



OUTSTANDING RESIDENCE WILL HOUSE SPRING GALA



101 East Melrose Street

The house at 101 Melrose Street has sat on Brookville Road for over a hundred years. It has been owned by several families including the Claudes, the Laucks, the Clagetts and the Bradens. The oldest part of the house was a very simple two-story structure probably fronting on Brookville Road. It predates the Chevy Chase Land Company's activity in the area.

According to Bailey Adams of Adams General Contractors, Inc., (the firm that did the largest and most recent renovation) the age and configuration of the framing and chimney of the original house indicate it was built between 1860 and 1870. Part of this earliest structure remains within the house as it is now configured. The chimney closest to Brookville Road, the stone foundation at the southwest corner of the house, and some of the first and second floor framing, were part of this

original structure. This structure had a door facing Brookville Road and tall Victorian windows.

In 1901 Mary Nevitt Steele Claude purchased this house from the Chevy Chase Land Company and she moved there in 1904 with her husband Judge Denis Claude. Their son, Herbert, worked for the Chevy Chase Land Company and was the father of the late Edith Claude Jarvis.

William Jett Lauck, the director of the Bureau of Applied Economics, and his wife, Eleanor, purchased the house from the Claudes in 1914. They also bought five pieces of adjoining property after their original purchase. They brought an architect from New York to remodel and enlarge the house (including relocating the staircase). Everything east of the small library including two sleeping porches were added. Additional plumbing was put in at this time and steel girders were used under the front hall.

In 1946, Charles T. And Nancy L. Clagett Jr. purchased the house. During their ownership much additional work was done. The kitchen wing was added, and the sleeping porches were enclosed. The Clagetts installed the marble mantel in the living room and other fireplace mantels, many of which were salvaged from other houses in the South. The front entrance including the sidelights and fan light may have come from a house in the Shenandoah Valley.

In 1993 Daniel Korengold and Martha Dippell purchased the house and undertook an extensive and exceptional renovation designed by architect Richard Williams. The house has a newly configured front to back center hall with French doors opening to the terrace and a sweeping staircase with hand-made railing and balusters. The Italian marble fireplace in

SPRING GALA SET FOR SUNDAY MARCH 1

The Chevy Chase Historical Society will hold its annual champagne supper on Sunday, March 1, from 4 to 7 pm at the home of Daniel Korengold and Martha Dippell at 101 East Melrose Street.

Invitations have been sent to Historical Society members and others who have expressed an interest in the Society. Reservations are by mail only. For more information, please call Helen Secrest, 301-652-4878.

the living room was retained. The library was paneled in solid walnut, the trees harvested from a single grove on an estate in Middleburg, sawn, selected, and book matched under the direction of the contractor. A circa 1815 New York pine mantle was stained to match the room. A curved bay, in which the window sashes and individual panes follow the curve, was added to the dining room. Early 19th century Zuber Cíe Parisian wallpaper, salvaged from a mansion in Bar Harbor, Maine, was painstakingly restored and installed in the new dining room. The wallpaper was printed contemporaneously with the events depicted in it and is called Views of the New World. The floors throughout the house are tung-oiled quarter sawn antique heart pine, each board hand selected. These are just some of the details which make this house a superb example of a thoughtful renovation.

We look forward to entertaining members and other friends honoring the renovation of one of the area's oldest homes.

~ Fall Lecture ~

We were delighted to have a very well attended Fall Meeting featuring a lively lecture by Eleanor Preston, curator of the Tudor Place Foundation. The following article briefly synthesizes and liberally quotes from Ms. Preston's lecture.

Ms. Preston traced the relationship of Chevy Chase's earliest estate, Hayes Manor, with that of Tudor Place—a major historic property in Georgetown. This relationship spans several centuries and begins in Scotland, with the marriage of Thomas Peter and Jean Dunlop in 1722. They had a son named Robert who emigrated to the United States and became a most famous and rich Georgetown and Maryland landowner and tobacco merchant. At the time he owned much of Georgetown and twenty thousand acres in Maryland including the present NIH campus.



