

## The Landing of the Scottish Settlers in Oxford in 1747

Reprinted from the Church of Holy Trinity Sunday Bulletin,  
October 2, 2022. Thank you Father Kevin!

### The Manifest of English Sailing Ship Johnson

Scotsmen taken prisoner after the Battle of Culloden Moor in Scotland on April 16, 1746 were transported to America. On July 20, 1747 the sailing ship *The Johnson* disembarked the Scots in Oxford where they were sold as indentured servants for a five-year term, after which they were given fifty acres of land, tools, and corn. Several of the proudest families in Maryland are descendants from these Scots and their names can be read on on the certified manifest from *The Johnson* that is housed in the Oxford Museum.



## From the President MAKING AND REPEATING HISTORY

Dear Members,

It's hard to believe that summer is over, and that Halloween and holidays are right around the corner. We witnessed horrifying history as Hurricane Ian devastated parts of Florida. That is type of history, I hope, doesn't repeat itself.

But here in Oxford, great history repeats itself in the form of multi-media videos and presentations. Didn't we have a great run of local history as we enjoyed the Memories and Musings project chaired by Paula Bell? She and her committee found some great Oxford history stories told by the people that made that history. See our website and enjoy the stories of the creation of the mural on the market, the capers that were pulled off successfully and hilariously, and the firehouse history that made us aware of the sacrifices made by our own first responders and the firehouse auxiliary.

Coming up! A members only preview opening party on October 28 at St. Paul's Church for the much anticipated *Crossroads* exhibit, a Museum on Main Street Program, sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution and Maryland Humanities. Please put that date on your calendar! The exhibit then opens to the public on October 29 and runs through Dec. 16. The Museum will be open concurrently with *Crossroads* with hours Friday through Monday 10-4pm for both exhibits. If you'd like to volunteer to docent at this special exhibit, please let us know.

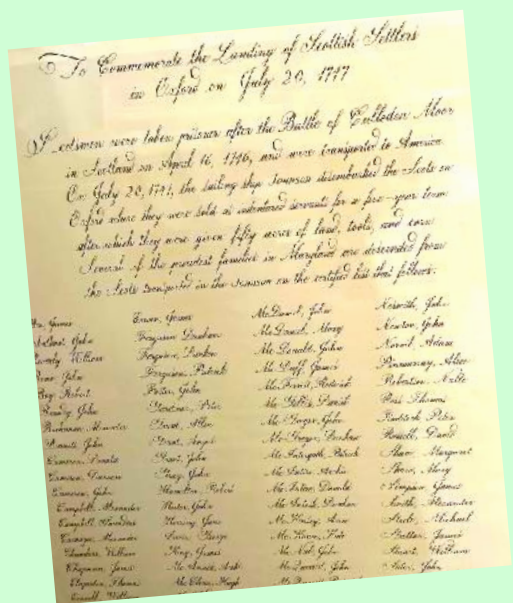
We hope you enjoyed *Down on the Farm* with Tot O'Mara. What a crowd gathered to hear her story. More programming is planned in conjunction with *Crossroads*. Be sure to come to *Kicking the Can* with Al Smith and Leo Nollmeyer on Nov. 10 at OCC. It's a special retrospective about the canning industry on the Eastern Shore. Members' Only Winter Party on December 9. Again, a busy quarter ahead of us as history keeps us busy.

Oh, and this is my last newsletter as my term as president is over in December. I will remain on the board and support the incoming president and Board, just as I know you will continue to support the vitality of this special Museum and our annual fund!

See you around the village many of us call home, where we all make history, daily.

Most Sincerely,

Julie Wells, President



### The History of The Kirkin' o' the Tartan

After the defeat of the Scots by the English at the Battle of Culloden 1746, the Act of Proscription banned the wearing of tartans and kilts, speaking Gaelic and other Highland ways in hopes the rebellious Scottish spirit would be subdued. But the canny and defiant Scots preserved their traditions underground. According to legend, one way was to hide pieces of tartan and bring them to church to be secretly blessed at a particular point in the service. Kirk is the Gaelic word for church.

