



Concerned that developers might tear down the home of a Signer of the Declaration of Independence, Historic Annapolis and the State of Maryland bought the Paca mansion and the rest of the Carvel Hall site in 1965. Over the next decade, a team of experts—archival researchers, archaeologists, architectural historians, landscape designers, horticulturists, and other skilled professionals—restored the William Paca House and Garden to their 18th-century appearances. The site was recognized as a National Historic Landmark in 1971.

After William Paca sold it in 1780, the house continued as a single-family home until 1801, then served mainly as a rental property for much of the 19th century. In 1901 the property was purchased and converted it into a hotel, with a large 200 room addition attached to the back of the colonial house and extending over most of the old garden. For much of the 20th century, Carvel Hall was Annapolis' finest hotel.

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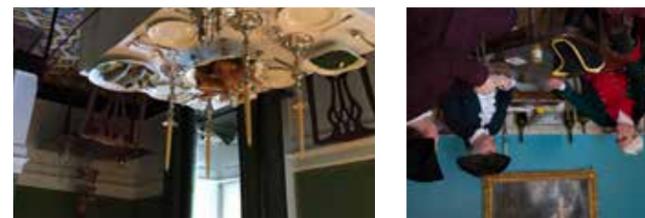
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MAKE YOUR MARK ON HISTORY!
Historic Annapolis strives to present thoroughly researched historic spaces to the general public, keeping abreast of the continual advances in scholarship and varying our exhibits to better inform our visitors. If the thought of supporting this cause excites you, please contact us to learn more about the program and benefits.



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ABOUT THIS HISTORICAL SITE

RESTORATION OF ROOMS IN THE HOUSE

COLLECTION HIGHLIGHTS

THE HOUSE



WHO WAS WILLIAM PACA?

William Paca cut an impressive figure in Annapolis society. Born the second son of planter John Paca and his wife Elizabeth on October 31, 1740, he was educated in Philadelphia and trained for a legal career under Annapolis lawyer Stephen Bordley. Paca's 1763 marriage to Mary Chew, "an amiable and most agreeable young lady of this City, with a very considerable fortune," provided him with resources and connections beyond his own family's reach. The couple had three children, but only their son John Philemon Paca was the only to survive past childhood. William and Mary also cared for an orphaned niece for several months prior to her death. In addition to Paca family members, the mansion also house a number of servants and slaves.

William Paca put his professional skills to use leading Annapolis's budding patriot movement, beginning with the 1765 Stamp Act protests and the 1766 founding of a local Sons of Liberty chapter. Popular recognition gained through these efforts fueled his election to increasingly important posts in the late 1760s and early 1770s.

As opposition to British rule intensified, William Paca argued against policies of the colonial governor, served in the upstart Conventions that wrested power from the proprietary administration, and represented Maryland in the First and Second Continental Congresses. In 1776, he voted for American separation from Great Britain, approved the Declaration of Independence, and signed that historic document in Philadelphia. During the Revolutionary War, Paca served in Maryland's new government as a state delegate, senator, and judge.

William Paca was Maryland's governor for three one-year terms (1782-85) at the end of the war. He supported state ratification of the United States Constitution in 1788 after proposing the addition of a Bill of Rights. In 1789, President George Washington appointed him a federal district court judge, Paca's last office in a life of public service. William Paca died at his Wye Island estate on Maryland's Eastern Shore on 13 October 1799.



Historic Annapolis is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and a member of the Smithsonian Institution Affiliate Program. This project has been financed in part with State Funds from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority, an instrumentality of the State of Maryland. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority.

JOHN SHAW BIBLE
A remarkable survival after its discovery in the trash, this Bible belonging to John Shaw. In 1956 it became the first item ever accessioned into its collection. Printed in London in 1766, possibly acquired on one of Shaw's transatlantic voyages. Throughout the book, on the blank pages between sections, the Shaw family recorded their marriages, births and the deaths, among other milestones. Shaw notes his bequeathal of this Bible to his daughter, Mary, two years before his death within the volume itself.



