

# The Phoenix

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The Newsletter of Preservation Maryland

Summer 2002



**At the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum Peter Brink, Vice President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation announced the inclusion of Maryland's commercial skipjack fleet on the Trust's 2002 Most Endangered List.**



**Work on the commercial skipjack Somerset begins with the pulling of its mast. As part of the Save Our Skipjacks Task Force recommendations a restoration program for commercial skipjacks was created at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum.**

## Maryland's Commercial Skipjack Fleet Named Most Endangered

On June 6, the National Trust for Historic Preservation named the nation's only remaining sail-powered commercial fleet one of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places. The skipjack, an icon for the Chesapeake Bay, was developed in the 1890s for dredging oysters. The Chesapeake Bay skipjacks are the only fleet of vessels to have received this designation. As many as 1,000 skipjacks existed in the early years of the 20th century. Today, skipjacks and the livelihood of the captain's who sail them are threatened by the vessels' age, fragile condition, the expense of upkeep and restoration, and the decline in the oyster industry.

The recognition of threats to the commercial skipjack fleet began in 1999 with the creation of the Save Our Skipjacks Task Force as part of Maryland 2000, the state's millennium celebration. The task force, appointed by Maryland 2000 chair and Comptroller William Donald Schaefer, includes skipjack captains, Preservation Maryland, the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, conservationists, and insurance experts. In April 2000, the task force issued several recommendations to save the 15-vessel commercial skipjack fleet including the

establishment of a restoration program, increased access to oysters, and affordable insurance.

To help implement the task force recommendations for the skipjacks, the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum has established a restoration program, utilizing the skills of shipwrights and apprentices at the museum, for the commercial skipjacks. Since the program began, four skipjacks have received assistance City of Crisfield, H. M. Krentz, and Lady Katie have been repaired at the museum. Skipjack Restoration Project Manager Mike Vlahovich estimates that the total cost to repair the commercial fleet is \$2 million. Estimates to repair individual vessels are up to \$250,000 per vessel and to date, \$150,000 has been spent on initial repairs to eligible vessels.

The fleet numbered 35 in 1985 when it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In the 2000-2001 season, 13 skipjacks worked and last season the numbers were even fewer. The task force hopes to raise the funds necessary to complete the repair and restoration of the commercial skipjacks and to create an endowment for future maintenance of the vessels. The Save Our Skipjacks Taskforce advocated for the National Trust's Most Endangered listing in order

*continued on page six*

## Legislative Wrap-Up: Heritage Structure Rehabilitation Tax Credit

Legislation introduced at the beginning of the 2002 Maryland General Assembly session threatened to drastically undercut the effectiveness of the Heritage Structure Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program. Proposed changes included a program wide cap of \$20 million dollars in the House version, and \$25 million in the Senate version, plus a per project cap of \$1 million dollars. Additionally, the legislation set a cut off date for part II applications under the existing law of February 1, 2002.

Preservation Maryland spearheaded a coalition of local governments, business and community groups, preservation and environmental organizations, and developers that made significant strides in keeping the heritage tax credit program as our most effective tool for preserving historic buildings and revitalizing older communities around the state. Preservation Maryland is especially grateful for the lobbying efforts of Robin Shaivitz of Alexander & Cleaver, the Maryland Heritage Alliance,



Preservation Maryland's Programs Director, Elise Butler; Rob Niewig, National Trust for Historic Preservation; Nicole Diehlmann, Maryland Historical Trust; and Patricia Hayes-Parker, Anacostia Trail Heritage Area, Inc. meet with Charlie Stek of the office of Senator Paul Sarbanes to discuss the economic, fiscal, and social impacts of historic preservation practices in communities across the state.

Reznick, Fedder and Silverman, West Side Renaissance, Greater Baltimore Committee, Baltimore Development Corp., Midtown Development Corp. and the City of Baltimore. The final version of the legislation passed by the General Assembly makes significant changes to the Heritage Structure Rehabilitation Tax Credit program as follows:

- The credit rate is 20% (lowered from 25%) both residential and commercial projects.
- There is no program-wide cap.
- The credit remains refundable.

- The maximum amount of credits per project is \$3,000,000.
- "Project" is defined broadly to include multiple structures that are functionally related.
- The credit can no longer be claimed for costs funded with state or local grants, grants funded by tax-exempt bonds, or loans from the state or a locality below the rate on MD GO bonds.
- Projects are grandfathered under the existing law for part II applications received by Feb. 1, 2002.
- Reporting requirements by the Legislative Reference and DHCD to



The Lighthouse Keeper's House, also known as the John O'Neill House, is constructed out of Port Deposit granite and brick. The historic residence is a good example of how buildings are transformed over time to meet changing needs and the grant from Preservation Maryland will be used to assist with interior restoration of the Keeper's House.

