



HISTORIC ELLICOTT CITY, INC.

Mill Town News

Volume 1, Number 1

Winter 2006

Celebrating Thirty Years of Stewardship

On Sunday, January 15, 2006 more than 300 people gathered at the Ellicott City B&O Railroad Station Museum to celebrate Historic Ellicott City, Inc.'s 30 years of stewardship. A cast bronze plaque honoring our organization was dedicated by County Executive James Robey, and commendations were offered by Delegate Gail Bates and by County Council President Christopher Merdon. Sunny skies, the occasional passing train, the incredibly detailed Holiday Model Train Exhibit and delicious cuisine provided by Tersiguel's French Country Restaurant all contributed to the jovial atmosphere. Although we relinquish management of the museum, we do so with pride, knowing that through our restorations and careful maintenance we have provided a firm foundation for others to build on.



President Charlotte Holland and County Executive James Robey at Museum event on January 15.

Oral History Project

By Janet Kusterer

There are many ways of preserving history. HEC, Inc. has been instrumental in restoring some of the finest old buildings in Ellicott City, and now we want to preserve the stories that go with them. For the last year or so, tape recorder in hand, we have been contacting people with Ellicott City tales to share and recording their stories. We hope that by sharing a few of these stories you might want to share yours as well.

Jean Hannon was one of the early leaders of the restoration of Ellicott City. People talk about her boundless energy in the 1960's, as she organized volunteers to clean up the town. In 1961 she spearheaded a project she calls 'PEC'—Paint Ellicott City. A member of the Cross Country Garden Club, she read about a contest sponsored by Sears to beautify your community. Jean said, "We decided to fix up the area of Main Street from E. T. Clark's (8000

Main St.) to Columbia Pike. We wanted to paint the fronts of all the buildings and bring in some color. We painted in June, 1961. That day the high school band played for us, the high school shop class made window boxes for the buildings and the high school students babysat the young kids. It was a big deal. We won \$1000 and used it to open "The Old Line Shop", an antiques shop run by volunteers that stayed in business
See Oral History Project, continued on page 5

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By Charlotte Holland

Have you missed hearing from us? Our printing and publishing arm has been busy with Decorator Show House activity, but we're glad to be able to send you a Newsletter again. We have much to report.

Our Decorator Show House at Longwood was an outstanding success, both financially and esthetically. Of course, after Al Smith's beautiful and carefully authentic restoration, how could we miss?

The place literally glowed at the Preview Party, and attendance figures proved its unique attraction even on cold rainy days. Thanks and congratulations are due our Show House leaders: Lorna Ozgun, Lissa Stolte, Carroll Frey, Robin Evans, and Ellen Bell. Many thanks also to our volunteers and the HEC members who worked behind the scenes.

After nearly 30 years of HEC, Inc. operation, the Ellicott City B & O Railroad Station Museum will soon be under new management. Effective February 1, 2006, Howard County Government will assume management of the building as part of its plan to oversee the 16 historic sites owned by the County. The Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Museum

will operate the Museum under a lease with the County. As the time of transfer approaches, we feel a sense of accomplishment and carry with us many wonderful memories. We hope you were able to share in our celebration of 30 years of stewardship of the Museum at our recent farewell party January 15th. A great crowd enjoyed food, beverage, and memories.

And finally, our future looks exciting as we're embarking on a new ambitious project. We're hoping to build a replica 18th century mill in the Ellicott City Historic District! You'll be hearing more from us as this project progresses. As they say, stay tuned....

Howard County Council Resolution

On May 2, 2005 the Howard County Council passed a resolution congratulating Historic Ellicott City, Inc. on its 30th anniversary. The Council "commends it for its forward thinking efforts to restore the city and celebrate its history, and extends best wishes for continuing success in preserving the County's capital city and sharing its history and charm with generations of residents and visitors."



Executive Director Janet Kusterer accepts the congratulatory resolution from the County Council.

Changes

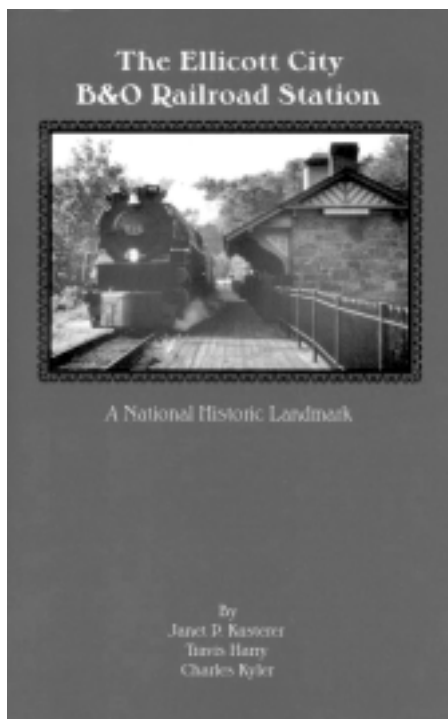
Historic Ellicott City, Inc. is relinquishing management of the Ellicott City B&O Railroad Station Museum. The Museum will be closed for the month of February. When it reopens in March, HEC, Inc. members will no longer be admitted free to the Museum nor will they receive a discount at the gift shop. However, admission prices are quite reasonable, so we hope that everyone will continue to support the Museum in the future.

