

THE ALLEN HISTORIAN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALLEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Box 31, Allen, MD 21810

Web Address: allenhistoricalsociety.org

VOLUME 18, NO. 2 August, 2012

George Shivers, Editor

Community Calendar

Sunday, August 19, 2:00pm. Regular meeting of the Allen Historical Society in the Great Room of Asbury United Methodist Church

Sunday, September 9, 1:00 - 4:00pm. Reception at the Poplar Hill Mansion in Salisbury. Civil War period theme.

Sunday, September 22, 11:00am. Annual Homecoming service at Asbury United Methodist Church, with luncheon to follow.

Saturday, October 6, 7:00am - 10:00am. Country breakfast at the Allen Community Hall. Sponsored by the Historical Society. Yard sale tables available outside. Contact:

Saturday, October 27, Asbury United Methodist Church fall bazaar at the Allen Community Hall.

Sunday, November 11, Annual pit beef dinner sponsored by the Allen Lions Club at the Allen Community Hall.

Saturday, Dec. 1, 7:00am - 10:00am. Country breakfast at the Allen Community Hall. Sponsored by the Historical Society. Yard sale tables available outside. Contact:

Sunday, December 16, 4:00-7:00pm. Historical Society annual Christmas party at the home of Ron and Sharon Walsh on Windrows Way. Bring an hors d'oeuvre or dessert.

In Memoriam: Robert P. Lloyd 1944-2012

Robert Phillip Lloyd, a 25-year resident of Millersville, died June 22 at Baltimore Washington Medical Center of natural causes. He was born February 8, 1944, in Raleigh, NC. He joined the U.S. Air Force on June 19, 1962 and retired on June 30, 1982 after twenty years of service. He attained the rank of MSGT (E-7) and had a career in which he received many awards including Meritorious Service Medal (two times), Air Force Commendation Medal, Air Force Good Conduct Medal (with the Silver Oak Leaf cluster), Longevity Service Award (with three Oak Leaf Clusters) National Defense Service Medal, Small Arms Marksmanship Ribbon, and the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (with one silver oak leaf cluster) and the Overseas Service Ribbon.

After retirement from the Air Force, he worked as a computer engineer for NSA for 15 years. Mr. Lloyd enjoyed genealogy, network solutions, being a disc jockey earlier in life and computers in general as a hobby.

He was preceded in death by his late wife, Sandy Lee Lloyd, whom he married on Valentine's Day in 1963 and who died April 2, 2003. He is survived by his wife, Donna Jo (Moore) Lloyd, whom he married October 21, 2006; son, Steven R. Lloyd of Gambrells; two brothers, Ken Lloyd of Cumberland, ME and Rick Lloyd of Henderson, NC; sister, Peggy Dole of La Plata; and eight grandchildren. A memorial service. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to www.psoriasis.org.

Bob lived in Allen with his parents and siblings as a child. The family lived in the old Messick house, on the property now owned by the Rayfields. The house was torn down some years ago. He had reconnected with his Allen roots a few years ago, when he attended Homecoming services at Asbury United Methodist Church.

More recently he had joined our Historical Society and showed great interest in village history and had hoped to visit the Passerdyke Cottage Museum. Sadly he had not been able to do that at the time of his death. We join in expressing our heartfelt sympathy to his wife and family.

In Memoriam: June Dukes Owens
1921-2012



June Dukes Owens, 90, of near Eden passed away Tuesday, June 26, 2012, at Coastal Hospice at the Lake. Born on July 12, 1921, she was a daughter of the late John W. Pryor and Bertha Parker Pryor. June Dukes Owens was the first woman judge of the Orphans Court of Wicomico County, where she served for 24 years, from 1978-2002. She was a buyer at Benjamin's, a department store in Salisbury and also worked at Wilkins Fashions for several years.

She and her late husband, Montgomery Dukes, owned and operated Duke's Stockyard, Duke's Trucking Co., and owned and rented farms where they raised, bought and sold livestock.

June served eight years on Wicomico County State Central Committees, worked with and served as president of the Fruitland Volunteer Fire Company Ladies Auxiliary and other voluntary organizations. She had been a member of the Allen Historical Society for many years. She is survived by two stepchildren, Anna Mae Rounds (Bill) and Warren Owens (Rose Ellen); sisters-in-law, Jean Miles, Joan Morris and Rachel Dennis; and a brother-in-law, Paynter Dukes. In additions to her parents, she was preceded in death by her first husband, Montgomery Dukes; a son, John Alison Dukes; second husband, Ralph Owens; and a stepson, Rodd Owens. In lieu of flowers or gifts of food, contributions may be made in memory of June to Coastal Hospice, PO Box 1733, Salisbury, Md. 21802.

