



Islc of Kent - 1631

NEWSLETTER OF THE KENT ISLAND
HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC.

FALL, 1993

TO DISCOVER, IDENTIFY, RESTORE AND PRESERVE THE HERITAGE OF KENT ISLAND



250 YEAR OLD WHITE OAK ENDANGERED by widening of Rt. 8

The Bay Times reported September 8 that the old oak trees bordering Rt. 8 could be damaged by the State Highway Administration's plans to widen the road, adding shoulders on either side and burying high tension lines, although sparing the magnificent trees.

Quoting tree expert John Smithmyer, the paper said construction could cause damage to the old white oak's root system, unless extra precautions are taken. Such damage may not show up

for as long as 10 years or more, Smithmyer warned.

As a matter of my own personal interest in anything of great age on Kent Island, I had recognized that the Rt. 8 oak trees were very old and therefore took a picture of them back in 1986. Due to the limitations of my camera at the time, I could not include all of the now destroyed third tree which went down in a storm around 1989 or 1990. But in such a short period of time, it is

interesting to see the plowed field where a parking lot now exists. And more to the point, the lack of traffic during a routine day on Rt. 8. I could not take a recent picture due to the heavy traffic at all times of day.

I have long wondered if these trees were on either side of the old path from the Glebe Farm on Thompson Creek (now Mr. Tom Oyster's) to the old Christ Church at the head of Broad Creek. Since there are almost no other ancient trees, I guessed the oaks may have been protected because of the location of the earlier church buildings. Can anyone add any information about the ancient oak trees? - (My grandchildren call it the "PacMan Tree! - *Bettye Speed*)

President's Message

Charlie Koegel

Great news! The Kent Island Heritage Society has been notified that it is a beneficiary in the will of Mrs. John Campbell White of Barnstable Hill Farm in Chester, who recently passed away at the age of 94.

Mrs. White has bequeathed the Society \$10,000 to carry on its work.

Mrs. White, a native New Yorker who resided part time on Kent Island for over 40 years, had been very active in Christ Church and contributed generously to many local charities and foundations.

We have completed the purchase of the adjoining property to the Cray House. There was a house on the property complete with well and sewer hook up. The house was moved down the street leaving the property vacant. Somewhere along the line it was zoned commercial which suits our purposes nicely.

The board has mentioned several times over the past few years that one of our long term goals should be our own museum. Acquisition of this property will make that possible while protecting the Cray House and Train Station museums. We envision a climate controlled building offering a secure place to store and exhibit such things as our family genealogy files, artifacts, and exhibits of any kind we choose.

We do not plan to constrain ourselves to



ANOTHER MEMORABLE TREE- *The famous "Lonesome Pine" tree on Bodkin Island was burned when fire destroyed the old hunting lodge a few years ago. Again, your Editor, intrigued by the stark and spindly pine, captured it in preparation for a story on the offshore islands of Kent Island and the erosion of Bodkin Island from 40 acres in the 1940's to 1.5 or 2 acres in 1987. (All pictures are in the Heritage Society's Historical file at the Kent Island Library.)*

any particular window of time. Any history of Kent Island will be acceptable. The Board will start some planning for the building in the near future.

The Cray House is in need of new exterior paint. The peeling paint looks bad and detracts greatly from the appearance of the house. Estimates are in the works.

It is not too soon to remind you of the annual dinner at the Kent Island Yacht Club at 6:00 p.m. on December 9, 1993. We hope to see many of you there. More news of the affair will be in the mail soon.

