

# Isle of Kent - 1631

*To Discover, Identify, Restore and Preserve the Heritage of Kent Island*

NEWSLETTER OF THE KENT ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC.

SUMMER/FALL 2017

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## President's Message



As we worked to finalize this issue of our newsletter, Kent Island was hit in the early hours of July 24 by a terrible, destructive tornado. Our hearts and prayers go out to our friends, neighbors and members in Bay City, Ellendale and parts of Stevensville whose homes and properties were destroyed or damaged. We heartily commend our county officials, government personnel, first responders, and the Delmarva Power heroes, who all went above and beyond to restore order and public confidence. The comment we heard

so frequently was, "The system works!" Thanks to all of you.

We are in awe of the massive outpouring of community support and the hundreds of volunteers who continue to respond wherever needed. It's a poignant reminder of the strength and spirit of the special people who call this island home and who are so ready to respond to a public need. It's part of who we are—part of our heritage!

We are reminded of another time in our heritage when islanders came together with that same Kent Island spirit to respond to a massive threat. This September it was exactly 100 years ago when the War Department wanted to take Kent Island for a weapons proving ground and bombing range at the beginning of WWI. A strong group of Kent Islanders, led by Sen. James Kirwan, came together with such strength and resolve that the government backed off, and the site was moved up the Bay to a place called Aberdeen! You know the rest. We would not be here today if they hadn't succeeded!

We are grateful to report that none of our historic sites, either in Stevensville or in Chester, were affected by the recent storm. We can't help but think the tornado response has brought out the best in Kent Islanders. It reminds us that this same determination and spirit is as strong today as it has ever been. We are proud to call ourselves Kent Islanders.

As far as Heritage Society news, spring and summer have been active. We have completed several maintenance projects at the Kirwan House that were supported by the Queen Anne's County Garden Club and the Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland. Meanwhile, in Stevensville work was completed on the fence and grounds of the Cray House, thanks to Rick Morris and his capable team of skilled craftsmen. Later this year we anticipate additional work around the Cray House grounds and the initiation of plans for a working blacksmith shop on the Kirwan Farm.

Heritage events this year included a visit in March to the Kennard African American Heritage and Cultural Center in Centreville. Clay Washington, director of the impressive Kennard project, hosted the event. The center occupies the newly renovated

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## KIHS Committees

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Lynne Riley-Coleman

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Linda Collier

### Publicity

Martha Lostrom

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### Cray House

Sally Lewis, Curator

### Post Office

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### Smoke House Building and Grounds

### Train Station

Rudy Lukakovic, Curator

### Bank

Marilyn Wilson, Docent

Lynnda Kratovil, Docent

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Josh Bouchal

Anne Marie Bouchal

Butch Collier

Linda Collier

Cassy Daffin

Carole Frederick

Carl Gerg

Joanne Gerg

Jay Gibson

Toni Gibson

Taylor Harmon

Chris Kilian

Lynnda Kratovil

Sally Lewis

Rawle Mannix

Barbara Marmion

Fran Peters

Hanna Wall

Marilyn Wilson

## PROGRAMS

### Kent Island Day

Nancy Cook, Chair

Jack Broderick

Carole Frederick

Toni Gibson

Jamie Sasse

### Picnic

Carole Frederick, Chair

Toni and Jay Gibson

Linda and Butch Collier

### June General Meeting

Jack Broderick

### Annual Election Brunch

Toni Gibson

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building that was historically the county's only black high school in the days of segregation. It stands as a tribute to the history and accomplishments of our African American community.

In May, we held our signature annual event, Kent Island Day, in historic Stevensville. We estimate that it was our biggest and best ever. The perfect weather was a real blessing, especially after last year's rain-out! The parade, the hours of on-stage entertainment, great local food, the numerous historic displays and vendors, as well as animals and kids' activities all made for an enjoyable day-long family event. See our story in pictures for highlights. Thanks and congratulations to our KI Day coordinator, Nancy Cook, and her active team for a superb Kent Island Day! We also appreciate our many sponsors who helped us meet our growing expenses for this annual community event.

In June, we boarded the Chester River Packet at the County Heritage and Visitors' Center at Kent Narrows for what has become a yearly event celebrating our maritime heritage. We enjoyed an evening cruise among friends on the Chester River with a wonderful buffet dinner, capped by a dramatic sunset.

