

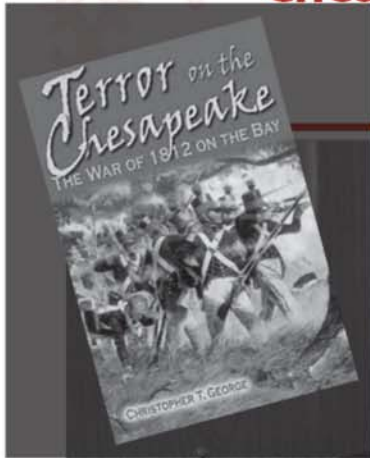


## CHEVY CHASE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2013

### Chesapeake Bay's Pivotal Role in War of 1812 Is March 10 Spring Lecture Topic



Christopher T. George, a British born historian turned American citizen, who says he is "able to see the heroism and stupidity on both sides" of the War of 1812, will deliver the Chevy Chase Historical Society's 2013 Spring Lecture. Author of *Terror on the Chesapeake: The War of 1812 on the Bay*, George will speak about the pivotal Chesapeake Bay campaign on Sunday, March 10, at 4:00 p.m. at the Chevy Chase Village Hall, 5906 Connecticut Avenue. The community is invited to the free program.

For nearly two years during the War of 1812, the British treated the Chesapeake Bay as their private lake. In summer 1814, though, as attention moved from their northern border with Canada to the Mid-Atlantic region, Americans fought back and saved Baltimore from British aggression, forcing the British to the peace table.

The March 10 lecture will examine the roles played by Britain's Royal Navy, President James Madison, and others. George will introduce little known American heroes such as Havre de Grace's John O'Neill, Eastern Shore heroine Kitty Knight, Mary Pickersgill who sewed the "star-spangled banner," African Americans such

as Charles Ball and William Williams, and Commodore Joshua Barney, as well as Britons such as Rear Admiral George Cockburn.

George will describe major strategic events on the Chesapeake, including the British blockade of the east coast that bottled up the famous Baltimore privateers, the destruction of Havre de Grace, General Robert Ross's burning of Washington, and the Battle of Baltimore at Fort M'Henry when Francis Scott Key wrote that "our flag was still there." He also will skewer popular myths about the War of 1812, including that:

- St. Michaels on the Eastern Shore of Maryland became "the town that fooled the British" by placing lanterns in the trees to confuse the British as to the actual location of the town;
- British troops burned Washington in retaliation for the United States burning of the capital of Upper Canada; and
- The War of 1812 was America's "second war of independence."

Copies of George's book will be available for sale and signing by the author at the lecture.

Founding editor of the *Journal of the War of 1812*, George also is coordinator of the annual National War of 1812 Symposium series. He is writing a biography of British Major General Robert Ross, in collaboration with Dr. John McCavitt of Rostrevor, Northern Ireland.

George was born in Liverpool, England in 1948 and immigrated to the United States with his parents at age seven. He has been a U.S. citizen since 1995. As a schoolboy in Baltimore in the late 1950s, he says he "felt ashamed that the British had bombarded Fort M'Henry." He says he now has a more balanced view of the War of 1812 and admits to divided loyalties on the conflict.

A CCHS History-Go-Round field trip to Baltimore on Saturday, March 23 will offer a chance to learn more about the War of 1812. See details on page three.

*Celebrating One of America's First Streetcar Suburbs*

## In Remembrance of Joan Marsh, 1924 - 2012

In November 2012 the society lost one of its stalwarts with the passing of Joan Marsh. She was a "founding mother" of CCHS in 1982, and its second Charter Member – the first being her husband, Richard Marsh. She served on the CCHS Board of Directors from its inception until last March. The society presented her with the CCHS Lifetime Achievement Award, created to honor her three decades of extraordinary service to CCHS and tireless dedication to preserving the unique history of Chevy Chase.

During CCHS' first 20 years, the Marshes generously housed the society's archive on the third floor of their home. They made it available to the public by appointment with Joan, who welcomed a variety of scholars and residents, assisting them with their research.

In 2002, when the collection was moved to our Archive and Research Center in the Chevy Chase Community Library, Joan's stewardship continued. She remained chair of the Archive Committee and worked diligently to maintain and expand our collections. In addition, she served as the third President of CCHS, and chaired the Nominating Committee for years. She hosted our annual Champagne Supper at her historic home twice, and hosted many board meetings and other CCHS events.

Joan made yet another extraordinary contribution to CCHS by co-authoring, with Frances Stickles, our recently published book, *The Placenames Chevy Chase, Maryland*. They tirelessly promoted the book, speaking at various community events and venues for months prior to Joan's death. The book will serve as a lasting legacy of Joan's devotion to the Chevy Chase community.

Above all else, Joan was a friend who was admired by everyone who had the privilege of working with her. Her intellectual integrity guided us. Her love of her family and community was evident to all. The CCHS board mourns her passing and remembers her with love. She will be sorely missed.



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HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

P.O. Box 15145  
CHEVY CHASE, MARYLAND 20825

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CCHS Archive and Research Center

Gail Sansbury, Ph.D., Director

Chevy Chase Community Library

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Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/chevychasehistory](http://www.facebook.com/chevychasehistory)

Open 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

on Tuesday and by appointment.

