

Interpreting Rich Hill: **A Report for the Friends of Rich Hill**



Prepared by Dean Krimmel,
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Dave Taylor and Lindsey Horn, Lincoln's 150th Anniversary Weekend at Rich Hill, April 2015

I. Introduction

A. About the Report

This report describes the findings from a series of interpretive planning meetings conducted with the Friends of Rich Hill Steering Committee by interpretive planning consultant Dean Krimmel. It is hoped that the contents will help guide decision making about the interpretation of Rich Hill, a historic site best known as a stop on John Wilkes Booth's flight from justice following his assassination of President Abraham Lincoln.

The timing of the report is noteworthy. Over the next several years, the Charles County Government will be leading an effort to stabilize and preserve Rich Hill. The Friends of Rich Hill, meanwhile, will be working to raise public awareness and appreciation of this National Register of Historic Places property — that is, to begin interpreting Rich Hill.

This report supports the Friends' work by opening up a conversation about Rich Hill's interpretive potential. It highlights what we know and don't know about the site's history and resources. It offers some initial ideas about the site's significance, and raises questions about audiences and their needs. It describes a set of visitor experience outcomes, and identifies potential partners and stakeholders. And it offers a statement of purpose that describes a deeper rationale for the Friends' commitment to preserving and interpreting Rich Hill.

Finally, the report lays a foundation for more comprehensive planning that will be necessary if Rich Hill is to become a valued community resource and popular visitor destination. As such, it is a first tentative step in a long but rewarding process.

B. Project Background

The acquisition of Rich Hill was the result of years of advocacy on the part of the Historical Society of Charles County, Civil War enthusiasts and preservationists. Charles County Government accepted the donation of the historic structure and its surrounding two-acre lot in 2014 and agreed to oversee building stabilization and additional land acquisition. The Charles County Historical Society (CCHS) quickly established the Friends of Rich Hill to continue public outreach and to initiate fundraising activities.

Acknowledgments

Funding provided by a grant from Preservation Maryland allowed the Friends of Rich Hill to hire consultant, Dean Krimmel of Creative Museum Services, who worked with the Friends of Rich Hill Steering Committee to produce this report.

The Steering Committee was led by Michael Mazzeo, HSCC Vice President, and included: Mary Pat Berry, HSCC President; Ron Brown, retired Professor of History, College of Southern Maryland; Joyce Candland, genealogist; Carol Donohue, HSCC Board Member; Tom Pike, HSCC Board Member; Debra Scoggins, HSCC Board Member; Dave Taylor, noted expert on the Lincoln Assassination; and Cathy Thompson,

Community Planning Program Manager, Charles County Department of Planning and Growth Management.

The Steering Committee would like to thank the following individuals, agencies, and organizations for supporting our effort to document, restore, and interpret Rich Hill for the benefit of future generations: Senator Thomas V. "Mike" Miller; Dr. Brad Gottfried, President, College of Southern Maryland; Charles County Commissioners; Nicholas A. Redding and Margaret DeArcangelis, Preservation Maryland; Elizabeth Hughes, State Historic Preservation Officer, Maryland Historical Trust; Esther Doyle Read, Archaeologist, WSP | Parsons Brinckerhoff; David Berg and Tom Bodor of the Ottery Group; and, Laurie Verge, Director of the Surratt House Museum.

Special thanks to Mike Mazzeo and Cathy Thompson for their assistance with the preparation of this report.

II. Recommendations

There are few things as challenging as transforming a property, however historically significant, into a popular visitor destination and valued community resource. Success, we soon discover, does not automatically follow our well-intentioned efforts to preserve and educate. It is not enough to simply “tell our story” if we hope to compete with other causes and leisure activities for people’s time, money, and respect.

With that in mind, I offer some recommendations to the Friends of Rich Hill and its supporters as a reminder that “Interpretation” is a starting point and not an end in itself — that our purpose is less about “teaching history” as it is about creating conditions for learning. That long-term success comes from raising questions that lead to meaningful conversations, building bridges and relationships, providing a safe forum for exploration and discovery, and strengthening people’s identities and sense of community.

A. Your Interpretive Lens

Rich Hill’s historical significance is rooted in several topics of local, regional, and national importance, including:

- *Colonial Maryland Architecture*: Recently dated to 1728-29, Rich Hill is one of the Charles County’s oldest surviving homes.
- *Plantation Slavery & its Legacy*: For some 200 years, Rich Hill was a working plantation supported by the labor of enslaved men, women, and children whose descendants may still live nearby.
- *Booth’s Flight*: Samuel Cox’s harboring of Lincoln assassin John Wilkes Booth forever linked Rich Hill to one of the best known events in American history.
- *Family Longevity*: Rich Hill remained in the hands of two white families — both of whom played prominent roles in county life – for more than 250 years.

Arguably, the best known of these topics is the Booth escape story which received an additional boost of public exposure during the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. For that reason, I recommend that the Friends of Rich Hill use it as their primary interpretive lens — though not as an end in itself but rather as a means of exploring deeper questions about life in Charles County, past and present, among them:

1. Why did Samuel Cox aid the escape of John Wilkes Booth?
2. Why did Mary Swann, an enslaved woman, protect her master from authorities following Booth's death—and why didn't any other enslaved person at Rich Hill speak out against the Coxes?
3. What is the legacy of plantation slavery, tobacco cultivation, and the Confederate Underground in contemporary Charles County?

If Rich Hill is to become a viable historic site and valued community resource, it must become a vehicle for discovery, for asking questions, and for having conversations that lead to understanding, reconciliation, and wisdom. The Friends' have an opportunity, some might say an obligation, to flesh out the site's history which up until now has been largely focused on a building and a small group of wealthy people known mostly by birth and death dates — more symbols of prosperity than complex human beings.

B. Ten Things to do during Rich Hill stabilization — and beyond

1. *Learn more about Rich Hill history, and share it with the public.*

Treat the many unanswered questions relating to Rich Hill's rich, complicated and often difficult 350-year history as opportunities for discovering and sharing. As I write elsewhere, embrace the mystery. And get going. Create a small task force to establish and operate an ongoing research and dissemination process. Start simply by creating a good bibliography, improving the current working timeline, and taking steps to share more information on your website.

Talk to scholars and subject experts to deepen your understanding of the historical context within which Rich Hill has existed, e.g., Julia A. King, professor of anthropology at St. Mary's College who has written extensively about historical archaeology and Chesapeake history and culture; Jean Russo, co-author of *Planting an Empire: The Early Chesapeake in British North America*; Ira Berlin, Distinguished University Professor at the University of Maryland and author of many works on the history of slavery; John Michael Vlach, retired George Washington University professor and author of *Behind the Big House: The Architecture of Plantation Slavery*; and, Joseph McGill, founder of the Slave Dwelling Project.

Reach out to historic house museum colleagues who are documenting and interpreting slavery. Use *Interpreting Slavery at Museums and Historic Sites* as the

basis for discussions and planning. (See also Max van Balgooy's book in the bibliography.)