### PRESERVATION MARYLAND AWARDS FOUR NEW GRANTS

- Baltimore Maritime Museum, Baltimore City:- Received a grant to assist with the repairs to the Lightship Chesapeake, a designated National Landmark.
- Friends of Concord Point Lighthouse, Harford County: Received a grant to assist with the interior restoration of the 19th Century Lighthouse Keeper's House.
- Historical Society of Talbot County, Talbot County: Received a grant to assist with the restoration of the James Neall House, a contributing structure to the Easton National Register Historic District.
- Jerusalem-Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church, Montgomery County: Received a grant to assist with the stabilization of the 1912 Cordelia House located in the West Montgomery Avenue Historic District.

make sure that the Legislature is informed about the kinds of projects and whether we are near a \$50 million amount in credits.

■ The program sunsets (terminates) June 1, 2004. Projects with Part II prior to May 31, 2004 are eligible to generate credit in subsequent years.

Additionally, in a year of deep budget cuts throughout State agencies, the Maryland Historical Trust's budget was not spared. Unfortunately most of the significant increases gained over the past few years were eliminated. The new programs initiated last year out of the Governor's Task Force for the Preservation and Enhancement of Maryland's Heritage Resources were the most vulnerable:

■ Non-capital Grants were cut from \$1.3 million to \$650,000

■ Capital Grants were cut from \$750,000 to \$500,000

■ Maryland History Investment Fund's \$1.2 million budget was eliminated

■ State Unit Heritage Preservation Program's \$709,000 was budget eliminated

■ Museum Grant fund was cut from \$872,000 to \$774,650

As a result of these cuts the MHT budget for these programs has been reduced to \$2 million from \$4.8 million. Other programs such as the Maryland Heritage Authority Fund and the MHT Loan Fund experienced budget cuts as well.

Thanks to all of our grassroots advocates from every corner of the state. Grassroots advocacy gave our issues a truly statewide presence and can be credited with helping save the heritage tax credit and salvage the MHT budget. However, the changes to the heritage tax credit make it clear that our work is not done. Plans are already in motion to assess the concerns of the legislature and to better quantify the economic, fiscal, and social impacts of the rehabilitation projects the tax credit produces.

*If you would like to be a part of Preservation Maryland's Electronic Advocacy Network and receive updates on the status of the heritage tax credit and other preservation legislation send your contact information to [Advocacy@PreserveMD.org](mailto:Advocacy@PreserveMD.org).*

## Historic Resources Damaged by Tornado

The F5 tornado that touched down in late April in La Plata, the county seat of Charles County, left in its wake millions of dollars in damage. Several National Register eligible historic resources were literally torn apart during the course of the storm. Prior to the damage, the La Plata Historic Preservation Commission was planning to create a historic district because the town was the best example in Charles County of a railroad village with turn-

of-the-century Victorian homes.

Preservation Maryland joined the Maryland Historical Trust, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Maryland Department of Planning, and the staff of the Charles County Historic District Commission in meeting with property owners to assess the damage to historic structures and assist with recommending technical and funding resources for stabilization and repair. The Maryland Department of Planning has offered pro-bono design and planning services to commercial property owners.

*For more information on disaster preparedness and mitigation as well as response contact the Heritage Emergency National Task Force at (202) 634-1422 or [www.HeritagePreservation.org](http://www.HeritagePreservation.org). The Heritage Emergency National Task Force is co-sponsored by Heritage Preservation and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.*



**Ellenwood, built in 1857 and listed in the National Register of Historic Places, is a grand Italianate manor house located just outside the town of La Plata. The recent tornado severely damaged the home and ripped away most of the 150 year old trees that surrounded the property.**

## 2002 Baltimore Preservation & Revitalization Conference Brings 500 to Historic Mount Vernon

For two days in May, nearly 500 architects, developers, government officials, students, and preservation professionals and enthusiasts participated in the 2002 Preservation & Revitalization Conference.

Each year the Preservation & Revitalization Conference provides attendees with a diverse selection of educational sessions that examine current historic preservation and economic development issues and practices. This year's sessions on topics such as preservation planning, heritage tourism, main street revitalization, advocacy, and Smart Growth were lauded by attendees as interesting and substantive.

*The Annual Preservation & Revitalization Conference is made possible in part with State Funds from the Maryland Historical Trust, an agency of the Department of Housing and Community Development.*



Tyler Gearhart, Executive Director and Jay Griswold, Chairman Emeritus of the Maryland Historical Society and former Preservation Maryland board member enjoyed the conference's opening reception and the Historical Society's new exhibit of HABS/HAER photographs - Built to Last: Ten Enduring Landmarks of Baltimore's Central Business District.



