

NEWTOWNE MANOR HOUSE NEWSLETTER

MAY 2018

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 1

St. Francis Xavier Church and Newtowne Manor House On the Tour

St. Francis Xavier Church and the Newtowne Manor House were selected to be on the 81st Annual Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage May 26, 2018. It is an honor to have been selected. The Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage is dedicated to the preservation and restoration of architecturally significant properties in the State of Maryland. The Pilgrimage has remained constant with this purpose since its formation in 1930.

Co-chair of the 2018 Pilgrimage, Beth Bonifant stated, "St. Francis Xavier Church and Newtowne Manor House are the heart and soul of this year's tour. The 18th century manor house was selected as the 'special project' and will be the beneficiary of the proceeds from the tour." Members of the St. Mary's Garden Club felt this was an opportunity to share our unique history and natural beauty while helping to preserve and protect our religious and historic treasures in St. Mary's County.

God blessed us with warm sunshine and a slight breeze, as visitors toured the historic Newtowne Neck area. At St. Francis Xavier Church, the old Newtowne Church Altar circa 1700's was on display, as well as, photos of the Church circa 1880 and the oldest known picture of the Church inside about 1913 was also on display. Descendants of William and Temperance Bretton, William IV and Anne portrayed by Frank and Pat Greenwell stand in front of St. Francis Xavier Church. Pictures of the inside of the Newtowne Manor House were displayed outside around the house. A special feature provided by the St. Mary's Garden Club was a row boat adorned with flowers, a missal, and wooden rosary prominently placed on the north side of the Manor House near the Church. People traveled by boat to attend Mass at Newtowne for generations.



NEWTOWNE MANOR HOUSE RESTORATION

Donations to:
St. Francis Xavier Church
21370 Newtowne Neck Road
Leonardtown, Md 20650
Memo Line: Manor House Restoration
Contact: Lynn Delahay 240-925-6485
George Matisick 301-475-9698
E-mail: Newtownemanorhouse@gmail.com

MISSION STATEMENT

The Friends of Newtowne Manor House, a non-profit organization, is dedicated to ensuring that the *Newtowne Manor House*, an 18th-century structure, is preserved and restored so that future generations may gain an understanding of and appreciation for its historical significance.

2nd Annual Walk in the Park

The 2nd Annual “Walk in the Park” was held Saturday, April 28th to benefit our parish’s Newtowne Manor Preservation/Restoration Project. The non-competitive 5K course began at St. Francis Xavier Church following the road through beautiful Newtowne Neck State Park to the Pilkerton House location and back to the Church.

We want to thank Fr. Rob Maro for his support and blessing, the Newtowne Neck State Park staff especially Dawn Letts, Park Manager and all of the Manor House Committee members who helped out in so many ways. Special thanks to all the sponsors including: **GOLD SPONSORS**- Dowdell Family, Downs Plumbing & Septic, Inc., PNC Investments, DeManss Associates, LLC, Delahay Healthcare Services, LLC, Precise Systems, Inc., International Beverage, Leonardtown Ace Hardware, Sterling Insurance, Community Bank of the Chesapeake and Fitzies Marina, Restaurant and Pub; **SILVER SPONSORS**- Printing Press, Inc., Controlled Power, A & M Glass, Bill’s Bottom Feeder, Tippet’s Seafood, The Hair Company, Burris’ Olde Towne Insurance, Delegate Matt Morgan, Bay Country Contractors and Chesapeake Wholesale Inc.; **PATRON SPONSORS**- Frank Greenwell Photography, Kevins Corner Kafe, Towne Florist, St. Mary’s Historical Society, Port of Leonardtown Winery and David’s Flowers. Check out the Church website stfrancisxavierchurch.org to follow the link for each of our sponsors’ own website. The total cash deposited for the Walk, tee shirts sales and donations was \$6,095.00. The tee shirt expense was \$1,544.00. The net income was \$4,551.00.

The winner of the ticket drawn by Cam Sterling from the Port of Leonardtown drawing for a “Wine Tasting for Four” was Charlene Cusic. A quote from one of the walkers, “I had a wonderful time on this spectacular spring day and everyone was just talking and laughing with each other. It was great!” At the Walk we had runners out front, walkers, children, pets, strollers and wagons. It was truly a fun, family event for all.



Registration was easy with lots of workers. People seemed to enjoy visiting with each other while waiting for the Walk to begin.





Fr. Rob gives a blessing before the Walk in the Park was set to begin.



This is only part of the group to participate in the Walk in the Park.