Get some help with some of the following research tasks:

- Map the changing property boundaries (and reexamine the chain of title) to understand the relationship between the current two-acre Rich Hill site and the adjacent properties that once comprised the original 600-acre patent, Rich Hills, and the subsequent holdings of the Cox and Brown families.
- Create a data base of all Rich Hill residents (white, black, free and enslaved)
- Conduct genealogical research on the families associated with Rich Hill. Use your findings (and other current research) as an entry into other primary sources, including probate records, tax records, rent rolls, church records, manuscript and family papers, court records, and newspapers.
- Document the presence of enslaved people who lived and worked at Rich Hill. (See Gunston Hall website page "George Mason and Slavery" and link to information about individuals: <http://www.gunstonhall.org/index.php/george-mason/slavery>)
- Document the Civil War-era Confederate Underground in Charles County.
- Use ground-penetrating radar (GPR) and other means to identify surviving building features, and reveal more about Rich Hill's plantation past.
- Conduct Phase One Archaeology to document the location of buildings and other features.

2. *Avoid the temptation to focus on a single "period of significance" in future restoration and interpretation.*

Many people, I suspect, will suggest that Rich Hill be restored to the 1860s to support the interpretation of the Booth escape story. Others will cite the house's surviving 18th-century interior fabric and layout as evidence that Rich Hill should be restored to the period of Gustavus Brown family. To do either, in my opinion, will be a big mistake that will place unnecessary limitations on future programming. Avoid the trap of making premature decisions that tie your hands.

3. *Keep Rich Hill in the public eye — always with the "big picture" in mind.*

Create a plan of diverse activities, using this report as a guide, to help the Friends of Rich Hill draw attention to Rich Hill as a place worth visiting, saving, protecting.

Keep the "big picture" in mind by using every activity to:

- Build relationships with people who have a stake in Rich Hill's success as an historic site — or might have a stake if they knew more about its history
- Learn more about your audience's interests and needs
- Learn more about the site history, especially topics such as plantation slavery, family networks, and the Confederate Underground in Charles County
- Get better at doing all those things demanded of a historic site.
- Attract financial and political support

Experiment and don't be afraid to "fail," but always identify what success looks like beforehand and always evaluate your efforts afterwards to learn from the experience.

4. *Build relationships in the community, county, and region.*

Identify your natural stakeholders and get to know them better. Find ways to work together. Some possibilities, both obvious and not, include the Southern Maryland Studies Center, Booth Trail organizations, Charles County Maryland Genealogical Society, African American Heritage Society, Gunston Hall, Charles County Archeological Society, Sotterley Plantation, Maryland State Archives Legacy of Slavery Project, Reginald F. Lewis of Maryland African American History & Culture, Charles County Tourism, Maryland Office of Tourism, and local faith communities.

5. *Learn more about your audience.*

Take some simple steps to learn about your natural constituencies, e.g., document what you know about the Booth Trail audience and its interests, needs, motivation, likes and dislikes about the tours. Talk to other historic sites in the region and around the state to learn what they do to understand the needs and interests of their audiences. Absorb the lessons of John Falk (see bibliography) and other audience researchers who know the museum and historic sites world.

6. *Don't confuse topics and storylines with interpretive themes.*

The Booth escape is a topic or storyline, as is the building of Rich Hill, slavery, Confederate Underground, and tenant farming. Topics or storylines are not interpretive themes. Themes are defined as overarching ideas that you are trying to develop and communicate. Think: message, moral of the story, main point and premise. (See Sam Ham's *Interpretation — Making a Difference on Purpose* (2013) for more information.)

Develop interpretive themes for everything you do, from exhibits and guided tours to lectures and programs. Learn to ask each other: What is our most important message? What's the moral of this story?

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Possible Interpretive Theme</u>
Booth Escape	Samuel Cox did what every white man in Charles County would have done when Booth showed up on his doorstep
Building Rich Hill	Gustavus Brown built a house to last, but its survival may have had more to do with long periods of family ownership than anything else.
Slavery	Until we learn more about the enslaved men, women and children who lived and worked here, the story of Rich Hill will be incomplete.

7. *Make “professional development” a priority.*

Interpreting and managing historic sites poses tremendous challenges. You can never know enough — individually and as a group. Continue learning, as we did during planning, by identifying literature to read and discuss, e.g., material on interpretation, interpreting slavery, visitor studies, managing historic sites. Begin slowly, but make a commitment and stick with it. Build a good library, join organizations (e.g., American Association for State & Local History, Small Museum Association), read blogs, visit other sites, talk to colleagues, attend conferences. Make learning a priority.

8. *Begin making your Case for Support.*

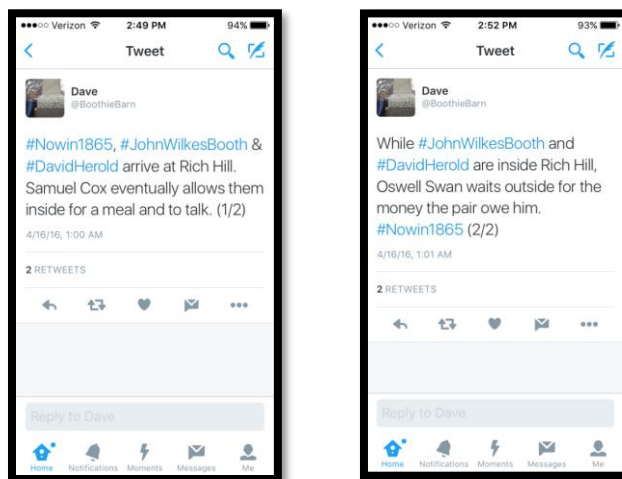
Begin to make a case for support to potential funders and supporters for *Why Rich Hill Matters* by articulating your philosophy, your set of beliefs about the value and relevance of history, the importance of preservation, and the role everyone can play in the Friends’ effort to transform Rich Hill into a community resource. Let people know where you stand—and invite them to join you—by including your philosophy on your website and on all printed or digital promotional materials.

9. *Manage public expectations and perceptions about the restoration of Rich Hill.*

Develop an elevator speech to quickly explain to people and media that while Rich Hill is best known in relation to John Wilkes Booth’s escape attempt after assassinating President Lincoln, it is also a window into Charles County’s complicated past and present and a place of great mystery.

10. *Celebrate every milestone, large and small.*

Keep Rich Hill in the public eye by publicizing research findings and discoveries, progress with the house restoration, new relationships and partnerships, you name it. Use your website, social media, and print media to share news of your progress, acknowledge those who are doing the work, and invite others to get involved.



III. Interpreting Rich Hill

Interpretation is a mission-based communications process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interest of the audience and meaning inherent in the resources.

National Association for Interpretation



Dr. Gustavus Brown (1689-1762)
Oil on canvas, 1742
Attributed to Gustavus Hesselius
Smithsonian American Art Museum



Samuel Cox (1819-1880)
Photographer, date, and
source unknown



Nellie Swann (1824-1904)

A. Friends of Rich Hill Statement of Purpose

The Friends of Rich Hill are committed to making Rich Hill a lively, engaging, and provocative resource that helps people discover their connections to the past and to each other, and recognize that history is a tool for understanding the present and shaping a better future.

