Clark’s Hardware Celebrates 170th Anniversary of Service to Howard County  

Paulette Lutz

The Depot Yard in front of the B & O Railroad Station and lower Main Street was a hive of activity in the 1800s and beyond. The train station was a major delivery and shipping point for Howard County farmers and businessmen. One of these thriving businesses was the original John L. Clark’s Farm Supplies store located on Main Street where Tiber Park is now located.

“…Mr. Clark has by his energy, perseverance and strict attention to business succeeded in building up a trade second to none in this section of the country.”

Ellicott City Times, March 20, 1909, Page 12.

The quote from the Ellicott City Times about John Lawrence Clark, can also be applied to Alton Andrew (Andy) and Jackie Clark, owners of Clark’s ACE Hardware located on the Baltimore National Pike at Pine Orchard. Andy Clark, the great grandson of John L. Clark and the sixth generation to own Clark’s Hardware has maintained this same dedication to service and professionalism as a family legacy for 170 years.

The Clark family history dates back to the 1700s when David, John (ca.17??–1845) and James Clark, originally from Scotland, emigrated through Belfast, Ireland as indentured servants to Charles Carroll of Carrollton. Charles Carroll, the largest land owner in Howard County, owned the estate known as Doughoregan Manor. Carroll had the Clarks farm the land in the area of Route 108 and Route 32 which eventually became Clarksville (ca. 1857).

John’s son, James Clark of “Wheatfield” (1809-1890) established the first Clark’s Farm Supplies (ca. 1845), on Main Street. James Clark, Jr., (1840-1909) eventually joined the family business. The building was located where the Tiber Park is now to the right of the Easton Building, the current home of Bean Hollow. (Note: This building was lost in a fire after the hardware business had moved to the Depot Yard.)

James’ son, John Lawrence Clark, (1855–1924) an 1872 graduate of Rock Hill College, was originally engaged in the cattle business after graduation. John L. Clark married Mary Corrine Talbot and became a business partner with E. A. Talbot at the Talbot and Clark Farm Supplies on Main Street.

Through World Wars, The Great Depression, fires and floods – good times and bad – Clark’s Hardware has provided Howard County and surrounding county farmers and residents with quality products and equipment, assistance in all home/farm repair matters and excellent customer service. Being a staple in the Howard County community for 170 years is quite an accomplishment and there are few businesses in Maryland that can make that same statement.

The services offered by Talbot & Clark over the years have been necessary and varied. In 1866, a blacksmith shop was added to the back of the store. In post-Civil War Howard County, the 1847-1866 store ledger notes the blacksmith “Placing leg irons on 4 prisoners – 50 cents ea. . .$2.00.” The blacksmith also removed the leg irons of prisoners to work on the railroad tracks at the B & O Station. These services have long been removed from the business and in the ensuing years, Clark’s delivered vital services such as coal and fuel oil delivery, machine repairs, parts replacement for farm equipment.

CLARK’S continued on page 7
THE PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE  Paulette Lutz

Believe it or not, the Howard County Fair is just weeks away! This year is very special because it is the 70th Anniversary of the Howard County Fair. The Fair starts on Saturday, August 8th and will run through Saturday, August 15th. At our booth in the Main Exhibit Hall, we will have a display on the history of the Howard County Fair to celebrate the 70th anniversary, so be sure to visit and see some wonderful old photos. We will also have for sale the new Howard County tote bags, wine bags, hats and more from our HCHS gift shop, raffle tickets and books on the history of Howard County.

On Wednesday, August 12th, at 4:00 p.m. be sure to come to the 4H Activities Hall to meet local chef Katie Moose who will be doing a cooking demonstration with our recently published Let’s Dish cookbook! The cookbook contains old and new recipes from noted Howard County residents. Katie will be preparing delicious recipes from our cookbook which will be available for sale!! So be sure to pick up your copy during your visit.

Hands on History Day is Friday, August 14th at 11:30 a.m. Be sure to bring the kids by to see our historic artifacts and take an educational historic journey in Howard County history.

Hope to see you at the fair!! ✴

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Anyone interested in contributing articles or photographs or anything of interest to the Society, please call the Library at 410-480-3250 or email Janet Kusterer at janetkusterer@verizon.net
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT
SUMMER 2015 Shawn Gladden

As we enter the second half of 2015, we are putting into place events, activities, exhibits, and partnerships that will define our organization for 2016 and beyond. Through the hard work of our staff, volunteers, board, and members we have put the Howard County Historical Society “on the map” not only as a repository for artifacts and records from the county’s past, but also as an organization with some great public programs for all audiences.