Thursday, September 16th. General meeting with Darrin Lowery as speaker. Darrin is practically our resident archaeologist. He has been busy on further explorations of Kent Island and vicinity. Darrin's work in the past has been of such high quality that the state has funded his additional work. Darrin will report on the results of this additional research.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Audrey Hawkins, Lois Cockey, and Bill Denny have proposed the following slate of officers and directors for the coming year:

Charlie Koegel	President
Hugo Gemignani	Vice President
Lois Cockey	Treasurer
Charlene Thomas	Recording Secretary
Eileen Dadds	Corresponding Secretary

Directors

1992-94 Emma Thomas
 1993-1995 Audrey Hawkins
 1994-1996 Richard Dadds, Robert Jones, Gil Dunn

CRAY HOUSE

Myrtle Bruscup called to say that the 1909 map of the shellfish bars around Crab Alley Bay and the Narrows has been laminated. The map was donated by Earl Seward (deceased) in memory of his grandfather Sam Seward a number of years ago and has been hanging in the Cray House, unframed, ever since. The lamination process will protect it.

Marian Price Steuart's parents' marriage certificate, also in the Cray House, has been

framed by Robert Walters Art Gallery. Mr. Walters generously donated his services.

Lois Cockey has kindly given an antique shaving stand and four enameled white plates to the Cray House museum collection. Myrtle advised that the Cray House committee is always looking for donated antique items.

TRAIN STATION

Gil Dunn reported at the June meeting that the train station has received new artifacts. One is a map of the old railroad system that ran from Kent Island to Lewes, Delaware.

The second is a special type of broom called a "switch broom". *(Editor's note: I always thought that was what you got when you were naughty and disobeyed! Perhaps the mere warning kept me from ever suffering from a "switch broom" so I really DIDN'T know what it was!)*

Gil said his next project will be to get poles up to simulate the old telegraph lines that used to run along the railroad track.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Lois Cockey

Checking Account Balance 6/9/93	\$8,655.61
Receipts to Aug. 29, 1993	\$5,580.01
Total Balance	\$14,235.62

Disbursements 6/10-8/29/93	\$9,950.28
Balance August 29, 1993	\$4,285.34

CD Accounts	\$3,507.13
	\$8,523.20
M/M Account	\$4,742.21

Total Assets	\$21,057.88
Including State Grant for D. Lowery	

NEW MEMBERS 1992-1993

KIHS welcomes the following folks who have joined us in the past year:

Queenstown: Michael and Joann Anderson, Beverly A. Coursey, Mrs. Patricia Reynolds

Stevensville: William Abell; Jack and Jean Bateman; Mrs. John P. Cissel; Franklin and Sharon Clark; George and Nancy Cook; Anthoney and Lorraine Fann; Carole Frederick; Dick and Sharon Jarenski; Keith Kitts and Brenda Lowery; Mary Anne, Toni, and Louise Lowery; Donna McKenzie and David Crouch; Stanley and Elizabeth Ruddie, Mrs. R. Dorothy Swearingen, Lauren and David Thompson, and Cindy and Glenn White.

Additionally, Mrs. Dolores Ewing of Chester;

Charles H. Carter Jr. of Florida; Charles H. Carter Sr. of Arkansas; Cindy and Kent Goble; Johnny Herndon of Grasonville; James and Judith Ireland of Bowie, Sandy and Betty MacGlashan of Church Hill, Mrs. Augusta Norris of Easton, Mrs. Minnie Redd of Virginia, Carroll and Diane White of Ellicott City and Richard Winchester of California.

Mrs Coleman (Trudy) Guthrie of Great Neck became a life member.

"RECEIPTS", ANYONE??