The Chevy Chase Historical Society collects, records, interprets and shares materials relating to the history of Chevy Chase, Maryland, one of America's first streetcar suburbs. The organization provides resources for historical research and sponsors a variety of programs and activities to foster knowledge and appreciation of the community's history.



## Attention Chevy Chase Readers! "Chevy Chase Reading Class" Online Exhibit Slated for Spring

CCHS will debut three new online exhibits this spring, including one about the Chevy Chase Reading Class. This women's reading group began in the fall of 1899, when Mrs. Verrill and Mrs. Cousar decided to form a group based on a class Mrs. Cousar once had attended. In spring 1900, they and three friends held their first meetings. The next year they invited four other Chevy Chase women to join them, and embarked on a reading course of Chaucer, Spenser, Bacon, Swift, Pope, and Johnson.

"The Chevy Chase Reading Class" continued into the 1920s. Each year, they printed their rules and reading list in a small pamphlet like the one shown below. In 1924-1925, their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, they included this quote from Carlyle in the pamphlet: "May Blessings be upon the Head of Cadmus, the Phoenicians, or Whoever it was that Invented Books."

There were other book loving groups in Chevy Chase. The Chevy Chase Association Literary Club was organized in 1907, and met monthly from October to May. Both men and women participated, and the meetings often included songs and recitations.

We'd like to include more recent Chevy Chase reading groups in our exhibit, so please tell us about yours! When did the group form, and if applicable, when did it end? Where did/does the group meet? What were/are the rules and customs as to reading material and meetings? And – very important – do you have a photo of your group members? We would love to include it in our exhibit. Please send information to [chevychasehistory@msn.com](mailto:chevychasehistory@msn.com).

## History-Go-Round Trip to Baltimore Will Further Explore War of 1812

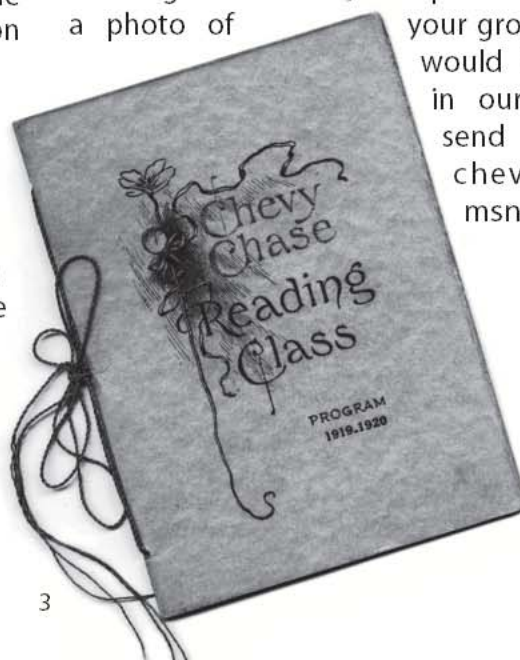
The society will continue to examine the War of 1812 with a History-Go-Round field trip to Baltimore on Saturday, March 23. Pre-paid participants will gather to join CCHS-arranged carpools at the Jane Lawton Community Center, 4301 Willow Lane in the Town of Chevy Chase, at 9:00 a.m. and will return by 3:30 p.m.

The group's first stop in Baltimore will be the Maryland Historical Society's extensive exhibit, "In Full Glory Reflected: Maryland During the War of 1812."

After enjoying a box lunch together, participants will tour the new Visitor Center at Fort McHenry, where Francis Scott Key was inspired to write the lyrics to "The Star Spangled Banner" while being held on a British ship in Baltimore Harbor during the bombardment of the fort. Finally, park rangers will be accompany the group as it tours the fort, to engage in conversation and to answer questions.

Reservations and payment in advance by Monday, March 18 are required for the HGR. A fee of \$30 will cover transportation, box lunch, and all admission fees. Holders of a U.S. National Park Service Golden Eagle Passport, an America the Beautiful Pass, or a similar pass will pay \$23 for the outing and should be prepared to present their passes.

To reserve a place for this fascinating and comprehensive field trip, call Susan Kirby at (301) 215-9079 or send her an email message at [snkirby@gmail.com](mailto:snkirby@gmail.com).

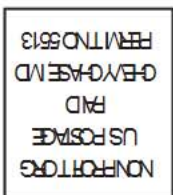


## Then and Now



The Chevy Chase United Methodist Church celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2012. Its first members met on Sunday evenings in the small Baptist church on Connecticut Avenue at Shepherd Street, shown in the photograph on the left. Eventually, the Methodists bought the property for \$3,996. According to CCHS's book, *The Placenames of Chevy Chase, Maryland*, the Chevy Chase Land Company originally donated the land for the Baptist church, and when the Methodists purchased it, the Land Company donated additional property to enlarge the site. Over the years, the congregation built three stone buildings. The current structure at 7001 Connecticut Avenue, shown in the photo on the right, was completed in 1954.

Address Correction Requested



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