Meanwhile, our new website contractor, Joslex, of Stevensville, worked with the helpful guidance of our board member Bob Lowe to build our new website. The result is terrific! The new website has been available since early spring and contains information about the Heritage Society: our sites, activities, and special events. Visit us at [kentislandheritagesociety.org](http://kentislandheritagesociety.org).

In September, our fall heritage picnic at the Kirwan House will feature a tribute to Sen. James Kirwan, celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the senator's public campaign that saved Kent Island from becoming an Aberdeen Proving Ground – exactly 100 years to the day. Thank you Senator Kirwan! We are presenting a proclamation to honor the senator known as "The Grand Old Man of Kent Island." We hope you join us for this celebration and picnic. Sign-up information is included in this newsletter.

The historic sites are open on the first Saturdays from April through November. We extend thanks to each of our dedicated docents who bring these sites alive with colorful and passionate stories of Kent Island and the unique heritage of each site. We are always looking for new volunteers to share the docent experience. If you are interested contact Sally Lewis (443-249-3203) or Nancy Cook (410-758-2502).

Finally, thanks to each of our members for your continued generosity and support.

*Jack Broderick*

# Calendar 2017

**JANUARY 18**

BOARD MEETING

**FEBRUARY 22**

BOARD MEETING

**MARCH 22**

*Special Event*

Kennard Museum Trip

**APRIL 19**

BOARD MEETING

**MAY 17**

BOARD MEETING

**MAY 20**

KENT ISLAND DAY

**JUNE 21**

General Meeting - TBA

**JULY 19**

BOARD MEETING

**AUGUST 16**

BOARD MEETING

IF NEEDED

**SEPTEMBER 17**

ANNUAL PICNIC

@ KIRWAN HOUSE

1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

**September 20**

BOARD MEETING

**OCTOBER 18**

BOARD MEETING

**NOVEMBER 15**

BOARD MEETING

**DECEMBER 11**

ANNUAL MEETING/Brunch

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

FISHERMAN'S INN 12:30 - 4:00 PM

# Farms - Not Bombs!

One hundred years ago on September 17, 1917, at a little after three o'clock in the afternoon, Colonel Tom Keller, veteran assistant sergeant-at-arms of the United States Senate entered the room where Maryland Senator John Walter Smith, Virginia Senator Thomas Staples Martin, and former State Senator James E. Kirwan, along with a few others from Kent Island waited.

"Unanimous," Keller announced.

The Committee on Military Affairs of the Senate had just passed a resolution offered by Senator Kenneth McKellar of Tennessee: ... that it is the sense of this committee that Kent Island, or any part thereof, should not be taken by the United States government as a proving ground for the test of ordinance material. In addition, about an hour or so earlier, the House of Representatives had stricken from the Appropriations Bill \$3,000,000 for the proving ground because it was assumed the money was to be used for a Kent Island facility.

And so it was over. Kent Island would not become a proving ground for the test of ordinance material as the country anticipated its entry into WWI. The Kent Island decision had taken about 10 minutes.

For the residents of Kent Island, however, getting a positive result from those 10 minutes of congressional time was a tense and commanding three-month struggle. It began when James E. Kirwan, business man and former senator, learned from his old friend and colleague Senator John Walter Smith (Kirwan was state senator during Smith's tenure as governor of Maryland), that a representative from the munitions firm Bartlett-Hayward was quietly optioning land on Kent Island for the government. The agent, W. H. Price, had optioned 3,500 acres without indicating the land was for the government and was the beginning of the purchase of the entire island.

