

# Isle of Kent - 1631

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

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE KENT ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC. ■ FALL 2007

## OFFICERS

### President

Nancy M. Cook

### Vice President

John E. Broderick

### Corresponding Secretary

Carole P. Frederick

### Recording Secretary

Flora S. Sossi

### Treasurer

Audrey B. Hawkins  
John Wayne Morris

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John W. Gibson Jr.

Daniel T. Hopkins

N. Jean Leathery

Brent F. Lewis

Lynne Riley-Coleman

Gary L. Walters

Joyce H. Woodford

## President's Message

**D**URING THE LAST NINE YEARS, I have had the privilege of serving as your president. It has truly been an honor and a wonderful learning experience.

As I have previously stated, preserving the past and providing resources to do so has become part of the agendas for many state and local governments, as well as in the federal arena. There are many more educational and financial opportunities that The Society can access than in the past, and much more focus has been on preserving the past as the baby boomers have come of age.

Local involvement in ESHI, Eastern Shore Heritage Initiative-Stories of the Chesapeake, the Queen Anne's County Historic Sites Consortium, Friends of Christ Historic Church Cultural and Arts Center Committee, and the Queen Anne's County Historical Society has constantly kept The Society abreast of historical offerings in the area, methods of preserving our heritage and strategies for organizational growth.

The wonderful and abundant historic materials and books generated by those in The Society since 1975 have provided a good foundation on which The Society has continued to grow and has provided a conduit for historic information as we try to reach those in our community and visitors to the Island.

We have tried to build on these assets and have tried to keep our organization a vital one. My annual column of remembrances, reflections

*Continued on page 2*

## Slate of Officers and Directors for 2008

An election of officers and directors to lead The Kent Island Heritage Society, Inc. in 2008 will be held at the Annual Meeting on December 8, 2007. The Nominating Committee of John Broderick, Dan Hopkins and Butch Collier recommended the following slate:

### President

John E. Broderick

### Vice President

Daniel T. Hopkins

### Recording Secretary

Flora S. Sossi

### Corresponding Secretary

Carole P. Frederick

### Treasurers

Audrey B. Hawkins

John Wayne Morris

Florence M. Dunn

### Director

Kerry L. Lake

### Director

Harold O. Wilson

Officers are elected for a one-year term; directors serve three year terms.

Additional nominations may be made twenty-one (21) days prior to the Annual Meeting. A declaration of intent must be presented to the Recording Secretary, Flora S. Sossi (335 Five Farms Drive, Stevensville) and must be signed by the candidate and two supporting members of The Society.

## Mark Your Calendar

## Kent Island Heritage Society ANNUAL MEETING

**Saturday, December 8**

**Kent Island Yacht Club**

**5:00 p.m. Wine & Cheese**

**6:00 p.m. Business Meeting**

**7:00 p.m. Dinner**

**Please return the enclosed  
reservation form by Dec. 1**

## COMMITTEES

### Docents

Audrey Hawkins  
**Kent Island Day**  
 John Broderick  
 Flora Sossi  
 Gary Walters  
 Joyce Woodward  
**Fundraising**

### Programs

Jack Broderick  
**Kirwan Property**  
 Joel Berger  
 Bill Denny  
 Dan Hopkins  
 Wayne Morris  
**Kirwan Interior**  
 Midge Kirwan  
 Myrtle Bruscup  
 Linda Collier  
 Lora Lake  
 Jane Sparks  
 Emma Thomas  
**Cray House**  
 Bill Denny  
 Barbara Marmion  
**Old Stevensville P.O.**  
 Francis Collier  
**Train Depot**  
 Florence Dunn  
 Gil Dunn  
**Caboose Restoration**  
 Richard Dadds  
**Oral Histories**  
 Brent Lewis  
**Nominating**  
 Jack Broderick  
**Grants**

### Membership

Mae Hutchison  
**Library Files**  
 Myrtle Bruscup  
 Mary White  
**Audit**  
 Lynn Riley-Coleman  
**Scholarship**  
 Jane Sparks  
**Social**  
 Janet Denny  
**Cemetery Identifica-  
 tion & Preservation**  
 Lora Lake  
**Editor**  
 John Bonner