Christmas Wreaths for Sale

Last year several of our creative members got together and made a number of beautiful Christmas wreaths which we sold as a fundraiser. This year we plan to expand the enterprise. If you are interested in purchasing a wreath, we are asking that they be pre-ordered and pre-paid. Prices range from \$20 to \$35, depending on the size of the wreath. We expect to be set up to receive orders at the Asbury Church Homecoming service on September 22, at the church bazaar on Oct. 27, as well as at our breakfast on Oct. 6. On those occasions we will have photos of last year's creations! You may also order by mail to our post office box. Arrangements will be made for pick-up of the wreaths prior to the holiday.

Annual Meeting, May 20, 2012

Earlier this year the Society undertook a major revision of our by-laws. One result of that revision was establishing an annual meeting of the membership during which the president would present a report on the year's activities and election of officers and board members would take place. The special nature of that meeting would be marked by having a guest speaker. The first annual meeting was held at Adam's Ribs restaurant in Fruitland on Sunday, May 20, beginning at 5:00pm with dinner. After dinner our guest speaker, Dr. Ray Thompson, spoke to us about the Edward H. Nabb Center for Research on Delmarva History and Culture, of which he is director, as well as being professor of History at Salisbury University.

After Dr. Thompson's presentation, we moved to the business portion of the meeting. As the first item of business it was decided that in the interest of time the president's annual report should be published in this newsletter along with the minutes of the March meeting and the annual meeting and a financial report. These reports follow.

President's Report

Since this was really our first annual meeting, billed as such, since our founding in 1996, and since I was leaving the office of president this year, I thought it might be good to review what we've accomplished, not only in 2011, but since we began. Before doing that, however, I would like to honor those members whom death has

taken from us and to express deep appreciation for their many contributions.

Jane Bailey
Carolyn Ballou
Henry (Hank) Barth
Pauline Best
Kathryn Carey
Florence Byrd Cooper
Rosalie Fields
Charlie Habilston
Mary Hope Harcum
Patricia Hazel
Richard Hazel
Betty Huffman
Ruth Keeler
David Kolb, Jr.
Captain Lindley Allen Lentz
John (Jack) Malone
Lillian Malone
Louis (Casey) Parsons
Mary Payne
Price Ransone
Elliott Wilkins

(Note: Since our meeting we have lost two other members, Robert P. Lloyd and June Dukes Owens, whose obituaries appear earlier in this newsletter.)

As I look back over the past 16 years, I believe we can be proud of our accomplishments. Our membership now stands at more than 50, with members living as far away as California, Florida and even Portugal! I thought I would focus on our accomplishments in the context of our mission statement. That statement sets forth a twofold purpose for our Society, which can be summarized in two words: preservation and education. Both, of course, focus on the material and non-material culture of our village and its surrounding area. First let's look at what we've done to promote the education of both residents and non-residents on the history of Allen:

A. Education

1. Receiving grants to publish two books – *Changing Times* and *The Ancestors and Descendants of Jonathan Huffington and Henrietta Adams Huffington*
2. Purchasing Passerdyke Cottage and establishing our museum there by assembling a small but excellent collection of Allen memorabilia- in the past open on a

regular basis – now by appointment. I believe that we can feel gratified by the number of visitors we have had over the years.

