

NEWSLETTER OF THE KENT ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC.

WINTER/SPRING2019

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Gordon Seward	77-79	
Julius Grollman	79-81	
Mary White	81-82	
Walter T. Denny	83-84	
Eva C. White	85-86	
C. Gilbert Dunn	87-89	
Audrey Hawkins	90-92	
Charles Koegel	93-94	
Hugo Gemignani	95-98	
Nancy M. Cook	99-08	



President's Message

Winter on Kent Island has been a mixed bag, with no let up of the super-wet patterns we saw throughout 2018 interspersed with cold Arctic blasts, snow, and ice. However Mother Nature tries to balance her tricks with treats, as one of our neighbors on Cox's Creek witnessed seven bald eagles vying for a fish in front of his house one morning.

The Bay Times published a lengthy article in December about our annual holiday brunch and installation of officers and board members at Fisherman's Inn. The mood was festive and

celebratory as we welcomed new board member, Annie May Price, who has deep family roots on her beloved Kent Island and is considered to be a valuable source of information on the island's heritage. We look forward to the passion and knowledge she brings to our leadership team. We also recognized departing board member, Hal Wilson who served on the board for the last 12 years, as a board member and as our vice president. We thank Hal for his rare insight and his uncanny ability to offer thoughtful solution to resolve many of our challenges.

In September, we began our exciting new project to bring Kent Island history into Kent Island High School, the creative brainchild of our board member and local author, Mark Lidinsky. The program has been a real success - well received by students and teachers alike. (See Bay Times article by Doug Bishop in newsletter.) We eagerly look forward to continuing with a new group of students in the spring and into next year. We commend Principal John Schrecongost for his enthusiastic support of this effort and look forward to our continuing partnership.

In keeping with our effort to reach out to our community to share the heritage of our historic island, John Conley, membership chair, has developed a mobile presentation about the heritage society. It has been well received in many communities, and we hope to expand our offerings to more communities, organizations, and businesses, to include specific periods, persons, or topics - using the high school presentations as a guide. There will be more on this on our website. Contact us if you'd like to host one of our presentations this year.

2019 promises to be an active year for the heritage society. In addition to the community and school educational outreach efforts, we'll host some exciting and informative special events. In May and in September we shall hold our two big outdoor events. Details will be shared in our local paper and on our website. Throughout the summer and early fall we will continue to host First Saturday Open Sites. As a new summer event, we plan to host a concert in Stevensville on the Cray House Green as part of the County's "Thursdays in the Park" Concert Series. Also in the summer we will host our June Sunset Dinner Cruise aboard the Chester River Packet. Look for details on our summer events in the next newsletter.

KIHS Committees

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John Conley,Chair

Budget

Bob Lowe,Chair

Jay Gibson

Linda Collier Lynne Riley-Coleman

lamie Sasse

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Cameron Sewell Taylor Harmon

Cray House

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Bank

Marilyn Wilson Docent Lynnda Kratovil, Docent

Docents

Sally Lewis, Coordinator

Butch Collier

Linda Collier

Betty Folz

Carole Frederick

lay Gibson

Toni Gibson

Taylor Harmon

Chris Kilian

Lynnda Kratovil

Sally Lewis Barbara Marmion

Carmen Mendez

Fran Peters

Hanna Wall

Marilyn Wilson

PROGRAMS

Kent Island Day

Jack Broderick, Chair

John Conley

Carole Frederick

Toni Gibson

Bob Lowe lamie Sasse

Carole Frederick, Chair Toni and Jay Gibson Linda and Butch Collier

June General Meeting lack Broderick, Chair Annual Election Brunch Toni Gibson, Chair

Continued from page 1

At our March general meeting we will host a special presentation on local archaeology. Dr. Darrin Lowery will discuss Kent Island's Archaeological Treasures and What They Tell Us. Dr. Lowery is considered the most knowledgeable living expert on the archaeology of the Eastern Shore. In the early 90s he conducted an extensive survey and study at multiple locations around Kent Island, in cooperation with the Kent Island Heritage Society. He will share his experience, insight, and some of his artifacts at our general meeting on Wednesday, March 20, at 7:00 p.m. at Historic Christ Church in Stevensville.

We are honored to have the Kirwan House included in the Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage on Saturday, May 4th. Details are available in this newsletter.