Our museum staff, led by Museum Manager Michael McManus, continues to work hard towards updating exhibits and preparing for September’s featured Smithsonian traveling exhibit, *Hometown Teams: How Sports Shaped America*. This issue’s “Artifact Spotlight” will feature some of the artifacts that have been loaned to HCHS for our accompanying exhibit, *Howard County High School Sports through the Decades, 1900-2010*. In addition to the exhibit, we have scheduled a variety of sports related programming including a High School Mascot Race, a Vintage 1800’s Baseball Game Demonstration at Mt. Ida, a Coach of the Community Contest, and a panel discussion with professional athletes from Howard County. The exhibit runs from September 19th to November 7th at the museum, 8328 Court Avenue, Ellicott City.

We have made significant changes to the museum layout and the interpretation and will continue to do so well into 2016. Through a special projects grant from the Colonel Thomas Dorsey Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution we have contracted model maker Robert Kirchman to build an exhibit model of the Ellicott Mills sawmill from 1772 based on a sketch in our collection by George Ellicott. This model will feature a motorized saw that will give visitors an idea of how a working mill functioned in a pre-Industrial mill town.

In June, we started the much needed repairs to the Museum roof. Thanks to the sponsorship of our board member Senator James Robey and State Delegate Guy Guzzone, we were awarded a State Bond Bill in the amount of $35,000, which we then matched from Society Capital improvement funds and a donation from former Board member Paul Miller. Ruff Roofers was contracted to complete the work which included replacing and repairing slate around the Bell Tower, re-pointing and re-flashing the Chimney, and replacing the gutters. By the time you are reading this newsletter, the work will have been completed.

As an ongoing part of our mission to provide more access to our collection, we are happy to announce that, with the help of volunteer Angela Render, we have rolled out Past Perfect Online. This search engine will allow online visitors to search our archives, library, photo and museum collection through an online version of our museum database.

Lastly, as a part of the many program offerings that we have at the museum on the weekends, we have started our Ellicott City Historic Walking Tours led by experienced tour guide, Anthony Hoos, on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of every month. The tour not only includes a tour of Main Street, but also the key historic sites at the “top of the hill” around the museum and courthouse. The tour is approximately 3/4 mile and lasts between 45 minutes and an hour, discounts for HCHS members and group tours.

This year has been an exciting, and very busy, year for all of us here at HCHS. We are happy to continue providing education, entertainment, and resources for our members and the community as a whole. Make sure that you check out our events calendar and make plans to visit us soon!

August is the month for milestone anniversaries this year. The Howard County Fair is in its 70th year, and 60 years ago this month The Enchanted Forest opened its doors. We will be at the Fair with an exhibit celebrating that milestone, and I will be at Clark’s Elloak Farm with Martha Clark the weekend of August 15 and 16, celebrating the Enchanted Forest birthday amid so many of the exhibits Martha was able to save. We’ll also be signing our book about the Enchanted Forest on both days. Hope to see you there!
The Enchanted Forest, Maryland’s “Storybook Park,” opened to the public on August 15, 1955, just a month after Disneyland opened in California. Walt Disney and Howard Harrison, Sr. and his son Howard were men of great vision and creativity. It was post-war boom time, and men home from the war were starting families and spending more time with them. They were looking for venues that would entertain the entire family, and found them in these theme parks.

The Harrison’s looked at many locations before settling on a spot in rural Ellicott City for their venture. They enlisted Howard Adler, who had created such things as the Christmas window displays in downtown Baltimore, to execute their ideas for the fairytales they wanted to tell. Howard Harrison, Sr. was particularly fond of sharing these stories with his grandchildren, and felt that many others would enjoy them. Not everyone shared their enthusiasm for the project but when thousands of people crowded the park on a regular basis, requiring police to manage the traffic, even the worst skeptics were convinced—it was a great idea.

The park grew every year, and the Harrison’s were meticulous in the care and maintenance of the park, carefully painting and pruning, making sure everything was safe and fun. Everyone had their favorite feature—Willie the Whale, where you could sit in his mouth and he would chuckle; Mount Vesuvius, where you could slide down a gigantic sliding board (even faster if you slid on wax paper) and the Old Ladies’ Shoe. Along the way you might meet up with Little Bo Peep or even Old King Cole. It was all the sweetest fun.

The park was groundbreaking in one very significant aspect. Opening in 1955, it was integrated from the very first day. The Harrison’s were adamant that the park welcomed ALL children and their families.