3. Collecting of family files and a library of materials related to Allen history. Available for loan and occasionally taken advantage of, mostly by out-of-town visitors with roots in Allen. Vastly underused. Something we need to address.
4. Creating of a webpage with support from the Rural Development Agency at UMES We have kept the page current over the years and it has brought us to the attention of people beyond the community but with roots or interests here. Includes a virtual tour of the village, a history of our Society, a history of the Huffington-Pollitt house, our by-laws, Society news and events, and information on joining.
5. Publishing our newsletter, *The Allen Historian*, which goes out to our members far and wide at least twice a year. Additionally we provide copies free of charge to the Worcester, Wicomico and Somerset County Libraries as well as to the Lower Delmarva Genealogy Society. The library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints has a paid membership and receives our newsletters. More input needed from membership!
6. Placing historical markers in 2000 at Asbury and Friendship UM Churches and at the site of the gristmill - with grants from the Lower Delmarva Heritage Committee.
7. Celebrating the village's tricentenary in 2002 with a historical pageant which was well attended, as well as a dinner held at the Friendship Hall, where Prof. Sylvia Bradley (SU) spoke to us about several Old Somerset families, including the Huffington family.
8. Assembling, largely through the work of the late Casey Parsons, an excellent exhibit as part of the Wicomico Historical Society's larger exhibit on the towns of Wicomico County – at their former facility at Pemberton Manor.
9. Participating frequently in historical fairs at Pemberton, Westside and the Salisbury Festival.
10. Holding four cemetery walks, which are both entertaining and educational, and also contribute to preserving the memory of some of our colorful former residents.
11. Having classified a collection of Native American artifacts donated several years ago by Murrell Simms, thanks to the good

offices of the Washington College archaeology program.

12. Expanding our educational mission into the arts with the holding of our first "Spoons and Tunes" program this spring. Perhaps a forecast of the future use of the Huffington-Pollitt house as a village arts and culture center for small concerts and art exhibits. Nancy Mysak anxiously awaits the opportunity to offer art classes there in the middle room on the second floor!

B. Preservation

In this area our record has been less successful than we would have liked, but I think we can chalk up quite a bit to our efforts.

1. Our first big failure, unfortunately, was the loss of the Phillip Messick house, former residence of Doug and Gail Rayfield, which they had offered us for relocation to a lot next to Asbury Church. Our inability to carry this through was a major disappointment. Since that time we have lost several other residences from the core of the village: most recently the Benjamin Franklin Messick house, but also the Whayland store building, and from the "suburbs" the loss of Mrs. Lillian Malone's house.
2. On the success side, however, we have purchased, paid for and maintained Passerdyke Cottage, and are slowly but surely moving forward in saving the Huffington-Pollitt house.
3. We presented a successful nomination of Asbury UM Church to the National Register of Historic Places, which hopefully will contribute in some small way to the preservation of that fine building.
4. We have probably contributed more than any other group to preserving and extending the art of making Maryland beaten biscuits!
5. Our spring country suppers have, in a sense, revived the old-fashioned church suppers that many of us remember from childhood, even preserving elements of the traditional menu.
6. I would add to this that virtually everything I have mentioned above as directed toward

our educational mission also contributes to our preservation mission.

To accomplish all these things we have had to put in a major effort at fundraising and those efforts have to continue if we are to bring the Huffington-Pollitt house project to completion. I would like to see that happen by no later than 2013! Joe Ballou has regularly and very ably kept the Board apprised of our financial status, which in 2010 and 2011 improved significantly with a major donation of \$20,000 by a donor who wishes to remain anonymous and the Captain Lindley Lentz legacy of more than \$30,000. Also in 2011 we were able to get a financial review by the accounting program at Salisbury University, which will help to move us forward in applying for grants. This was accomplished with the modest outlay of \$500 – compared to the thousands charged by commercial CPAs!

With regard to the Huffington-Pollitt house in 2011 and early in 2012 several things were accomplished: removal of the HVAC tubing from under the house. The person who did that reported as a layman that he saw no problems with the underpinnings of the building. We have as of yet not been able to get a review by an engineer. Chris Judd did demolition work in the fire-damaged kitchen area. We also got a proposal from Mast Electrical Services with a bottom line of \$4,741.35 with an additional \$650 if we want to add a subpanel and submeter for 2nd floor (split loads at panel box so no rewiring of circuits is included). Doug Rayfield has agreed to oversee future work on the project and to provide a detailed budget plan. Once that is available, we will be in a better position to apply for grants. (Note: Since I wrote this report Lin Davis has generously volunteered to take up this function.)

For the first time members of the Society made Christmas wreaths which sold well and the plan is to make even more this year. We had our spring dinner in 2011 and fourth cemetery walk in October. The former was well attended and profitable; the latter was not as well attended as usual and therefore less profitable. On the whole, however, our fundraising efforts produced good results.

In terms of community service the Society spearheaded the roadside clean-up program in the spring of 2011 and again in 2012 with major

support from the Allen Lions Club and the Allen Volunteer Fire Company.