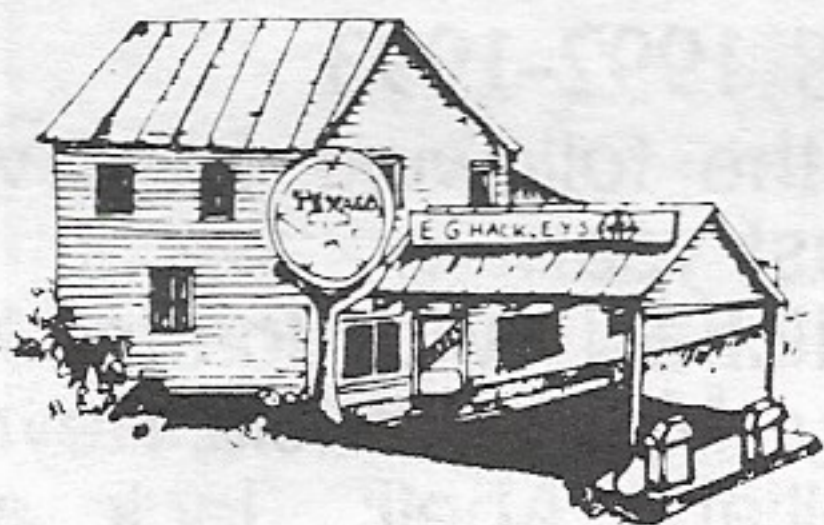
Bettye Speed

Without commenting on the marketing wisdom of opening yet a third supermarket on Kent Island, The Isle of Kent's "history-in-the-making" must note that the Food Lion chain is willing to risk the competition in attracting the grocery shoppers of Kent Island's approximately 4,850 households and Grasonville-Queenstown's 3800 or so homes.

This idea should prove interesting, but one always fears another "For Lease" building along the Rt. 50/301 corridor, complete with an acre of asphalt.

Nonetheless, I thought of the long ago Grollman and later Frampton stores in Stevensville, Gardner's and Price's in Chester, Mrs. Jones' store below Mattapex, and others. I remembered a friend telling me that when she moved here 18 years ago, the only frozen veggies she could find were green beans! An exaggeration, but Kent Island's household choices have certainly grown enormously in the past 20 years.

GENERAL STORE



Pre- supermarkets, general stores, and local grocers, even before the ubiquitous "ice-box" relying on block ice for preserving food, Kent Island grandmothers saved their "receipts" for smoking meats, poultry, and fish, drying fish and fruits, and pickling, jellifying, and canning meats, vegetables, and fruits in order to feed their families through the long winters.

And we can't overlook the farmland's

"Sippin' Recipes" for special occasions: dandelion wine, blackberry cordial, cherry bounce, and other potables.

"Maryland's Way", the famous cookbook which benefits the Hammond Harwood House in Annapolis, is the consummate collection of Maryland's great grandmothers' cherished "receipts", dating as far back as 1811. Having tried a "spiced oyster" recipe on guests, I can vouch for the delicious recipes "Maryland's Way" contains. The oysters were gobbled up in no time.

Which brings me to the KIHS membership. Surely many of you have your mother's and grandmother's favorite recipes or "receipt books" lovingly put away.

It would be fun to publish Kent Island's culinary heritage to benefit the Heritage Society. No recipe should be dated any later than perhaps 1930 or 1940.

Mary White says she has her mother-in-law's recipe book. Sis Harris, are your mother's favorites available to us? Lois Cockey, Mae and Alva Hutchison- what Kent Island goodies have you from your mother's or grandmother's recipe files?

Surely restaurateur Betty Thomas Schulz has some early receipts. Eva Thompson, have you something special? How about you, Isabel Porter, Isabel Ewing, Mary Legg, Jane Sparks, Ann Tolson, Katherine Carter, Julia Eaton, Lois Horney, Anna Mae Price, Linda Collier, Jeanette Clevenger, June Palmer and everyone? What delicious items are tucked away, perhaps forgotten, in the back of your kitchen cupboards?

Could we make a "Kent Island's Way" cookbook of early recipes a success story? Let's consider putting something together for next year.



GENEALOGY

Mary White

In spite of the warm weather, your genealogy committee has been busy this summer. Bill Goodhand and I met with Russ and Mary Beth Abel and Jean Kelly of the Upper Shore Genealogical Society at the library in August to coordinate efforts to record all cemetery

records on Kent Island.

The Society has published the cemetery records from Caroline and Talbot and is now concentrating on Queen Anne's County. There were three volumes for Caroline and four for Talbot. They anticipate at least three for Queen Anne's County beginning with the 4th and 5th districts.