I'm sorry to close on a sad note but want to acknowledge the recent passing of two friends and supporters of the Kent Island Heritage Society. In November, Oscar "Sonny" Schulz, patriarch of the Fisherman's Inn business complex and iconic community and political leader in many respects, died surrounded by his family. Sonny, a long-time member and supporter of the Kent Island Heritage Society, hosted our annual holiday brunch and election meeting at Fisherman's Inn. Thank you, Sonny, for your friendship and for your support. In December, our KIHS board member and friend. Carl Gerg. died suddenly. Carl, a docent at our Stevensville train station enjoyed sharing stories of the rails with visitors. Carl and his wife Joanne, travelled extensively and lived in many places, but Carl said Kent Island was the best place he ever lived. After his wife died last fall, Carl said he wanted to spend the rest of his life here on his beloved Kent Island. He did. Godspeed, Carl. Thank you for your friendship.

Please be sure to check regularly on our website, www.kentislandheritagesociety.org, for timely information about the heritage society, our sites, activities, and special events. For those who are active in social media you can also link to our Facebook and Twitter through our website.

We extend a warm thank you to each of our members for your continued generosity and support. We look forward to seeing you during the year, especially at our upcoming new events: the archaeology presentation in March and the Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage in May that will include two Kent Island Properties - the Kirwan House and White's Heritage.

Jack Broderick

Calendar 2019

JANUARY 16 BOARD MEETING

FEBRUARY 20 BOARD MEETING

MARCH 20

GENERAL MEETING Darrin Lowery, Archaeologist Historic Christ Church - 7:00 p.m.

> **APRIL 17 BOARD MEETING**

> > **MAY 15**

BOARD MEETING

MAY 18

KENT ISLAND DAY

JUNE 19

General Meeting **Annual Cruise**

JULY 17

BOARD MEETING

AUGUST 21 BOARD MEETING

September 18 BOARD MEETING

SEPTEMBER 22

ANNUAL PICNIC @ KIRWAN HOUSE 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

OCTOBER 16

BOARD MEETING

NOVEMBER 20 BOARD MEETING

DECEMBER 8

ANNUAL MEETING/Brunch **ELECTION OF OFFICERS** FISHERMAN'S INN 12:30 - 4:00 PM

Dr. Lowery to Speak

Kent Island Heritage Society General Meeting Wednesday, March 20, 2019 7:00 p.m. Historic Christ Church, Stevensville



Darrin Lowery University of Delaware Alumnus

Darrin Lowery was raised on Tilghman Island in Talbot County, Maryland and comes from a long-line of boat builders, waterman, and farmers. His family has lived on the Delmarva Peninsula since the mid-17th century. His interest in coastal geology and archaeology began at the age of seven while combing the eroding shorelines of the Chesapeake Bay near Tilghman with his father.

Dr. Lowery has both undergraduate and graduate degrees in anthropology/archaeology and a doctorate in geology - specializing in coastal geology/geo-archaeology.

The Smithsonian Institute awarded him a research fellowship in 2009, appointed him to a research associate position within the Department of Anthropology in 2010 and awarded him a post-doctoral fellowship in 2013. He maintains research and adjunct faculty positions in the Department of

Geology at the University of Delaware.

Dr. Lowery has systematically surveyed 91,241 acres of agriculturally-tilled fields and examined 2,973 linear miles of coastline for archaeological sites. As a result, he has recorded 1,920 archaeological sites in the Delmarva tri-state area. He has published 52 peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters. He has also prepared 56 research monographs.

Dr. Lowery is acutely interested in landscape formation processes and under-standing how climate change and sea level rise have impacted ancient human societies within the mid- Atlantic region.

Dr. Lowery's presentation will focus on his search of Kent Island and the artifacts that he found.

Welcome New Members

Susan and Mike Bright
Amy Dorn & Family
Janet Downey
Robin Eckstorm Brechtel & Family
Valerie and Thom Hirsch
Tracy and Jamie Kinsel
Ellen and Ernie Smith
Deborah Valainis and family
Mindy and Jamie Sewell
Nancy Boone Thompson

In Memoriam

Carl Gerg (board member) (1947 – 2019)

Oscar "Sonny" Schulz (1933 – 2018)

When I am gone, just release me, let me go - so I can move into my afterglow. - Author Unknown

Reprinted from the Bay Times, January 29, 2019, by Doug Bishop KIHS at KIHS

STEVENSVILLE — Friday, Jan. 25, marked a new date in Kent Island history — the completion of the first Kent Island/Chesapeake Bay history course taught to Kent Island High School students by members of the Kent Island Heritage Society. The effort started with the visit to historic James E. Kirwan House and Store Museum by KI High Principal John Schrecongost and Vice Principal Dan Harding in late August 2018. They were both so thoroughly impressed by the visit with Kirwan Museum creator, Linda Collier, they wanted everyone at the high school to visit.