When this became known along with the fact that all the residents of the island would have to leave, no more options were obtained. Senator Kirwan organized a protest when he found that the land purchases were a precursor to a War Department plan to turn Kent Island into an

## The Saving of Kent Island

By Harold O. Wilson

ordinance proving ground. The government's intention was to purchase or take island property by eminent domain, dispossess the people (with compensation as required) and move in bombs, cannons and other ordinance for testing. According to the diary of Kent Island resident Henry A. Palmer at the time, a meeting was called on July 3, 1917 to elect a five-person delegation to go to Washington and meet with Secretary of War Newton Baker to convince him not to take the island. The five were

former State Senator James E. Kirwan, William E. Denny, Roland Carville, Henry A. Palmer, and Dr. John R. Benton; family names that still resonate on Kent Island. Linda Collier, curator and board member of The Kent Island Heritage Society,

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*A delegation of Kent Island residents went to D.C. to protest a planned takeover of Kent Island for bombing use.*





# Saving Kent Island

*Continued from page 3*

says that Senator Kirwan organized and chaired the meetings of the committee. Again, according to Palmer's diary, the committee of five traveled to Washington on July 6 and met with Secretary Baker and with Senator Smith to state their case.

Palmer says it was a cordial meeting, and it must have been since Senator Smith invited them to lunch.

The five stayed in Baltimore that night and went home on the morning boat. The morning boat? Remember, this is 1917, there was no Bay Bridge. A trip to Washington was an arduous affair that took a significant commitment of time, planning, and money. One first had to cross the bay to Baltimore, and then take a short walk to Camden Station and the B&O Railroad. The Chester River Line ran a morning and evening steamboat service from Baltimore to Chestertown with stops at Kent Island, docking at Steamboat Landing at the end of Steamboat Landing Road (now Grollman Road), and just across the narrows at Jackson Creek Landing in Grasonville and at Queenstown.

Other companies ran steamboats from Baltimore to Love Point on the island to connect with the railroad that took patrons to the beach. Jack Shaum, in his excellent book *Lost Chester*

River Steamboats notes that the Chester River Line was shaky financially at that time and in one of their brochures stated that service was likely to be "uncertain." This would require that the committee determine the current steamboat schedule and plan their trip to Washington accordingly.

Having met with Secretary Baker and having educated Senator Smith, the committee then decided it was time to bring the Governor on board. On July 11, the Kent Island Five met with Governor Harrington and checked that box.

Making the most of their trip across the bay, the group then went to Washington and met with Representative Jesse Price from Salisbury who represented Kent Island and the First District. The committee found Price favorable and came back to Kent Island on the evening boat.

Continuing their round of meetings, the committee again met with Senator Smith and Governor Harrington in Baltimore on July 26. Without offering a reason, Palmer notes that there was no encouragement to be had from this meeting. In response, the committee wisely decided to ratchet up their approach. They swelled their committee of five to a group of about a hundred. All went to Washington on August 16. The following day Representative Price had the group before the House Committee on Appropriations at 2:30 to testify. The House Appropriations Committee subsequently dropped a \$3,000,000 line from the appropriations bill. Most of the delegation went back to Baltimore for the night and took the boat home the next day.

On September 9, the Kent Island Five traveled back to Washington and passed the week meeting with members of Congress.

According to the *Centreville Observer* of

September 22, 1917, things were coming to a head when Secretary of War Baker announced on Thursday, September 13, that he was willing to hear both sides of the Kent Island issue at a hearing of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs. The hearing was set for 10:00 am Saturday morning September 15. With this news in hand, Dr. Benton and Senator Kirwan conferred with Senator Smith and Representative Price. All decided that it was imperative to have a delegation present for the hearing.

The call went out and more than 500 Kent Island and Queen Anne's County citizens made their way to Baltimore, probably by chartered steamboat, and at 7:00 a.m. Saturday morning boarded a chartered B&O train, the Kent Island Special, for Washington.

Lined up two-by-two, the group marched from Union Station to the Capital. The line was so long that as the leaders entered the Capital building those at the end of the procession were just leaving the station. The *Centreville Ob-*

**Senator Smith spoke eloquently on behalf of Kent Island. His words, recorded in the *Centreville Observer*, are worth repeating here:**

**"I believe that I can say safely that I am second to no man in this country in my loyalty to my native land or in my eagerness to do all that is in my power to push this war to a successful conclusion.**

**"And I know I can say the same for the loyalty and readiness to sacrifice of these people of Kent Island who are before you today appealing to you to save their homes. In this very room their sons were drafted and their sons have responded willingly to the call of their country, for not one has claimed exemption. And if it were necessary that they give up their homes, as they have already given up their sons, they would make that sacrifice also, but it is not necessary.**

**"There are plenty of other places in Maryland, and there are hundreds of other places throughout the country for ordinance proving grounds."**

James E. Kirwan became known as the "Grand Old Man of Kent Island." Under his leadership, the Kent Island Five had done everything right: they met with the right people at the right time, told a compelling story, and demonstrated great resolve through their persistence. And on short notice they turned out 500 residents to overwhelm the halls of Congress. They were not going to see the homes of 3,000 fellow citizens taken unnecessarily for an ordinance proving ground. The people of Harford County were not as fortunate. The decision was later taken to establish the proving ground in Aberdeen.