Maryland Day- March 26, 2018

The Friends of Newtowne Manor House was invited to the Maryland Day festivities at St. Clements Island Museum on March 26, 2018 to display the 1970's artifacts from Newtown collected by archaeologist Michael Humphries and a group of students. These artifacts were donated to the St. Clements Island Museum at that time. A special display of 18 artifacts including Native American and colonial items were chosen.

At the Maryland Day program, Msgr. Ed Coyle was the keynote speaker. The parishes he serves in Pennsylvania were part of the original Jesuit Providence in Maryland. Jesuit priests served St. Francis Xavier Church and all of the St. Mary's County churches from 1662 until 1967 when they moved their mission work to other areas. A blessing at the celebration was given on Maryland Day by Reverend Anthony Lickteig of Holy Angeles and Sacred Heart Churches. Remarks and a blessing were given by Piscataway Conoy Tribal Chair Francis Gray.



Artist Ellen Duke Wilson is holding her rock depiction of St. Francis Xavier Church and the Newtowne Manor House.

The special display included wine bottle glass, pipe stem, a drawer pull, a buckle, an axe hand, aboriginal jewelry, Piscataway projectile point and a Potomac projectile point.

Scott Lawrence Memorial by Carol Moody

Our parish has lost a good friend. Scott Lawrence passed away April 17, 2018. He helped define the boundaries of our original cemetery and identify the most likely location of the original Saint Francis Xavier Chapel. Scott also served on the Friends of Newtowne Manor House when it first began. Scott was an engineer for 40 hours a week and a devoted archaeologist and cemetery restoration advocate for every minute of every day. You may recall that he talked the Navy into allowing him to restore the Saint Nicholas Church cemetery on the Patuxent River Naval Base, committing himself to study the land and genealogical records of the cemetery and becoming certified in monument repair. He worked on other cemeteries in our county and Charles County, enhancing his skills.

According to Scott in an oral history interview last year, Bob Schaller put Fr. Brian Sanderfoot in touch with him and they designed a plan to explore the Church cemetery. Scott prepared a Report on Mapping at St. Francis Xavier Cemetery to locate the grave-stones January, 2011. Over the course of two seasons, Scott and Jim Gibb dug shovel test pits and supervised many members of the public as they all sifted soil, searching for clues to the location of the chapel. The Search for Newtowne Chapel report was submitted in October, 2011. The Archaeology Society of Maryland even held their field school at St. Francis Xavier Cemetery one year. Scott and Jim submitted their final report Discovering St. Francis Xavier Chapel in December, 2013. Through his hard work and then a difficult illness, Scott never lost his love of a good time, exemplified by his wake at the Green Door. Please cherish his memory; he was one of the good ones.

Oral History Project

The oral histories of St. Francis Xavier Church and the Newtowne Manor House are continuing to be collected. A special thanks to all who have been interviewed so far and to those who have asked the questions. If you are interested in being interviewed or conducting an interview, please contact Lynn Delahay, 240-925-6485 or Sarah Matisick, 301-247-7416.

Meeting Attendance

All parishioners are invited to attend the monthly Manor House meetings. Typically the nights are alternated on Mondays and Thursdays. The next meeting will be held Monday, June 18, 2018.

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Vernacular Architecture Forum Visit

On May 3, 2018, St. Francis Xavier Church and the Newtowne Manor House hosted two bus loads of members from the Vernacular Architecture Forum (VAF). The VAF is an organization dedicated to the appreciation and study of ordinary buildings and landscapes to see the everyday built environment as a window into history, life, and culture. Established in 1979, VAF is composed of scholars from fields including history, architectural history, geography, anthropology, sociology, landscape history, historic preservation, and material culture studies. The VAF holds annual conferences across the country and this year's conference was focused on 'Urban and Rural Experience on the Banks of the Potomac' including the highlight tour of homes and buildings on both sides of the Potomac River. The Maryland Historical Trust coordinated this event. The tour focused on visits to ordinary, rare and historic and religious structures.

As they walked around, they were drawn to such features as the doors outside, the arches in the Church and the bricks on the Manor House. Many commented on the Trostel drawings of the Manor House displayed in the hall. The group was in awe of the 1733 St. Francis Xavier Church and the 1789 Newtowne Manor House and was very appreciative of the opportunity to visit. Many took pictures, some chatted with each other making comments and remarks, while others asked various questions; one lady from Bozeman, Montana sketched the Church. In general, the VAF group enjoyed their visit to our religious and historic treasures. Special thanks to: Deacon Bill Nickerson, George Matisick, Drew Dowdell, Walt Hayes, Marybeth Dowdell, Steve Raley and Sarah Matisick for receiving the group.



Members of the VAF were excited to arrive at St. Francis Xavier Church and the Newtowne Manor House.

