

## TAKE YOUR BEST SHOT, OXFORD!

### A WINTER CHALLENGE

While you are out and about on your winter walks snap a photo of something in Oxford that captivates you. Is it your favorite house or an unusual detail? Is it a special tree or bush?



We find these "mounting stones" pretty interesting. Also called "horse blocks" or "carriage stones," they were an assistance for mounting and dismounting a horse or a cart, and are usually found by the street directly in front of the entrance to the home. This one is in front of 311 N. Morris Street. There are dozens around town. Have you noticed them?

Submit a photo of something you've seen that intrigues you, and anything you know about it, to [theoxfordmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:theoxfordmuseum@gmail.com). We may display it in a window exhibit or on the Museum's social media.

## THANK YOU DOCENTS

At our winter party we thanked our 2022 Docents, a team of 28 who kept our little museum and the *Crossroads* exhibit open with their faithful attendance and warm hospitality. If you would like to join this team in 2023, please send us an email. In addition to our docents, our Summer Intern, Zach Foster, spent over 300 hours in the Museum during

Ken Blythe  
Kae Dakin  
Melody Davis  
Pasquale Dilulio  
Bob Fay  
Dorothy Fenwick  
Phyllis Gaiti  
Steve Goldman  
Pat Jessup  
Amy Kimball  
Liz Koprowski  
Luann Madary  
Jerry Marconi  
Christine Maynard

Reese Meisinger  
Mary Jane Mekulski  
Jan Nelson  
Karina Paape  
Stuart Parnes  
John Pittman  
David Poe  
Phyllis Rambo  
Dodi Sutton  
Bob Valliant  
Julie Wells  
Harvey Zendt  
Louisa Zendt

the 2022 season. When not greeting guests or working on our online archives, you could find Zach working on a paper in early December, as he finished up the first semester of his masters program at Salisbury University. Thank you Zach!



**Museum members at the opening reception of the Edwin Remsberg Photography Exhibit, *Rooted in the Land***

## From the President THANKFUL

It was hard to close the Museum in December after such a robust 2022 season of exhibits and programs! We extended our fall season through December 16 for the Smithsonian Museum on Main Street exhibit that came to town on October 29. This exhibit, "*Crossroads: Change in Rural America*" explored many themes that seemed to parallel the booms and busts of Oxford's history. It gave us a lot to think about from land development to organic farming and the recent surge of young families moving to more rural areas with the capability of working from home. At the same time our extended season allowed us to keep Edwin Remsberg's photography tribute to Eastern Shore famers at the Museum. Partnership programs throughout the fall explored related themes at the Oxford Community Center and included Tot O'Mara discussing growing up farming in Oxford and Leo Nollmeyer and Al Smith sharing the story of packing houses in Oxford and canneries on the Eastern Shore during their youth. We celebrated the end of our 2022 season with a great Winter Party in the Parish Hall at Holy Trinity.

I mention these events because there are people to thank at these venues. Without their collaboration and partnership, the Museum would be at a great loss. Our sincere appreciation goes to **Jennifer Stanley** at St. Paul's Church, **Liza Ledford** at the Community Center, and **Father Kevin Cross** at Holy Trinity. It takes a village, a special place, and if you read on, you will notice the theme of thanks in this newsletter, thanks to so many who have served the Museum and our little village.

Winter is a time of planning for the Museum and with a change in leadership and new board members we are looking ahead to our 2023 season that opens on Oxford Day in April. In the meantime, we hope you will think about your role at the Oxford Museum. As members and generous supporters, do you have other talents you would like to share and time to contribute to the Museum? From docenting to writing for our newsletters, or serving on the board or a board committee, we could use your talents! Send me an email or contact any board member, if you have interests to share. Again, It takes a village.