After creating many happy memories for generations of visitors the park closed in 1989. No one knew what would happen to the many wonderful attractions. In 2004, Martha Clark came along to pick up the pieces. She first acquired the Pumpkin Coach and after seeing the popularity of that at her petting farm, Clark’s Elioak Farm, she decided to see what else she could add. After over ten years of hard work the collection of over 100 pieces culminated with the move of the final buildings from the original site to her farm, in the summer of 2015.

Clark said, “All of us at Clark’s Elioak Farm are very excited about becoming the new home of the Enchanted Forest Castle. It is sad that the Castle is leaving its Route 40 location as the entrance to the magical storybook park that entertained several generations of families and children from 1955 to 1989. Moving and rebuilding it at our farm ensures that it will continue to be a symbol of the wonderful Enchanted Forest for another generation of children to enjoy. We look forward to the ribbon cutting for the Castle on August 15, which is also the 60th birthday of the Enchanted Forest.”

Now, the only remnant of the park at the original location is Old King Cole, pointing the way into the shopping center. A very happy ending to the tale.

For up-to-the-minute news on happenings at the Society, become a fan on Facebook. In addition to finding out what we are up to, you can also post comments, questions and photos of Society events and Howard county history. If you aren’t on Facebook yet, sign up today at www.facebook.com
ARTIFACT SPOTLIGHT: HAMMOND HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS ARTIFACTS

These are artifacts for our upcoming exhibit Hometown Teams: How Sports Shaped America. These items were donated by Hammond High School and are the following: Travis Clark’s 2010 Maryland Baseball Player of the Year Bat and Award; Tameka Harrison’s 1000 Point Scored Basketball, a Hammond Under Armour T-Shirt (The first Howard County School to use Under Armour products), and Jaqueline Rieschick’s All American award from 1991.

Hometown Teams opens at the HCHS Museum from September 19th – November 7th, 2015.

HCPSS AND HCHS PARTNERSHIP

The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) has partnered with the Howard County Historical Society to support elementary and secondary social studies in HCPSS schools. The goal of the partnership is to inspire students to develop a sense of local history by connecting the past with the present.

The partnership was formalized at an official signing on Thursday, June 18, at the Howard County Historical Society’s new education display featuring HCPSS artifacts at the Howard County Library Charles E. Miller Branch and Historical Center in Ellicott City, Maryland.

Howard County Historical Society representatives will support elementary and secondary social studies curricula by attending HCPSS professional development meetings to educate staff about the resources, exhibits and educational programs available through the society. The society also will serve as a resource for information regarding the collection, repository and display of historical artifacts and will include HCPSS historical items in its educational exhibits.

HCPSS will loan educational items of historical significance to the Society for community exhibits and provide a school system representative to serve on the Society’s Board of Directors. In line with the HCPSS strategic plan, Vision 2018, this partnership provides staff with access to learning experiences that support professional growth.

Howard County Board of Education Members Bess Altwerger, Sandra French and Ellen Flynn Giles, HCPSS Communications Director Rebecca Amani-Dove, HCPSS Coordinator of Secondary Social Studies and Advanced Placement Mark Stout, and HCPSS Coordinator of Elementary Social Studies Kim Eggborn joined Howard County Historical Society Board President Paulette Lutz, Education Committee Chair Anne Clark Schoenhut, and Executive Director Shawn Gladden to sign the formal partnership agreement at the June 18 event.

THANKS TO ALL OUR SPONSORS
2015 EVENTS AT A GLANCE

August

7  Lunch Date with History, 11:30 a.m.  
   Museum (8328 Court Avenue)  
   “Early Maryland Military History” by Richard Martiny.  
   $5 per person, Free for Members.

8  Historic Ellicott City Walking Tour,  
   11:00-12:00 Meet at Mt. Ida  
   (3691 Sarah’s Lane).  
   $10 per person, $5 for Members.

8–16  Howard County Fair: Booth Exhibits:  
   70 Years of the Howard County Fair:  
   Howard County Fairgrounds  
   (2210 Fairgrounds Road, West Friendship).

9  Second Sunday Market, 11:00-4:00  
   Parking Lot D, Historic Ellicott City  
   (Out front of Mat About You).

12  Historic Cooking Demonstration  
    w/ Katie Moose, 4:00 – 5:00.  
    Howard County Fairgrounds  
    (2210 Fairgrounds Road, West Friendship),  
    Tickets to fair required.

15  Museum Concert Series:  
    The Kline’s Appalachian Bluegrass Band.  
    Museum (8328 Court Avenue).  
    $15 per person, $25 per couple,  
    Free for members.

22  Historic Ellicott City Walking Tour,  
    11:00-12:00 Meet at Mt. Ida  
    (3691 Sarah’s Lane).  
    $10 per person, $5 for Members.