Holy Trinity Oxford celebrates this American "Kirkin' o' the Tartan" tradition each Fall and honors our Scottish settlers rooted in Oxford history.

## FAMILY FUN AT THE MUSEUM

We want the Museum to be accessible to everyone. Kids are welcome, too!

When you are in the Museum, look for the Family Fun table, where you will find activities to guide you through the exhibit, or to keep children entertained while you explore.



In the same category as “fun” we planted “Colonial Crops” again this summer and had our first success with five tobacco plants in a row in front of our corn. They were planted behind the Dependency and grew tall and strong until the squirrels of Oxford and the winds of Fiona took them down in mid-September! Look for more information about *Tobacco as Currency in Colonial American* at the Museum.



## Our Covid Rebound A SUMMER OF EXCITEMENT

Our last newsletter reported on our summer events, the Fine Arts Exhibit and the first of several talks under the title *Remember When, Memories and Musings* with Howard Lapp and Dorothy Fenwick sharing the story of the Oxford Market Mural. Since then, the Museum hosted three more programs this summer and we have a handful more on the calendar, before we close for the winter on December 16. How refreshing it has been to be open and busy! A review and photos of these programs follows. And we offer another round of thanks to the presenters!



The Caper Crew entertained Oxfordians on a lovely July evening with their tales and enhanced memories of over 40 years of Oxford shenanigans! Ray Stevens led the crew as Sid Campen, Tom Bixler, and John Pepe each shared the story of a “caper” and embellished the last one told! It was an evening of laughter by both those who remembered these events and those new to this very special village.

The Oxford Fire House and Auxiliary opened the bay doors this summer for our *Remember When* series with Tim Kearns and Pam Baker telling stories of the past and sharing thoughts on the future of the Oxford Volunteer Fire Company.



In August, Steve Cox opened his barn for us to gather and he shared the story of his farming experience in



Oxford, over just the past few years, to a group with varied levels of farming knowledge. A great exchange of information from seed planting methods to fertilizer and water issues, to the economy of small scale production of grain and animal feed and the international market, to name just a few of the topics covered weaving his presentation into a great Q&A session.



A few weeks after our current exhibit *Rooted in the Land* opened, photographer Edwin Remsberg came for a special evening at the Museum attended by our sponsors, the Secretary of Agriculture, representatives from Maryland Humanities, and Museum board members to celebrate Edwin's exhibit as both a tribute to Maryland farmers and a companion exhibit to *Crossroads: Change in Rural America*, our special exhibit coming to St. Paul's Church on October 29.



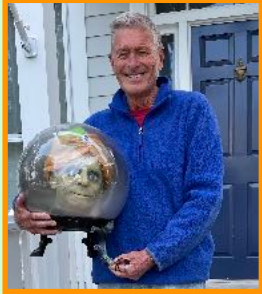
Three generations of proud farmers visited the Museum recently to see “Grandpa’s photo.”



## HALLOWEEN HIJINKS

So...not so long ago, or so far away, Read Madary and his lovely wife Luann lived at 217 North Morris Street. And this is where our story takes place...

Read was a jokester and among his many friends was Ray Stevens, another jokester, with whom he played a prank on Halloween, on unsuspecting trick or treaters.



It seems that one Halloween Ray took a "talking head" to Read's front porch. The "head", which was a globe about the size of a basketball, was connected to a microphone. When a mysterious someone used the microphone to speak to the unwitting trick or treaters, the head would light up!

Children would engage in conversation with this disembodied head, listening to how lonely the head was and comforting it with an affectionate pat. The head would complain of a headache, and the children would say, "I'm sorry. I hope you feel better"...and give the head another pat.