The Friends of Rich Hill will pursue this goal by:

1. Embracing the mystery of Rich Hill, treating the many unanswered questions into opportunities for learning, discovering, and sharing.
2. Respecting the power of the John Wilkes Booth escape story, but will avoid the trap of narrowing our focus on a single point of interpretation trap.
3. Learning more about everything, from the history of the site and its residents to the house, property, and county.
4. Giving others a sense of ownership in Rich Hill and its mission by finding and involving people who are interested in every aspect of Rich Hill history.
5. Preparing for the long haul by making the process of discovery an ongoing public event that feels like a long running television mini-series.

B. History Meets Mystery: What we know about Rich Hill

This very brief historical sketch is intended to highlight what, in general, the Friends of Rich Hill know and don't know about the history of Rich Hill and its occupants. For the fuller story of Rich Hill, see the bibliography.

Pre-Contact: Native Americans along the Potomac

We know very little about the pre-contact history of this area (Zekiah Valley), and about the land that became Rich Hill in particular. There is the potential to learn more through future archaeological investigations, but for the time being this period will not be of primary concern.



"A Tobacco plantation " The New York Public Library Digital Collections
<http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/7892af2f-0c37-bb1c-e040-e00a180621c8>

Beginnings: Rich Hill, 1666-1714

We date the history of Rich Hill from 1666 when Hugh Thomas, a recent arrival from Wales, receives a patent for 600 acres. (A recent examination of the patent reveals an earlier chain of title—a topic for future research. Rich Hill's first decades might be characterized as an era of survival, a time for establishing a foothold in a young colony and even younger county. (Maryland was founded in 1634, Charles County in 1658.) We do not know if Rich Hills' early owners lived there, or hired others to oversee the cultivation of tobacco, the region's cash crop. We do know that land or property became the basis of wealth, soon followed by ownership of slaves who tended the crops that supported generations of white planters and their families.

The Steering Committee concluded that we ultimately know very little about life at Rich Hills during the 17th and early 18th centuries.

Some Questions:

1. What was the actual footprint of the original 600 acres?
2. How did this patent compare to others of the period? Large/small/typical?
3. Did the owners live on the property? Build any structures?
4. Was the land cultivated? With what and by whom?

5. What can we learn about these people?
6. Who else lived in the vicinity?
7. What were relationships like between colonists here and native people?

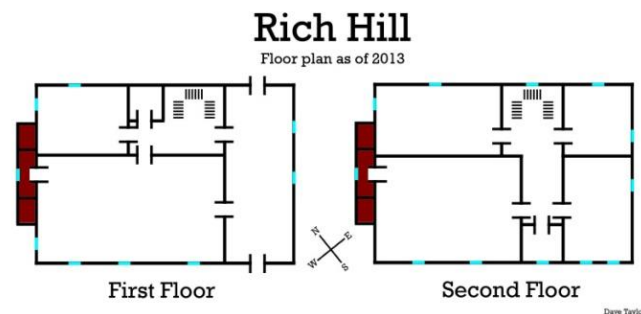
Brown Family Era, 1714-1807

Gustavus and Frances Brown, Builders: 1714-1762

Gustavus Brown (1689-1762), the Brown family patriarch is an adventurer with strong ties to his native Scotland. He is a traveler, as is his Charles County born wife. Brown is also well educated (Anglican, we think) and perhaps self made, becoming financially successful in the colonies. By his own account (or by others), Brown arrived penniless in 1708. Within two years, he is married to Frances Fowke who is well connected and relatively wealthy. Raising the question: Is Brown's self made man image manufactured or at least embellished?



Mrs. Gustavus Brown (1691-1744)
Oil on canvas, 1742
Attributed to Gustavus Hesselius
Smithsonian American Art Museum



Floor Plan of Rich Hill by Dave Taylor, 2013

Brown is also the “builder,” the person behind the construction of the house at Rich Hill. He is buried somewhere on the land there—perhaps in a family plot as yet undiscovered. Gustavus and Frances Brown raise a family, acquire slaves and oversee a [tobacco?] plantation. Theirs is a barter society, tobacco being currency.

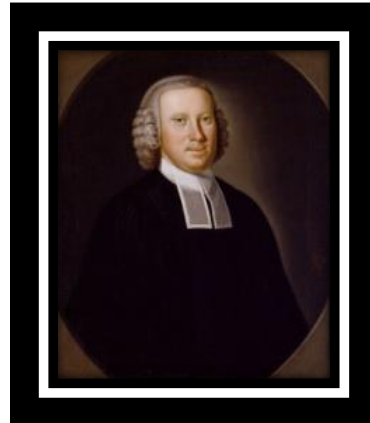
The House, large for the period, is substantial, ambitious, and revealing of status. Its hall and parlor layout is typical, while the jerkin roof is not. Now one of the county's oldest houses, its rarity makes it more difficult to assess architecturally.

Some Questions:

1. Where was the Brown family living between 1714 (Rich Hill purchase) and 1729 (construction of surviving house)?
2. How did Gustavus Brown benefit from his marriage and new family connections?
3. What more can we learn about Gustavus' background and life as surgeon?
4. When did he begin cultivating Rich Hill—and with what? Did he use indentured servants? When did he acquire slaves? Did he acquire slaves through marriage?

Rev. Richard and Margaret Brown, Remodelers: 1762-1789

Richard Brown (1725-1789), the eldest surviving son of Gustavus and Frances Brown and a minister, inherits Rich Hill at his father's death in 1762. He may have added on to it as the steeply pitched building that appears at the rear in 1890s photograph suggests. Richard's ownership straddles Revolutionary War era, but beyond that and his three marriages, his life and relationship to Rich Hill remains largely a mystery.



(l-r): Mrs. Richard Brown and Rev. Richard Brown, c.1760.
Both works: oil on canvas by John Hesselius,
Smithsonian American Art Museum

Some Questions:

1. Again, how did the house change, and when?
2. Who exactly is living in the house during this period?
3. How does Revolutionary War era shape their lives?
4. What did Margaret Brown bring to marriage in terms of dowry? (Include slaves?)
5. What more can we learn about the family?
6. Why did the Brown's sell the property, allowing it to leave family hands?

Cox Family Era, 1807-1971

Samuel C. and Sarah Cox and Family, Rebuilders: 1807-1847

The Steering Committee suspects that Samuel C. Cox (1760-1811) is the person responsible for adding the massive chimney at west end and raising the jerkin roof. Both changes are thought to date from the first quarter of 19th Century.

Samuel C. Cox (1760-1811) was the son of William Cox (1711-1761), a native of Virginia, and Mary Byrne (1715-1772), both of whom died in Charles County. Samuel's 10 siblings were: Charles, Mary, Ann, Margaret, John, Hugh, Edmund, Richard, William, and James. [Mike Mazzeo "Cox Genealogy" word doc] In his December 14, 1761 Will, William leaves Samuel tract of land called Cox's Swamp along with his saddle, bridle, mare and proceeds from sale of another horse.]

Samuel C. Cox & Sarah (nee Chandler) [c.1756-1813] had at least nine children: Charity, Margaret, Walter, Sarah, Samuel O., Rebecca, John C., Cecelia and John Chandler Cox. Margaret (1785-1819) became the mother of Samuel Cox (b.1819). Following the deaths of Samuel C. and Sarah Cox in 1811 and 1813, respectively, the two dozen or so enslaved men, women and children who were bonded to the Cox estate are “bequeathed” to Cox children, thus separated from one another.

