

Tour offers historical glimpses

By Rachel Mauro

Special to The Examiner

Descendants of prominent Towson residents will gather at Prospect Hill Cemetery on Saturday to share stories about their family members buried there.

The cemetery, originally part of the Hampton estate and now a Baltimore County landmark, is a piece of local history: Richard Mudd, designer of the Bay Bridge, and Divine, of John Waters movies, are laid to rest there. Other businessmen and landowners in the plot played major roles in Towson's past.

Henry Peck, a Towson lawyer, plans to talk about his great-grandfather, Charles Thomas, who built houses in Roland Park, Peck said, as well as the 1892 original Calvary Baptist Church in Baltimore. He Peck said his goal is to "try and put faces and a story with those stones up there."

Carolyn Knott, president of the cemetery's Board of Directors, sees her organization as "custodians of Towson history and Baltimore County history." Knott noted that 14 members of her family are buried there including her great-grandfather, Irish immigrant Richard Parker, "the toll-gate keeper on York Road when it was a private road."

Ginger Mudd Galvez, chairwoman of the tour, cited names "very familiar to Towson people" as having plots at the cemetery. Herself a descendant of the Burke family, for whom Burke Avenue was named, she included the Hillens, whose original farmhouse is now the clubhouse at Mount Pleasant Golf Course.

Descendants will be at 11 separate stations at their ancestors' graves for brief talks, Galvez said.

"I hope other people will come and share their family stories," Galvez said.

IF YOU GO

The tour starts 11 a.m. Saturday. The rain date is 2 p.m. Sunday. Prospect Hill Cemetery is located between York Road and Washington Avenue.