Heritage Society member Mark Lidinsky came up with the idea to have five 90-minute history sessions for students during the first semester of the 2018-2019 school year. Schrecongost approved the written plan to proceed with the elective course, and on Sept. 28, the first session was held in the high school media center. Fifty-four 11th-graders from Meaghan Kline's and Lacey Phelps' world history classes piloted the course. Lidinsky served as coordinator for the five sessions.

Each month, September through January, the students were presented information about various topics related to Kent Island and Chesapeake Bay history, including such topics as the War of 1812, steamships, the Civil War, farming, railroads, "Oyster Wars," the close call of Kent Island becoming a munitions proving grounds during World War I (which eventually was located in Aberdeen, where it still exists today), life today around Kent Island, and challenges that still exist with pollution, the Bay Bridge and continuing transportation issues. In early November, during one of the teacher in-service days, the entire 80-member teaching staff of Kent Island High School toured the Kirwan House and Store Museum, along with all the historic places in downtown Stevensville. The 54 students taking the course did also. Heritage Society President Jack Broderick said many remarked that they had lived here for many years and driven by these places everyday but had no idea what they were.

In the final session, attempting to make local history come alive, Broderick as the late Hunter Davidson, the first appointed commander of the Maryland Oyster Navy Police in 1868, and KI Heritage Society member John Conley as the late Maryland State Senator James E. Kirwan, spoke to the students, in character, about issues of their day.

Davidson (Broderick) told students about "the gold" (reefs of plentiful oysters) that once covered the floor of the Chesapeake Bay, the "Oyster War" that followed, and how that great natural resource was ravaged especially during the later 1800s. Davidson even recommended to the state legislature a three-year moratorium from harvesting oysters in 1870, as he feared oyster extinction. His recommendation was ignored, and Davidson resigned in 1872. The height of the oyster harvesting in the Bay took place from 1884-1885. During that time 15 million bushels were taken from the Chesapeake. The Maryland DNR futilely attempted to regulate harvesting, even mounting small cannons on the front of DNR boats, as oyster harvesters would often shoot rifles at boats suspected of being oyster police, Davidson said.

Conley, as Kirwan, presented information about Kent Island being considered as a site for a federal munitions testing area in 1917. The people of Kent Island were painted in the national press as being unpatriotic for wanting to preserve the island. Hundreds of Kent Islanders, led by Kirwan, made a laborious trek to Washington, D.C., to protest turning the island into a munitions site. The people of KI won, and the proving ground went to Aberdeen instead.

At the completion of the class, Vice Principal Harding and Jack Broderick presented each student individually with a Certificate of Completion, a student membership card to the KI Heritage Society, and their congratulations. Broderick and Lidinsky both strongly credited Principal Schrecongost with allowing the course to be offered to the students. The course will be repeated for new students this semester, and plans have been made to offer the course to freshman students at KIHS next year.

Principal Schrecongost said, "This has been a great partnership between our high school and the Heritage Society."

Did You Know?

Did you know that The Kent Island Heritage Society partners with the following groups and/or organizations?

Centreville Masons Friends of Historic Christ Church Kennard African American Heritage Center Kent Island Schools

Kent Narrows Development Foundation

KI Garden Club KI Kids' Connection

QAC Chamber of Commerce QAC Comprehensive Plan Update QAC Concerts in the Park
QAC Historic Sites Consortium

QAC Historic Sites' Preservation Policy and

Archaeological Protection Proposals;

QAC History Summit

QAC Library

QAC Office of Tourism QAC Schools' History Day Stevensville A&E District

\$1000 SCHOLARSHIP AVAILABLE 2019

The Kent Island Heritage Society, Inc. is pleased to award a \$1000 scholarship to a Kent Island High School graduating senior who is able to meet the required criteria. A form is enclosed in this newsletter and should be completed and mailed by April 30. A committee will meet and select the recipient. The scholarship will be awarded during the senior assembly in May.