In spite of Ray's warning that this encounter with the globe would "scare the children for life", the trick or treaters defied that expectation and Read made some new friends.

*As remembered and told by Ray Stevens and Luann Madary to Paula Bell.*



These Halloween photos were shared by (and include) Nick Nazarre, taken in the late 50's. The place is Pope's Tavern,

though at the time it was a store and pool hall. This is Harry Pope behind the counter.



We noticed three things: 1) he is smoking a cigarette in his shop (!) 2) the bags to haul candy were really big, and 3) Dracula, back then, looked not so scary!

## Exhibit News THE SMITHSONIAN IS RETURNING TO OXFORD

*Crossroads: Change in Rural America*, developed by the Smithsonian's Museum on Main Street program and supported by Maryland Humanities, will be opening at the end of October. Installed at St.

Paul's Church, as the *WaterWays* exhibit was three years ago, the exhibit will run through December 16.



Many Americans, including Maryland residents, assume that rural communities are endangered and hanging on by a thread. The perception that rural America is threatened by urban sprawl or declining populations is far from true in many areas, including the Eastern Shore. Despite so many changes in demographics, communications, and transportation in the past century, many rural areas are working hard to sustain their communities and their unique way of life.

Here in Oxford, we love our Bay and watermen so much that it can be easy to overlook the rural nature that still shapes our land and our sense of place. We may have forgotten that this region has always been an agricultural area, from the seasonal settlements of Nanticoke and Choptank peoples and the establishment of the first British plantations on the mid-1600's. We may not think of how that life continues here as we drive up and down the Oxford Road, but don't we all still measure the seasons by the planting, growth and harvesting of the fields of corn and soybeans?

The Museum planned several programs to support the *Crossroads* exhibition, before and after the members opening reception at St. Paul's. We look forward to seeing you there and perhaps at a few of these other related events.



- October 13 *Down on the Farm* with Tot O'Mara and Bill Eason | OCC
- October 28 Members Preview Party for *Crossroads* | St. Paul's Church, Oxford
- October 29 *Crossroads* exhibit opens | St. Paul's Church, Oxford
- November 10 *Kicking the Can: History and Stories of the Canning Industry on the Eastern Shore*, Leo Nollmeyer and Al Smith | OCC
- November 13 *Bridge Toll: The Impact of the Bay Bridges on the Eastern Shore* | TCFL
- November 14 Christopher Tilghman, Author of *Mason's Retreat* and *The Right-Hand Shore* | TCFL
- December 9 Members Winter Party at Holy Trinity
- December 16 *Crossroads* exhibit closes, Museum closes

We thank the Oxford Community Center (OCC) and the Talbot County Free Library (TCFL) for partnering with us on many of these special programs.

Details for these programs can be found on each website:

[www.oxfordmuseummd.org](http://www.oxfordmuseummd.org), [www.oxfordcc.org](http://www.oxfordcc.org), and [www.tcfl.org](http://www.tcfl.org)

*Crossroads* in Oxford has been made possible by Maryland Humanities.



## WHAT'S IN YOUR ATTIC?

Or in your basement, your backyard or on your shoreline? Treasures can show up anywhere and here is our latest find:



This piece was found on an Oxford beach this summer.

Clay pipes like this one have existed in Europe since Sir Walter Raleigh visited Virginia in the mid 1500s. He

most likely introduced tobacco and the pipe to Europe in the late 16th century. The earliest known types of clay pipes here were Native American.

This particular clay pipe is an Irish pipe, probably from the mid 1800s. It was found on the west beach during a blowout tide. "Home Rule" is clearly stamped on the pipe with an Irish harp. The Home Rule Movement was a movement by the Irish for self-governance in Ireland. The Irish domestic and legislative matters we disputed and this was a step towards more independent rule from the British.

Let the Museum know if find pieces of the past, in your attic, basement or on your property. These pieces help us understand, a little more clearly, the history of our village.