We already have records from as many family cemeteries as we could find. Most of these were recorded by Mildred Schoch and Marian Steuart. Others contributing to the effort were Elsie Price, Paul Tolson, Margaret Knox, Marion Leaverton, Bill Goodhand, Sam Goodhand, Catherine Kirwan, Walter Coppage, and Alfred White. Catherine Kirwan and Walter Coppage also copied the records from Chester's Kingsley Chapel site.

In 1984 Paul Tolson copied the records at the Stevensville Cemetery and presented them to the Upper Shore Genealogical Society. In 1991 Myrtle Bruscup, Catherine Senseney, Bill Goodhand, and Mary White also copied the Stevensville Cemetery records. Jean Kelly has also copied part of these records and we are now trying to coordinate all of our findings.

This is a monumental undertaking and we are pleased to have our efforts in this regard included in the publication which will include the Heritage Society as a contributor as well as participant's names.

We were asked for information on the creator of the two quilts given us by Mary Esther Hall Dyes and her sister Frances Barton Hall. Mrs. Dyes was kind enough to allow us to copy the pertinent pages from THE HALL FAMILY OF WEST RIVER AND KINDRED FAMILIES by her father Thomas John Hall, III in 1941.

An interesting sidelight to this story is that the hardcover 325 page book was published by RUE PUBLISHING CO., of Denton. Does anyone remember that company? We are fortunate to have this information in our files and available to the Maryland State Quilt Project for inclusion in the book to be published: MARYLAND QUILTS 1634-1934.

These quilts made ca. 1826 are very appropriate accessories to the second floor bedrooms of the Cray House and we are honored to have them included in the book which will soon be published.

I was pleased to hear from Mr. Kenneth Kirwan who lives at Heron Point, Chestertown. He is interested in researching the Kirwan family and sent us some very detailed information for our

files. These facts are a valuable addition to what we were able to find in the "Portrait and Biographical Record of the Eastern Shore". This book, you may recall, was given us by Charles and Frances Ford, being the original property of Mr. John Ruth.

The earliest record we have is of Captain Lemuel Kirwan who was born in August 1811 in Dorchester County, married Sophia Stallings of Baltimore County on 15 May 1836 and died 25 Oct. 1849. Captain Lemuel was the father of our own State Senator James E. Kirwan.

Our long time residents will remember that the Senator was the grandfather not only to Catherine Kirwan, but also to Mary, Bertha, and Reba Coleman. We would very much like to have more information on this family.

We have copied the records from another family Bible bringing our total to 104. This Bible is owned by Eva Chance Thompson and was given to her by her mother, Minnie Kelley Chance, recently deceased.

The earliest record is of the death of Louis M. Kelley who was the son of Zedekiah and Matilda Young Kelley. Another son was Henry Randolph Kelley- Eva's grandfather.

We also have another convert to the hobby of researching family history in Katherine Atkinson Schneider who used to visit with Eva's family when they were children and is related through the Chance family.

We were happy to give her some of our family forms and expect to receive the completed forms in the near future.

We had a request from Richard Winchester of California for information on his branch of the Winchester family. He has joined KHS and sent us a very interesting article on his ancestor General Stephen Severson Winchester who was born in Baltimore.

We sent him a listing of sources that may be useful as well as a list of the information we have in our files dating from John Winchester, who called himself a cordwainer and who came to this country and this island in 1644. It was for this family that Grasonville was at one time called "Winchester."

This letter was particularly interesting to me because my late husband's grandmother was Julia E. Winchester, 4th great granddaughter of that early settler. Unfortunately we could find no direct reference to General Winchester but we sent information on another branch of the family that settled in Carroll County where

William Winchester was one of the founding fathers of the town of Westminster. Grandmother White often visited relatives there before her death in 1929.