Tudor Place, Georgetown, circa 1804

Robert Peter had several children and the tale of the two houses is about his eldest son and eldest daughter. Robert Peter's eldest daughter, Elizabeth, married James Dunlop (a cousin) in 1787 and established a residence in Georgetown. They purchased Hayes Manor in 1792 for their country house and the house, incredibly, remained in their family until 1965. "The house was completed in 1767 and is the third oldest house in Montgomery County. It rivals in beauty both Paca House in Annapolis and Kenmore in Fredericksburg, both of which it strongly resembles. From this comes the attribution that it was built from drawings by John Ariss with William Buckland serving as the builder."

Robert Peter's oldest son, Thomas, brother of Elizabeth Peter Dunlop, married into the nation's first family. He married the grand-daughter of George Washington, Martha Parke Custis, on January 6th, 1795, "choosing that date because it was Washington's wedding anniversary." Originally they lived in the 2600 block of K Street. They made the decision to build an in-town estate rather than purchasing a country house like their siblings. They chose to build in what was the most fashionable area of the city—the heights of Georgetown. In 1805, with money inherited from George Washington, the young couple purchased an entire city block between "Q" and "R" Streets and 31st and 32nd Streets

They hired the architect of the United States Capitol, Dr. William Thornton, to design the house. With Thornton's help they turned away from the Georgian and Federal styles favored by other family members and chose a radical neo-classical design with a circular domed portico reminiscent of Thornton's form for the Capitol. Dr. Thornton's presentation drawings can be seen at Tudor Place. It took eleven years to complete the house.

"All who came to Tudor Place could not fail to realize that they were entering, in effect, a sanctum sanctorum filled with relics of Mount Vernon . . . (in addition) . . . visitors . . . were greeted by a scene of unrivaled beauty with their great shade trees and sloping velvety lawns, flowers of every shape and hue, vines, shrubbery in rare varieties and above all thousands of roses as famous for their beauty and fragrance as the 'thrice blooming roses of Paestum.'"

The scene at the Dunlop house, Hayes Manor, here in Chevy Chase, was similar. A description includes mention of box roses, lilacs, peonies and a very large Maiden's blush rose "planted a century and a half ago by the first mistress of Hayes." The same rose is at Tudor Place, planted by Martha Custis Peter.

By the early nineteenth hundreds, both houses had to be brought into the twentieth century and each household chose family



Hayes Manor, Chevy Chase, Maryland, circa 1760

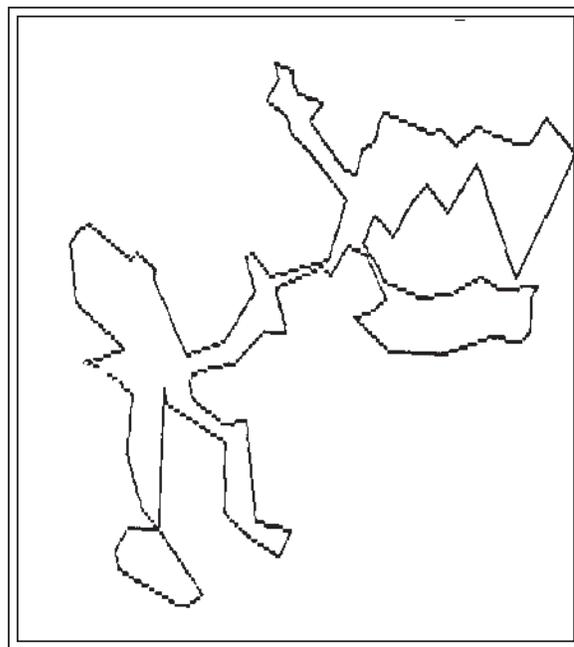
member, Walter Gibson Peter, as the architect. Tudor Place remained in the Peter family until 1983 at which time Tudor Place Foundation was created to ensure the preservation of the house. The Columbia Foundation, a non-profit corporation, has purchased Hayes Manor and will continue its preservation.

CHEVY CASE HISTORY

The Montgomery County Historical Society publishes a quarterly titled THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY STORY edited by Eleanor M.V. Cook. The most recent issue describes the original division of the land by the European settlers. It is an extremely complicated subject and Eleanor Cook has laid out the story well. Ms. Cook and Mary Anne Tuohey, current president of MCHS, have given us permission to print the following brief synopsis.