28  Museum Concert Series:  
    80’s Party with I’m the Man  
    the Ultimate Joe Jackson Tribute Band.  
    Museum (8328 Court Avenue).  
    $15 per person, $25 per couple,  
    Free for members.

September

4  Lunch Date with History, 11:30 a.m.  
   Museum (8328 Court Avenue)  
   “Native Americans in Howard County” by Lee Preston, Jr.  
   $5 per person, Free for Members.

11  Ring and Remember, 8:46 am  
    Museum (8328 Court Avenue)

12  Historic Ellicott City Walking Tour,  
    11:00-12:00 Meet at Mt. Ida  
    (3691 Sarah’s Lane).  
    $10 per person, $5 for Members.

13  Second Sunday Market, 11:00-4:00  
    Parking Lot D, Historic Ellicott City  
    (Out front of Mat About You).

14  Ring and Remember, 11:30 am  
    Museum (8328 Court Avenue)

19  Hometown Teams:  
    How Sports Shape America  
    Museum Exhibit Opening 1:00 pm  
    (8328 Court Avenue)  
    Howard County High School  
    Mascot Race,  
    Time TBD. Free to the Public.

20  19th Century Vintage Baseball  
    Demonstration, Mt. Ida (3691 Sarah’s Lane).  
    Part of the Hometown Teams Opening Weekend. Activities for the Whole Family.  
    Free to the Public.

26  Historic Ellicott City Walking Tour,  
    11:00-12:00 Meet at Mt. Ida  
    (3691 Sarah’s Lane).  
    $10 per person, $5 for Members.

29  Program: Every Dream Begins  
    with a Dreamer: The 50th Anniversary  
    of Desegregation in Howard County Public Schools  
    7:00 – 8:30 Miller Branch Library  
    Meeting Rooms (9421 Fredrick Road).

October

2  Lunch Date with History, 11:30 a.m.  
   “The Underground Railroad in Howard County” by Paulette Lutz  
   Location change - Ellicott City Colored School,  
   Restored (8683 Frederick Road).  
   $5 per person, Free for Members.

10  Historic Ellicott City Walking Tour, 11:00-12:00 Meet at Mt. Ida  
    (3691 Sarah’s Lane).  
    $10 per person, $5 for Members.

11  Appraisal Roadshow and Antique Fair w/ Todd Peenstra and Steve Gouterman, Miller Branch Library Meeting Rooms (9421 Fredrick Road)  
    (2) Sessions 10:00-11:30 & 11:30-1:00.  
    $12 ($8 members) General Admission w/ 1 Appraisal.  
    $5 General Admission – No Appraisal.

24  Historic Ellicott City Walking Tour, 11:00-12:00 Meet at Mt. Ida (3691 Sarah’s Lane).  
    $10 per person, $5 for Members.
and household repair items.

In 1870 Joshua Dorsey bought the land on Maryland Avenue that now is the home to the Antique Depot. He built a frame house at this location in 1885 and delivered coal and ice to local businesses and homes.

In 1903, E. A. Talbot decided to open a lumber store up the hill on Main Street to avoid the frequent flooding issues on lower Main Street. The Ellicott Mills Brewing Company now occupies the building that was once Talbot Lumber.

Needing to expand the business, John L. Clark bought the property at the B & O Depot Yard from Joshua Dorsey in 1907 and opened a hardware and agricultural implement store. William B. Owings who worked for Joshua Dorsey remained at the hardware with John Clark and the store became Clark and Owings Hardware.

In 1922, John was succeeded by his son Edward T. Clark, Sr. (1886–1951) also known as “Pops” who was a graduate of St. John's College in Annapolis when it was still a military school. Pops consolidated two of the oldest hardware/farm implement businesses - Joshua Dorsey's and Talbot and Clark. As the business grew and expanded, Pops needed more room to operate to and constructed a feed warehouse in the back of the store.

He bought the Bridge Market (8000 Main Street, the building east of the train tracks) to store coal. Elevated siding was constructed to drop the coal from the railroad cars to the bins for the coal delivery to customers. The coal was moved from the Depot yard to the Bridge Market. A livery stable located on Maryland Avenue in back of the store was removed to accommodate the feed business.

Pops Clark needed lumber to build the addition for the feed warehouse. The lumber came from the land along St. John’s Lane between Frederick Road and Route 40. At this time, the property was heavily wooded, allowing him to cut the trees down for the needed lumber for his expansion. The cleared land has since been used for the St. John’s Cemetery.

Discovered in the Depot store and currently housed in Andy's office today, is the door of the original hardware store with the signatures of John L. Clark and E. A. Talbot, December 24, 1893; Wesley G. McKenzie, May 24, 1888; John Collier, 1890; L. Scott Mercier, 1892; and John William Moss Kiger, 1889.

