

# Hancock Historical Society

## 97<sup>th</sup> Regular Membership Meeting Town Hall

The 97<sup>th</sup> regular meeting of the Hancock Historical Society was held Sunday, April 28, 2013 at Town Hall. The meeting was presided over by President Dan Murphy.

Those in attendance were: Glory Houck, Sam Judge, Aura McCusker, Anne Mazingo, Vickie Vann, Bill Minnick, Homer Schetrompf, Debbie Murphy, Dan Murphy, Evelyn Roman, Mary Ann & Leslie Golden, Marian Golden, Don & Jeanie Corbett, Linda Hixon, Mary Avella, Ronald Barkdoll, Douglas King, Mac Elser, Joe Walters, James Rada, and Wayne Keefer. A total of 23 members and friends were present.

The minutes of the previous meeting were not available and were not read.

### **Business Meeting**

The meeting was presided over by the Hancock Historical Society's new president, Dan Murphy. He announced a change in leadership and thanked his predecessor, Don Corbett, for serving as President during the Hancock Historical Society's first 25 years. Other new officers are Marian Golden, Vice-President and Wayne Keefer, Secretary/Treasurer. Dan also named current trustees: Don Corbett, Jeanie Corbett, Jackie Flowers, Ernest Shives, Marilyn Bowers, Mac Elser, Leo Murray, and Theresa VanDerBos. It was also announced that Don Corbett will serve as President Emeritus.

Dan Murphy spoke of a need for a new generation of membership.

The historical society's new website was announced – [www.hancockmuseum.org](http://www.hancockmuseum.org).

It was shared with the membership that the Toll House is in need of serious work to repair termite and water damage. The museum board is currently seeking grants to repair the Toll House which is owned by the Town of Hancock, but managed by the museum.

Don Corbett's updated 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the Round Top Cement Mill book was presented to the group and is now available for purchase for \$5 plus 6% MD sales tax. The book includes more material and more pictures which are much clearer than the first edition. Don's upcoming book on the Hancock apple industry is also in the works and is due out in the fall.

The museum is working with Hancock High to get student volunteers in need of Student Service Learning Hours to volunteer at the museum filing papers, scanning pictures, or greeting guests.

Museum workers for 2013 are needed. A sign-up sheet was passed around.

Museum member Debbie Murphy suggested not offering refreshments since the same people bring each time. Anyone wishing to help with refreshments should contact Dan Murphy, otherwise refreshments will be stopped.

Members were asked if the annual summer picnic should be continued. Members present had no comments, and so it will be up to the board to decide if the picnic should continue.

Members were asked to bring friends and family members to future meetings to help build membership.

Member Leslie Golden asked if students had ever been invited. Marian responded that the museum continues to ask for student involvement with the schools and hopes that students seeking SSL hours with the museum may be a start.

## **Guest Speaker – James “Jim” Rada**

Author James “Jim” Rada was the guest speaker for the day. Mr. Rada, formerly of Cumberland and presently residing in Gettysburg, PA, writes historical non-fiction, historical fiction, fantasy, and books geared for young readers. His topics generally deal with Western Maryland history and the C&O Canal.

Mr. Rada shared with members glass plate negatives of C&O Canal construction during the early 1900’s when the railroad was extended. The pictures that can be developed with today’s technology provides fantastic details, and these pictures were shared as well.

Rada spoke of how the C&O Canal was essentially the board between the North and South during the Civil War, just as much as the Mason-Dixon Line was. He mentioned that, because of the importance and location of the C&O Canal, it was often a target for attack.

He mentioned that the canal was so well built that troops often had a hard time destroying the stone and masonry locks and aqueducts.

One of Jim’s books details the procedure for canal boats to enter tunnels, such as the Paw Paw Tunnel which is 3/5 of one mile long and is a modern day “one lane highway.” He said that barges had a green lamp in the rear and a red lamp in the front of the vessel. If a captain entering the tunnel saw the red glow, he knew the boat was headed towards him and that he should not enter. If the glow was green, that was the boat in front passing through in the same direction and it was safe to move forward as well.

He also spoke of a Captain Williams from the Hancock area which was the only known black C&O Canal Boat captain.

**Suggestions and/or ideas for guest speakers are needed and would be appreciated. Please call the museum at 301-678-7377 (leave message) or email: [hancockhistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:hancockhistoricalsociety@gmail.com) if you have any proposals.**