The Society has awarded over \$10,000 since 2001 and we feel privileged to be able to be a part (even though small) of the financial aid that a college student might need.

Below is a list of past recipients:

2001 – Jennifer Michelle Reamy

2003 - Carla Chance

2005 - John W. Hamilton

2006 - Jackie Lynn Stowe

2007 - Sarah Scharnus

2008 - Erin Lynne Kelley

2009 – Danae Latrese Brown

2010 – Peter J. Molnar, III

2011 - Iris Spik

2013 - Kendal Nicole Ruth

2014 - Rebecca Lee Molnar

2015 - Kelasia Coates

2016 – Lily Spik

2018 - Kylie DeVincentz



KENT ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY SCHOLARSHIP

The Kent Island Heritage Society is offering a \$1000 one-year scholarship to a graduating senior from Kent Island High School who plans to attend college.

To be eligible the applicant must:

- be at least a second-generation Kent Island native, at least one parent born on Kent Island;
- have a 3.0 GPA or higher; and
- have performed community service.

Please submit for review:

the application form, a letter of recommendation from a guidance counselor accompanied by your high school transcript, and a one page essay on the importance of preserving the heritage of Kent Island (the first paragraph of which should contain a brief biographical sketch).

Application Form

Complete the following and return with the recommendation and essay.		
Name		
Address	_	
Kent Island born parent	_	
Other native grandparents	_	
Brief explanation of Community Service	_	
	_	

All applications must be submitted by April 30.

Send to:

The Kent Island Heritage Society Scholarship Committee % Mrs. Nancy Cook 124 Bryce Road Queenstown, MD 21658



Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage **Queen Anne's County** Saturday, May 4, 2019

Tickets for the entire tour = \$40.00Tickets for individual sites = \$15.00 Tickets may be purchased at any site



The Kent Island Heritage Society is honored to have had the Kirwan house and gardens included on this tour. Another Kent Island home included is White's Heritage located at Gibson's Grant. Other properties on the tour in Queen Anne's county are The Hermitage (in the same family since the original settler in the 1600s), Silk Farm (from the 1700s), a 1923 Sears Roebuck kit house, St. Peter's Church, and two schools begun to ensure equal access to education - The Gunston School and Kennard High School. This may be our last opportunity to see the interior of these glorious old properties.

Queen Anne's County featured in the Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage

Saturday, May 4, 2019

Enjoy a Spring Saturday on May 4 with friends or family in beautiful Queen Anne's County touring eight significant historic homes and properties, each offering a unique perspective on the county's rich and diverse history and each enhanced with beautiful floral arrangements courtesy of the Queen Anne's County Garden Club. Take advantage of this rare opportunity to step back in time and get a sampling of the many facets of Queen Anne's County life in a bygone era in what is one of the oldest and what was one of the most prosperous communities in North America.

Be a guest in a number of privately-owned homes in the area—some dating back to the 1700's including a working farm still held by the direct descendants of its first English settler. See preserved ice and meat houses, slave quarters, and other structures typical to the times. Witness for yourself the way families kept their deceased loved ones close to their hearts by creating adjacent burial grounds. Get a real glimpse into the lives of prominent families on the rural Eastern Shore of Maryland at the turn of the 20th century, including where they shopped!

Get a first-hand look at what school was like for segregated African Americans at the only comprehensive high school for them in the county, dating back to the 1930's and open to you following years of attentive renovations. Visit one of the first churches in the Maryland colony, that partially raised funds for its expansion by holding jousting tournaments within the community, and view relics

and mementos rarely seen by the public. Tour the once private home in which a school was

founded by parents of a child with polio so that she might have as good an education as her peers, today fully restored and part of the school's 35-acre waterfront campus.

The properties featured in this one-day-only event are conveniently clustered in the Kent Island, Queenstown, and Centreville areas. Together they reflect the colorful and varied history of Queen Anne's County from its earliest settlers to its more modern residents.

This tour is part of the 2019 Maryland House & Garden Pilgrimage (MHGP), held across Maryland since 1937. MHGP, a non-profit organization, is dedicated to the preservation and restoration of architecturally and historically significant properties in the State of Maryland. It is the only statewide house and garden tour organization and the oldest tour in Maryland.