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server says that the crowd at the hearing itself was so large it had to be moved from Senator Smith's office to a large reception room on the lower floor. It's ironic that the room selected to debate the fate of over 3,000 Kent Island citizens was the same room where a few months earlier draft numbers had been drawn and the fate of their sons placed in the balance.

Secretary Baker opened the hearing with a statement that many sites had been investigated and that Kent Island appeared to be the only available place suitable for the proving grounds. He added, however, that he would abide by the Committee's decision in the matter.

Munitions officers and others then testified that Kent Island was the only place in America where the ammunition and guns could be properly tested. After further testimony to that effect Senator Smith asked if the War Department had a second choice. It was then admitted that there was a site at Gunpowder Point that might serve. Senator Smith continued to ask questions until finally the officers admitted that they had not given other sites careful study.

In fact, Maryland Senator Joseph I. France stated that there were three other sites in Maryland that were suitable. He then read a letter he received from General William Crozier, Chief of Ordinance, refusing to investigate a site in Southern Maryland offered by the senator. Following this discussion, the fact that 3,500 acres had been willingly optioned by Kent Island residents was offered as an indication that the islanders were prepared to give up their property for a price. This was debunked by Senator Smith who said that 98 percent of the residents of Kent Island were unwilling to go and that those who optioned their property did so under misapprehension or under duress.

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their sons were drafted and their sons have responded willingly to the call of their country, for not one has claimed exemption. And if it were necessary that they give up their homes, as they have already given up their sons, they would make that sacrifice also, but it is not necessary.

"There are plenty of other places in Maryland, and there are hundreds of other places throughout the country for ordinance proving grounds."

Then it was Governor Harrington, the *Observer* reports, who offered a very practical economic reason for not taking the island. He reminded the committee that he had traveled from one end of the state to the other with the administration's admonition that people conserve their food products and increase the production of all foodstuffs.

It seemed to him a cruel irony, he said, that at the very time everyone in Maryland was being called on by the government to conserve food and increase production, the government itself was undertaking to destroy the greatest food-producing community in the state.

The hearing ended with the statement that a decision would probably be made on Monday.

That was Saturday. On Monday, September 17, at 3:00 p.m., the Senate Committee on Military Affairs did its 10 minutes on Kent Island. Emotions ran high in the room when Tom Keller entered and announced the results of the vote: Senator Kirwan threw his arms around Senator Smith, and the venerable Dr. Benton wept.

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Today, because of the skill, commitment, and persistence of the citizens of Kent Island, the island remains the heartbeat of the land of pleasant living. •

# Kirwan House Update

By Linda Collier

The fiscal year for the Kent Island Heritage Society is July 1 to June 30th. I can honestly say that 2016/17 was a very, very productive year for the Kirwan property. Our new rendition of the old and rotten shed was completed July 2016 by Tom Willey and then he and Yancy Sewell graciously offered to refurbish the old well—at their own expense, which was unveiled it at our annual picnic in September 2016.

As you may recall, in 2012 Hurricane Sandy came through and did a fair amount of damage to the Kirwan House. We discovered leaks where we didn't even know we had cracks. Although all the leaks had been attended to immediately, the damage needing painting, wallpapering and plastering was still pretty evident. It did not go unnoticed by the Queen Anne's County Garden Club who chose us to be the recipient of a very generous gift to help with the repairs—that got us moving. By November we were on a search for the correct contractors to do the repairs to the interior of the house. Kirwan house has plaster crown molding and most present day plasterers have never worked with that.