## President's Message

*Continued from page 1*

and resolutions will consist of an overview of activities and projects since assuming the office of president:

- \* Revising and updating The Society's constitution and bylaws.
- \* Establishing a budget with exemplary accounting processes and personnel.
- \* Generating an annual brochure for distribution.
- \* Generating the Historic Stevensville Walking Tour brochure and accompanying signage (the late Willard Thomas was responsible for making the signs).
- \* Replenishing the editions of the Schoch book "Of History and Houses" and "The Forgotten Seven: The Decoy Carvers of Kent Island" by Hugo G. Gemignani.
- \* Opening the Kirwan Store Museum (the committee chaired by Linda Collier and Lora Lake deserve many accolades for their meticulous research and volunteer hours given to this project).
- \* Emphasizing the Docent Program by providing scripts and costumes (thanks to the guidance of Janet Denny) for our docents.
- \* Presenting the annual Docents Tea in honor of our volunteer guides.
- \* Applying for grants for the restoration of The Cray House (Delegate Wheeler Baker Sponsored a Bond Bill to complete that effort).
- \* Initiating The Kent Island Heritage Society Website (with much appreciation to Thomas Associates, Inc., in Stevensville.)
- \* Purchasing a computer system and accompanying computer program "Past Perfect" to aid in accessioning (inventorying) our artifacts.
- \* Initiating efforts to preserve Stevensville Historic Episcopal Church by conducting a post card campaign to our 1992 county commissioners.
- \* Initiating effort to adapt an Historic Preservation Ordinance for Queen Anne's County, again sending post cards to our county commissioners urging them to consider such (this is still an ongoing process, which will need to involve our residents input).
- \* Revitalizing our Oral History project (kudos to Brent Lewis, who has expanded the work begun by Jane Sparks and Dan

Hopkins).

- \* Relocating a 1924-29 caboose (now being restored) to land next to the train depot.
- \* Participating in the planning of the Queen Anne's County Tricentennial Events — the 2006 April Tricentennial Tea and the Tricentennial Ball held in November 2006.
- \* Awarding an annual \$1,000 college scholarship to a Kent Island High School senior who is a descendant of a native Kent Islander.

Mention must be made of John Bonner, who has been an invaluable generator of the *Isle of Kent* newsletter and numerous brochures. His professionalism and skill as a journalist and with the computer have been a tremendous aid to the organization.

A thank you, too, to board member Ned Gerber of Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage, who has aided in creating a conservation-conscious Society.

Our thanks go to Mae Hutchison, who has been our membership chair for over 10 years and who has worked diligently with Audrey Hawkins in keeping our lists updated.

The Kent Island Garden Club is owed a great deal of thanks for their continuous efforts at the beautification of our sites.

The American Legion, Kent Island Post #278 has been a most generous benefactor, and we thank them.

As I leave this position, I convey my deepest appreciation to all the board members throughout these past nine years who have given many hours of hard work toward carrying out the mission of The Society to discover, identify, restore and preserve the heritage of Kent Island.

*Nancy M. Cook*

## In Memoriam

OLIVE LOWE

STEVENSVILLE

EUNICE CHANCE

CHESTER

*The society is very thankful for and will miss the interest and support shown our organization by these members. Continuing our shared mission honors their memories.*

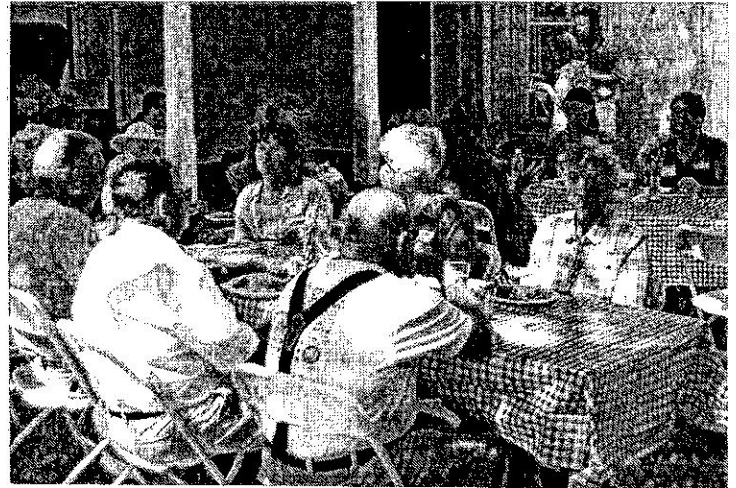
# Kirwan House Old Fashioned Picnic Was Huge Success