We enjoy keeping up with our members and friends, and so will include a column sharing news in our next issue. Please call the HEC, Inc. office at 410-461-6908 or email to jkexecdir@verizon.net to be included.

Ellicott City Books

Historic Ellicott City, Inc. is proud to have recently published two books that add to the available references about our special town. Just out is "The Ellicott City B&O Railroad Station: A National Historic Landmark" and still available is the 2003 update of "Ellicott City, Maryland: Mill Town USA."

In 1831 the Ellicott City B&O Railroad Station—the Oldest Terminus in America—became an integral part of America's rail transportation system. Passengers and freight moved through its gates on a daily basis, traveling to the port of Baltimore or to points west with unprecedented speed and efficiency. Since 1976 the Station has operated as a living history museum, telling the story of its place in the history of transportation, and its role in the Civil War and other milestones in our country's history. The Railroad Station book, written by Janet Kusterer, Travis Harry and Charles



Kyler, tells those stories, and also functions as a guide to the facility.

Late in 2003 we completed an update to "Ellicott City, Maryland: Mill Town USA." Three decades ago, Celia Holland first published this book, which offered an opportunity to venture inside many notable sites in Ellicott City, most of which are not open to the public. Over the years this publication, long out of print, became a valued historic resource for collectors and visitors alike. Update authors Janet Kusterer and Charlotte Holland revisited each site, interviewed the owners and learned their stories of continued preservation over the past thirty-plus years. This book, with new additional text and photos, is again an important resource for those who love the local history of Ellicott City.

The Museum book is available for \$9.95. The Mill Town book costs \$17.95. Both are available by calling the HEC, Inc. office at 410-461-6908.

Mill Project

Historic Ellicott City, Inc. wants to bring a mill back to the mill town of Ellicott City, Maryland. The mill concept is in its earliest planning stages right now, but the concept has been approved by the County Executive for the project to be built on county property. We await approval from the County Council, hopefully this spring, and then will begin to plan in earnest.

The Historic District has been home to a variety of mills, beginning with those built by the Ellicott brothers in 1772. It is exciting to think that by participating in this effort to reproduce a mill in the Historic District of Ellicott City, Maryland, we will be helping educate future generations about the unique history of this region.

Visitors will learn from the instructive displays planned for the facility—how the wheat was grown, ground, and sent to market. The waterside location, next to the Tiber River, will also lend itself to informative displays regarding the history of floods in the area.

If you would like to volunteer for the mill committee, please call HEC, Inc.'s office at 410-461-6908.



Longwood

Our 21st Decorator Show House

Thanks to everyone who attended our 21st annual fundraiser decorator show house, fall 2005. Longwood was a gratifying experience for all of us. Special thanks goes to the Smith family, Al, Kim and Burke, for extending such gracious hospitality in sharing their beautiful home with all of us. We broke attendance records this year, with more than 7,500 people touring the house. As special thanks we are sharing the recipe for 'Longwood Cookies.' We were given this recipe during the show house, as well as a delicious batch of the cookies, and we know you will enjoy them too.



LONGWOOD COOKIES

½ pound butter or margarine
 1 heaping cup sugar
 Yolk of one egg
 2 cups flour (all purpose)
 1 teaspoon cinnamon
 ½ cup chopped pecans
 1 egg white, beaten slightly

Cream butter or margarine and sugar. Add egg yolk, flour and cinnamon. Knead well. Press into well greased cookie sheet (may need 2 cookie sheets for thin cookies) (may use a rolling pin to spread). With fingers, spread egg white over dough. Sprinkle with chopped pecans. Bake slowly, 30-35 minutes at 325° F. Cut while still warm into triangles.

Submitted by Miriam Warfield Reed, from the files of Louise K. Warfield, 1930.

PASSAGES

Historic Ellicott City, Inc. began in 1974, in response to the destruction inflicted on our town by Tropical Storm Agnes in 1972.

Our first goal was to preserve the Ellicott City Railroad Station, the first terminus of the B&O Railroad, a National Historic Building. The Station opened as a Museum in August, 1976 after an extensive restoration.

