

NEWSLETTER OF THE KENT ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC.

SPRING, 1992

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

IN MEMORIAM: JULIUS GROLLMAN

Audrey Hawkins

Kent Islanders were saddened to hear of the death of Julius Grollman December 15th. Julius will be missed by the community and especially by the Kent Island Heritage Society.

In 1975 Julius was one of our charter members and he served as President of the Society from June 1979 to June 1981. Julius also served a Co-chairman of the 350th Annicersary Celebration of the founding of Kent Island.

On December 12th, 1985 the Board of Directors, by unanimous vote, granted an Honorary Life Membership to Julius as an expression of sincere appreciation for his long years of service.

The Kent Island Heritage Society has lost a valuable and helpful member, always willing to participate in all our events with a smile. Julius gave us silent financial help. He sold Kent Island hats and T-shirts in his store and gave the Society the profits from the sales, a substantial amount over the years. Julius diisplayed our book, "Of Heritage and Houses" in his store and has sold meny copies for us.

The Heritage Society regrets his passing but his name and work will remain in our records as a testament of his interest in the Kent island Heritage Society.

R.I.P. Rest In Peace

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Audrey Hawkins

Thank you for the honor of being re-elected as your president for 1992.

I want to welcome Lois Cockey as our new Treasurer, and Emma Thomas as a new Director. I also welcome Jonathan Slocum as publicity chairman, Mae Hutchison as membership secretary and Virginia Donaldson as refreshment chairman. We will have a change in our Cray House Committee: Janet Ellis will be chairman for the Cray House tours and special events. Myrtle Bruscup and Mary White will still be chairman of the furnishings of the Cray House.

A special thank you to *Roland Bruscup* for his 7 years of excellent publicity for the Society and also to *Florence Dunn* and *Elaine Grollman* for years of delicious refreshments at the K.I. Heritage general meetings. The Society's appreciation is also due to *Myrtle Bruscup* as Cray House chairman for keeping the Cray House open every Saturday during the months of May through October. *Avaleen Thompson*, membership secretary, has kept excellent records of our membership dues, an important job well done, and thank you.

Our library files continue to grow because of Mary White, Chairman. Bettye Speed does an excellent job as editor of our newsletter, thank you both. Catherine Kirwan's special interest has helped our membership grow. And special appreciation is due to my officers, directors, past and present.

The Officers and Board of Directors have met

several times since January 1992 to make

plans for the year:

1. First, we finally have received a letter from the Maryland Historical Trust that funding has been approved for our Preservation project survey of Kent Island. We have not received the money as yet, but at least the funding has been approved for \$5,000. Per *Paul Wilderson*, survey chairman, a copy of this letter is printed in this newsletter. Also we have printed a Kent Island Archaeological Survey outline by Darrin Lowery. Darrin will be our speaker at our general meeting, March 19th.

- 2. Gil Dunn and his helpers have been working all winter at different times inside the train depot. Gil's goal is to have the depot finished by spring or early summer. When the depot is finished, we plan a grand opening ceremony. Stay tuned for further information. I hope you all will make a special effort to come to this celebration, because Gil and his helpers have worked hard for many years to restore this original train depot to create another historical museum for Kent Island.
- 3. Plans have been in the making since November, 1991 for KIHS to hold an 18th Century Colonial Weekend, Saturday and Sunday, October 17th and 18th on the Cray House lawn. Chairman Janet Ellis is currently working to make this Festival a happy and enjoyable weekend for all. More information and plans will be printed in the June newsletter. Put these dates on your calendar and plan to attend. It should prove to be a uniquely different KIHS affair.

Our first regular meeting this year will be at the Kent Island Library on Thursday, March 19th. at 7:30 p.m. Plan to attend, I will be looking for you.

ATTENTION!!

STEVENSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

Plans are being developed to organize an

SHS Alumni Association
WATCH FOR FURTHER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MARK YOUR CALENDARS 1992 Dates to Remember

The Society's 1992 membership meetings will be held at the K.I. Library:

Thursday, March 19 7:30 p.m. Thursday, June 18 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 17 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 10 6:00 p.m. Kent Island Yacht Club, Dinner Meeting

This year our Kent Island Days will be celebrated with an 18th Century Weekend at the Cray House on October 17th and 18th. Watch for further information.

CRAY HOUSE REPORT

Myrtle Bruscup

In our Winter 1991 Newsletter the Society gratefully acknowledged the donation of a wrought iron fireplace set from Julia Norman Kibler. Bill Denny took the fireplace set to Mike's Guns of Stevensville, to be cleaned of rust and painted. Mike Whitmore repaired a broken part, sandblasted and painted the set with heat resistant paint. A beautiful job well done, the set looks like new. The set consists of 11 pieces and has been placed in the Cray House living room where it occupies a central focal point. Mike Whitmore presented KIHS with a "No Charge" bill for \$93.50. We want to express our grateful appreciation acknowledgment to Mike's Guns for the generous contribution.