By Carole Frederick, Chairman, Picnic Planning Committee

The weather was picnic-perfect. The grounds were inviting. The food was bountiful and fabulous. A great time was had by the 150 or so people who came from as far away as Baltimore and Delaware. One was from Scotland, but he was a family friend of a local.

Historically-authentic ice cream prepared by Linda Collier was served from the Kirwan kitchen.

It was a time for reminiscing with good friends about old times. Melvin Clark brought old photos to share that jogged distant memories as they tried to identify the people.



*Isle of Kent* suggestively tagged this event as the *First Annual Kirwan House Picnic*. "We'll have to think about that," hedged KIHS President Nancy Cook. "Maybe this was the first biannual."

Buffet tables were laden with a savory variety of covered-dish specialties. There were heaping trays of finger-lickin' good fried chicken prepared by Annie May at Shore Stop.

There were games for the more energetic.

A hayride through the farm's overgrown outback was provided by Ron Frederick. Andi Pupke of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation served as tour guide, explaining about plant life and tagging Monarch butterflies.

Dan and Ann Shortall and members of The Corsica Antique Tractor Club provided a static display of

meticulously restored antique tractors. An antique John Deere tractor and manure spreader converted into an elegant chariot was hauling loads of eager picnickers.

There were antique cars.

Marty Walker gave a Flower Arranging Demonstration.

There were marshmallows for making smores.

A local cub scout den served vigilantly as trash-can watchers and replaced trash bags when needed.

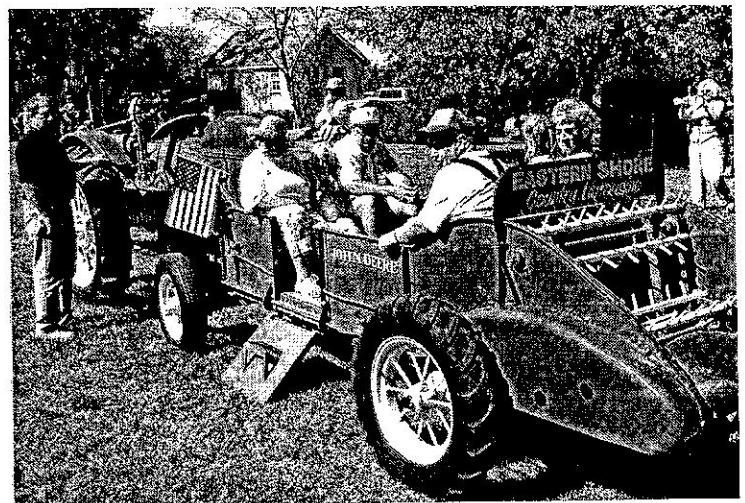
Gary Walters and his son directed traffic in our much-overflowed parking lot.

Myrtle Bruscup and Audrey Hawkins signed up new members and gave out name tags.

Harris Seafood supplied the ice to keep our food cool and safe.

The Kent Island Garden Club had spruced the yard up with new flower beds and hacked away a pickup truck load of drought-damaged plantings, which your editor hauled away.

Many thanks to members of my committee for their hard work in planning and coordinating this event: Toni and Jay Gibson; Dan Hopkins; Jean Leathery; and Gary Walters. And a big thank you to all members of The Kent Island Heritage Society who brought all that delicious food. People were asking all afternoon who made this and who made that.



Photos by Doug Bishop, Courtesy of The Bay Times



# Kent Island Methodism

On Sept. 23, **Kent Island United Methodist Church** — built in 1964 to consolidate the parishes of three Kent Island Methodist churches — held a groundbreaking ceremony for a new addition that will almost double its size.