Finding a company that repaired plaster crown molding was a challenge, but, after calling around to other historic sites we found Ian Berry of Monumental Plaster Molding in Silver Spring, MD, and they knew just what to do. They had just come from working on the apothecary shop in Old Town Alexandria, VA. They repaired the large cracks in the ceilings also. Then it was on to paint and wallpaper. Lundberg Builders got us some estimates with the help of Chris Holmes, their project manager, waving usual fees. Before they could get started there were some chimney issues which had to be resolved. You can't put new wallpaper on a leaky chimney. With that taken care of we were ready to go.

Rodney Calisto was our contractor for that job and what a big job it was. All the walls had to have cracks spackled, peeling wallpaper removed and primed, before 26 double rolls of wallpaper could be installed. The wallpaper goes all the way to the 3rd floor. The end result is very pleasing and we are proud to show folks through these days. What a major improvement! The wallpaper in the hallway was the original, so it could have been there over 100 years. Our new pattern is very reminiscent of the old.

To quote Hillary Clinton, "It takes a village." It surely does take a lot of people to keep a property as large as the Kirwan property going. If it were not for the garden club, Michael and Monique Thomas, Roger and Rena Dye, just the yard would be overwhelming. If not for our contractors and especially Brad Lundberg and Chris



Holmes, it would have been much more difficult to get the right people to do interior and exterior repairs.

On June 26th we held a little wine and cheese party to show off our newly renovated downstairs and to show gratitude to all who participated in making this happen. I think the garden club was pleased with the way we used their gift and I think the Kirwan family will be happy with the choices we made in our ongoing attempt to bring back some of the grandeur the home possessed in the senator's day. Pictures cannot do it justice; hopefully you will all stop by and see for yourselves. We are as proud as can be to give you a tour.





# *Cruising Down the River ...*

By Jack Broderick

On the evening of June 16, the *River Packet* cruised down from her home port of Chestertown to the Queen Anne's County Heritage and Visitor Center at Kent Narrows to meet the Kent Island Heritage Society. Again this year, the Society's June meeting was a celebration of the maritime heritage of Kent Island. About 55 members and guests boarded the *River Packet* and enjoyed a relaxing and informative three-hour dinner cruise on the Chester River.

The cruise began in 2015 as a special celebration of the 40th anniversary of The Kent Island Heritage Society. It was such an enjoyable experience that many members urged us to do it last year and again this year. During the cruise, guests were treated to an outstanding array of hors d'oeuvres and a Chesapeake surf and turf buffet dinner prepared and served by Occasions Catering of Chestertown, with which the *River Packet* is affiliated.

After the Captain welcomed us aboard, we cruised north on the Chester River taking a long circular route toward Love Point and the mouth of the river.

We then sailed back along Eastern Neck Island. Narrations of geographic points of interest, stories of the colorful history and heritage of the area, as well as wildlife habitats were offered by Jack Broderick during the cruise.

Reflections were shared on the 386 years of European history and nearly 12,000 years of Native American history in and around these waters. You get a really different perspective and feel about our history when you're out there on the water where so much of it happened.

A menacing looking storm passed safely to the north, but was a poignant reminder of the realities of travel by water which has been so important during most of Kent Island's history. At the end of the evening a brilliant sunset



capped off a great experience, as the *Packet* eased back in to the Landing at the Narrows.

The famous words of Captain John Smith about the Chesapeake Bay Country seemed appropriate and were shared, "Heaven and earth never agreed better to frame a place for man's habitation."

The *River Packet*, based in Chestertown, is owned by the Chester River Packet Company and is in its fourth year of operation. The boat was built in Albany, NY in 1990 and served as a tour boat on Seneca Lake, NY and in Charleston, SC. She was brought to Maryland in 2014 and beautifully refurbished as a 20's era "packet" style bay area cruise vessel.

Capt. Greg Kimmel reports that business has far exceeded expectations. The *River Packet* offers a variety of scheduled public cruises out of Chestertown, complete with meals and refreshments. It is available for charters and special events such as this Heritage Society dinner cruise.

The *Packet* folks are a pleasure to work with and the food is great. According to many comments, the folks who shared our cruise again this year came away with a deeper appreciation of our rich heritage as well as having had a good time.