We were able to find a clue for Mr. Winchester in one of our publications in the library- Cecil County Marriages 1777-1840, copied by the Cap't. Jeremiah Baker Chapter, DAR: " Nov. 1, 1814, John Winchester married Mary Severson" (p. 35). We hope that will prove the connection to General Stephen Severson Winchester.

Incidentally, the General was an attorney and lived most of his life in Pennsylvania where he was commissioned a Brigadier General in the State Militia in the 1850's.

The proximity of Cecil County to Pennsylvania lends credence to our theory that our information may be helpful. It will be interesting to see what develops.

And finally I met with Polly and Richard France who were traveling from Oregon in their motor home and stopped by the library looking for information on her ancestor William Claiborne.

It pleased me no end to be able to offer the voluminous research that Mildred Schoch had done on Claiborne. They copied relevant materials and left some of their own information. We also showed them a copy of the family chart given us by John Mears showing his direct descent from Claiborne. There was some difference in their information regarding which of the Claibornes was killed by Indians. We expect to hear further from the France family.

A request from Mrs. William E. DePuy from Virginia on where to find an early history of Kent Island, its land grants, houses, churches, etc. has been answered with as much detail as possible.

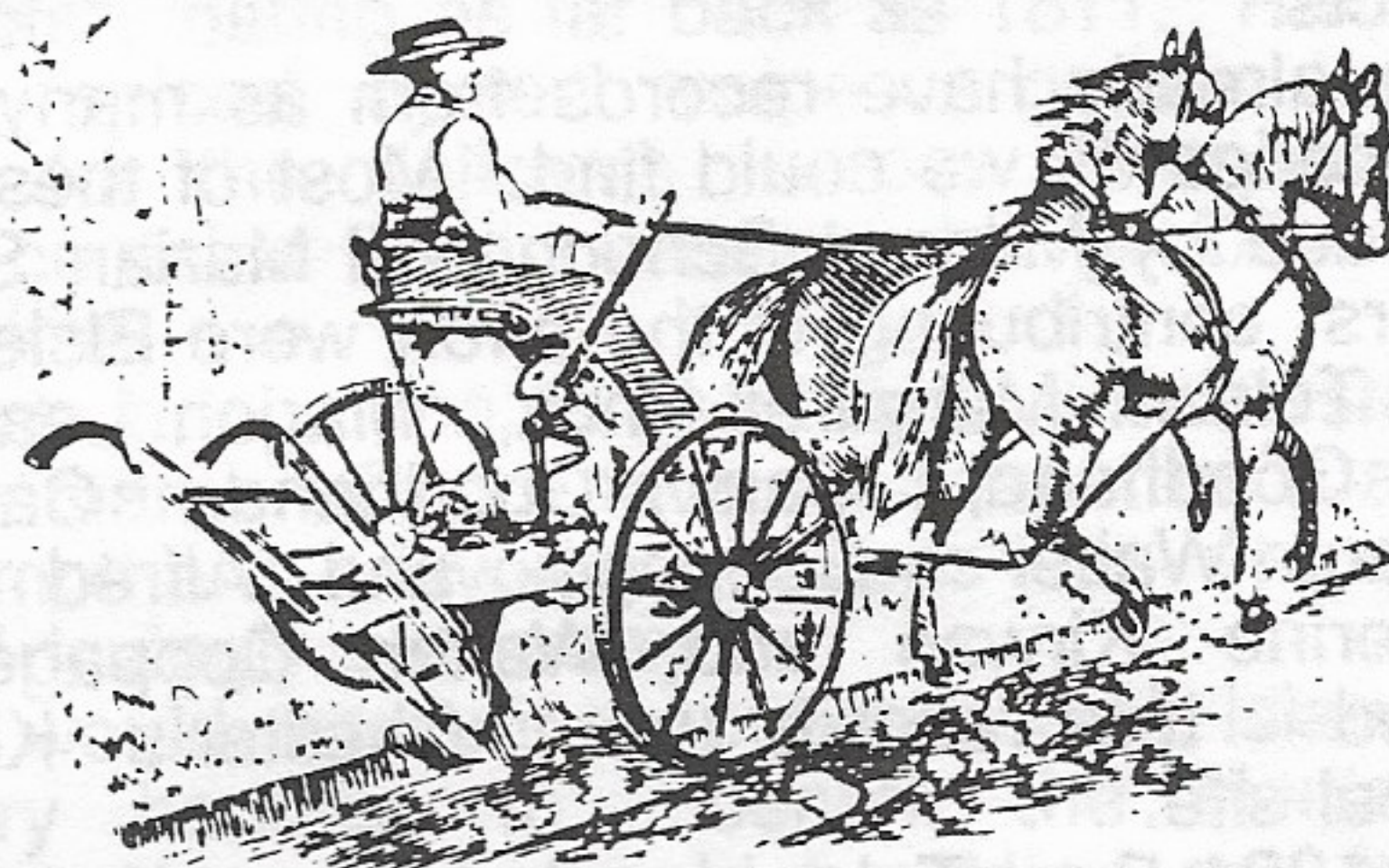
All in all it has been a busy summer. We would still like to copy more Kent Island Bible records. It is so important to preserve them.