Howard County government leased the building from the B&O and Historic Ellicott City, Inc. agreed to manage it. We didn't know then that this agreement would continue for thirty years. As time passed, a caboose was added to the attractions, as well as a hand car and a speeder car. Volunteers constructed a diorama in the Freight House which depicted the first thirteen miles of the railroad and interpreted our story as living historians.

A second restoration was completed in 1998, and in 2001 the station celebrated twenty-five years as a Museum. Now, in 2006, Historic Ellicott City, Inc. completes thirty years of stewardship at the Museum and turns it over to the County.

The County has contracted with the B&O Railroad Museum in Baltimore to manage the site, and Historic Ellicott City, Inc. moves on as well—plans are being made to build a mill in the Historic District of Ellicott City, a project both logical and exciting. For these reasons our preservation, education and restoration work continues, and our organization continues to be a vital entity, contributing to the community.

Oral History Project, continued from page 1

for ten years. That shop showed that antique shops were the way to go in town."

Gladys Mary Stanton Cross and her granddaughter Debbie Temple talked to me in her house on Columbia Pike. Gladys has lived in her home for 70 years. Her family donated the Thomas Isaac Log Cabin to Historic Ellicott City, Inc. Ms. Temple said, "My maternal great-grandparents, with their children in tow, moved from Daisy to Merryman Street in Ellicott City where they owned their own home and farmed the land, raising hogs, chickens, rabbits, fruit and vegetables and selling their goods to markets in the area. Imagine having a farm today right within the Historic District." Mrs. Cross said, "I have seen a lot of changes over the years. When we moved here Columbia Pike was a dirt road and our house was a log cabin, which we have added on to over time."

James Robey, our County Executive, was born and raised in the mill town of Daniels. He said, "My earliest memory of Ellicott City was going there to shop. This was in the late 1940's, early '50's. We bought clothes, went to K.D.'s barber shop for haircuts, and got our furniture from Taylor's. On Saturdays we would go to Eddie's drug store next to the movies, and go to the movies and watch westerns and eat popcorn."

Al Corun remembered "When I was a kid (he was born in 1927) my father was bartender in the Columbia Café, which was in what is now Ellicott's Country Store. The bar had a dirt floor and in a corner of the bar were rabbits and chickens. People would play cards there and drink liquor. My mother sent me up to get my father one day, but he made me leave because kids didn't belong there."

Norma Valmas Caloyianis and Sylvia Cavey Sheppard have known each other since first grade, and were in the first graduating class of Ellicott City High School in 1943. Sylvia's father owned Cavey Brothers Barber Shop on Main St. for over 60 years, while Nora's father John Valmas and her uncle Paul owned Valmas Brothers Restaurant, in business on Main Street from 1926 to 1973. They remembered that farmers would come to town on Friday and Saturday nights and eat at Valmas' Restaurant and get their hair cut at Cavey's Barber Shop. Sylvia remembered roller-skating down the sidewalks of Main Street, and also sitting on wax paper and sliding down "The Rock."

To make an appointment to preserve your memories of Ellicott City, please call the HEC, Inc. office at 410-461-6908.

The Next Show House

Much as all of us would just like to go back to Longwood and do another show house there, tradition demands that we move on to a new location. We are in the process of visiting potential sites to select the location of the 2006 show house. If you would like us to consider a property you know about, please call the HEC, Inc. office at 410-461-6908.

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This is a time of transition and great promise for Historic Ellicott City, Inc. The organization has a history of chronicling our progress as far back as 'The Grist' published by our predecessor Historic Ellicott Mills in 1962. This was followed by the still valuable reference, 'Bicentennial Journal' in 1972, and fifteen years of 'The Heritage' edited by Enalee Bounds. In the last few years an occasional newsletter has kept you informed. Now, with this new 'Mill Town Newsletter' we hope to encourage you to work with us as we develop plans for a mill, plan our next fundraiser show house and conduct oral histories. Join us.

Janet Kusterer

Our Mission:

The mission of Historic Ellicott City, Inc. is to restore and preserve the historic beauty and significance of the Historic District of Ellicott City and to promote the many opportunities for education and enrichment the Historic District offers to our community and to our visitors.

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HEC, Inc. Membership Application

YES, I would like to become a member of Historic Ellicott City, Inc. I want to support the cause and enjoy the newsletter and other benefits of membership.

My check, made payable to HEC, Inc., is for the following category (check one):

Basic:

- Student or Senior \$20.00
- Individual \$30.00
- Family \$40.00

Contributing:

- Supporting/Business Sponsor \$50.00
- Patron \$100.00-\$499.00
- Benefactor/Corporate \$500.00-\$999.00
- Life/Preservationist \$1,000+

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Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (Home) _____ (Office) _____

Email _____

Mail completed form with check to HEC, Inc., P.O. Box 244, Ellicott City, Maryland 21041