, January 31, 1861.

¹⁷ "The Past." *The Aegis*, June 08, 1866.

Dormant again for a while, the *Peggy Stewart* makes perhaps its grandest return in the 1870s. It is first referenced in a few “Then and Now” segments in local newspapers, but it gains more attention after its feature at the Maryland Historical Society Meeting in Baltimore in October 1872. Society President Benjamin Latrobe regales the story, first told to him by Charles Carroll of Carrollton while Latrobe was a law student, providing a “life-like and graphic picture” after it was “requested by a member”.¹⁸ In the realization that the centennial was near, public interest continued to grow. The *Peggy Stewart* had come to represent a patriotic event which could help unify a country still healing from the Civil War. As celebrations were being planned for the national centennial in 1876, Marylanders were looking for ways to celebrate the state’s contributions to the Revolution.

As early as January 1874, public officials were suggesting a recreation of the event.¹⁹ And the public seemed to agree with the idea. One responded, “It would not be inappropriate, since the centennial fever is spreading, for Maryland to celebrate this honorable incident in her history [...] the Legislature [...] should] celebrate and call attention to that spirit of our ancestry.”²⁰ A newspaper in Annapolis exclaimed, “Let us have a grand ‘tea party’ on the occasion, and endeavor to impress upon the hearts of the descendants of the patriots of the revolution, a little of the love of liberty and independence [...] a little more patriotic love of country and a little less partizan zeal would do the present generation a wonderful sight of good.”²¹

By the time of the centennial, plans for large scale celebrations were underway. Baltimore declared October 19, 1874 a public holiday.²² There was a parade of the Maryland National Guard, and people rang bells throughout the day.²³ Residents in Annapolis were asked to attend some celebratory event that day, whether it be a public gathering, hearing the Governor’s remarks, or illuminating their homes from 7-10pm.²⁴ The grandest of all the spectacles however was the burning of a small vessel in the Annapolis Harbor. The dramatic scene was sketched out by local Maryland artist Francis Blackwell Mayer (1827-1899) and featured in *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper*.²⁵



¹⁸ “Meeting of the Maryland Historical Society.” *The Baltimore Sun*, October 15, 1872.

¹⁹ “National Centennial- Remarks of Senator Baylor.” *The Baltimore Sun*, January 30, 1874.

²⁰ “The Maryland Tea Party.” *The Baltimore Sun*, 31 January 31, 1874.

²¹ “The ‘Peggy Stewart’.” *Maryland Republican and State Capital Advertiser*, February 21, 1874.

²² “The Annapolis Centennial.” *Maryland Republican and State Capital Advertiser*, October 03, 1874.

²³ “The Tea Burning at Annapolis.” *Port Tobacco Times and Charles County Advertiser*, October 23, 1874.

²⁴ “Resolutions of the City Corporation.” *Maryland Republican and State Capital Advertiser*, October 10, 1874.

²⁵ “A Centennial Celebration of the Burning of the ‘Peggy Stewart’”, *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper*, November 07, 1874, pp.

Mayer may be the primary contributor to why the story of the *Peggy Stewart* still lives on. He not only played an active role in the planning of the centennial celebrations, but also chose to depict the dramatic moments right before Stewart burned the ship in his 1896 painting (above, right) [MSA 1545-1111]. The massive painting, measuring over 6 feet high, is currently on display in the Old House of Delegates Chamber of the State House.



Caption: “A Centennial Celebration of the Burning of the ‘Peggy Stewart’, in *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper*

Around the turn of the 20th century, researcher Richard D. Fisher began to investigate the details surrounding the burning more closely. He discovered records held in England related to Anthony Stewart’s claim for reimbursement after the conclusion of the Revolutionary War in 1783. Fisher discovered Stewart’s and others’ sworn affidavits of the event. Fisher published these and his other findings periodically in the *Baltimore Sun* in 1905-1906. It is clear from his commentary that Fisher was disturbed by what he read, but was in the minority in viewing these acts as less than patriotic.

BURNING WAS DISGRACE

Mr. Richard D. Fisher Tells More About The Peggy Stewart.

WHAT HE FOUND BY SEARCHING

Delving In Records At Home And Abroad Led Him To Write To School Board.

Caption: “Bruning was Disgrace.” *The Baltimore Sun*, November 29, 1906.

By publishing the affidavits, he hoped that readers would think more critically about the *Peggy Stewart* and stop teaching the idea that it was wholly patriotic. “We must abandon the celebration of Peggy Stewart Day [...] we must expunge the Idolatry of Crime from the walls of the Temple of Justice. This is the retribution which enlightened

conscience demands [...]”²⁶

²⁶ “The Anthony Stewart papers in the British Archives.” *The Baltimore Sun*, May 26, 1905.

Fisher was not successful in his attempts to prevent the “arson of the Peggy Stewart” from being commemorated. There was a play about it in Annapolis for the 1974 bicentennial, which was resurrected in 1985; it's even part of the State House Tour. Not to mention its recent celebrations in October 2024.

What precisely keeps the *Peggy Stewart* in the forefront of Marylanders minds? Perhaps it is the ambiguity surrounding these events, with tantalizing lingering questions. None but the people present will fully know the truth, but it remains for us to decide how its story will live on. How should we reflect upon the events of 250 years ago? Was it an act of patriotism to be celebrated or an act of mob violence to be condemned? Should we continue to celebrate these actions in the future?



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