As I take my turn at the helm of the Museum I have to share how very mindful I am of the extraordinary leaders who came before me, and how lucky we are that each of the three past presidents will continue to serve on the board or on a committee this year. Thank you for your extraordinary commitment, **Julie Wells, Stuart Parnes and Pat Jessup.**

Louisa Zendt  
[president@oxfordmuseummd.org](mailto:president@oxfordmuseummd.org)

## THE SUMMER INTERNSHIP

This past summer the Museum benefited from the energy and interest in history of an intern, who served as a docent a few hours each week and worked on our online archives with collection manager Leo Nollmeyer and curator Stuart Parnes. The intern also stuffed a few envelopes and carried a few boxes up and down from the basement, rounding out the time spent experiencing the operational tasks of a small museum!



If you know a young person entering 12th grade or in college, who is interested in a paid summer internship, and would benefit from the professional experience of working in a small museum, please have them contact us at [theoxfordmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:theoxfordmuseum@gmail.com)

An Application will be available on our website by February 1, the application deadline is March 1, 2023.

## MUSEUM STORE ONLINE

Enjoy shopping from home at the Museum Shop online <https://oxfordmuseummd.square.site> while the Museum is closed for the winter.

Our new Jigsaw Puzzles featuring Bringman's Store, The Oxford Mural and The Oxford Museum sold out



during the Christmas rush but our shelves have been restocked! There are new items from Salisbury Pewter as well. Take a look online!



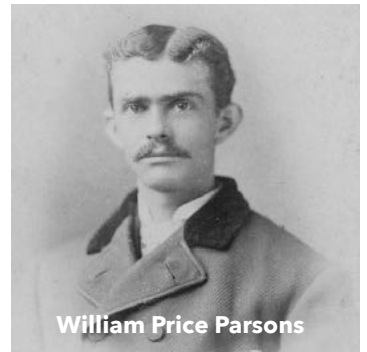
## Summer History Lessons IN THE PARSONS NEWNAM HOUSE

by Cathy Newton Schmidt

As a child, summers in Oxford were pure joy. My Nana, Catherine Newnam, would take me to the Oxford Museum to visit her good friend Mrs. Betty Moll. We would walk the museum, see the log canoe, and she would show me with great pride items our family had loaned to the newly established local archive. 1976 was a special summer as the town celebrated the Bicentennial in Oxford. My brother Bill remembers swimming at the wharf with the town boys and looking up on the hill by the new Customs House. All the prominent ladies of the town were dressed in historical garb giving history lessons to passers by—it was a memorable scene. Mary Hanks, Betty Moll, Sally Adkins, and Sara Benson are some of the ladies I remember as docents for the Customs House, but I know there were several more, as I made many visits to see them with Nana. My mother would take me to the Oxford Cemetery and show me where all my ancestors were buried and tell me stories about them. Sometimes while visiting their graves, we would walk a wooden plank onto an old derelict skipjack that had been run aground on the shallow banks many years before.



However, the most memorable Oxford history lessons were the ones told on the front porch of the house that my great-great uncles, William Price Parsons and Edward Thomas Parsons, built in 1886. As the story goes, William wanted to marry Sallie Nichols. Her father said William would have to have a house "free and clear" before he could marry his daughter. So William and his brother Edward built three houses in Oxford, and sold all but one. In 1899 William Parsons sold the house to his nephew, Howard W. Newnam Sr., my great grandfather for \$1500.00. My grandfather, Howard Newnam Jr. was born in the house in 1902. Of course there were no



William Price Parsons



**The author's grandfather Howard Newnam is standing next to his mother Ida May Stevenson. On the porch rocking chair is his grandmother Sarah Buckley Stevenson. Ida May and her mother had previously lived in Maple Hurst, the home of Nellie Stevens who was also a relative.**

house numbers in those days; instead a wrought iron "1886" was tacked on the entranceway. In the 1980's house numbers became mandatory, the 1886 was removed and replaced with "210." Six generations later, the house on Morris St. and the stories within it, remains in our family.

### EDITOR'S NOTE:

The Parsons Newnam House, and other Parsons houses are pictured and described in *Oxford's Treasures Then and Now* by Douglas Hanks, Jr., available in the Museum Shop, the Museum website shop, and at Mystery Loves Company, in Oxford.