Kent Island Methodism goes back to the 1700s. When Freeborn Garretson preached here in 1778 he found a class already organized. Bishop Asbury and Bishop Coke both preached here in 1784.

The mother church probably was **Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church** on the southern part of the island. There was no record of its existence in 1780, but it was standing in 1799. Trinity built a new church in 1882 that was destroyed by fire in 1923.

Another **Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church** stood in Stevensville in 1816. It was joined in 1918 by the **Trinity Downes Methodist Episcopal Church**.

**Kingsley Methodist Episcopal Church** was built just south of the

Village of Chester in 1887.

Records indicate that there was a class meeting in Dominion in 1902, then known as Devil's Dominion, which grew into a Methodist church in Dominion in 1916.

A **Trinity Methodist Protestant Church** built in 1866 operated for 75 years.

In 1939 the three branches of Methodism — Methodist Episcopal, Methodist Protestant, Methodist Episcopal South — consolidated into the Methodist Church. The two Methodist congregations in Stevensville united as **Trinity Downes Methodist Church**.

In 1956 **Trinity Downes**, feeling the need to expand, invited **Kingsley** and **Dominion** to join together to plan a new consolidated church.

Thus begat the **Kent Island United Methodist Church**.

*Source: History of Methodism, published in The Service of Worship and Consecration Bulletin, Oct. 20, 1963.*

## Maryland Historic Land Records Now On Internet

Maryland is creating a gigantic data-base containing names of all past and present owners of property anywhere in Maryland. When completed, it will be an invaluable tool for genealogical research. In fact, even in its early testing stage it already is.

The site has almost 165 million records from every Maryland county and the City of Baltimore. It has converted property transactions to digital, beginning with historic quill-and-ink hand-written records that date from the establishment of each jurisdiction. For Queen Anne's County that was 1706.

Access presently is limited to "testers," of which there are more than 54,000. But it's easy to register as a tester in order to gain access to the Website.

Open your browser and search for [www.mdlandrec.net](http://www.mdlandrec.net). Click on the listing to open it. At the end of the second paragraph, click on the words "application for password."

Fill in the form, click on the "Submit Request" button and they will email a password to you within a day.

This password will also open a companion application, [www.plats.net](http://www.plats.net), which is a digital image reference system for land survey, subdivision and condominium plats that may be of interest.

## HELP!

Myrtle Bruscup needs some help putting The Society's genealogy records into acid-free sleeves and cleaning out excessive material from the files.

The biggest challenge, Myrtle explains, is to keep focused on the mundane task at hand when surrounded by so many interesting articles in our collection about people and happenings on Kent Island, including historical and contemporary articles about ferries, farms, bridges, homes and such. It's so easy to get distracted.

"I'm guilty myself," she confesses. "Something interesting catches my eye, and I just start reading it. Then I remember what I'm supposed to be doing."

The work can be done whenever the library is open and you have some time to spare. An hour or whatever. Myrtle will show you the files, explain what needs to be done and show you where supplies are kept.

Please give her a call at 410-643-5596. If no answer, leave a message. She promises to get back to you.

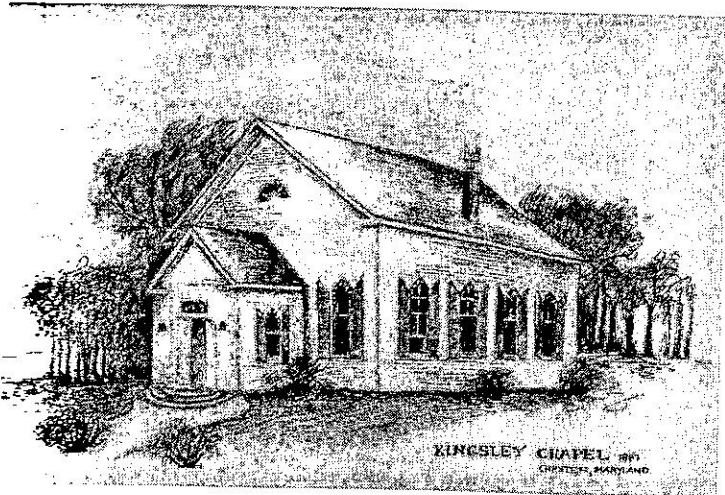
### FROM THE INTERNET

### HOW DRY IS IT?

Kent Island is so dry that:

