

Department, was generous with her time and information, and constantly kept us informed of developments that might affect the *Manual*. Janet Davidson and Pat Hofmann in the President of the Senate's Office and Susan McCann in the Speaker of the House's Office provided essential information for the Legislature section of the book. Willard Morris and his staff at the State Administrative Board of Election Laws proved cooperative in many ways. F. Carvel Payne and his staff, especially the Library Division personnel, freely gave of their time and expertise. Bill Jabine of the Department of Natural Resources continued his biennial task of updating the Maryland At A Glance section in addition to the submission for his department.

One small, but very important, addition to this *Maryland Manual* is the designation by number of the various sessions of the General Assembly discussed in the Legislature section of the book. Although we are often asked how many sessions of the General Assembly have been held, it has heretofore been impossible to give a definitive answer. Lynn Browne and Jane McWilliams, two members of the Hall of Records Legislative History Project team, used data compiled in the Hall of Records' ongoing study of the Maryland legislature to determine exactly how many legally constituted sessions of the legislative branch of government have been held to date. Their research established that the General Assembly that met on January 11, 1983, was the 386th meeting of the legislative branch, a number that includes all proprietary assemblies, commonwealth assemblies, provincial conventions, revolutionary conventions, and general assemblies back to the first, which assembled in St. Mary's on February 26, 1634/35.

Compilation of the county section of the *Maryland Manual* is as difficult as any. Among the host of individuals who provided information, Leigh Sands, clerk of the Caroline County Board of Commissioners, deserves our special thanks for the thorough information on county government and personnel she supplied. The staff of the Maryland Municipal League was helpful and courteous whenever we had questions concerning Maryland municipalities. The Judiciary section of the book is much improved in readability and accuracy due to the efforts of Deborah Unitas. A special thanks is due to Chief Judge Robert C. Murphy for allowing us to reprint extensively from the descriptions of judicial agencies that appeared in the 1981-1982 Annual Report of the Judiciary, edited by Ms. Unitas.

Text for the *Maryland Manual* is produced on in-house text editing equipment, which not only saves time but results in considerable savings to the State in the composition of camera-ready pages. The highly technical and exacting task of properly keyboarding new text and revisions, and of managing the data file generated for the book, devolved principally upon two individuals, Jane Morris Drupteski and Beverly Davis. No one could ask for more than they willingly gave to complete this project. Barbara Hopkins, Lois Hess, and Alyce Libby also assisted in various aspects of the work. That the book appeared in a timely fashion is largely due to the hard work of these individuals.

It is impossible to thank by name all of the hundreds of people throughout the State of Maryland who contributed to this edition of the *Maryland Manual*. What is good about the book is to a large extent due to help we received from outside our agency; responsibility for the faults we reserve to ourselves. We do in any case extend our deepest appreciation to everyone who contributed to this book in whatever capacity.

The *Maryland Manual* is, for many people, nothing more than a current reference book that is discarded every two years when a new edition appears. For those of us associated with Maryland history and government it is much more. Thanks to a dedicated staff and conscientious respondents throughout Maryland government, the *Maryland Manual* is a benchmark of the status of the State at a given time. The successive editions of the *Maryland Manual*, now covering nearly ninety years, provide a valuable, and often overlooked, source for the study of Maryland history and government. It is our hope that the edition that follows will be judged a worthy successor to the volumes that preceded it, and that it will serve as a fair, accurate, and complete guide to the government of the State as Maryland celebrates its 350th year.

Annapolis, Maryland  
14 January 1983

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