## 2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Paula Bell  
Melody Davis  
Jef Kinney  
Gordon Fronk  
Reese Meisinger  
John Pittman  
David Poe  
Phyllis Rambo  
John Tochko  
Julie Wells  
Louisa Zendt

Leo Nollmeyer Director Emeritus  
Stuart Parnes, Curator



John Tochko, Louisa Zendt and Julie Wells with Maryland Humanities Program Director, Rob Forney setting up the Crossroads exhibit



Melody Davis and Stuart Parnes at the "Docent Training for Crossroads"



David Poe, John Tochko, Paula Bell, Liz Koprowski and Julie Wells, laying out the "Board Buffet" for the Winter Party

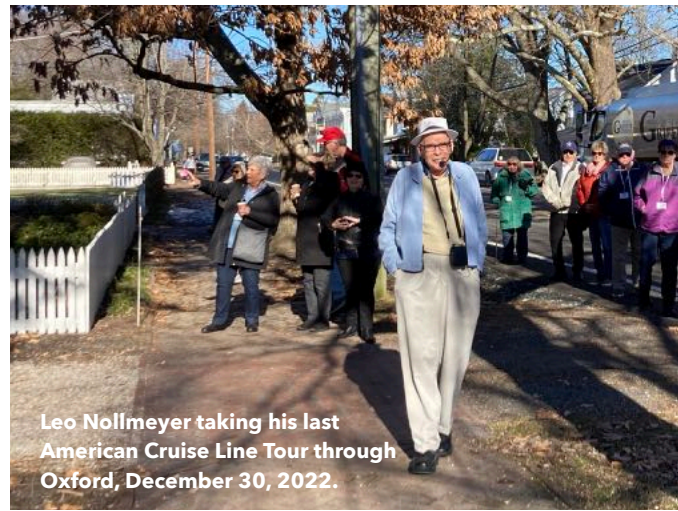


Bar Tenders, John Pittman and Bob Valliant, serving it up at the Members Party

## Cruising Through Oxford with Leo Nollmeyer

Leo came to Oxford as a young man when his father bought a seafood packing business and later a restaurant here in the 1950s. When he retired from corporate life in 1995 he returned to the town he loved with his wife Jean, and ever since Leo has been actively involved in collecting, preserving and sharing Oxford's history.

When Leo returned to Oxford in 1995 he immediately contacted Betty Moll, then museum curator, to volunteer his services as a docent. Shortly thereafter he was invited to join the Museum's Board of Trustees and within six months he was elected President. Leo served as President for two years, and then continued to serve on the Board as Treasurer for several more years. He was made trustee emeritus in 2005, Leo has dedicated more time to preserving Oxford's history than any single individual we can think of still living, serving as the Museum's curator, docent trainer, resident historian, and tour guide.



Leo Nollmeyer taking his last American Cruise Line Tour through Oxford, December 30, 2022.



As President, Leo was responsible for bringing the Museum into the computer age, selecting and installing the professional Museum software program that is currently used today to maintain data on the Museum's collection, donors, and members. He has accessioned thousands of artifacts, and continues to spend countless hours to maintain an accurate archival database. When President, he was the first person Doug Hanks called when he had an idea about a book comparing Oxford Then and Now. Working together they published the book that is responsible for funding the Douglas Hanks Jr. Preservation Award. In 2008, Leo was honored by receiving this award for his service to Oxford.

Leo has led countless Oxford walking tours, most notably for the American Cruise Line. Boarding their tour bus in Cambridge, Leo would give a history of the town as they traveled to Oxford. Walking his group, some as large as 30-40 people, from the Strand to Holy Trinity, through the town educating and entertaining them with stories about the houses and occupants of Oxford days past. Always stopping at the Museum, asking visitors to give their thanks in the form of a donation to the Museum, Leo has contributed thousands of dollars to the Museum over the years through his donated tips. "Mr. Leo" is noted by many visitors from far and wide on the American Cruise Line as the "highlight" of their trip on the Chesapeake Bay.



Twenty-eight years after his retirement, Leo would like to slow down and relax a little! On a beautiful warm day in December, he gave his last Oxford walking tour. We think Leo deserves a little time off and we are delighted that he has promised to continue as a docent in 2023. Thank you Leo, for all that you have given and continue to give Oxford!