- ▣ The Baptists have started sprinkling.
- ▣ The Methodists are using a wet wash cloth.
- ▣ The Presbyterians are giving rain checks, and
- ▣ The Catholics are trying to turn wine back into water.

Now that's **DRY!**



Drawing of Kingsley Methodist Episcopal Church by Kent Island artist Barbara Koenig, now deceased. KIHS members Jack and Patricia Weston were among the last couples to be married in this church.

# Christmas Cheers

Distinctive pottery by Cheers  
Brought to you by  
The Kent Island Heritage Society

Please call 410-643-5969  
for appointment. Prices plus  
5% sales tax and shipping.



Mugs \$18

Waterman's Boat  
Back side: Incised "Kent  
Island" or "Chesapeake Bay"  
Gray

Canada Geese  
Back side: "1631"  
Gray

Incised "Kent Island"  
or "Chesapeake Bay"  
Back side: Bay Bridge  
Blue

Love Point Lighthouse or  
Thomas Point Lighthouse  
Back side: Name/Date Plaque  
Blue

Crab mugs may be  
available separately



Crab Mug &  
Bowl Set \$30  
Blue & Gray  
Green & Gray

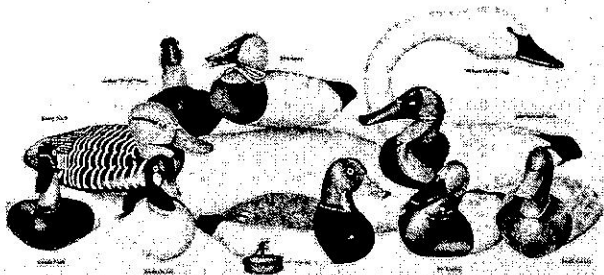


Vase \$20  
Gray/Lt. Blue



More Gift  
Suggestions ➔

## The Gunning Decoy Carvers of Kent Island



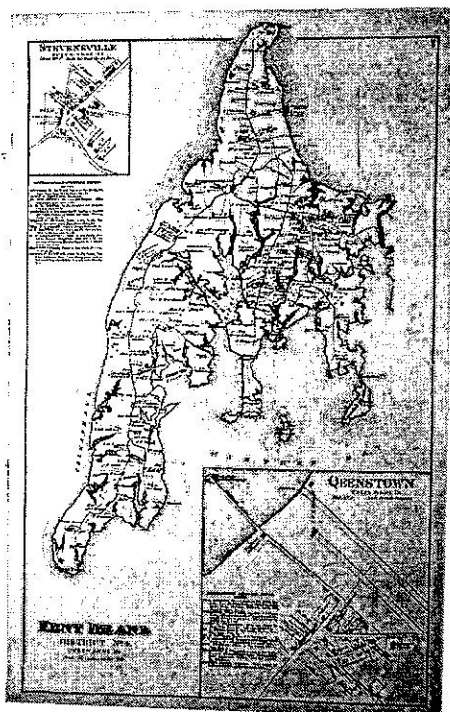
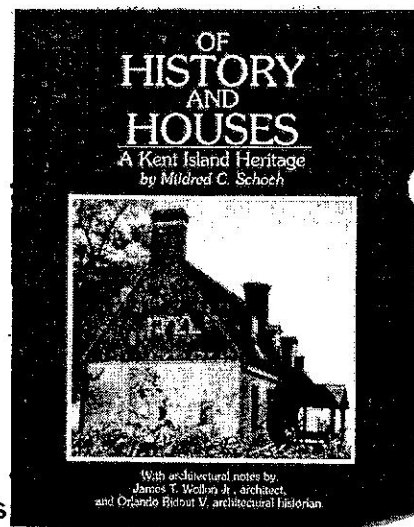
The Wildlife Trust of North America  
Kent Island Heritage Society

The Gunning Decoy  
Carvers of Kent Island  
Lithograph by Laura  
DeNardo, 23x18½".