This handsome mahogany tall case clock is one of the nation's most treasured examples of craftsmanship in the field of clockwork. This is the only John Shaw and William Farris collaboration that has ever come to light. John Shaw, born in Glasgow in 1745 and arrived in Annapolis in 1763, is considered one of the preeminent cabinetmakers of Annapolis during the Federal period. Shaw and his students helped bring the Neo-Classical style to Annapolis homes and public buildings.



SALT CELLARS
William Paca and his wife, Mary, either purchased or were given these two salt cellars from England in 1763. This date marks both the year of their marriage and the year that construction began on their home.



MISSION

Established in 1952, Historic Annapolis is the leading nonprofit preservation and history organization in Annapolis, MD. Our mission is to *Preserve* and *Protect* the historic places, objects and stories of Maryland's capital city, and provide engaging experiences that *Connect* people to the area's diverse heritage.

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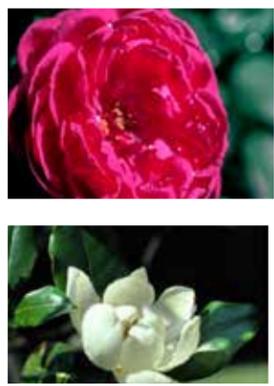
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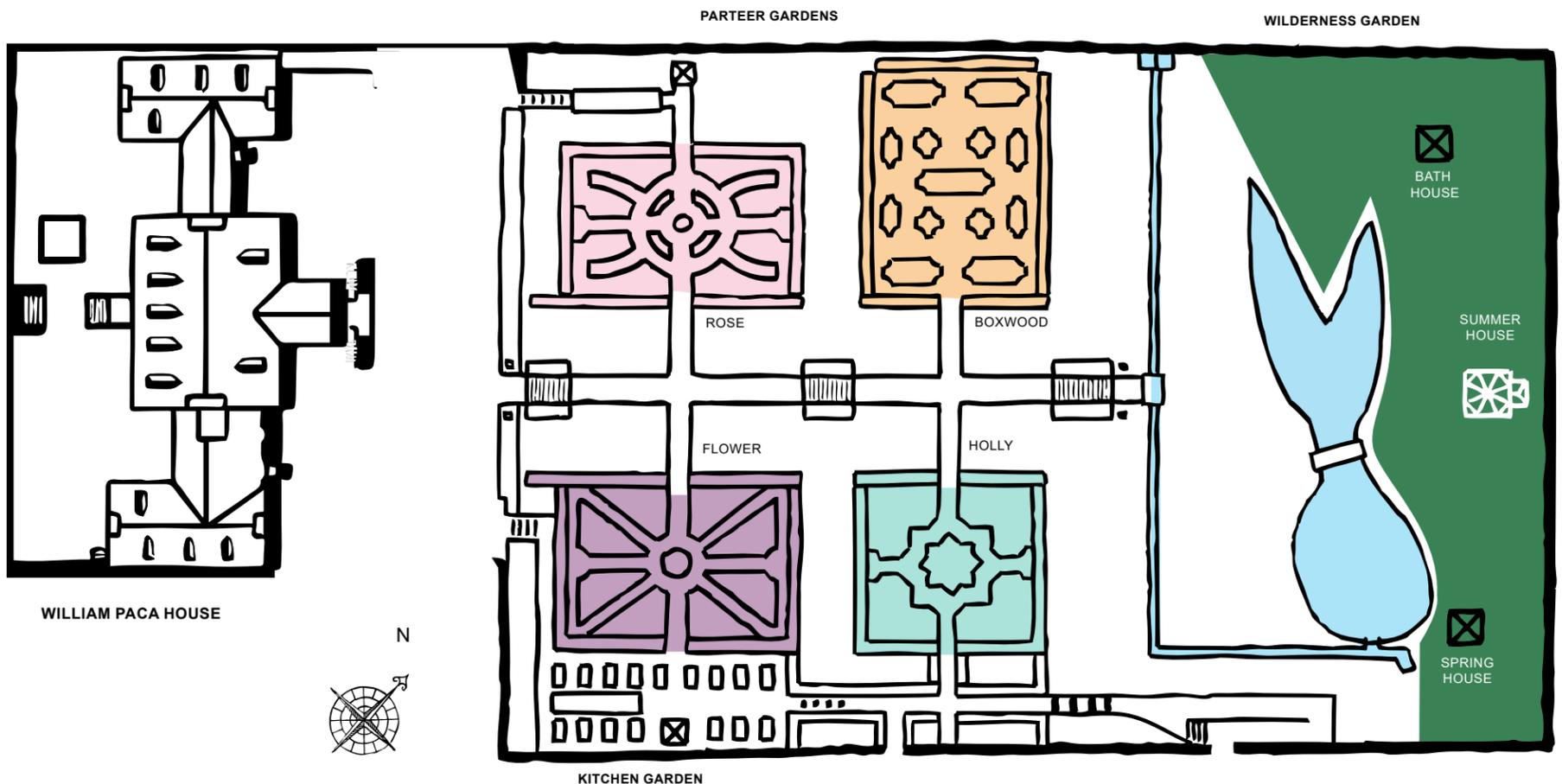
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THE GARDEN