Minutes of March 11, 2012 Meeting

Present: Joe Ballou, Aggie Culp, John Culp, Doris Fretz, Judy Giunta, Mary Goodwin, Diana Kiessling, Susan Knowles, George Shivers, Larry Stookey, Ron and Sharon Walsh.

The meeting was called to order at 3:15 P.M in the Great Room of Asbury Church. Aggie moved, and Mary seconded a **motion** to approve the minutes with the addition of Bettie Sue Malone's name to the list of those present at the February meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Joe is trying a new format which will show budgeted amounts for each item. Fundraising income and outgo show that we made only \$300 on our fundraisers, but if he includes items we sell, the fundraiser total is higher. The 2012 budget has nothing designated for improvements to or expenses for the HP house. However, we have spent \$500 which was approved, but not in the current budget. Ron clarified that this expense was for demolition. Joe's report shows a year-to-date income total of \$3,221 and year-to-date expenses of \$2,372.39.

OLD BUSINESS

HP House—George stated that Chris Judd completed the demolition in the kitchen area as agreed. Doug Rayfield toured the house with George last week, took measurements, and will be drawing up a proposed cost analysis for the restoration work so George can use it for grant applications. It's getting late in that process, but George is hoping we will be successful in receiving one or more grants. George also needs a detailed budget for these applications. The State Heritage grant won't work for us because we aren't in a designated historical zone and our restoration isn't totally "historic." We probably need to do outside maintenance such as weeding for both HP and Passerdyke this spring. Passerdyke did not pass inspections because of peeling exterior paint. We were given an extension until April to complete this work. John and George will do the painting in March, and the group will do weeding on Saturday, April 21, at 10 am. Our sales tax was late because no form was sent to us. We were informed by the tax office that we are now responsible for requesting the form.

"Spoons and Tunes" Fundraiser—Sharon reported on the food that has been volunteered. We have enough bread and soup at this point.

We will set up Saturday, March 24, at 2 p.m. Sharon, John, Diana, George, Aggie, and Susan volunteered. Blossom Harris has volunteered to help in some way. We'll ask her to help serve. Diana and John will also be servers.

Althea thinks we should have greeters in costume. She suggested Lorie and Debra Liebig who have been tour guides for us at the Cemetery Walks. Sharon will ask them.

George is doing the program. Caitlyn's accompanist has an obligation until 4 p.m. Caitlyn then contacted Jack who first agreed to accompany her, but now is having second thoughts because of all the playing he is already doing. Caitlyn is looking for another pianist and is sure she will find someone. If she isn't able to find someone, we'll plan to put her at the end of the program when her accompanist could get to Allen.

Publicity—George took the announcement to WSCL and PAC -14; Diana posted it in several places at Wor-Wic, John submitted to the Daily Times; Tracy Sahler will put it in her column if we give her a recipe (probably George's butternut squash soup); Doris is handing out flyers at Tuesday Farmers' Market; John will announce it at Lions Thursday night Farmers' Night and have tickets available. George will check with Althea about banners.

We need to check with Carol Hobbs about the Youth Group doing dessert. She told Susan they are definitely doing it. Aggie will confirm details with Carol. Decorations are needed at the hall and church. Diana may have very large musical notes. The piano also needs to be tuned, so Jeff Hahn, who also tunes the pianos at Salisbury University has agreed to do the tuning on Saturday morning, March 24. We should consider a donation to the church for use of the hall and church. Aggie moved and Diana seconded a **motion** that our donation be in the form of piano tuning. The motion passed unanimously.

Roadway Clean Up—We decided to repeat this 2011 event in which we and other community groups cleaned up the roadways around Allen. We will do the clean up on Saturday, May 19 from 9 am to noon. John will notify Lions and Asbury Church members, and Aggie will enlist the help of the Allen Fire Company. Sharon will contact Paul Mysak about safety vests and John will ask Lions to donate donuts and coffee.

Sharon still has banners, and she and Ron will put them up.

Annual Meeting—John will check into having this at Adam’s Ribs on May 20 at 5:00 pm. George will ask Ray Thompson to speak or if he’s not available, ask him to suggest someone else.

New Business

Westside Historical Society Heritage Day—This will be held on May 12 in Mardela. We have participated the last 2 years. There is no cost to non-profits unless groups sell items. In the past, we’ve sold a few things but not much. The value in doing it is cooperating with another historical group and gaining some visibility for our group. George may be able to go. Theme this year is Memories of the County Fair which is not related to us. We will leave it open. If George is available to go, he will.