The tour is from 10 am to 5 pm. For advance ticket sales and information, contact Diana Pietrowiak, 443-223-1699 or Dot Abbott, 410-758-2071; or email 2019qachousetour@gmail. com. Ticket prices range from \$30 to \$40 depending on date purchased. Tickets are also available online at www.mhgp.org. Tickets will also be available at any of the eight sites on the day of the tour (cash or check only). A delicious box lunch is available at the third site on tour until sold out, with advanced reservations encouraged by April 26, 2019; contact Michele Shultz, 410-979-2673. Tour proceeds benefit historic preservation projects in Queen Anne's County. No strollers or high heels, please. Properties are generally not wheelchair accessible.

Kent Island Heritage: Highlights from the KIHS Newsletter

Compiled by James Parker

In December I dropped by the Kent Island Library to visit our KIHS Resource collection. I was in search of topics for future newsletters. I got lucky: Lynne Riley-Coleman and Bob Lowe were there working on the ever-growing collection. I asked them "what topics would you like to see covered in 2019 Newsletter editions?" They responded "How about going through previous Newsletters and identifying highlights of KIHS activities and projects over the years."

So, after perusing the 120+ Newsletter editions published since 1981 (!), here are some highlights of the tremendous work of KIHS over the years. My guide to this effort was Jack Broderick's excellent article celebrating our 40th anniversary: Reflecting on Our Major Milestones and Accomplishments, in the Fall 2015 edition. It is our hope that this compilation will bring back some great memories for our veteran members and inform new members (like me) about the extraordinary work accomplished by KIHS in the past 44 years. Note: This article covers nowhere near all of the significant efforts by KIHS members, so if you would like to add a personal favorite event/project, please write a paragraph and email it to Jim Parker at jtparker@atlanticbb.net for inclusion in a future edition.

Remembering KIHS Events and Projects:

- On May 9, 1975, the Kent Island Heritage Society was formed to discover, identify, restore, and preserve the heritage of Kent Island. KIHS was founded and incorporated by five insightful Kent Island women: Marion Stewart, Mary White, Mildred Schoch, Emily Denny, and Annie May Price.
- In May 1977, the first Kent Island Days' celebration was held with a proclamation by Acting Governor Blair Lee, proclaiming the third weekend in May as Kent Island Days.
- KIHS efforts often focused on celebrating the founding of the Island in 1631. A Joint House Resolution was signed in February 1981 proclaiming Kent Island as the first English settlement within Maryland August 1631. KIHS organized the public celebration of the 350th Anniversary of the Founding of Kent Island. In August 1981 the 350th celebration peaked with the presentation of an original play, "A Patent for Conflict: Founding of Kent Island," by Paul Sherr.
- In the fall of 1981, publication began of the KIHS Newsletter The Isle of Kent, the quarterly publication which continues to the present. Early Newsletters featured a Demographer's Corner, including some stats from the U.S. Bureau of the Census: Population of Kent Island 1930 2,196, 1940 2,094, 1950 2,205, 1960 3,114, 1970 3,932, 1980 8,177. The big jumps came, not surprisingly, after the Bay Bridges were completed.
- Key historic documents have been published over the years, including: "The Isle of Kent" commemorative history pamphlet (1981) and the book, Of Houses and History by Mildred Schoch (1982).
- KIHS succeeded in supporting Historic Stevensville to be designated on the National Historic Register (1986). At that time, Stevensville was the only town in Queen Anne's County listed on the National Registry.

- The task of coordinating 15 years of collecting data pertaining to Kent Island history was completed by Mary White and her committee in Fall 1990. The Society realized the dream of permanently housing the collection at the Kent Island Library, under proper conditions and for easy access for researchers. The Heritage Society held a reception on Sept. 20 at the library to celebrate the opening of the KIHS Genealogy and History files to the general public.
- An extensive effort was undertaken, and continues, to collect oral histories from prominent Kent Island "characters." Over the years scores of oral histories have been collected and preserved as tapes and DVDs.
- KIHS identified and cataloged Kent Island cemeteries and burial sites, establishing a database for historical and preservation purposes. We also played an active role in the relocation and dedication of historic tombstones from around the island to the Stevensville Cemetery.