## OXFORD AUDIO WALKING TOUR

Email the Museum to get your FREE MEMBERS code to download the audio tour and photos of 37 Oxford places (listed below) on your smart phone.

Oxford Historical Overview Tour		
1	Walking Tour Welcome	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
2	Introduction	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
3	Town Park (100 S Morris St)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
4	Oxford Museum (101 S Morris St)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
5	Academy House (205 N Morris St)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
6	Barnaby House (212 N Morris St)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
7	Molly Stewart / Postmistress House (216 N Morris St)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
8	Grapevine House (309 N Morris St)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
9	Stewart House (319 N Morris St)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
10	Town Point #1 Customs House	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
11	Town Point #2 Ice House / Tred Avon Yacht Club	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
12	Sandaway Suites and Beach - (103 W Strand)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
13	The Story of Robert Morris, Sr.	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
14	Robert Morris Inn (314 N Morris St)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
15	Oxford - Bellevue Ferry (101 E Strand)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
16	The Strand, Kerr's Island (100 E Strand to 512 E Strand)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
17	Oxford Boatyard   Packing House   Docks	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
18	Cutts and Case and Byberry House (306 Tilghman St)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
19	Odd Fellows Hall (201 Tilghman St)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
20	African American Schoolhouse, Sail Loft (208 Tilghman St)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
21	Waters United Methodist Church (205 Market St)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
22	Oxford Library (101 Market St)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
23	The Bringmans	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
24	Oxford Social Cafe, formerly part of The Eastford Hall Hotel (102 S Morris St)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
25	Maryland Military and Naval Academy	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
26	Red Men's Hall (202 S Morris St)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
27	Mystery Loves Company	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
28	The Mews (105 S Morris St)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
29	Saint Paul's Church (225 S Morris St)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
30	Maplehurst (221 South St)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
31	Applegarth Boatyard (317 S Morris St)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
32	Holy Trinity Episcopal Church (502 S Morris St)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
33	Pope's Tavern (504 S Morris St)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
34	Oxford Community Center, formerly Oxford High School/Elementary School (200 Oxford Road)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
35	Oxford Cemetery (Oxford Cemetery Road)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
36	John Wesley Church (Oxford and Evergreen Road)	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>
37	Conclusion	<a href="#">LISTEN ►</a>

## WHAT'S IN YOUR ATTIC?

This December 1890 issue of the farming magazine *THE AMERICAN AGRICULTURIST* was found in the attic of the Academy House over the recent holidays. While found rolled up in the eaves and not in great shape, it still brings our attention to matters and interests of Oxford residents of days past. Living in the Academy House at the time was Sam and Mary Ann Bratt, their 7 children, Mary Anne's mother, Jane Bell and a young black servant, Sarah J. Gibbs. Which family member last had this in their hands and left it between the eaves in the attic?



A little research about the magazine:

From Nineteenth-Century art Worldwide a journal of nineteenth-century visual culture. <https://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/autumn21/mandravelis-on-the-american-agriculturist>

**The American Agriculturist** (1842-51, 1853-present), a popular trade periodical based in New York City that disseminated practical advice concerning the care, management, and improvement of the farm and rural home, has long been recognized by historians as one of the most significant farming publications of the nineteenth-century United States. Frank Luther Mott, author of the seminal *A History of American Magazines* (1931), stated that the *Agriculturist* "reached what is perhaps the most distinguished position ever held by an American agricultural periodical" in the wake of the US Civil War.

Treasures can show up anywhere on your property in Oxford. Let the Museum know if you find something that you would like to have us explore.

## In Memoriam: Ellen Anderson

Ellen served as Executive Director of the Oxford Museum from 2005 to 2017, and as President of the Oxford Community Center. She also served on the board of the Historical Society of Talbot County. Ellen was an avid cook and loved to practice hospitality. Her house was furnished with cherished antiques. She was a history buff and enjoyed preserving historical items for use and display. Ellen is responsible for several acquisitions made by the Museum. We are grateful for Ellen's long service to the Oxford Museum.