Fundraiser at Uno’s or Applebee’s—We discussed the idea of having a restaurant fundraiser. Lions is considering this. John said that the organization does publicity and is wait staff. Other non-profit groups are doing this, so why not us? Susan suggested we consider it for fall. As an alternative, serving breakfast at the Community Hall on Saturday morning was a god fundraiser for the Fire Auxillary. They charged \$7 and served 100 people.

The meeting adjourned at 4:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Walsh, secretary

ALLEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING May 20, 2012

The first annual meeting of the Allen Historical Society was held at Adam’s Ribs restaurant in Fruitland at 5 p.m. Those attending were: Joe Ballou, Bruce and Melissa Bright, Althea and Julius Chandler, Aggie Culp, Lin and Lucy Davis, Doris Fretz, Geraldine Hayward, Doris and Harold Huffington, Susan Knowles, Mary Lee Kolb, Bettie Sue Malone, George Shivers, Shirley Spielman, Larry Stookey, and Sharon and Ron Walsh.

Our guest speaker was Dr. Ray Thompson, a co-founder and director of the Edward H. Nabb Research Center and a professor of history at Salisbury University. His presentation included the history of the Nabb Center, evidence of the prestige it has earned nationally, its resources,

and the services it offers. He stated that the Delmarva area has the longest continuous historical records of any in the country, and the Nabb Center is the repository for a great many of those documents. In addition, the Center accepts and displays objects of historical interest. He encouraged us to visit the Nabb Center and consider volunteering and/or joining.

The business meeting was called to order at 7:40 pm by president George Shivers. He asked if we wished to have him summarize his Annual Report to members or send it in the next newsletter. Susan Knowles moved and Ron Walsh seconded a motion that the president’s Annual Report be published in the next newsletter. The motion passed unanimously. Melissa Bright moved and Harold Huffington seconded a motion that treasurer’s report and secretary’s minutes for the Annual Meeting and the previous meeting held in March also be included with the Annual Report in the newsletter. The motion passed unanimously.

George presented the slate of officers nominated for the coming year:

President—John Culp
Vice President—Velmar Morris
Treasurer—Joe Ballou
Secretary—Sharon Walsh
Historians—George Shivers and Althea Chandler

Melissa Bright moved and Doris Fretz seconded a motion to close nominations. The motion passed, and the slate of officers was approved by a unanimous vote. The new officers will assume (or in some cases, continue) their duties immediately. John Culp will need to have his signature added to the signature card at the bank. In light of the impending “retirement” of George Shivers as the first president of the Society, Melissa asked to be recognized. She presented a history of the Allen Historical Society along with a tribute to George for his 16 years of service as president. She gave him a facsimile of a plaque that will be delivered soon and placed in the Huffington-Pollitt house in his honor.

OLD BUSINESS

George reported that Chris Judd completed the demolition of the HP kitchen and MAST Electric has given us an estimate of \$5000 to restore service. More estimates will be sought before deciding on the company to do the electrical work. Doug Rayfield has agreed to be the overseer of all work to be done at the HP house. George isn’t sure if the electrical work should be the next step, but Doug should be able to advise us as to sequencing the renovation. George is

waiting for Doug's estimate of the total amount needed to complete all of the necessary work. This figure is required for grant applications. Julius suggested we contact Shockley Electric and Rodney Bounds for estimates on electrical work.

NEW BUSINESS

Joe Ballou, in his capacity as treasurer, stated that he has scheduled a termite inspection for Passerdyke Cottage near the end of May. Cost is approximately \$125. He also reported that the back porch of the house on the side nearest Residential Drive has a gap and is allowing water to enter. Bruce Bright has given us a maximum estimate amount of \$528.58 to inspect and do all necessary repairs. Joe moved and Sharon seconded that we authorize Bruce to do this work. The motion passed unanimously.