Information on the *River Packet* is available at [www.chesterriverpacketco.com](http://www.chesterriverpacketco.com)

# *Kent Island Day 2017*







# *Of Cracked Bats and Crabapples*

*by Alex Johnson*

● His mother baked him a ball bat  
● In the country kitchen oven.  
● She did.  
● Baked it hard, baked it long and hot.  
● Too hot, too long.  
● You could hear the "CRACK" all the way  
● Past the privy beyond the barn.  
● You could.  
● On the summer trip to Grandma's  
● His ball bat got left behind.  
● It did.  
● "Cut yourself a limb from an orchard tree.  
●     Carve the end so you have a knob for holding,"  
● His mother said.  
● "Grandma's stove will harden it up."  
● It will.  
● The boy christened it "Cracker Jack"  
● For the inch-wide crack at the sweet spot.  
●     Fill a bucket with crabapples, the little ones you can gather on the ground.  
● Swing at them from the hill above the spring".  
● She said.  
● A single was past the cold spring,  
● Double over the rose bushes,  
● And a triple beyond the road.  
● The boy whiffed a dozen times  
● Before he had four singles,  
● A double and a triple.  
● He did.  
●  
● "But Mama, what's a home run?"  
● He said.  
●  
● "Here," she said, "Hand me your bat.  
● I will hit one out."  
● She whiffed on some, then swung,  
● And "SPLAT"  
● The crabapple stuck fast in  
● The crack of the bat!  
● "That's a homer!" she said.  
● It was long gone, a dinger, a tater,  
● A blast, see you later.  
● So long, it's been good to know you.  
● It was.

**Join us for an Old-Fashioned Picnic  
at The Kirwan House and Farm on  
Sunday, September 17  
from 1 to 5 p.m.**

**Bring a covered dish to share ... the Society will  
provide fried chicken, hot dogs, iced tea,  
lemonade and coffee**

**Hayrides - corn hole - chickens to feed - good conversa-  
tion - games - displays and a commemoration of not  
becoming the Kent Island Proving Grounds in 1917  
RSVP to frederickcarole521@gmail.com or  
call Carole at 410-643-3776**

# KIHS Board Bios

**John W. Gibson Jr.** or Jay as he is better known, is a docent for the KIHS. He is a native Queen Anne's County resident who has lived all his life (but about ten years) on Kent Island. He is proud to tell people his family goes back to the late 1700's on Kent Island.



The family farm was located where Kent Island Estates is today, and years ago watermen would bring Jay's dad bricks from the foundation of the old farmhouse from the Bay which had claimed the land through erosion. Jay is a retired teacher of high school math. He attended Stevensville High School and graduated from East Carolina U. He also attended graduate classes at Johns Hopkins. He has been married for 41 years to his wife Toni, and they have two children, Kiri and Jason, and four grandchildren to whom he loves to give rides on his tractor. In his younger years, he was an avid duck and goose hunter but now Jay collects old farm toys and automobilia. He enjoys docenting the train station and the caboose and being on the Board of KIHS.

**Toni Gibson** is a retired schoolteacher. She taught seventh and eighth grade reading and English for thirty years which was more like fun than a real job! Toni has taught in Baltimore, Annapolis, Stevensville and Easton. During the time her two children were young, she taught sick children and teens for the county, a humbling experience, and tutored many years during after-school hours. Born in Baltimore, she lived most of her early life in Anne Arundel County. Moving to Kent Island in 1968 was quite a life-changing experience for her: she chose a different life path, having been a nun for ten years, and about a year later, met her husband of 41 years, Jay. She attended the Institute of Notre Dame, Notre Dame College, and received two Masters' from Johns Hopkins. She was on the Board of Directors of the Queen Anne's County library for nine years and is currently on the Board of KIHS. Her hobbies are reading and treasure-hunting (flea markets, antique stores, etc) and being "Gammy" to her four grandchildren. She has a great time docenting wherever she is needed.



## The Cray House

By Sally Lewis, Chairman  
of the Docent Committee

We are saddened to learn of the death of Rawle Mannix, a faithful and enthusiastic docent at the Cray House for the past several years. She is missed.

We are still celebrating the restoration of the Cray House, the process of which was completed this spring with the repair and painting of the fence out front. Looking good.

Kent Island Day was wonderfully busy and many old time Kent Islanders came to visit and reminisce of their coming to the Cray House when it was a private residence.

It was good to see everyone and hear their happy memories. It is a special place for so many of us.