Recognizing Historic properties acquired:

- The first historic property was acquired in September 1976 when the Cray House in Stevensville was donated by heirs of the Cray family. Work was begun to restore the house with grants from the Maryland Historic Trust. It was ultimately designated on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Momentum continued through the eighties with acquisition of additional properties. The original Stevensville Train Station was located in 1987, and was donated to KIHS. We moved it into Stevensville at the Cray House property. Twenty years later a 1924-29 vintage caboose was acquired to complement the train station. It was hauled across the Bay Bridge from Millersville, where it was being used as an office.
- The 90's saw major additional property acquisitions including adjoining property at the Cray House.
- The Historic Stevensville Post Office in Historic Downtown Stevensville was acquired for \$47,000. It was built in 1860, and renovated to house the KIHS headquarters, including office and a meeting room.
- The Kirwan Farm and Farm House in Chester were bequeathed to the Society by Katherine Kirwan under the condition that the house be restored as a museum including the original general store located in a portion of the house. This request was to be supported by income from agricultural uses of the farm. Current Kirwan projects include development of a working blacksmith shop.
- In the current century KIHS has acquired the Historic Stevensville Bank by special lease and played a leading role in Queen Anne's County's acquisition and restoration of Historic Christ Church in Stevensville. Built circa 1880, this is the oldest church on Kent Island. We regularly open the church with docent support when other KIHS historic sites are open for tours.

The three volumes of Isle of Kent newsletters are a major resource for Kent Island history, people, and culture. I encourage you to stop by the Resource/Research Room at Kent Island Library and learn more about the heritage of this wonderful island. Stay tuned for news of the development of an online site where you can review these documents from home (a work in progress).

Opening Ceremonies and Parade at 10:00 a.m.



CELEBRATING THE FOUNDING
OF
KENT ISLAND





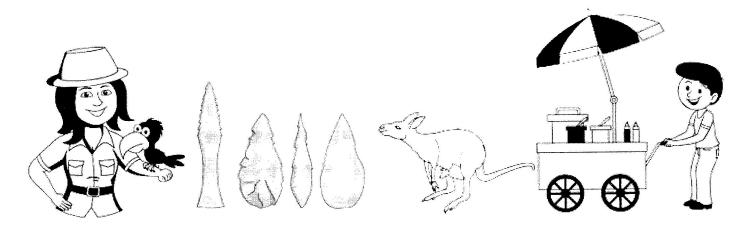


Kent Island Day 18 May 2019

Come Join the Fun

Attention

Commercial Groups, Artisans, and Non-Profits For exhibitor forms to participate go to our website: www.kentislandheritagesociety.org



The Board Adds New Membership Category

The KIHS now has a Business/Organization Membership category and encourages local commercial interests to join. In addition to helping to preserve and promote KIHS activities, these members will receive a membership sign to display, recognition in each KIHS newsletter, and information materials to share with customers. Please encourage businesses and organizations with which you deal to become a member. The annual dues are just \$50. KIHS recently joined the Queen Anne's County of Chamber of Commerce to increase awareness of our activities within the business community.

Membership Form		
 \$15 Single Membership \$50 Business/Organization Membership \$25 Family Membership \$40 Non-Profit Membership \$250 Individual Life Membership 	Interests History Genealogy Photography Docent Program Property Maintenance Special Interest	
Name	Email	
Address		
Dues and contributions are to	ax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. riod: January 1 to December 31	

Model Presentation



Alex Johnson presented this model of White's Heritage, a Colonial era home, to Andrew and Mackenzie Costello, the current owners and members of the society.

The house is located at Gibson's Grant on Kent Island, and is described in Mildred Schoch's book, **OF HISTORY AND HOUSES**, available from the Kent Island Heritage Society.

KENT ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC.

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Postcard: Old Stevensville Elementary and High School

Submitted by John Conley





This building was the first Stevensville High School which graduated its first class of four students in 1912. It also was home to the elementary school. The postcard on the left shows the building before a second story was added around 1913 to accommodate the growing student population. The card on the right was mailed in 1922. A new high school was built in Stevensville in 1930 and closed in 1965. The building pictured has housed several businesses, including the School House Antique Store. Today it is home to the Sweet Bay Magnolia Academy at The McArdle Center at 201 Love Point Rd.

The Kent Island Heritage Society recently reprinted a book, History of The Schools of Kent Island, written in 1976.