Joe has received notice from the Passerdyke Village Homeowners' Association that annual dues are \$100 this year as they were last year. The Association intends to attach liens to any properties for which dues are not paid. The next meeting of the group is in mid-August. The last time we paid dues was a couple years ago, and at that time, the amount was \$35 (before the installation of street lights). George said that he had checked with the Planning and Zoning Commission about separating the Passerdyke Cottage property from the Association, but it would be very difficult and expensive to do. Ron suggested we send a letter to the Association giving our rationale for our request that we be exempt or excused from the dues. The Executive Committee will draft the letter before the mid-August Homeowners' Association meeting. Aggie will inform John that he needs to call the Executive Committee together for this purpose.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Walsh, secretary

Financial Summary 7/4/2011 - 7/3/2012

Total Income: \$15,970.39

Total Expenses: \$13,598.55

Balance: \$2,371.84

Bank Account Balances:

Checking: \$852.38

Savings: \$79,194.83

Total: \$80,047.21

Asset Accounts: (Amounts are based on tax assessments)

Huffington-Pollitt property: \$64,500.00

Passerdyke Cottage: \$136,900.00

Liability Accounts:

Huffington-Pollitt property mortgage: \$62,981.28

Overall Total: \$218,465.93

The Reverend Alexander Adams and the Status of African American Slaves in Stepney Parish

The Reverend Alexander Adams was born c. 1680 in England and was ordained deacon and priest by the Bishop of London. He came to Somerset County as rector of Stepney Parish in 1704 and served there for sixty-five years until his death in 1769. Stepney Parish included basically all the territory now contained in Wicomico County. Adams had an important role in the history of our community because his plantation lay just south of the village. His Georgian brick home, built in 1738, still stands and is known as Brentwood. Adams had a large family and during much of the second half of the 18th century and into the 19th. several of his sons (and a grandson) had business enterprises at the Trappe (now Allen), including the gristmill, a saw mill, a store and a tavern.

The purpose of this article is to explore Adams' position regarding slavery and the status of African American slaves in the Anglican community of Stepney Parish. I am indebted to an article published in the Maryland Historical Magazine, vol. 87, no. 4, Winter, 1992, and authored by Mary O. Klein. Ms. Klein was a graduate student in history at Salisbury State University at the time and the winner of the 1991 Undergraduate Essay Prize of the Maryland Historical Society.

Ms. Klein notes that Rev. Adams confronted numerous problems in his role as "Missionary to the Plantations." These included inadequate pay, poor housing, a parish 50 miles long with 400 families scattered across those miles, and difficulty in buying wine for communion! He had answered the call issued by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts in 1704. The Society's mission was to encourage missionary work in the colonies and to promote

the conversion of the natives. In 1724 the Society sent a questionnaire to the missionaries. To the question, "Are there any infidels, bond or free, in your Parish and what means are used for their conversion?" Adams replied, "There are Indians and Negro slaves. Some Negroes are baptized after instruction in the Church Catechism and frequent the public worship. No means used to convert the Indians; their language is unknown to us." (Klein, p. 1; from William Stevens Perry, ed., *Papers Related to the History of the Church in Maryland, A.D. 1694-1775*; John R. H. Moorman, *A History of the Church in England*, 1954, p. 267). Klein notes that Adams' job of converting the infidels was made more difficult by geography, climate, mosquitoes and the general apathy. "Slave owners," she writes, "were either unconcerned about the conversion of their slaves to Christianity or afraid they would be freed if baptized (Klein, p.400; Nelson W. Rightmyer, *Maryland's Established Church*, 1956, p. 25). It appears that whether baptism brought the slave freedom was unclear in the minds of both clergy and slave owners. A 1664 Maryland law stated that baptism had no effect on the status of a slave, and in 1727 the bishop of London gave the following instructions to his missionaries: "Christianity and the embracing of the Gospel does not make the least alteration in Civil Property. . . . The freedom which Christianity gives is a freedom from the Bondage of sin and Satan But as to their outward Condition, whatever it was before, whether bond or free, their being baptized and becoming Christian makes no manner of Change in it." (Klein, p. 400; William Hand Brown, ed., *Archives of Maryland*, 2:272; "Two Letters of the Lord Bishop of London," quoted by W.E.B. DuBois in *The Negro Church*, 1903, p. 10).

In general families were responsible for the education of their own children as well as slaves, but slave owners were slow to bring their slaves for baptismal instruction. Ms. Klein notes an interesting comment by the Rev. James Robertson of Coventry Parish, which adjoined Rev. Adams' parish. He wrote, "There are Indians whose Language we don't understand & there are negro slaves whereof some come to Church and are baptized & and others who neither by their own consent nor their masters are willing to be baptized." Neither Adams nor Robertson give any indication of reluctance to instruct slaves nor to unwillingness to receive them in public worship.

Klein writes that the church required that all births be noted in the parish registry, and that blacks were listed as "free negro," "slave," "mulatto," "servant," or "colored."

