

# I.U. Families' Association

I.U. Families Association, Inc.

Summer 2007

## 59<sup>th</sup> Old Friend Day September 9, 2007

### *An Open Invitation...*

Plan to join with family and friends at historic Christ Church, I.U. in Worton, Maryland, for a happy day of reunion in a wonderful setting full of memories and fellowship. The Rt. Rev. James (Bud) Shand, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Easton is to preside at the 11:00 am services. The service is open to all.

The service will be followed by the traditional picnic on the church grounds. The picnic will begin with a blessing from Bishop Shand. Tours of the church and its graveyard will be given to interested persons and activities will be arranged for our younger participants. Folks are encouraged to bring pictures of previous celebrations to the picnic.

In addition to memories, please bring a covered dish or dishes of sufficient food for sharing to be placed on a central buffet table. Iced tea and other cold drinks will be available. Tables and chairs will be provided and in the event of inclement weather, we have reserved indoor space at the nearby Worton Methodist Church Hall.

The feasting will be followed by a brief annual meeting of the I.U. Families Association. Highlights of the business meeting will include the reading of the minutes and the election of Advisory Board members for a two year term.

Of course beyond the food and fellowship, Old Friends Day raises funds for the endowment that helps the church membership preserve and restore this unique chapel and landscape.



### *Robinsons Retire...*

In May, our Rector, The Rev. David G. Robinson, and Curate, the Rev. Constance W. Robinson announced their retirement from active service at Christ Church, I.U. The Association wishes a hearty *au revoir* to the Robinsons and thanks them for their many contributions to the parish.

### *Architectural Study Underway...*

The Parish Vestry has taken the first steps toward the preparation of a *Historic Structure Report* on the church building. This report will provide a baseline for future maintenance and preservation undertakings. The work, which includes updating existing blueprints and an initial structural investigation, will be completed under the direction of Michael Bourne, a noted local architectural historian. In *Historic Houses of Kent County*, Mr. Bourne described our chapel as “the best example of Gothic Revival church architecture” in Kent County.

### *Families Association News...*

The I.U. Families Association, Inc. was established in 1948 by local and distant persons having a concern for the maintenance of Christ Church, I.U. Among the Association's founders were P. Medford Brooks (Chairman), Margaret S. Payne (Secretary) and Lloyd P. Hepburn, who suggested the name. Today the Association is led by three officers (elected for a two year term in even numbered years) and a six member Board of Directors (serving two year terms and elected in odd numbered years).

The objective of the I.U. Families Association is to assist the Parish in the maintenance and preservation of the Christ Church building, cemetery and grounds. Incorporated as a non-profit organization by the State of Maryland in 2001, the Association's current bylaws were adopted in 1999. Since 1948 the funds raised by the members of the association have been placed in a permanent endowment. Each year, the Association distributes only funds generated as interest from the endowment which support projects, identified by the Parish Vestry, that ensure the continued preservation of the property. In 2007, the Association provided \$4600 to the Vestry in support of our collective mission. The Association will present a comprehensive fiscal report at Old Friends Day.

### *The Cross Roads at a place called I. U.*

St. Peter's, the first Episcopal church at this location, built in the late 1760s was the parish church of Chester Parish. Chester Parish was established in 1765 as a third parish for Kent County out of portions of South Sassafras (Shrewsbury) and St. Paul's Parishes. This act empowered vestrymen to purchase two acres of land at I. U. and to build a "commodious

brick church" costing no more than 130,000 pounds of tobacco.

According to a late 1760s building contract, the original church was 60 by 40 feet in area and exhibited a brick exterior waternable, 13 good double hung windows, and four pilasters along each brick wall. The contract continued: "to have also a sufficient Gallery at one end, with stair case and open seats across, a Good Pulpit, Reading Desk, and Communion, all Neatly Finished....a good lock on one door and bolt to the other, and the whole Church to be completely finished in a good workmanlike manner." The property also included a brick vestry house (18' square) located northeast of the church.

By the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, membership had declined severely and the building was in a "deplorable condition." In 1830 the bricks of the deteriorating building were sold to a local landowner. An increase in membership resulted in the 1860 construction of the present "gothic revival" style chapel. The Church acquired the adjacent "Sexton's House" (a ca. 1790s vernacular home) during the later 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Church, grave yard and Sexton's House were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980.