Signed \$35

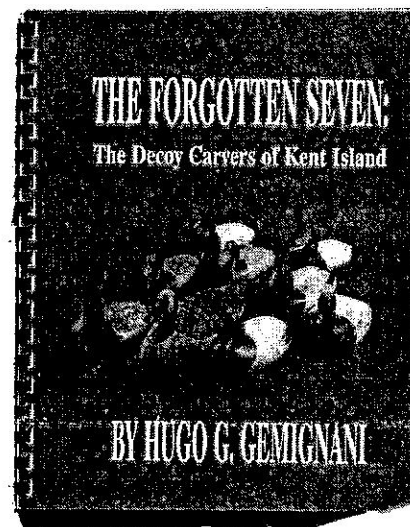
Remarqued \$50

Of History and Houses  
By Mildred C. Schoch.  
Features 55 present and  
past historically signifi-  
cant Kent Island structures  
and sites. 94 pages. \$20



The Forgotten Seven: The Decoy Carvers  
of Kent Island by Hugo G. Gemignani  
Profiles the life and times of contemporary  
carvers born between 1893 and 1910.  
56 pages. \$15

1877 Map of Kent Island, District No. 4,  
Queen Anne County. Lists Kent Island land  
owners and businesses in Stevensville.  
14¼x23. \$10

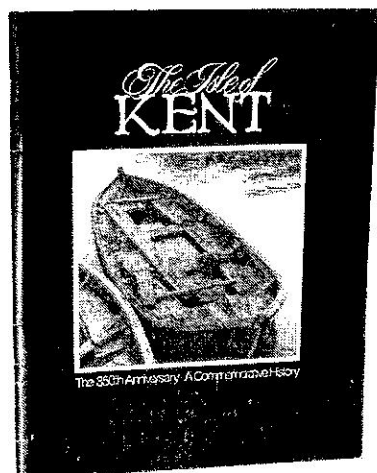


### MEMBERSHIP

The gift that keeps on giving for less than the price of a mug.  
Come check us out.

### The Isle of Kent

A commemorative history  
prepared for the 350th  
anniversary of Kent Island.  
24 pages. \$5



## THE KENT ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC.

P.O. Box 321 • Stevensville, Maryland 21666-0321

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I wish to become a member of the Kent Island Heritage Society, Inc.  
Enclosed is my check to cover dues of membership indicated below:

Life Membership ...	\$250.00	Single Membership ...	\$15.00
Organization Membership ...	\$25.00	Family Membership ...	\$25.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

Town/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Dues and contributions are deductible on income tax returns.  
Membership period January 1 - December 31



# KENT ISLAND POP-QUIZ

By Brent Lewis

*Take a seat, class, and spit out your gum. There will be no cheating and no talking. Take all the time you need. If you haven't covered the material, use your knowledge of the subject to make an educated guess.*

YOU MAY BEGIN.

**1. Which completed sentence would be false?  
Kent Island...**

- A. has very little clay and sand in it's soil.
- B. is about 6 miles wide and 15 miles from Love Point to Kent Point.
- C. is approximately 42 square miles and the largest island in the Chesapeake Bay.
- D. often smells of crab seasoning.

**2. Indians associated with Kent Island's history include:**

- A. Apache, Comanche, and Mohawk
- B. Romancoke, Chesapeake, and Wye
- C. Monoponson, Matapeake, and Ozonie
- D. Colavito, Shoo, and Cy Young

**3. The Long Tayle wasn't:**

- A. legendary as the first boat built entirely of Chesapeake Bay wood.
- B. a skipjack.
- C. involved in American history's first naval battle.
- D. any story ever told in Grollman's store.

**4. In the Revolutionary War Kent Island:**

- A. stayed totally unaffected.
- B. was the location of several important battles
- C. was generally protected from British depredation by encamped militias and sent troops to fight at the battle of Long Island.
- D. was invaded by Martians.