It would take another century and more for the slave trade and the institution of slavery to be abolished in Great Britain and the British Empire. "An Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade" was passed by Parliament on March 25, 1807. William Wilberforce was a leader of the British campaign to end the slave trade. Both Quakers and the Wesleyan Methodist movement were major forces in the abolitionist cause. The abolition of slavery itself in the Empire was not achieved until 1833, with the passage of the Slavery Abolition Act.



William Wilberforce (Wikipedia)

It would be another three decades before the institution of slavery in the United States would be abolished and would require the fighting of a bloody and devastating war.

Free African Americans in Somerset County and Upper Trappe Prior to the Civil War

Slavery underwent a decline in Somerset County in the early decades of the 19th century. The spread of the Methodist movement throughout the Delmarva Peninsula contributed to this decline in a major way. John R. Wennersten notes that most blacks in Somerset County in the 1850s were only one or two generations removed from the heritage of Africa ("A Cycle of Race Relations on Maryland's Eastern Shore: Somerset County, 1850-1917," Maryland Historical Magazine, p. 378). Frederick Douglass noted that during his youth he knew of many Guinea blacks on the Eastern Shore "with their African dialects and transmogrified

English." (Wennersten, p. 378) An example can be found in the history of an important Allen family, the Polks. Morris Polk, manumitted by the will of Miss Nancy Morris of White Chapel, was the grandson of Frederick Polk, who, according to the family tradition, had arrived in Somerset County as a slave from Guinea in West Africa at the end of the 18th century.

Wennersten writes that "Free blacks during the last decade before the war showed a remarkable determination to acquire property in Somerset County." (p. 378). The community of Upper Trappe gives ample evidence of this tendency even prior to the 1850s. We also see that white landowners were more than willing to sell land to free African Americans. For example John and Sarah Anne Moore sold a 12 acre tract to free African American Roger Dutton on January 12, 1839 for \$50. Dutton's name appears on the list of "Free Coloured People of Somerset County" in 1832 (Somerset County Deeds, Liber GH 6, folio 354). Over the next decade Dutton continued to expand his land holdings. In the census records of 1850 his property was valued at \$500. Ten years earlier the 1840 federal census lists the following as free African-American residents of Upper Trappe: Mary Polk, Jane Peters, John Waters, Rufus Fields, Anne Dove, Jane Elzey and Levin Taylor.

Wennersten cites the work of Professor Tom Davidson who had noted that approximately 14% of free blacks in Somerset County owned land (mostly farms of 8 acres or less). This is especially remarkable when we see that only 15% of all county citizens, white or black, owned property. (Wennersten, p. 378). By 1860 there were 4,483 free African Americans living in Somerset County, and Wennersten writes, "many enjoyed modest prosperity as barbers, blacksmiths, lumberjacks and teamsters." The author goes on to say that it was not unusual for African Americans to accumulate capital of \$100 to \$500 and that they occasionally sued in the county court to protect their rights.

As noted in the 1860 federal census one free African American in Upper Trappe, George Dutton, was a modestly prosperous farmer with real estate assessed at \$500 and personal property in the same amount. His prosperity would decline during the 1860s, when he was forced to mortgage his land.

It is clear that free African Americans in Somerset County faced serious obstacles, making

their rapid achievements even more notable. Wennersten notes that in an attempt to control the free black labor force planters demanded that they sign iron-clad labor contracts. Under these contracts they were forbidden to leave the county, could only go into town with the employer's consent and were compelled to buy food and clothing from the planter, often resulting in a level of indebtedness nearly equivalent to slavery. Fortunately, the free African Americans I have mentioned as part of the Upper Trappe community as landowners in their own right could avoid that kind of entrapment. During the same period the Jacobs Bill in the state legislature presented a plan to re-enslave all blacks who had less than \$150 and refused to be hired out on labor contracts. The bill was defeated, but Wennersten writes that "Undaunted, Somerset County authorities offered free blacks over 18 years of age the right to renounce freedom and take masters." (p. 378) He doesn't say how many took advantage of this "opportunity"!

Emancipation for all African Americans would come, of course, with the end of the Civil War, and the African American population of Upper Trappe, centered on what is now the Upper Ferry Road, would continue to grow and would coalesce spiritually and socially around the Friendship Methodist Episcopal Church, founded just prior to the end of the war.

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