## "A Pictorial History of Queen Anne's County" Compiled by the Bay Times and Record Observer, 2006

Book Review by Alex Johnson

If you think this is just another coffee table book, then Jimmy Foxx was just another ball player, and Butterball never threw an anchor.

This Bay Times publication of photos, donated by many local families, is a classic. Old pictures of the Nash, Ewing, White, and Roe families are included. Another book section includes photos of the building of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge.

One of the best pictures is of the long-gone Hotel Love Point. This pictorial history is available at the Kent Island Library.





Lester S. Jones was Kennard High School's first and only principal. He oversaw the first intake of 131 students and 4 teachers and even helped collect the community funds that financed the school. Mr. Jones attended a number of colleges for his educational training most notably graduating in the first class of Morgan State College in 1909. He served as the leader of Kennard from its opening until 1968 when the school moved into the new building. With the onset of desegregation in the County School System, he was appointed and principal of the Queen Anne's County High School. He is remembered for his leadership, vision and the faith he had in young people.

**Caretakers of the Past, Guardians of the Future**

The Kennard Alumni Association is a nonprofit established to carry forth the proud heritage of Kennard High School. Queen Anne's County's first and only secondary school for African Americans. We strive to be a shining beacon for youth in our community and to inspire them to continue this proud heritage. Through programs in education and cultural arts we will be through scholarship, assistance. With the help of our members and the community at large, we are revitalizing this site to be a teaching resource for all generations to come.





# Bird Watching on Kent Island

... not scientific, just saying  
by Carole Frederick



The idea of bird watching up on the farm came about because my mother is partially home-bound and more entertainment was the objective of the day. It turns out that all of us who stay and/or visit with her have really enjoyed feeding and watching the birds too.

To date over twenty different species have appeared at the feeding ground right outside of the fully glassed storm door where Mom can see everything that goes on. We have referred to several bird books to help with identification.

The first one to appear was the English Sparrow; and shortly after there were Savannah Sparrows; these little fellows (I think) have not missed a day. There must be a hundred different species of sparrows but they all seem to have stripes on their heads. It is very hard to distinguish one from another, however, one day a White Crowned Sparrow arrived.

The Red Winged Black Bird is also very punctual when seeds are scattered. When they want to intimidate another diner, they make their wings look like angel wings and a great big red eye seems to be looking out from there. It is very scary looking – even to me.

As many as eight male cardinals dropped in one morning – what a colorful sight! There are as many female cardinals that dine there too but they are not as bright. The male Blue Jay is a frequent visitor, but the female must be nesting.

Mourning Doves are plentiful and are the only ones who, so far, have tried to run off their own kind. There is one smaller one that none of the others seems to like.

Speaking of smaller ones, the Black Capped Chickadee is a little dive bomber! Almost all of the other birds make a smooth landing like a jet. Not this little fellow; he flies over and drops right down on the food. I hope he doesn't break a little toe!

The chickadee is not alone in exhibiting a different landing: the Red Bellied Woodpecker always comes in sideways like he's skiing and wants to stop. What a beauty! That red head and black and white striped back is magnificent. The female's head is a little different. Her red only goes to the top of the head whereas

his red goes all the way to the beak.

There have been several Cowbirds, both male and female. One of the books calls them vagabonds because they lay their eggs in other smaller birds' nests, and because these babies are bigger, they thrive better than the smaller ones who sometimes don't survive at all. The male cowbird has a black body and a brown head. The female has a much more muted coloration.

Showing off another distinct color is the Brown Thrasher with his rusty hue. He's a funny one because as he pecks for food his whole body goes up and down. He has a very long beak and never stays but a short time.

Starlings are interesting because now, during the mating season, their beaks, legs and feet are a bright orangey-yellow. They, like the cowbird, have displaced many indigenous species. They inhabit nearly all of the U.S.A and Canada. They were brought to New York from England in the 1800s.

The tiny Ruby Throated Humming Bird finally arrived at our feeder. What a sight when he put his beak in the feeder's flower and stopped his wings from moving. He just sat there and rested while drinking the potion.

