



# NEWSLETTER

of the

**HARFORD COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY**

143 N. MAIN ST, BEL AIR, MD 21014-3539

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**November 2009**

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## NOTICE OF NEXT MEETING

**Date:** Sunday, November 22, 2009    **Time:** 2:00 PM  
**Place:** Historical Society of Harford County, 143 N Main St, Bel Air, MD 21014-3539  
**Program:** **Freepersons of Color in Harford County**

Our own Reginald M. Bishop will be discussing early Black established communities and institutions in Harford County, including his personal family history. Surnames of his Harford County relatives include Bishop, Bond, Durbin, Harris, Hill, Lewis, James, Corn(Coen), Kennard, Butler, Hamilton, Cooper, Johnson, and Skinner-Ellis.

Reggie grew up in Havre de Grace, and is an entrepreneur, minister, author, and family historian. As a family historian, he is presently researching information on the history of early African-American families in Harford County under the direction of the Historical Society of Harford County, Inc.



He has served on the Harford County Historic Preservation Commission since 2006, and the Board of Directors of the Susquehanna Museum of Havre de Grace. He is also a national motivational speaker for those living with diabetes.

**\*\*\*\* PLEASE NOTE DATE CHANGE \*\*\***

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## DIRECTORY

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**eMail:** [HaCoGenSoc@verizon.net](mailto:HaCoGenSoc@verizon.net)

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## MEETING SCHEDULE: March, May, July, September, & November

We hold five meetings per year, usually on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month. The March, July, September and November meetings begin at 2:00 PM at The Historical Society of Harford County Inc., 143 North Main Street, Bel Air, MD 21014. The May meeting is a box lunch held at various historical locations in the county.

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## 2010 MEMBERSHIP DUES

Attached is our 2010 Membership Application and Renewal form for your convenience. Payment is requested before **February 15, 2010**. We are always interested in speakers, program topics, and off-site venues for our May meetings. Please jot down your ideas in the COMMENTS section.

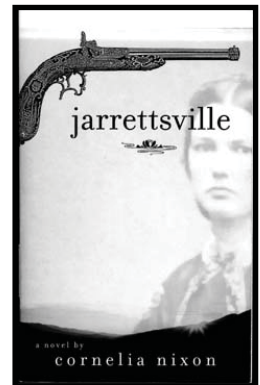
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### FROM THE PRESIDENT

Rare, indeed, is the occasion when a novel is published possessing as much presence of place for a community and its families as does *Jarrettsville* by Cornelia Nixon, published September 14, 2009.

Quoting from the back cover: "Based on a true story, *Jarrettsville* is the account of a love affair and a murder in a small Maryland town that is rebuilding after the Civil War. Written from more than a dozen different perspectives, Cornelia Nixon's masterful tale centers on a pair of star-crossed lovers: Martha Jane Cairnes and Nicholas McComas. "...

...Cornelia Nixon breathes life into a story mined from the depths of history, from a town where brothers fought on opposing sides and former slave-owners lived next door to abolitionists and freedmen. Poetic and colloquial, Nixon's prose dances effortlessly through this heart-wrenching novel."



Of particular interest for we Harford County and Jarrettsville area folks in particular, is the author's descriptions of strained relationships both within and among local families at this difficult time in history. Personally, well into my formative years, I heard those rumblings, recognized the subtle nuances, and sensed the persistent deep feelings. They were real! While Nixon makes it clear that her book is a novel, a work of fiction inspired by true events. The personages, families, and locales in the dialogues were factual, as were many of the personal and family relationships, and individual's roles she describes. Cornelia Nixon, daughter of the late Jean Cairnes Nixon Blickman who grew up in Jarrettsville, has local connections. The author's research acumen is evident throughout – and she had access to the family archives.