The pattern of land tracts in what is now Montgomery County can best be described as chaotic. Looking at a map of the tracts as they were originally laid out, you see lines running in every direction, few tracts even remotely square or rectangular. Those not familiar with Maryland's land tract system are often astounded at the pattern, wondering why we have it and how it could possibly be mapped. Most of the United States, when it was settled, had been divided into grids by land companies or by the United States Land Office, and the designation of a certain quarter of a section of a township in a range makes it easy to locate a particular acreage. Maryland, on the other hand was established long before there was a United States Land Office. In the original colonies, New England was settled and divided by townships, but from present day New York City south, there was irregular land division, each colony having its own method. None of the southern colonies surveyed land in advance of settlement and in Virginia, the first authorized surveyor did not arrive until 1621, long after settlers had begun claiming land. Many of the land tracts in Montgomery County

took rather bizarre shapes as they wound their way through vacant spaces between adjacent tracts. One of the interesting examples of this is shown below.



In 1632, Cecilius, the second Lord Baltimore, received something over 10,000 square miles of magnificent virgin land that would become more and more valuable as time went on. He was, of course, interested in securing the best returns for himself and his descendants.

As Lord Proprietor he owned the land and had complete jurisdiction over it. He made grants of acreage to settlers, but the land was held by them "in fief", a type of tenure resembling an assignable lease in perpetuity. Settlers bought and sold their land and passed it on by inheritance, but paid yearly quit rents to Lord Baltimore and under certain circumstances, at his discretion, he could and did revoke grants.

At first each person coming into Maryland to settle (or bringing in others) received a warrant of survey (also called a "common warrant") entitling him to a certain number of acres, the number decreasing as time went on. The warrants could be sold and often were by those more interested in having money than land: a craftsman, for example, or a ship's captain who transported settlers. Land was granted to all takers, regardless of religion, on a first-come, first-served basis, and they were free to choose any land not already taken.

In 1683 Lord Baltimore decided it was no longer necessary to give free land in order to obtain settlers, and from that time on settlers applying to the proprietor's agent for a warrant had to pay what was called "caution money" or "purchase money." The price rose steadily and was five pounds sterling per hundred acres in 1776. The warrants, if sold, were valu-

able not only because of the caution money paid, but because to obtain them, enormous fees were also paid. Each official and many subordinates received their pay entirely by the fees from their office and since the land was considered the private property of Lord Baltimore and the land office his personal affair, the legislature left the charges untouched even when reducing fees elsewhere.

Lord Baltimore received not only caution money payments but quit rents and alienation fines. Quit rents were paid semi-annually and were usually four shillings per acre: an alienation fine was paid when there was a transfer or conveyance of all or part of a tract. Of these, quit rents were the most lucrative. Caution money brought Lord Baltimore an average of 1500 to 2000 pounds sterling a year; alienation fines from 120 to 200 pounds; and quit rents from 5000 to 6000 pounds sterling. It was excellent financial planning.

Obtaining a warrant was just the first step in the patent process. The warrant was then presented to the survey office to survey a specific piece of land. If all went well, the survey was recorded in Annapolis including the name of the property, the name of the owner, land description and amount of quit rent that was due to Lord Baltimore and the alienation fine—which usually amounted to a whole year's rent. (These original surveys have survived and can still be seen in Annapolis.) The prospective patentee could choose whatever name he wanted

for the land. Some of the more interesting ones: Eleanor's Greens, Andrew's Folly, The Swamp, Barren Ridge, Rich Land, Little or Nothing, Clean Shaving, As Good as We Can Get, and Not Worth a Name. Two of our neighborhood land patents were Clean Drinking and No Gain.

The American Revolution brought changes in the land system in the colonies. In 1776, Lord Baltimore lost all rights he had to the land in Maryland. British property was confiscated and sold to help pay for the Revolution. Other persons holding land at that time became the absolute owners of it, in their own right. They no longer paid quit rents, but in 1777, the General Assembly began taxing real and personal property instead of having a head tax. The basic system of land division and ownership, that is warrant, survey and patent continued.

Jot this down. . .

The Chevy Chase Historical Society's archives are open by appointment with Joan Marsh. Call 301-656-5135. We welcome your queries.

The Montgomery County Historical Society has a new web site: www.montgomeryhistory.org. Their e-mail address is mchistory@mindspring.com.