In the 1920s, Pops made innovations such as switching from wagons to trucks to deliver coal to local residents. He brought modernization to the business to keep pace with the changing times and economy.

Pops Clark bought out William B. Owings in 1946 and changed the name to E. T. Clark and Sons, joined by his two sons, Edward T. Clark, Jr. and Addison Hodges Clark. Pops soon retired in 1950.

His son, E. T. Clark, Jr. further modernized the business by changing from coal to oil and started the first fuel oil delivery service in Howard County and surrounding counties. As a teen, Andy rode with the fuel truck drivers to make deliveries in all types of weather, which could be quite treacherous on the snow and ice-covered, narrow, hilly streets of Ellicott City and Oella. The oil business was later sold to the O’Malley, Sexton – Globe Company.

With the urbanization of Howard County, E. T. Clark and Sons added more “suburban supplies” such as lawn mowers and garden items in 1954. Lawn mower repair and maintenance became such a popular service, the business was once again expanded to The Bridge Market to house the lawn mower sales and repair trade and the coal business was terminated. Andy recalls in the prosperous early spring months weighing and selling larger than normal amounts of seed and garden supplies. One of Andy's fond memories of the 1950s was walking across the street to the B & O station to pick-up crates of baby chicks to sell to the local farmers. And, as was the custom then, parents bought chicks for their children's Easter baskets.

Andy, a graduate of Howard High School and Virginia Military Institute, and his brother Edward T. Clark, III did not intend to go into the hardware business. Andy, then an Army Captain, had a very successful career in the Corp of Army Engineers traveling the world working on various projects.

However, in the spring of 1972, an automobile accident took the lives of Andy's parents, Marie and Edward T. Clark, Jr. Andy and his brother Ed decided they would resign their commissions as Captains and run the family business.

According to the Howard County section of the Baltimore Sun, dated September 15, 1991, “The day I out-processed was the day Agnes came through and washed out the store,” recalls Clark, referring to the devastating tropical storm Agnes that flooded lower Ellicott City with 28 feet of water on June 22, 1972. Had the storm hit before he resigned his commission, Clark said, “the store would never have re-opened.”

The storm caused $70,000 in damage and Clark's Hardware was not covered by flood insurance. Local banks were not willing to lend money to the inexperienced Clark brothers to get back on their feet. Through personal re-financing by mortgaging their parent's house, Andy and his brother Ed were able to re-establish the business, often working 18 hour days to keep it from floundering.

In 1973, Andy and Ed reopened Clarks Hardware at St John's Plaza. Having better parking than the old location in Ellicott City and taking advantage of the traffic on Route 40, the new store thrived and eventually more than doubled the national average for hardware sales per square foot. To demonstrate their care and concern for the customers and community, Clark's offered smoke detectors at cost to encourage Howard County residents to install this new life-saving device in their homes.

Always modernizing and keeping up with the times, Andy computerized the hardware store in 1978, being one of the first in the nation to establish computers in the hardware business. In 1981, Andy and his wife Jackie bought Ed's portion of the business and in 1987 Andy and Jackie Clark bought 5 acres on Route 40 to expand their business once more. Andy and Jackie managed to personally finance their new 40,000 square foot business. The hardware store has thrived in this location for the last 28 years and the family legacy continues as their daughter Margaret E. Clark (the fifth of five children) works in the hardware store today.

Over the years, Clark’s Hardware has operated under many names – American Hardware Cooperative, ServiceStar, TruValue, Do-It-Best Cooperative and currently ACE Cooperative, but residents of Howard County will always know the store as Clark’s Hardware and remember it for their excellent customer service and quality products. ☟
HOWARD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

YES! I want to join/renew my membership with the Howard County Historical Society and support the Society’s mission to collect, protect, and share Howard County’s rich history. I’ve enclosed a check to cover annual dues at the following membership level(s):

- Gold $500
- Silver $250
- Gift $55 (new member)
- Individual $35
- Family $50
- Student $10
- Bronze $100
- Family $50
- Student $10

TOTAL ENCLOSED: $0

Membership Benefits: Basic Benefits for all members include:

- Research: Free research assistance, free or discounted copies of Marriage Licenses.
- Events: Discounted admission to paid HCHS programs and events. Pre-sold tickets available on first come, first serve basis. Invitation to Annual Members only events. Pre-sale available for all events.
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* Please see our website www.hchsmd.org/join for full membership benefits.

Please return this completed form and your check made payable to the Howard County Historical Society to:

9421 Frederick Road
Ellicott City, MD 21042

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!