As I read the book, I was struck by how the literary form can help shape one's understanding of context within which many of our ancestors lived and worked – it helps put the 'meat on the bones' of family histories and explain what and why events may or not have been recorded in family archives. As you turn the pages, imagine yourself 140 years ago at the intersection in Jarrettsville - it happened right there. For me, Nixon's work reinforced the importance in genealogical research of delving into literary pieces set in locales of inquiry. Insights imbedded in those writings may well go a long way in helping solve the myriad of unanswered questions in our family stories. Enjoy the read.

...Arch

see also **GENEALOGY TIDBITS** in this newsletter.

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### GENEALOGY FEATURE

#### What Is A Certified Genealogist?

Since 1964, genealogists have looked to the **Board for Certification of Genealogists (BCG)** for consumer protection, skill assessment, and respected credentials. BCG is independent of any society, although its trustees and judges are always national leaders in the field.

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**Certified Genealogist** *continued*

Certification is an important step in one's personal growth as a genealogist, and it is a vital part of maintaining quality and public confidence in our field. For genealogists—whether they be professionals or family historians—certification says, “I care about the quality of work I produce for posterity.”

Board-certified genealogists, whether professionals or highly skilled hobbyists, pass rigorous tests, and subscribe to a code of ethics. The Board for Certification of Genealogists offers two credentials, a core research category, and a teaching category.

Research:

- **Certified Genealogist (CG)**: one who is proficient in all areas of genealogical research and analysis. They conduct broadly based projects, whose goals are to find and interpret evidence, assemble proof of identity and relationships, and prepare sound reports and historical accounts of families, past and present.

Teaching:

- **Certified Genealogical Lecturer (CGL)**: one who gives public addresses of an educational nature on specific genealogical topics or related subjects pertinent to establishing identity and tracing kinships. The CGL must also pass requirements for CG.

In the last forty years, some credentials have been developed and dropped from usage, including Certified Lineage Specialist (CLS), Certified American Indian Lineage Specialist (CAILS), and Certified Genealogical Records Specialist (CGRS), and Certified Genealogical Instructor (CGI).

The first and most necessary step to becoming certified is to acquire the knowledge and skills that exemplify the standards articulated in the **BCG Genealogical Standards Manual (\$20)**. Adequate experience is absolutely essential to acquiring the necessary expertise. No specific program of education is required; however, as standards rise genealogists increasingly are finding that educational preparation via institutes and conferences is extremely helpful. Applicants also benefit from studying case studies developed by certified persons and published in national genealogical journals to be helpful.

Certification results from evaluation of work samples in a portfolio submission. BCG requires different materials for each certification category. Three to four judges independently evaluate each application. If three judges recommend certification, you will be certified for a five-year period. You can perpetuate your certification with five-year renewal applications showing that you have kept your skills up to date.

To be successful, an applicant for certification needs sufficient experience in dealing with the full range of problems a genealogist may meet, and sufficient knowledge and judgment to distinguish competent from unsatisfactory work by other genealogists. While the Board sets no minimum level of experience or education as pre-requisites, it realizes education is an important factor in preparing a certification portfolio. In fact, surveys of successful applicants have shown that most have some years of experience in intensive genealogical research, and have availed themselves of structured learning opportunities above the introductory level--institutes, conferences, workshops, or distance learning courses by mail or online. They tend to have broad interests beyond genealogy, preserve their research findings in written accounts, and during their research and writing, they have at hand and regularly consult five or more standard reference works on genealogical methodology.

Successful applicants demonstrate excellence in research, evidence analysis, and communication. They are thorough, analytical, and innovative.

As researchers: They know the records available within their specialties. They are proficient in

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**Certified Genealogist** *continued*

reading the handwriting of earlier eras. They know and practice sound practices in abstracting and transcribing records, compiling data, and documenting all work they produce.

As analysts: They are well-grounded in the laws, customs, and terminology of past societies in order to properly interpret the records they find. They understand the principles that differentiate sources, information, and evidence, and they apply these principles critically. They soundly weigh all findings and exercise caution in reaching conclusions.

As communicators: They are articulate. They present problems clearly, identify their resources thoroughly, and provide the rationales for all their conclusions. Their research reports, narratives, and presentations are professional in their construction and well targeted to their audience and purpose.