A SUPER SALESMAN

Mary J. White

During the late summer and early fall and before the advent of our own County Fair, one of the big events which attracted many Kent

Islanders was the Kent & Sussex County Fair at Harrington, Del. This fair usually took place after the wheat had been threshed, the hay had been gathered, and there was really no pressing duty other than the regular morning and evening chores. Later it would be time to cut corn and sow the wheat.



This story is about one of the times when Alfred and his father Thomas White went to the Fair. Here I should explain that Alfred and his two older brothers called their father "Pah" with the "a-a-h" sound. The two younger siblings called their father "Daddy," but our girls always called him "Pah" like their daddy did. So, to make this story sound right, he will hereafter be called "Pah".

Now, as in most cases, at affairs such as this, cars were parked in a certain area and fairgoers walked into the fairgrounds through a space or lane on each side of which were farmers with their wagons or trucks holding their garden produce which they offered for sale. Cabbages, potatoes, corn, beans, peaches, etc. were all attractively displayed and seemed to be selling well.

However Pah noticed one farmer with a pickup load of beautiful apples who did not seem to be doing a flourishing business. So, he walked over and sat on an upturned basket and struck up a conversation with the farmer. (I always did say that Alfred and his father would talk to a fence post if it would answer back.)

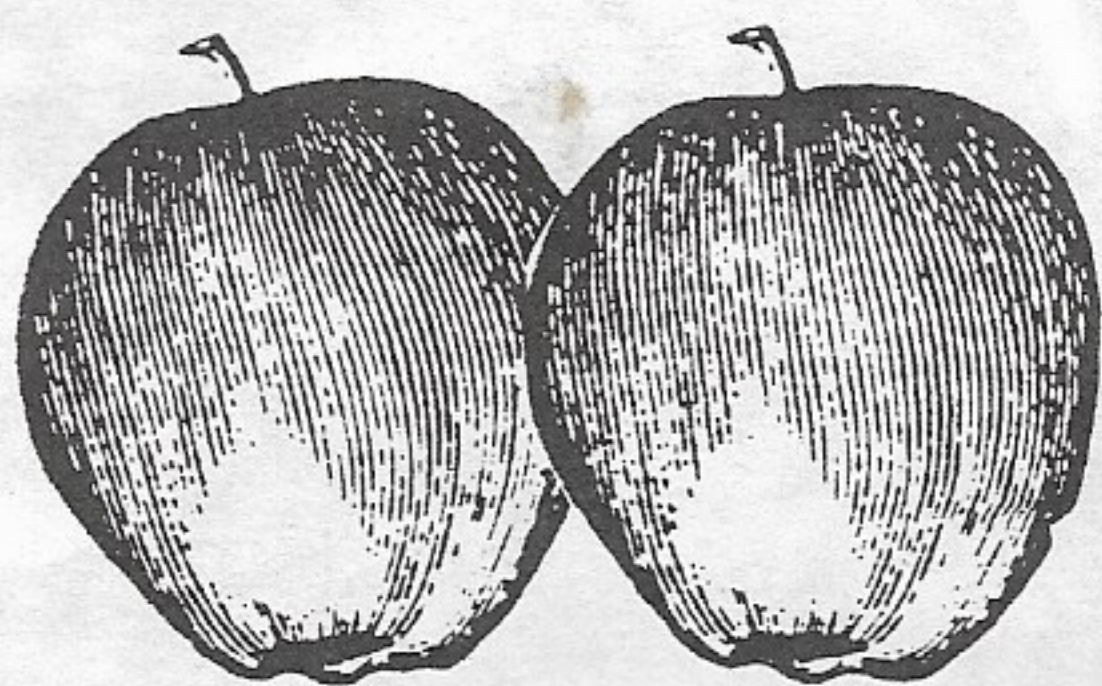
The two old fellows discussed the weather, crops, the market, taxes, etc. (*Ed. Note: Just like 1993!*)