### *A Grave-Stone Unveiled...*

**O**n Sunday, October 26, 1902 between four and five hundred citizens gathered at Christ Church, I.U. for the unveiling of a grave stone dedicated to General Philip Reed (1760-1829), the “hero of Caulk’s Field” and a Maryland congressman. The effort to mark the grave was led by I.U. Rector, The Rev. Chris. T. Denroche, who had come to the church in 1892. This account of its dedication comes from a contemporary account of the ceremony.

“The day was cheerless and bleak, yet there was no dampening of the patriotic ardor of those who had assembled to honor their hero. Nearly every section of the county contributed its quota of representative citizens, and the exercises were marked by a dignity and simplicity in perfect harmony with the character of the great Kent countian whose history was being perpetuated in appropriately marked granite. The picturesque beauty of the country church-yard gave added impressiveness to the appropriate ceremonies which were being carried out.

The slab is a solid granite block, six feet long, three feet wide, one foot thick, and lies flat upon the grave. On this occasion it was surrounded by potted plants and flowers—a large wreath of green leaves crowned its surface, and a neat staff upon which to hoist the flag with which it was veiled, stood gracefully at its head.

A number of national and other hymns formed a stirring feature of the unveiling service:

every individual in the throng joined in them. The singing was led by an organ, at which Miss Olivia Wilkins presided, and by a quartet of brass instruments in the hands of Prof. John Cannan, Foster Cannan, Benjamin Greenwood, and Roland Matthews, under the able direction of Mr. Walter M. Chapman. A choir composed of Mrs. C. T. Denroche, Mrs. Alwyn N. Stavely, Mrs. Allan Harris, Mr. & Mrs. G. Wright Nicols, Misses Hellen Wilkins, Isabel Beck, Hallie Wescott, Wheeler Peterson, Nellie Valliant, Lilian Greenwood, Erie Grimes, Elizabeth Pennington, Prof. L. Harris Crewe, Nesbitt Trenchard, Thomas W. Perkins, Prof. Edw. J. Clarke, Mr. & Mrs. C. B. Lamb and others, gave the multitude substantial aid in every offering of prayer and praise in song.”

After the songs and an address on General Reed, “Miss. Elizabeth Anna Nicols, only daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Harry Nicols, of Worton, Md., and a great-grand niece of General Reed’s wife removed the handsome American flag from the polished and engraved face of the massive granite slab, and laid it at the foot of the staff in graceful folds” after which, Mr. Edward W. Hepbron, a vestryman of I.U. Parish, slowly hoisted the flag as Rev. Denroche completed the dedication of the grave-stone.

There is a tear for all that die,  
 a mourner o’er the humblest grave;  
 But nations swell the funeral cry,  
 and Triumph weeps above the brave.  
 For them is sorrow’s purest sigh  
 O’er Ocean’s heaving bosom sent;  
 In vain their bones unburied lie,  
 All earth becomes their monument.

Lord Byron

On the death of Peter Parker at Caulk’s Field

## How Can I Help?...

The easiest way to help further the mission of the I.U. Families Association is to make a donation to our endowment fund. Donations can be cash, securities, or other commodities. We distribute a special envelope with our annual newsletter for collection at Old Friends Day in September. Contact our Treasurer, Reyner Meikle, to make your tax deductible contribution.

## In Memoriam...

The members of the Association honors the memory of the following members who passed away during the last year:

Paul Messner

Robert H. Sparre

Margaret Hepburn Perry

## Many Thanks To...

The I.U. Families Association wishes to thank the Vestry and membership of Christ Church, I.U. for their continuing day-to-day stewardship of the chapel grounds and Sexton's House.

## *Christ Church, I.U. Parish*

### *Officers*

Mr. John E. Nunn, Sr. Warden

Mrs. Nancy Robson, Jr. Warden

Mrs. Jane Hukill, Registrar

Mr. Thomas Noble, Treasurer

### *Vestry*

Mrs. Sybil Curtin

Mr. Harry Keen

Mrs. Pat Keen

Mrs. Deborah Reilly

Mrs. Brenda Rocconi

## *I. U Families Association, Inc.*

### *Officers (2006-2008)*

Mr. John H. Sprinkle, Jr., Chair

603 Johnston Place, Alexandria, VA 22301

Matilda W. Wessel, Secretary

10974 Worton Road, Worton, MD 21678

Reyner S. Meikle, Jr., Treasurer

255 Appleby Road, New Castle, DE 19720

### *Advisory Board (2005-2007)*

Mrs. Nancy Sharon Hepbron Ash

Mr. William J. Hepbron III

Mrs. Elaine Naper

Mr. Thomas Noble

Mr. J. Rennie Stavely

Mrs. Anita Williams