This two-acre oasis of natural beauty was laid out by William Paca while he built his house. Although many colonial Annapolitans had gardens, only Paca's has been returned to its original splendor and opened to the public.

Archaeologists excavating the site in the 1960s and 1970s found remnants of the original brick garden wall, three outbuildings, the pond, and the canal.

The background of Paca's portrait documented the architectural details of the two-story summer house, the Chippendale-style bridge over the pond, and the brick bath house. Period garden manuals and plant lists provided more clues. Garden historians and horticulturists used all this information to recreate an 18th-century landscape.



THE PARTERRES are precise geometric designs that demonstrate human control over nature, occupy the middle terraces. The rose parterre is filled with heirloom varieties, while the flower parterre provides three seasons of colorful bloom. The holly and boxwood parterres exhibit the art of sculpting living plants into topiary.

THE GARDEN WALL AND TERRACES define the spaces and views of this elegant garden. Terraces or "falls" were a characteristic of colonial gardens in the Chesapeake region. Slopes in the stone foundation of the garden wall told archaeologists where the falls were located so that terraces could be reconstructed. The upper level serves as a platform for entertaining and viewing the garden. The vertical slits in the wall, that surrounds the garden, are thought to encourage air circulation in hot humid weather.

THE SUMMER HOUSE was reconstructed based on Paca's portrait, serves as a focal point in the garden. On its upper floor the Paca family could view the garden, entertain guests and catch cool summer breezes. Perhaps Mr. Paca and his revolutionary friends met in this private space to discuss strategy. The bridge provides a path over the pond to this inviting garden retreat.

THE WILDERNESS GARDEN reflects the picturesque style of gardening that was fashionable in England after 1740. Serpentine pathways meander between beds of mixed plantings. The emphasis today is on native plants of North America that had been brought into cultivation by Paca's time.

WATER FEATURES meet the challenge posed by the garden's low elevation and the presence of a natural underground spring. Paca designed a system of drains to divert excess water into useful and charming garden elements. The brick canal carried runoff across the lowest garden level. The spring house captured water for household use and provided cool storage for milk and butter.

Uncovered beneath the hotel parking lot, the same spring once again feeds the spring house and flows through a brick channel to fill the fish-shaped pond. Wooden baffles diverted water through another underground conduit to the bath house.

18TH CENTURY PLANTS

Plants of the 18th Century are known from books and letters. Roses, perennials, and annuals in the parterres are authentic to the colonial period.

The vegetable garden provides fresh delicacies such as salad greens, peas, and asparagus.

In the fruit garden heirloom varieties of apples, pears, plums, cherries, and figs are carefully trained into espaliers and cordons to take advantage of limited space in an urban garden.



Spring House