Soon Pah noticed two ladies walking toward them. He reached over, selected a nice red apple, and getting out his pocket knife, began paring and quartering the apple.

Shoving his hat on the back of his head, he smiled broadly with a twinkle in his blue eyes and greeted the women.

"Good morning, ladies," he beamed. "How about some nice apples today? Here, ma'am, try this tasty bit and tell me, aren't they the most delicious apples you ever tasted? Now

ladies, how many baskets would you like? Just pay this gentleman here and he will carry them to your car."



The ladies were so flattered and flustered, they each ordered a basket right then and there.

Pah was glibly proficient in answering all queries about the quality of the apples, assuring the woman who wanted eating apples, that these were the finest. If the next lady inquired about their use as cooking apples, he declared they unsurpassed for pies, applesauce, baking, etc.

Pah kept up this superb sales routine until all the farmer's apples were sold. Pulling his hat forward on his head, he held out his hand to the farmer and said, "Well sir, it certainly has been nice talking to you, but I've got to be moving on. The harness racing is about to begin. I'll see you around!"

I've always understood that after his super selling spree, Pah still had plenty of time left to enjoy all of the attractions at the Fair and the races as well!

WATERMAN'S MUSEUM

The new Waterman's Museum is open in Rock Hall at Haven Harbor Marina. The concept for the Museum began in 1990 when it was decided that Maryland's watermen needed their own unique center of recorded history.



The Museum includes exhibits on oystering,

crabbing, and fishing. A reproduction of a shanty house is also on display, along with historical photographs, local carvings, and, of course, boats.

Future plans include enlarging the present structure and adding more outdoor exhibits. A pier to accommodate several authentic workboats including a skipjack will be constructed.

Admission is free but a donation is welcome. All funds will benefit the Maryland Waterman's Association.

The museum is owned by the Brawner Co. of Washington which also owns the Haven Harbor Marina.