*Hugh Cox who married
Margaret daughter of
the late
Negro Man George 50
1 fire Letty 30
1 Bed 30
1 Horse 11
1 pair oxen 7*

*I do give and bequeath to my son John Chandler Cox one
negro woman named Mary one negro boy child Katha (son of
William) upon this express condition that my said son John Chandler
Cox give and convey to my daughter Sarah Cox a negro woman by
the name of Sarah and her child Elizabeth which were allotted
to my said son John Chandler Cox upon distribution of his de-
ceased father's estate. I give and bequeath to my said son John*

(L-R): Detail from Samuel C. Cox Estate Distribution, June 1811; Detail from Sarah Cox Will, December 1813 term [I don't have a citation for either of these]

Samuel Cox, Sr., Confederate Planter: 1849-1880

Samuel Cox (1819-1880) marries his cousin Walter Ann in 1842, and following his father Hugh's death in 1849, inherits Rich Hill. Samuel and Walter Ann are credited with adding the dining room/bedroom addition, but we aren't certain that it wasn't the work of Margaret and/or Hugh Cox. More mysteries.



Walter Ann Cox (1821-1893)
Mt. Rest Cemetery
Michael Mazzeo photo



Samuel Cox, Jr. (1847-1906)
Mt. Rest Cemetery
Michael Mazzeo photo

The big story of this era, which has been well documented, concerns the role Samuel Cox and his household played in John Wilkes Booth assassination escape. Here are some observations:

The Cox-Booth escape story is also the story of the Confederate Underground in Charles County where white sympathizers acted as agents and mail carriers, among other things, to assist with Confederate communications and intelligence. In 1865 Charles County, then, Samuel Cox is Everyman (every white man);, doing what every other white man in the county (and across Southern Maryland) would have done.

The other aspect of story concerns Mary Swann, a house slave (so-called servant). Swann's testimony backed up the Cox claim that Booth and Herold never entered house. While it's not difficult to understand why she would do so, its nonetheless worth exploring as a way to dispel the hardened myth of the 'happy slave' and kind master.

Finally, the Booth escape story is a window into Charles County's long history as a plantation economy and slave society.

Some Questions:

1. What more can we learn about Cox's relationship with Thomas Jones, his foster brother, and other Cox family members—including his parents and grandparents?
2. To what extent has the Confederate Underground in Charles County and Southern Maryland been documented? (Familial, economic, political ties to south?)
3. Why did Samuel Cox Sr insist to his dying day that he didn't allow Booth and Herold inside, contrary to other very detailed accounts that later emerged?

1	2	3	4			7	8		10	11		13	14	15			18	19	20
			Age at last birthday, or date of birth, if resident in U.S.	Sex	Color—White (W.), Black (B.), or other (O.)		Value of Real Estate	Value of Personal Estate		Place of Birth, naming State or Territory of U. S.; or the Country, if of foreign birth.	Parents			Married within the year, giving date (Jan., Feb., etc.)	Attended school within the year, giving date (Jan., Feb., etc.)	Current work			
		Thomas S.	8	F	B					Maryland									
		G.	6	F	B														
67	65	Cox Samuel	50	M	W	Farmer	9000	2405											
		W.A.	48	F	W	Keypink house													
		Samuel	4	M	W	Farmer													
		Walter	70	F	B		7000												
		Reech, L.E.	28	M	W	Farm laborer													
		Heck, A.	78	M	W	Farm laborer				Prussia									
		Swann, E.	42	F	B	Domestic serv				Maryland									
		M.	18	F	B	Domestic serv													
		J.	16	M	B	Farm laborer													
		Kelly, M.	15	F	B	Domestic serv													
		O.	13	F	B	Domestic serv													

1870 Federal Census (Population Schedule) for Samuel and Walter Ann Cox household

Samuel Cox Jr., Striver: 1880-1906

Samuel Cox, Jr (1847-1906) had complex family relationships, his father, John Robertson, abandoning him as a boy following the death of Sam's mother. He is rescued by his maternal uncle who gives him a name, education, property, and a better life. Samuel Jr is ambitious; he's a striver who enters the Charles County bar in 1868 at age 21, and later succeeds in business and politics.

Samuel Jr. inherits control of Rich Hill in 1880, but does not gain title to the land until the death of his 'mother' (Walter Ann) in 1893. He comes of age during the post-Civil War era when slavery ends and Rich Hill slaves and others in county become paid laborers. Most, we suspect, do not leave the area, believing they have little choice but to work for former masters or other former slaveholders.

Cox marries twice, fathering three children who will inherit Rich Hill following his death in 1906. None of them apparently lived at Rich Hill.

Some Questions:

1. What more can we learn about Samuel Cox Jr., his wives, Ella and Ann, and their families?
2. What can we learn about life in Charles County for African Americans?

Ann "Nannie" Cox, Last in the Line: 1906-1930

We initially believed that Ann "Nannie" Cox (1846-1930) remained in the house from Samuel's death in 1906 until her death in 1930, thus ending the Cox family 123-year occupancy of Rich Hill. More recently, Mike Mazzeo learned that the Garner family spent some five years between 1916 and 1920 farming Rich Hill ("Cox's place"). The Garners then left but returned in 1945, living and farming here until 1954.

In 1920, according to the federal census that was enumerated in early January, the Garner household included Adrian (30), Rosa Bel (26), Russell (8), Veronica Naomi (5?), Willson (2), and Thomas Adrian 2 months. We're not sure then, where Nannie Cox was living in 1920.



Rich Hill, early 1920s (Bessie Burns Scrapbook)



Rich Hill, 1950s (Charles County Dept of Planning Photo)

Tenant Farming: 1930-1969

We only briefly discussed this era and the next two eras, even less, during our series of meetings. Steering Committee members noted that the Great Depression and decades of falling tobacco prices ravaged the county economy. Farms were abandoned or leased to tenant farmers, suggesting a breakdown of the older order of long periods of family ownership. The county's population remained small through the 1950s. White men begin leaving to find work in for Washington, DC. Some local families (so-called first families of La Plata) continue doing well or at least okay during this period. Many begin acquiring land, cheaply, becoming very large landowners. For most whites and probably all blacks, life is hard scrabble.



(l-r): Rosabelle Angela Inscoe and Thomas Adrian Garner; Ethel Garner in front of Rich Hill barn; Margaret Garner with chicken coop in background

The Garners, Tenant Farmers: In May 2016, Mike Mazzeo interviewed three members of the Garner family, Margaret Wedding (83), Gladys Buckler (89), and Ethel Manley (79) at Rich Hill. For a full account, see the Rich Hill working timeline. Here are some notes:



Margaret, Gladys and Ethel Garner return to Rich Hill, May 2016 (Mike Mazzeo photo)

Joseph and Mary Vallario, Developers: 1971-2014

(Note: We did not discuss this period at great length.) Joseph Vallario, a state legislator, and his wife Mary acquired Rich Hill in 1971 from the son's of Lucy Cox Neale, Samuel Cox, Jr.'s daughter. (The property included 143 acres north of Bel Alton-Newtown Road (site of current 2.5-acre historic site), and 149 on the south side of the road.