The Black Bird has only visited briefly and once an old Crow stopped by to check things out. He raised his leg very high and stepped sideways into the seeds, moved his head down across his shoulder (if he has one), took a taste, jumped away, and never returned. Robins are plentiful on the perimeter but they don't eat seeds.

One day before the leaves were on the trees, a huge Turkey Buzzard with his wings outspread was sunning on the branches. He stayed there for the better part of the morning. His wing span must have been about 20-feet wide.

I've saved the most unusual, beautiful one for last. It is a Blue Grosbeak. At first we thought it was an Indigo Bunting but the finer markings didn't bear that out. He is a beautiful indigo blue, however, and adds the icing on the cake to our view of the Kent Island birds.

**SAVE THE DATE:** Sunday, December 10, 2017  
from 12:30 to 3:00 p.m. at Fisherman's Inn

Join us for the election of board members and officers,  
award presentations, great music and a fine buffet!



# Welcome To New Members

Sandra and James Herbert  
Sarah L. Bartlett  
(upgrade to Life membership)  
Janet D. Euler-Knight & Family  
James Parker  
Elizabeth (Betty) Spear  
Susan Walters and Don Crouch  
Robin Ferro and Family  
Betty and Walt Folz  
Dawn Russo  
Anne Tate and Tom Baker  
Priscilla and Ed Ryan



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## Membership Form

I/We wish to be a member of The Kent Island Heritage Society. Enclosed is a check to cover dues of membership for one calendar year:

- ☐ \$15 Single Membership
- ☐ \$25 Family Membership
- ☐ \$25 Organization
- ☐ \$250 Life Membership per person

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Mail to: The Kent Island Heritage Society, Inc.  
PO Box 321, Stevensville, MD 21666

*Dues and contributions are  
deductible on your income tax.  
Membership period is January 1 to December 31.*

## In Memoriam

*When you lose someone you love,  
life will change, you rearrange,  
and everything around you  
seems so strange.*

From: *How Losing Someone  
Changes Your Life*

Rawle B. Mannix  
1944 to May 2017

Nancy Lewis Saddler  
January 1940 to May 2017

Lillian "Sam" C. Walters  
July 1951 to May 2017

Robert (Bobby) Gardner  
September 26, 1963 to August 13, 2017

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## Kent Island Garden Club Hosts District I Flower Show

Every two years, all 11 garden clubs on the Eastern Shore get together to celebrate all things gardening by hosting a District Flower Show. In recent years, shows occurred in Chestertown, Preston, Cambridge and Salisbury. On Thursday, September 21, 2017, "A Blast from the Past" will happen at the Kent Island Volunteer Fire Department, hosted by the Kent Island Garden Club.

As you can tell from the name of this show, it's going to be spectacular. Members of the various clubs will show their best horticulture specimens to vie for a blue ribbon, if not a top award, in the "American Bandstand" Division. Based on the time of year, it is possible that over 500 horticulture specimens will be on display. In the Design Division, "Memory Lane," designers will compete in 12 different classes. The Botanical Arts Division, "Oldies but Goodies," will feature three classes—flip flops, boutonnieres and wrist corsages, and floral interpretations of 1950's record albums. The Photography Section will highlight black and white vintage photos, color wildlife photos and color "poison ivy" or invasive plant photos. Four garden clubs will vie for top honors with a floor design titled, "Whole Lot of Shakin' Goin' On" which will require the use of hula hoops and slinkies.

One segment of the show will be the Education Division, "School Days." Three exhibits will be displayed to honor the value of garden clubs on the Eastern Shore since 1917 (yes, Talbot County Garden Club recently celebrated its 100th anniversary). Another exhibit will feature the history of the zinnia flower (which has actually been around since the 1700's) and you'll be delighted at the results of a Zinnia Growing Challenge among garden club members. Finally, a "Centennial Tribute to Senator James Kirwan" will recognize the efforts of Queen Anne's County citizens to save Kent Island from being sold to the government in 1917. This exhibit will be presented by Linda Collier.

So, on Thursday, September 21 from 1:30 to 5:30 PM, please be sure to come to the Kent Island Volunteer Fire Department, 1610 Main Street, Chester to take a step back in time and to enjoy the way things used to be. We promise you won't be disappointed.

Questions? Call Linda Elias at 410-827-6981, President and KI Garden Club Chair / District I Flower Show 2017