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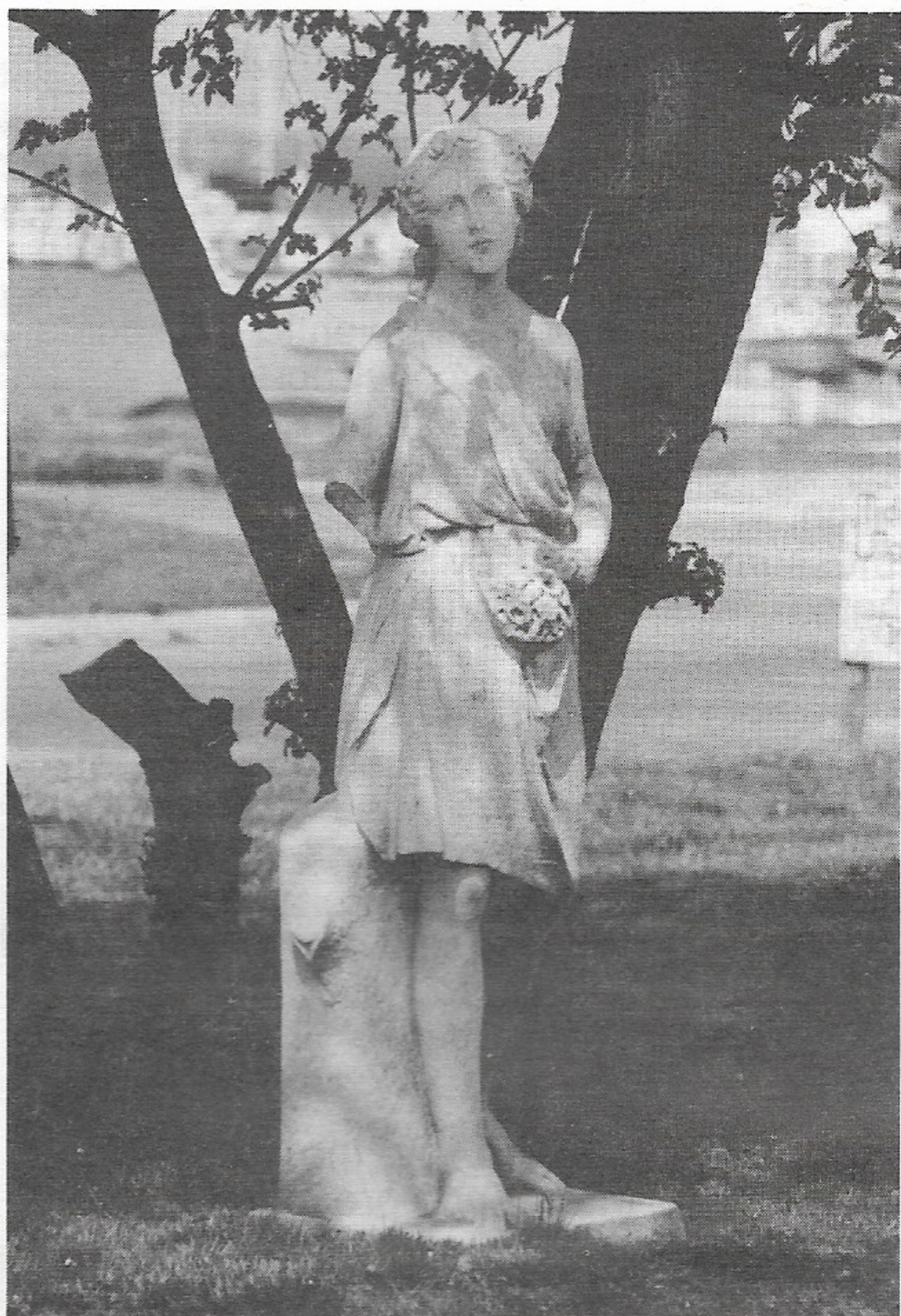
Membership dues are \$10 annually. Send applications to Catherine Kirwan, 641 Dominion Rd. Chester, MD. 21619

VICTORIAN GARDEN STATUARY

Around the turn of the century give or take 20 years on each side, the "Landed Gentry", imitating the latest gardening styles from Italy and England commissioned marble sculptures for their formal gardens. Today, the few remaining pieces look more like cemetery figures than landscape garden additions.

The late Mrs. John Campbell White had a garden of statuary brought from her husband's family's estate in Baltimore. Fearing vandals, she had some of them removed closer to her home in a small garden, and stored others.

It is interesting that such works of art found their way to Kent Island from the Western Shore. We should take pride in preserving them for what they are. It's a shame to consider them fodder for unthinking, unappreciative vandals.



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