In 1975, Rich Hill was added to the National Register of Historic Places, and a year later the Vallarios "restored" the house to its 18th century appearance by removing the front and rear piazzas and the wing that figured prominently in the Booth escape story. Plans for subdividing and redeveloping the 290-acre property picked up pace from 2005 on but stalled in the wake of the financial crisis of 2008.

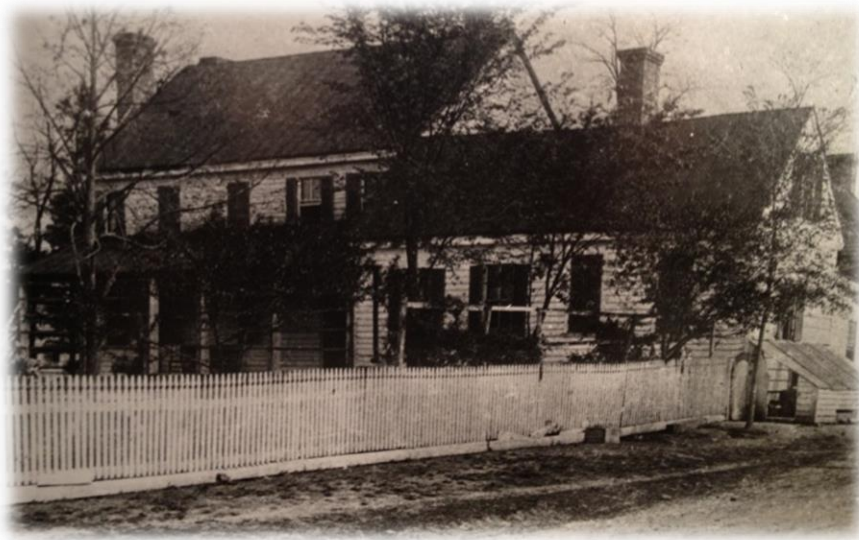
Friends of Rich Hill, Interpreters: 2014-

Note: We did not discuss this brief period. [For future versions of this document, you might include a brief description of HSCC's involvement and the founding of the Friends group.]



Rich Hill, Fall 2015

C. Finding the Meaning Inherent in the Resource



Rich Hill, 1890s

Big Picture: What is Rich Hill?

Rich Hill is now a two-acre remnant of a 600-acre land grant that was patented in the 1660s and occupied over the next 300 years as plantation and tenant farm. Rich Hill is

- ❖ BIG — physically. The current two-acre site is only a fragment of the 300-acre plantation once home to generations of Browns, Coxes, and enslaved people, including Nellie Swann and many others as yet unnamed.
- ❖ RICH — historically. There are an abundance of stories that open windows into the broader history of families, slavery and economics, architecture, archaeology and cultural landscapes. *Rich Hill*, then, is a poignant play on words.
- ❖ CONNECTED — geographically. The site is part of large network of historic sites in and around Charles County and Southern Maryland.

Rich Hill's historical significance is tied to

- *Booth's Flight*: Samuel Cox's harboring of Lincoln assassin John Wilkes Booth in April 1864 forever linked Rich Hill to one of the best known events in American history.
- *Colonial Maryland Architecture*: Recently dated to 1728-29, Rich Hill is one of the Charles County's oldest surviving homes.
- *Plantation Slavery & its Legacy*: From some 200 years, Rich Hill was a working plantation supported by the labor of enslaved men, women, and children whose descendants may still live nearby.
- *Family Longevity*: Rich Hill remained in the hands of only two white families — both of whom played prominent roles in county life for more than 250 years.

Taking Stock: An Inventory of Interpretive Resources

Every historic site has a variety of tangible resources that might support great interpretive activities — but only after those resources have been identified and their inherent meaning grasped. Rich Hill is no exception. This inventory enumerates Rich Hill's most obvious interpretive resources. The sections that follow briefly describe the interpretive potential of the house and landscape, and, offer some examples of interpretive themes. They are intended to be exploratory and instructive rather than prescriptive.

Rich Hill's tangible interpretive resources include:

1. The House (built 1728-29)
2. The yard around the house (including a well)
3. Shed
4. Foundations of outbuildings
5. Trees and vegetation
6. Barn ruin*
7. Ice house ruin*
8. Trash heap(s)*
9. Slave quarters**
10. Other outbuildings, e.g. dairy**
11. Brown family cemetery*
12. Tenant house (currently occupied)*
13. Spring*
14. Path (old cart path)* (Does this cross the two -acre site?)
15. Original bed of Bel Alton-Newtown Road* (Does this cross the two-acre site?)
16. The lot between the two-acre site and Bel Alton-Newtown Road*

*Asterisk refers to known resources located outside the 2-acre county-owned property

**Double asterisk refers to resources we believe "should" exist, given what we know

Assessing Potential: Finding the Meaning Inherent in a Resource



Rich Hill, Fall 2015



18th century construction detail

The House

What you know:

- The house was built in 1728-29 according to the dendrochronology study.
- Original features include the footprint and interior floor plan (or close to original); NW gable chimney, many doors & woodwork. That is, the ‘guts’ are exposed.
- The house was changed over time, the additions and two porches all but lost.

What you might build the interpretation around:

- House as Structure: construction techniques and materials; style, design and building traditions; labor, trade and craftsmanship; wealth and taste; trade and transportation. (All looked at through the prism of change over time.)
- House as Lived Space: family & household life (relationship between master and slave); public/formal vs. private space; use of space; daily life; rhythms (seasonal, annual); gender roles; notions of time; social life; work-home relationship.
- House at Historic Moment: Booth escape; “crossing the threshold” into hallway and the actual footsteps of history.

The Landscape

What you know:

- Lots about the sequence of land ownership, but less about the changing shape of the property as its boundaries changed.
- As a plantation, land was cultivated (but we don’t know much about the crops)
- Slaves lived here (but we don’t know the location of any quarter, and we only have some names for some periods)
- A tenant house survives (but not much more about it)
- There was a barn, stable and dairy (but we only have the location of the barn)
- Yard was fenced during Cox residency (but we don’t know what it looked like)
- The original Browns are buried here (location unknown)
- The house had additions (but we haven’t figured out the sequence of construction nor exact locations). Note: The kitchen wing which figures so prominently in the Booth escape story is pivotal to future interpretation. There is deep support for

reintroducing this feature, either by building a facsimile of the original wing or constructing some sort of ghost structure. Cathy believes that an outline of the wing, while outside the scope of the grant project, might be doable in the near future—and fundable. Worth discussing as a Friends Group project.

What you might build the interpretation around:

- **Mystery:** The unsolved mysteries of Rich Hill and your ongoing quest to know more about this place and the people who called it home. We discussed this concept at great length during our morning tour and throughout our meeting—all roads leading back to the mysteries.
- **Discovery:** There is much to be learned through continued archival and historical research, photographic analysis, architectural research, archaeology, oral history, and genealogical research, among other methods.
- **Interpretation (Finding Meaning):** The need for more documentation should be labeled an opportunity rather than a weakness or threat to Rich Hill's future. The need for more research allows you to open up the process of discovery and decision making about future interpretation to the public.