## AUDIO OXFORD WALKING TOUR

Fall and winter walkers, if you have not taken the audio tour of Oxford yet, now is the perfect time! Just use the QR code below to purchase a \$5 link to download the audio tour, with photos, on your smartphone. Or, email the Museum to get your FREE MEMBERS code! [theoxfordmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:theoxfordmuseum@gmail.com)



The tour is a great companion for a long walk around town with family or friends, stopping for coffee, ice cream, or lunch along the way.

## MUSEUM STORE ONLINE

Holiday shopping already? We are here for you. Enjoy shopping from home at the Museum Shop online: <https://oxfordmuseummd.square.site>

And, if you are shopping on AMAZON, did you know that your order can benefit the Museum? Sign up on your account for [AMAZON SMILE](#) and they will donate .05% of your order to the Museum. It's that easy. May not seem like much, but it all adds up!

## And Now for Something Really Scary HAUNTED HISTORY OF THE ROBERT MORRIS INN, AS TOLD BY THE INNKEEPER.

The Robert Morris Inn, formerly known as The Riverview House, was built somewhere around 1710. A building that old must have some great ghost stories and what better time of the year to share ghost stories than October. One can only imagine how many people have lived and died at the Robert Morris Inn. The Inn wasn't always an Inn, after all. And its namesake, Robert Morris, Sr. died an agonizing death there in 1750. He was only 39 years old. The Riverview House remained in the Morris Estate until the late 1700s and during part of this time was used as a convalescent home for soldiers during the American Revolutionary War (1775 - 1783). Four rooms were occupied, each with several cot beds. Between these less fortunate soldiers and Robert Morris Sr., it is fair to say that many souls have passed through this building. Robert Morris Sr. insisted that the two top bedrooms of the house were used by him and his son and the two superior bedrooms on the second floor were reserved for guests, of which there were many. Later the house was converted into a full service Inn.

The Inn was acquired by Ian Fleming and Mark Salter in May 2010. Through his long career Ian Fleming has specialized in managing and developing historic Inns and Castles, from the 11th century Spread Eagle in Midhurst UK to the 13th Century Taunton Castle in Somerset UK. As to hauntings, he takes the firm position that he is "no believer one way or another, but rather sees himself as a "conduit for other people's experiences and beliefs."

The Inn's front desk would get regular complaints from the occupants of Room 2, saying that the couple above them were inconsiderate and seemed to march around the room all night, and yet on each of those occasions the room above, Room 17, was not occupied. Robert Morris stayed in the room now called Room 17 and this was where he also died. Occupants of Room 1 and 17 would occasionally complain of freezing breezes whipping around the room and low level mumblings and cussing from corners of the room. On four occasions, guests actually left during the night.

*Room 1 Checked Out. It is TOTALLY HAUNTED. I left at 5:50 a.m. Here is what I experienced. Light next to bed turned off. Heavy man got in bed next to me. He was raging with fever. I woke up saturated in sweat. British man talking about Jenny. British man talking about the Hog Roller. Saw man lying on floor beside bed with a soldier standing over him. Then the bed began to rock violently like a roller coaster. I kept trying to yell for help but could not get my mouth open. Opened my eyes and saw a roach crawl up the left bed post. That was it. That room has an energy vortex. It is holding the energy from Man's death. Sorry to miss breakfast. I am out of here.*

Fleming felt it better to keep this quiet believing that such revelations would keep more guests from the Inn, than would be attracted. Now that such guest experiences are public, some guests will call to request a specific room or avoid it.

In 2015, ghost story writer and teller Mindie Burgoyne decided to experience an overnight stay for herself. After that visit she felt compelled to write a book featuring the haunting experiences of the Inn. The Robert Morris Inn is featured on the cover and Ian Fleming wrote the foreword to it. "The Haunted Mid Shore" Mindie Burgoyne with foreword by Ian Fleming was published August 24, 2015.

Thank you Ian Fleming for providing us with this scary story.

