

A Brief History: Tudor Hall

Home of the Booth Family In Harford County, Maryland

» In 1821, Junius Brutus Booth Sr. eloped with Mary Ann Holmes from England to the United States where he became one of the leading Shakespearean actors on the American stage. He left behind his first wife Marie and their 2-year-old son named Richard Junius.

» In the early 1820s, Junius and Mary Ann purchased a 150 acre working farm in Harford County.

» Junius and Mary Ann had ten children many of whom are believed to have been born in a log house on the Booth farm. The oldest of the Booth children was born in 1821, the youngest in 1840.

» The Booth children included “super stars” Edwin and John Wilkes as well as Asia who was a gifted writer and the family historian.

» Four of the Booth children died in the 1830s of communicable diseases: three were buried in a cemetery on the Booth farm until their graves were moved to the family plot in Baltimore’s Green Mount Cemetery in 1869. The fourth child was buried in London, England, where the family was visiting at the time of his death.

» Work began on Tudor Hall in the fall of 1851.

» The Gothic Revival cottage was intended to be the dream home of Junius and Mary Ann after Junius retired from the stage.

» Construction on Tudor Hall was still ongoing at the time of Junius Brutus Booth’s death at the age of 56 while he was on tour in November 1852.

» After her husband’s death, Mary Ann rented out the family’s townhouse in Baltimore and moved to Tudor Hall

in the spring of 1853 with her oldest daughter Rosalie and her teenaged children Asia, John Wilkes, and Joseph

» When it became clear that neither John Wilkes nor Joseph was cut out for farming, Mary Ann rented out the farm in the summer of 1857. None of the Booths ever lived at Tudor Hall again.

» Mary Ann sold the Booth farm to Samuel Kyle in 1878 who bought it as a wedding gift for his wife Ella Harward who survived two husbands and lived at Tudor Hall until her death in 1948. Ella Harward Kyle Mahoney lived at Tudor Hall longer than anyone before or since and made many changes to the house.

» After 1948, Tudor Hall underwent several changes of ownership and a number of renovations. Howard and Dorothy Fox owned the property and lived at Tudor Hall from the late 1960s to the late 1990s. The property was purchased by Harford County in 2006. It is currently managed by the Department of Parks and Recreation and serves as a temporary home for the Center for the Arts and the Harford County Cultural Arts Board.

* Prepared for Spirits of Tudor Hall by Dinah Faber, revised March 2011; Designed by Fallon Hearn, Images provided courtesy of fotolia.com (excluding those of Tudor Hall)