An overseer doing his duty near Fredericksburg, Virginia.
Watercolor on paper by Benjamin Henry Latrobe, c.1798
Maryland Historical Society, 1960.108.1.3.21

Communicating Meaning: Examples of Interpretive Themes

An interpretive theme is defined as an overarching idea that you try to develop and communicate in a program, lecture, tour, and exhibition. As Sam Ham suggests in *Interpretation—Making a Difference on Purpose* (2013), it's helpful to think of an interpretive theme as your main point or key message, or the moral of your story.

This list of interpretive themes for Rich Hill programming is meant to be suggestive only:

- Residents of early colonial Maryland struggled to gain a foothold in a harsh, unforgiving world.
- Tobacco and chattel slavery became the economic engine of Charles County (and tidewater Maryland), bringing prosperity to some planters.
- Marriage and family networks helped create prosperity among county white landowners in the 18th and 19th centuries.
- The slave society of Charles County laid the foundation for the Confederate Underground.
- The legacy of Charles County's agricultural economy and slave society continued shaping life into the 21st Century.

The Friends of Rich Hill will want to craft an overarching interpretive theme for Rich Hill — a “big idea” that captures its essence. This one emerged from our discussions:

Rich Hill reminds us that while the past is often more complex, painful and difficult to understand than we imagined, the study of history can help us discover our shared past and build a stronger more resilient community.

SCHEDULE I.—Free Inhabitants in *Allen's Fresh District* **in the County of** *Charles* **State of** *Maryland* **enumerated by me, on the** *11* **day of** *July* **1850.** *John W. Hawkins Ass't Marsh*

Dwelling-house number in order of inhabitation.	Family number in this order of inhabitation.	The Name of every Person whose usual place of abode on the first day of June, 1850, was in this family.	DESCRIPTION.			Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each Male Person over 15 years of age.	Value of Real Estate owned.	PLACE OF BIRTH. Naming the State, Territory, or Country.	Married within the year. If so, when within the year, the name and place of the wife.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict.
			Age.	Sex.	Color, or Race.					
		<i>Phylobetha Neal</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>f</i>				<i>Md</i>		
		<i>Augustus Neal</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>m</i>				<i>"</i>	<i>(D)</i>	
		<i>Charles A Neal</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>m</i>				<i>"</i>		
		<i>John W Neal</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>m</i>				<i>"</i>		
		<i>Ivan Mills</i>	<i>71</i>	<i>f</i>				<i>"</i>		
		<i>Mrs Mills</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>m</i>		<i>none</i>		<i>"</i>		
<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>Samuel Cox</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>m</i>		<i>farmer</i>	<i>1000</i>	<i>Md</i>		
		<i>Walter A "</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>f</i>				<i>D C</i>		

1850 Federal Census for Samuel and Walter Ann Cox Household

<i>Samuel Cox</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>B</i>			
	<i>1</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>B</i>			<i>blind</i>
	<i>1</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>B</i>			
	<i>1</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>B</i>			
	<i>1</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>B</i>			

Detail of 1850 Federal Census Schedule 2 (for Slaves) owned by Samuel Cox (Cox entry totaled 21 enslaved men, women and children: 13 males, ages 11 to 50 and 8 females, ages one to 60)

D. Interpretive Activities for 2016-2017 and Beyond

This list of interpretive activities was developed by the Friends' Steering Committee in May 2016. It is sorted by Priority with N = Now and L = Later. It is followed by some brief comments of my own.

Topic	Idea	Details & (Itemized Pricing)	Format	Price	Priority
African-Am. Experience	Biography	Exhibit about Mary Swann, what we know of her, her testimony; life after 1865.(Design \$225; printing \$40; Stand \$102)	Exhibit	\$367	N Grant
African-Am. Experience	Slavery	"In the Shadows," "Coming Out of the Shadows." Different time frames about African-Americans: Browns, Cox's, after Emancipation. Number & names of slaves.(Design \$225; Pull-Up \$200)	Exhibit	\$425	N Grant
Archaeology	Archaeology Experience	Let visitors have a "hands-on" experience with archaeology, maybe allowing them to use a sifting tray to search for bits of metal/china/etc.	Event		N
Archaeology	Why Archaeology	<u>Outside</u> Exhibit showing pictures of what an archaeologist looks for, such as soil discolorations. Boards could explain what we hope to find, like the locations of outbuildings, fences, additional structures, etc. plus Dendrochronology (Design \$225; Stand \$1000)	Exhibit	\$1,225	N*
Archeology	Dig	Archeological dig could move around the property with display/placard of what was determined/ found at each location	Event		N
Architecture	Virtual Reality	<u>Outside</u> Stand of the transformation of the Rich Hill Structure. (Design \$225; Stand \$1000)	Exhibit	\$1,225	N*
Beyond John Wilkes Booth	Biographies	Create exhibits about Charles Countians connected to Lincoln/Booth Story: Dr. Mudd, Thomas Jones, Oswell Swann, Mary Swann; George Atzerodt) (Design \$225; printing \$40 x 5people)	Exhibit	\$1325	N
Enhanced Booth Tour	Biography	Detailed biography of Samuel Cox as product of his times: his standing in community, political & agricultural affiliations, estate inventory (Design \$225; printing \$120; triple stand \$208)	Exhibit	\$553	N
Enhanced	County Trail	County event of trail of J. W. Booth	Event		N

Booth Tour	Event				
Enhanced Booth Tour	Genealogy	Create a pull-up of the Genealogy of the Cox family, highlighting the owners of the Rich Hill property. (Design \$225; Pull-Up \$200)	Exhibit	\$425	N
Enhanced Booth Tour	Virtual Reality	Feature the Booth escape in the front hall as this is where the first encounter occurred. Electronic Map or Kiosk of the escape route showing all the Booth stops.(Design \$225; Pull-Up \$200)	Exhibit	\$425	N*
Enhanced Booth Tour	Welcome Center	Brochure at the Welcome Center on Crain Highway highlighting the escape tour & Rich Hill	Brochure		N
Rich Hill Farm	Map	A map could be developed as to the land boundaries of the original Rich Hill property and show what was included during Cox occupancy and what is included today and ownership chain. (Design \$225; printing \$40; Stand \$102)	Exhibit	\$367	N
Rich Hill Farm	Overview Drawing	<u>Outside</u> - Create overview of buildings and landscape of 19th or 20th century Rich Hill. (Design \$225; Stand \$1000)	Exhibit	\$1,225	N*
The Browns	Dr. Gustavus Brown	Create a biography of Gustavus Brown, the builder, including his properties, wealth, Inventory of his estate. (Design \$225; printing \$120; triple stand \$208)	Exhibit	\$553	N
The Browns	Genealogy of the Browns	Create an exhibit of the Genealogy of the Brown Family. (Design \$225; Pull-Up \$200)	Exhibit	\$425	N
Understanding the House	Virtual Reality	Experience Rich Hill's past/present/future shape of the house through a virtual reality presentation. (Design \$300)	Website	\$300	N*
African-Am. Experience	Display	This hands-on exhibit created in partnership with the African American Heritage Society includes borrowed objects, primary sources. (Table \$50; Table Cover \$30)	Exhibit	\$80	L
African-Am. Experience	Role-Playing	Role playing/demonstrations& artifacts/lectures/talks	Event		L
African-Am. Experience	Slave Cabin Relocation	Relocated a slave cabin to Rich Hill focusing on how many people inhabited it, living conditions, cooking implements,	Structure		L