**5. The War of 1812 brought Redcoats to:**

- A. Kent Point
- B. Kent Narrows
- C. Broad Creek
- D. No Place

**6. Old time Kent Island place names don't include:**

- A. Ticktown, Buzzardsville, and Devil's Dominion
- B. Sharktown, Hollica's Snooze, and Philpot's Island
- C. Legg's Dependence, Morgan's Enclosure, and New Hog Pen Neck
- D. Unfriendlyland, Gateway to the Eastern Shore, and Glen Burnie East

Put your pencils down. I was just kidding about that take all the time you need nonsense. The answers are below. None wrong is an A, one wrong is a B, and so on. You got an A, give yourself a gold star. If you failed, get out and learn more about this interesting place we call home.

You never know when there'll be another pop-quiz.

**ANSWER KEY:**

- 1. A. Kent Island's is a loamy soil, where, depending on the location, is thick with clay and sand or both. And admit it, you know that at any given moment you're always no more than a few feet away from some Old Bay.
- 2. C. The Monoponson tribe were located primarily on the Eastern Bay tip of the island, while the Matapeakes lived mostly along our southern Chesapeake shores. The Ozonie were relations a little further up the Chester River. Colavito, Shoo, and Cy Young are from a tribe in Cleveland, Ohio.
- 3. B. The Long Tayle was a pinnacle, historically a term for ships of a general small size and use, while a skipjack is type of sailboat with specific design features developed for oyster dredging. As far as places like Grollman's was, long tayles, tall tales, who ever knew the difference?
- 4. C. Everybody knows the Martians didn't invade until the early 1950s and ever since then the government has run a secret alien monitoring station on Cox Neck Road. Sheesh. Where ya' been?
- 5. B. The northern Kent Island side. From where they made forays onto the mainland and embarked from to participate in the Battle of Baltimore. It was August. No Place wasn't on their radar. They were hoping to see a bikini contest at Red Eye's.
- 6. D. We've never been called unfriendly, the second phrase is what every teenager always thinks, and the last is usually uttered by an old-timer stuck in traffic.

# Oscar Dunn's Crab House

By Gil Dunn

It was the pride and joy of the entire black community on Kent Island and the surrounding area. From its opening in the 1930s, Oscar Dunn's Crab House was a popular place to get first-class seafood. He did little advertising. The high quality of his seafood was his best advertising. Its popularity grew from Kent Island, to towns on the Eastern Shore, to include a good number of customers from the

Western Shore.

The crab house was located on Riverside Drive, off Cox Neck Road, a short distance from Crab Alley Creek. The location gave easy access to local watermen to unload their catch direct to their buyer. The operation was a financial success for more than four decades.

An outstanding feature of Oscar Dunn's Crab House was its cleanliness. Upon entering the crab house, one was immediately

aware of its staff of ladies dressed all in white — suggestive of a hospital operating room — diligently doing their jobs in the production of first-class seafood.

Oscar Dunn had only one child, a son who worked part-time with his father in the crab house. His son's early death left Oscar's grandchildren as heirs. Their mother, who was a school teacher, influenced them to pursue careers in education rather than continuing in the crab

house business. Today they have active positions in Queen Anne's County schools.

After Oscar's death, the operation of the crab house declined and eventually closed. The old building remains, vacant and surrounded by weeds and wildlife. It is unlikely that it will ever operate as a crab house again.

Gone but not forgotten, Oscar Dunn's Crab House shall remain a source of many wonderful memories.

## Welcome New Members

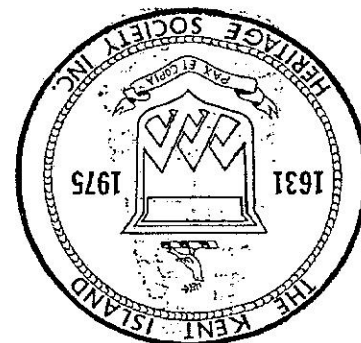
Francis L. & Betty  
Glasgow, Chester

Laura Keene  
Stevensville



## Isle of Kent John Bonner, Editor

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