CG candidates submit work samples for testing in four areas:

- document work, demonstrating their ability to transcribe and/or translate, abstract, analyze, interpret, and develop work plans;
- research reports, demonstrating their knowledge of a wide range of sources and their skills in analyzing and reporting their findings in a professional manner; • case studies, demonstrating their ability to resolve research problems via indirect evidence or conflicting evidence, when direct evidence cannot be found or is flawed;
- kinship determination projects, demonstrating their ability to prove relationships and assemble family units.

CGL candidates submit recordings of lectures—with corresponding outlines, visual aids, and handout materials—to demonstrate their ability to communicate and their knowledge of subject matter.

**Are You Ready To Apply?**

The following self-scored quiz can be one-step to help you determine whether you are ready to apply. A score of less than 20 points indicates an experience level below that of most successful applicants.

1. How long have you been intensely doing genealogical research, writing, and compiling?  
Score one point for each year you have done at least 250 hours of serious research. (Maximum: 4 points)  
Score for question 1: \_\_\_\_
2. How many institutes, conferences, workshops, and courses have you attended during the past five years?  
Score one point for each one lasting three days or 24 class/contact hours or longer. (Maximum: 4 points)  
Score for question 2: \_\_\_\_
3. Have you researched on site at courthouses, archives, and major genealogical libraries?  
Score one point if you are experienced with all three types of repositories. Score for question 3: \_\_\_\_
4. Have you completed both of the on-line "[Test Your Skills](#)" exercises in transcription, abstracting, and research planning at the BCG website?  
Score one point when both exercises have been completed to the described BCG standards.  
Score for question 4: \_\_\_\_
5. How many journals containing peer-reviewed research or case studies do you regularly read?  
(Examples: NGSQ, TAG, NEHGR, NYGBR, The Genealogist)  
Score one point for each journal read regularly for two years or more. (Maximum: 4 points)  
Score for question 5: \_\_\_\_
6. How many reports or articles have you written that describe fully a genealogical problem of identity or relationship for which there is no direct evidence or else the evidence conflicts? The

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**Certified Genealogist** *continued*

reports may be for yourself or a client (paying or pro bono). Count the projects only if they fully resolve their problem and are completely documented.

Score one point for each report. (Maximum: 4 points)

Score for question 6: \_\_\_\_

7. Review up to five of your reports and articles against the BCG Genealogical Standards Manual and determine how many meet all applicable standards, and how many meet only some of them.

Score two points for completing this review, however it turns out.

Score for question 7: \_\_\_\_

Total Score: \_\_\_\_

If your total score is 20 points, you have reached the experience level from which most successful applicants come. Applicants with less experience tend to be less successful in presenting applications that meet certification standards, although some are able to do so. Please remember that your application is judged on the materials you submit, not on the score of this quiz.

If you are a researcher, writer, or teacher, when you seek certification and pass the Board's rigorous examinations, your credential assures others that you are producing quality research and writing.

This article was abstracted from information on the BCG website. For more information, visit the BCG website at

<http://www.bcgcertification.org>

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## GENEALOGY TIDBITS

### Catholic Church Records

At our September General Meeting our guest speaker, Fr. M. James Roach, sighted three sources rich in background information for researchers of Catholic Families. These sources are listed below :

Joerndt, Clarence V.; **Saint Ignatius, Hickory and Its Missions**; 09Feb1972, Publication Press; Baltimore MD; Library of Congress# 7292408, hardcover 536pp.

**Maryland Historical Magazine**; Vol. 62 No. 3; September 1967.

Peterman, Thomas J.; **Catholics In Colonial DELMARVA**; 1996; Cook Pub, PA, hardcover 372pp. (History of the Old Bohemia Church 1704c. near Warwick, in Cecil County is a focal point in this text.)

### Jarrettsville: A Novel

Arch Phillips announced the release of a book titled **Jarrettsville: A Novel**; by Cornelia Nixon, and published by Counterpoint Press, Berkley, CA, Oct. 2009, paperback, \$16, ISBN 9781582435121.