		food, pallets/beds, etc.			
African-Am. Experience	The African-Americans of Rich Hill	Display of pictures/names of the African-American people we know lived there and what happened to them after Emancipation. (Design \$225; Pull-Up \$200)	Exhibit	\$425	L
African-Am. Experience	Virtual Reality	Using actual information, re-create and listen to "oral histories" of former slaves (Maryland Slave Narratives) (Design \$200; Ipad Air \$400; Kiosk Lock \$20; Stand- \$67)	Exhibit	\$687	L
Architecture	Corner Stone	Expose a part/parts of the building, such as a corner stone or beam, to talk about the architecture of the house	Structure	\$0	L
Beyond John Wilkes Booth	Personal Name Cards	At the beginning of the tour, visitors or given 1 card with the picture and name of a person they will learn about on the tour. They will carry the card with them throughout the tour and learn the fate of their person at the end: Booth, Herold, Cox, Cox, Jr. Mary Swann, Oswell Swann, Thomas Jones, Dr. Mudd, George Atzerodt, etc.(Design \$100; printing ?)	Exhibit	\$200	L
Enhanced Booth Tour	Candlelight Tour	Candlelight Tour that moves from indoors to outdoors	Event		L
Enhanced Booth Tour	Civil War Clothing	Mannequins depicting the typical clothing for the Civil War Era	Exhibit		L
Enhanced Booth Tour	Costumed Docents	Docents guide the visitors through the Booth story at Rich Hill	Simulation	\$0	L
Enhanced Booth Tour	Educational Programs	On site and at schools for county students	Program		L
Enhanced Booth Tour	Period Room	Furnish the parlor in the period of Samuel Cox.	Display	?	L
Enhanced Booth Tour	Period Room	Furnish the upstairs bedroom in the period of Samuel Cox, Jr. (where he looked out and saw Booth & Herold)	Display	?	L
Enhanced Booth Tour	Re-Creation	Visitors view a life-like model of Samuel Cox, Jr. in his bedroom (called a fake-it) (Design \$400)	Exhibit	\$400	L
Enhanced	Virtual Reality	Visitors listen to a recording of "Samuel	Simulation	\$567	L

Booth Tour		Cox, Jr." as he reads his statement of the event.(Design \$150; Ipad Mini \$270; Speaker \$60; Kiosk Lock \$20; stand \$67)			
Misc.	Gift Shop	The downstairs back room could serve as a gift shop. The tour could start in the entrance hall, proceed to the parlor, upstairs and end in the gift shop	Gift Shop		L
Rich Hill Farm	19th Century Children's Clothing	Children dress in 19th century-style clothing and given jobs that children of time expected to do: carrying a bucket of water, (or a slop jar!), sweeping a porch, sewing on a button, etc.	Simulation		L
Rich Hill Farm	Ghost Structures	Using photos & archaeology build Ghost structures of the other buildings at Rich Hill for an enhanced walking tour	Walking Tour		L
Rich Hill Farm	Slave Cabin	A Slave Quarter could be erected or a ghost structure. The names of the Brown & Cox Slaves could be included.	Exhibit		L
The Browns	Colonial Clothing	Mannequins depicting the typical clothing of the colonial period along with panels of the Brown genealogy. Include the Brown connections to Rose Hill, George Washington, Thomas Stone	Display		L
Understanding the House	Colonial Themed Day	Rich Hill hosts a Colonial-themed day that features actors, experts and performances	Event		L
Understanding the House	Meeting Space	Create a meeting space on the second floor (Chairs, tables, podium)	On Site		L
Understanding the House	Plein Air	Rich Hill in partnership with Arts Alliance hosts painting event that features local artists, craftsman culminating with sale of the art created during the event.	Event		L
Understanding the House	Room Transformation	Visitors step inside 2 nd floor room and use Card Board Viewer to see how an 18th century may have appeared. Then, without the viewer they see the bare-bones structure of the room.(Design \$400; Google Card Board Viewers \$30.00 each x 5)	Exhibit	\$550	L
Understanding the House	Room Transformation	A 1714 beam is exposed so visitors can touch (wearing white cotton gloves to protect the wood and heighten the special nature of the experience)	Exhibit		L

Understanding the House	Visitor Center	Create a Visitor Center (possibly in the East Wing addition)	Structure		L
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Some thoughts on interpretive activities for 2016-2017 and beyond

Taking this list as an important point of departure, I would look for ways to consolidate the activities, perhaps, as follows:

1. *Exhibitions:* Create some portable exhibits (traveling, pop up, table top) for use at Rich Hill and at off-site locations. Concentrate on three topics, bringing together some of the topics listed. (Titles are intended to be suggestive only.)
 - April 1865: Story of Cox household's harboring of JW Booth
 - Rich Hill: An overview history of owners, house and land
 - The Quarter: Introducing the people who were enslaved at Rich Hill
2. *Programs:* Create a slate of community programs (talks, genealogy workshops, house research workshops, Rich Hill Discovery Day/Reunion). Invite African American community to hold a ceremony that might honor their enslaved ancestors.
3. *Tours:* Develop a menu of tours, centered around an enhanced Booth Tour and including other special themed tours, behind-the-scenes tours, and perhaps even digital storytelling.
4. *Website:* Enhance the website with expanded content (new and existing), links, and opportunities for public response.

IV. Building an Audience

Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.
Freeman Tilden, *Interpreting our Heritage* 1957 (2007 edition): 36

Consumers do not buy what you sell. They buy what has value to them.
James Heaton, President, Tronvig Group (marketing strategy agency)

A. Introduction

Building an audience for Rich Hill, or for any new historic sites, may feel like a chicken-and-egg game. Should you create a range of programs and hope they find an audience? Or should you target specific audiences with programs designed with them in mind?

The answer is, to borrow from the improv world, “Yes, all of the above. And more.” While both approaches have merit, neither goes far enough. Neither is a real strategy for building an audience which is, arguably, the single most important and difficult challenge ahead for the Friends of Rich Hill.

To jump start your thinking, I recommend that you revisit John Falk’s *Identify and the Museum Visitor Experience* (2009) which we used during our planning process. Digest Falk’s advice and consult some of the other sources in the bibliography. Consider creating a small task force charged with using Falk’s model to describe what might motivate your natural constituencies (see below) to visit Rich Hill or attend one of your off-site programs. Use this as a learning experience, and the starting point of your never-ending quest to understand what people value and need from an encounter with Rich Hill.

B. Starting Point: Rich Hill’s Natural Constituencies

Identifying so-called “natural constituencies” is a useful starting point for thinking about Rich Hill’s audience. By natural constituency, I mean individuals and groups that share an interest in some aspect of Rich Hill’s history, physical or tangible remains, or some potential interpretive strength that hasn’t been uncovered, e.g., slave quarter remains, family cemetery.