Conference attendees heard from Charles Duff, Executive Director of the Midtown Development Corporation; Congressman Robert Ehrlich, U.S. House of Representatives - 2nd Congressional District; and Stanley Lowe, Vice President for Community Revitalization at the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The plenary speakers discussed Baltimore's architectural history, preservation issues at the national level, and neighborhood revitalization utilizing preservation-based community efforts.



Over the two-day conference participants attended educational sessions on issues such as agricultural tourism, archeology, historic tax credits, and brownfields redevelopment.



Sally Cairns (left) and Audrey Edwards, both of Cecil County, networked during a break between sessions.



The Maryland Historical Society, the state's oldest cultural institution, was the 2002 Conference Headquarters and the site of several educational sessions.



Conference attendees enjoyed the Exhibit Hall which featured information on groups such as Friends of Maryland's Olmsted Parks and Landscapes, Baltimore Heritage, Inc., Maryland Department of Planning, and LIVE Baltimore Marketing Center.



The educational session Rehabbing Downtown Baltimore with Tax Credits included a tour of projects, such as the Masonic Temple, that have utilized the rehabilitation tax credits in conjunction with the Secretary of Interior's Standards.



While enjoying the conference's closing event, Blues in the Backyard, Executive Director Tyler Gearhart and Preservation Maryland board member Sam Himmelrich encouraged bidding at the Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions' Great Escape silent auction.



Former Preservation Maryland board member Guy Warfield and his wife Paris caught up with conference attendees at the closing event.



Conference attendees and guests celebrated the close of the conference with an evening of blues music from Bruce Ewan and the Solid Senders and exquisite food and drink from Mount Vernon's own Brass Elephant Restaurant.

# 2002 Baltimore Preservation & Revitalization Conference

Special Thanks to the following for their participation and assistance in making the 2002 Preservation & Revitalization Conference possible.



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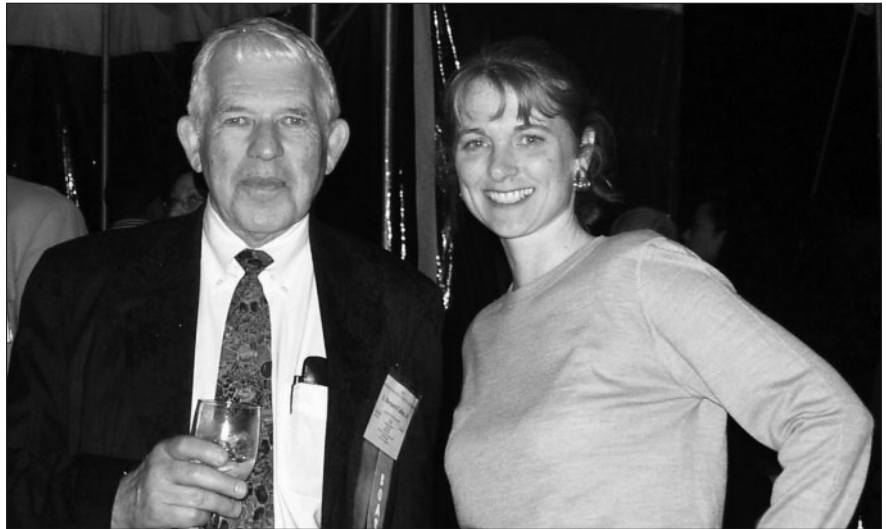
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**Bernie Callan with the Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions and Elizabeth Hughes, Chief of the Office of Heritage Planning and Outreach for the Maryland Historical Trust both served on the planning committee for the 2002 conference and enjoyed Blues in the Backyard!**

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to bring further attention to the need for the preservation of this critically important resource of Maryland's cultural heritage.

Also included on this year's 11 Most Endangered List are the Rosenwald Schools. Between 1913 and 1932 more than 5,300 schools, funded by Chicago philanthropist Julius Rosenwald, were built for African American students in the South. Of the 23 Rosenwald schools built in Prince George's County, nine remain and the county is actively pursuing the preservation of those schools.

Other Maryland properties previously included on the National Trust's Most Endangered List are the Senator Theatre, Baltimore City; West Side District, Baltimore City; Antietam Battlefield, Washington County; Monocacy Aqueduct, Frederick County; USF Constellation, Baltimore City; and Sotterley, St. Mary's County.

*If you would like to learn more about the Skipjack Restoration Project contact Deborah Davis at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum at (410) 745-2916, ext.11 or visit [www.cbmm.org/skipjacks.html](http://www.cbmm.org/skipjacks.html).*

# Member Contributions

*New and renewed members from March 1 to June 15, 2002*

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Students from Roland Park Country School visit the newly renovated pagoda in Patterson Park. The Friends of Patterson Park have applied for Preservation Maryland's Special Grant in order to fund an interpretive exhibit inside the pagoda.

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