This novel is set in the immediate post Civil War period and provides great insight into the Union & Confederate factions that existed in northern Harford County. The Cairnes & McComas families are central figures in this book. Although the novel is a work of fiction, it was inspired by true events, but remains imaginary. Some characters and scenes were invented, but most of the names, relationships, events, and places are historically accurate.

Copies are available from the Harford County Public Library, but the waiting list is long.

### Churches, An Illustrated History Harford County's Rural Heritage

Henry Peden and Jack Shagena published this new book in August. It is basically a pictorial inventory of still-standing structures that are currently in use, with a few historical exceptions. One chapter is devoted to the discussion of how mother churches gave birth to daughter churches throughout Harford County area. Copies may be purchased from the Historical Society of Harford County, local retailers, and directly from Mr. Shagena at 410-569-0988. ISBN: 97809819164



## GENEALOGY HAPPENINGS

### Giants: The Parallel Lives of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln

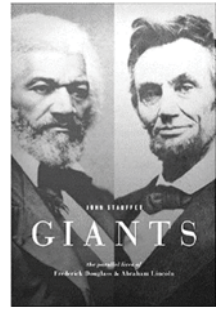
Date: **07 November 2009** (Sat) at **2:00 pm**

Place: **Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture**, Baltimore., MD

Registration: Free with \$8 museum admission. For more info. call: 443-263-1816

See [www.AfricanAmericanCulture.org](http://www.AfricanAmericanCulture.org) for more information.

Program: **Meet The Author** -Join Harvard University professor **John Stauffer**, author of "Giants: The Parallel Lives of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln," 2008, pp432, ISBN 9780446580090, as he traces the history of two of America's seminal figures of the nineteenth century.



### NARA Workshops

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) offers the public a comprehensive program of genealogical workshops and courses in its facilities nationwide. Topics include an introduction to genealogy and research into records such as census schedules, military service and pension records, and passenger lists. Upcoming workshops nearby:

**Finding Your Immigrant Ancestors**, Philadelphia, PA, **November 04, 2009**

**What Else is Here?**, Philadelphia, PA, **November 18, 2009**

*--none listed for December--*

Registration: contact the NARA Mid Atlantic office: 900 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107-4292

Phone (215) 606-0112

E-mail: [philadelphia.archives@nara.gov](mailto:philadelphia.archives@nara.gov)

### Conference on Computerized Family History & Genealogy

Date: **March 12–13, 2010** (Fri-Sat)

Place: **Conference on Computerized Family History & Genealogy**, Brigham Young University, Salt Lake City, Utah

Registration: TBA see <http://ce.byu.edu/cw/cwcompu/>

Program: **Building a Lasting Legacy** -This conference is designed to be a how-to guide for everyone—beginning, intermediate, and advanced researchers.

The focus of the conference is to help everyone learn how new computer programs and advancements in existing programs can improve family history and genealogy work.



### 2010 NGS Family History Conference

Date: **28 April–1 May 2010** (Wed-Sat)

Place: **Salt Palace Convention Center**, Salt Lake City, Utah

Registration: Online registration begins 01 November 2009

See [http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/cs/conference\\_info](http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/cs/conference_info) for more information.

Program: **Follow Your Ancestral Trail** -Whether your family helped settle the nation, migrated across the country, stayed in the same place, or recently arrived in America, this conference has much to offer. The family history resources in Salt Lake City, Utah, will provide a depth and breadth to your research. The Family History Library has an extensive collection of international records. A major focus of the conference will be increasing research skills in foreign countries.

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## MARCH MEETING

Our **Sunday, March 21, 2010** Society meeting will be held at the **Historical Society of Harford County Headquarters**, 143 N Main St, Bel Air, MD 21014 at **2:00 PM**. Look for details in the February 2009 issue of the NEWSLETTER.

Our speakers will be members of our Society reporting on their current research projects.

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