This list was developed during our planning process but not further developed. I would consider this a starting point for deeper discussions about each groups’ interests and motivations as they relate to Rich Hill. Some of these groups will, I suspect, disappear from future lists while others will rise in importance as a potential audience.

Natural Constituencies:

1. People interested in the Lincoln Assassination/Booth flight story
2. Civil War enthusiasts (some overlap with Lincoln/Booth audience)
3. Charles County/Southern Maryland residents, in particular

- African American residents and organizations interested in history and genealogy (e.g., African American Heritage Society of Charles County)
 - Residents entertaining visiting family and friends
4. Members of historical organizations (local/county/region/national)
 5. Professional preservationists and architectural historians
 6. People who love old buildings
 7. People who love Colonial history
 8. People interested in archaeology (Charles County Archaeological Society)
 9. Charles County educators (public and private schools; home schoolers)
 10. Tourists using the Visitor Center

C. Finding New Friends: Stakeholders & Partners

The Friends of Rich Hill have identified some potential stakeholders and community partners that might become allies in the effort to make Rich Hill a valuable public resource. Some of these might be considered “natural stakeholders” based on a mutual interest while others might feel like a stretch in terms of shared concerns. The challenge will be to discover what other people value, need and expect from a relationship.

Stakeholders by definition have a stake in your future, but that doesn’t mean they are there to solely do your bidding, e.g., promote your site, fund your program. The relationship must be mutually beneficial—and serve some larger purpose. Make it a habit from the beginning to find out what your partners hope to get out of your relationship, how they define success, what larger impact they hope to make on the community—and revisit those questions every time you collaborate.

Possible Stakeholders and Community Partners

1. John Wilkes Booth Escape Trail organizations and Civil War-related groups, e.g., Surratt House Museum, Dr. Samuel A. Mudd House Museum, Ford’s Theatre National Historic Site and Petersen’s Boarding House, Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area, Maryland Civil War Trails, Virginia Civil War Trails.
2. College of Southern Maryland
3. Charles County Tourism; Maryland Office of Tourism
4. Charles County Maryland Genealogical Society
5. African American Heritage Society of Charles County
6. Charles County Branch, NAACP
7. Charles County Archeological Society, Inc.
8. Maryland State Archives Legacy of Slavery Project
9. Historic St. Mary’s City and Sotterley Plantation (St. Mary’s County)
10. Reginald F. Lewis of Maryland African American History & Culture

Possible Funders/Supporters

1. Charles County Heritage Commission
2. Maryland Historical Trust
3. Preservation Maryland
4. Charles County Historic Trust

5. Southern Maryland Heritage Area Consortium
6. National Endowment for the Humanities (Preservation Assistance)
7. Institute of Museum and Library Services



Public Archaeology at Rich Hill, April 18-19, 2015
Photo by Charles County Archaeology Society, Inc.

D. Planning with People in Mind: Visitor Experience Outcomes

To build an audience you must create visitor experiences that satisfy a range of visitor needs, interests, and expectations. The visitor experience outcomes described below were developed during our planning process without specific audiences or Falk’s visitor identities in mind. While the purpose of the exercise was to introduce committee members to the idea that visitor experiences can and should be intentionally planned, there is no reason that the committee’s work should be lost.

To that end, here’s how the Steering Committee characterized the ideal visitor experience — what they would like visitors to do, know, feel, and “be” during and after spending time at Rich Hill. Moving forward, the challenge will become how to design and implement activities that allow and encourage these and other outcomes for visitors with different motivations for coming.

Doing (behavioral outcomes)

During their time at Rich Hill, visitors will be:

- Reading; paying attention to information
- Interacting with their companions, and talking to strangers
- Interacting with docents, asking questions and participating in discussions

- Providing good feedback to keep Rich Hill relevant to other visitors
- Taking photos and selfies; posting on social media, e.g., Facebook, Instagram, all encouraged by hashtags and other means
- Interacting with displays: touching things, recording a memory
- Participating in hands-on activities, e.g., dress up, role playing using identity cards, interactive games, cooking, feeding horses, helping someone do something

After they leave Rich Hill, visitors will:

- Act as our ambassador by telling friends about the good time they had, posting photos and comments, and encouraging others to visit via social media
- Become members of the Friends of Rich Hill
- Become active as a member, e.g., volunteer, make a donation of artifacts, oral histories, old photos
- Reflect more deeply about state and local history and preservation
- Visit a website or read take-way material to learn more
- Visit other local sites, related and unrelated to Rich Hill, ISO more experiences
- Make plans to return, preferably with someone who hasn't been to Rich Hill

Knowing (educational outcomes)

After spending time at Rich Hill, visitors will know:

- The basic history of Rich Hill, including important events, its architectural significance, and ongoing preservation efforts
- The story of Rich Hill's role in our history
- The facts and context surrounding the Booth escape story
- Something about life on an 18th and 19th century plantation
- That our knowledge of the past always grows as we learn new information

The one thing visitors will remember from their visit is that Rich Hill is:

- A comprehensive historic site that offers more than just one story
- An integral part of the Booth escape story—where he got help
- A place for learning about 18th and 19th-c history, architecture and archaeology.
- A thread that sews together past and present—our history—without which we can't fully understand or appreciate our world today.

Feeling (emotional outcomes)

During their time at Rich Hill, visitors will feel:

- Excited and enthused—about a range of things, including Charles County's role in history, Rich Hill's intrinsic value, discovering and learning, and being here
- Tension and conflicted feelings over the Booth escape story and the Cox household's involvement; about the lives of the enslaved people
- Curiosity about unanswered questions, daily life, living conditions and hardship, and other historic places in the county
- Contemplative and reflective, wondering about how life "used to be," about the choices people made, and the impact of the Lincoln assassination on national life
- Satisfaction (happiness even) over the fact that Rich Hill is being preserved and protected, and about spending time in pleasant, informative, and worthwhile way

Being (beliefs and values)

We will affirm the following beliefs or values in our programming for Rich Hill:

- History and historic sites are worth saving, preserving for those living in the present—no matter the chronological distance in time
- Southern Maryland has wealth of history; people care about our heritage.
- Local history can help us understand national history
- We value our history. We must know all sides of a story, put ourselves in other people's shoes to understand their perspective and draw informed conclusions
- We are passionate about what we present and want to portray history in an accurate and balanced way.

IV. Appendix: Selected Bibliography & Resources

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More Resources: Organizations, Websites and Blogs

American Alliance of Museums (www.aam-us.org)

- Historic House Network

American Association for State and Local History (<http://www.aaslh.org/>)

- Historic House Museum Community: <http://community.aaslh.org/historichouse/>
- Listserv for Historic Houses: historichousemuseums@yahoogroups.com

Engaging Places (Max van Balgooy): <https://engagingplaces.net/>

Slave Dwelling Project: <http://slavedwellingproject.org/>

Small Museum Association (<http://www.smallmuseum.org/>)

Tracing Center of Histories & Legacies of Slavery: <http://www.tracingcenter.org/>