A most successful Cray House Open House was held Sunday, December 29 when about 60 people visited our house museum, hosted by Myrtle Bruscup and Mary White. Janet Ellis gave a demonstration of spinning which everyone seemed to enjoy. They came from Baltimore, Rockville, Silver Spring, Grasonville, Stevensville and Chester.

A surprise of the day was the arrival of *Christopher* and *Teresa Killian* with their children *Nancy* (13), *Laura* (10), and *Geoff* (6). They drove up in their antique car, dressed in colonial costume, from their Love Point home. The Killians sang "The Hollly and The Ivy" in the Sussex, England version, while the children gave their rendition of "Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer", which was delightful. The impromptu entertainment was just the right touch to end a successful day. Also I must thank the members who supplied the cookies for the day.

TREASURER'S REPORT Violet Harris (1991) Lois Cockey (1992)

Nov. 7, 1991 - Feb. 20, 1992 Balance: Receipts Disbursements CD Accounts	\$11,491.90 4,127,79 2,507.06 11,029.72
TOTAL ASSETS:	\$ 24,142.35

PROPOSED BUDGET

For the first time, Kent Island Heritage Society has a written budget in order to manage funds better in an ever expanding economy with enlarged operations.

Balance 1/2/ 1992: \$14,158.03

INCOME: Dues	1,000
Balance: \$27,058.03	ASW/
	500 over 600 400 60 1,000 200 100 200 200
Balance 12/31/1992: \$10,493.03	

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST RESPONDS

Paul Wilderson sent this letter from Mark Edward, Deputy Director of the MHT re: the KIHS Archaeological Survey.

Cray House Extenor

January 6, 1992

Re: Kent Island Archaeological Survey

Dear Mr. Wilderson:

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that our Board of Trustees and Housing and Community Development Secretary Jacquelin Rogers have approved funding for ten FY 1992 Maryland Historical Trust Historic Preservation Grant Fund projects, including yours, as described above. The specific level approved was \$5,000.

Our office is now in the process of drafting grant agreements with all our successful applicants. We should be forwarding a grant agreement to you for your signature within the next six weeks and hope to begin your project shortly thereafter.

If you have any questions about this, please contact Mrs. Richelle Thomas, our Grants Manager, at 410 514-7608. We look forward to working with you on this most important project.

Sincerely,
Mark R. Edwards
Deputy Director
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

KENT ISLAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Darrin Lowery

I. Shoreline Survey: Goal: The researcher will check all eroding shorelines for prehistoric and historic sites. Bulkheading and all non-eroding shorelines will be noted.

Estimated Duration: January to Mid February

II. Private: Goal: The researcher will check and note all known collections of prehistoric and historic artifacts from Kent Island. Based on the assistance of local artifact collectors, the researcher will note, plot, and record all unrecorded archaeological sites.

Estimated Duration Time: Mid February through March.

III. Record New Sites Found During Shoreline Survey: Goal: The researcher will fill out archaeological data forms for each site and also label all the artifacts found during the shoreline survey.

Estimated Duration Time: Mid-February through March.

IV. Begin Field Survey: Goal: Each contributor (Kent Island Heritage Society, University of Delaware Center for Archaeological Research, and the Maryland Historical Trust) will suggest certain fields to focus on during the field investigation.

Estimated Duration Time: Mid February through

March.

V. Conduct Field Investigations: Goal: The researcher will check selected tilled fields based on their potential for producing archaeological remains.

Estimated Duration Time: Late March through

early May.

VI. Record new Sites Found During Field Survey: Goal: The researcher will fill out archaeological data forms for each site and also label all the artifacts found during the field survey.

Estimated Duration Time: Mid-May to June.

VII. Complete Research Paper with Suggestions for Future Research:

Estimated Duration Time: June.

MINUTES

Carolyn Stevens Koegel

February 5, 1992 At a special meeting, the directors discussed whether to hold Kent Island Days in May or combine it with a Colonial Weekend in October. October was chosen. The Kent Narrows Association contacted the Board asking that we consider holding Kent Island Days at their facilities at the Kent Narrows Marina in June. This is the first time the Narrows organization has ever acknowledged the existence of The Kent Island Heritage Society, although they are aware of our presence. Audrey Hawkins and Bill Denny attended their meeting. Present were Bob Sallitt, Wheeler Baker, Joe Stevens, Woody Woodford, Morris Jones, and Mr. Donaldson.

They offered a free building mentioning that the roof doesn't leak having been fixed. Lacking air conditioning, they said there are five large fans available, if needed. Folding tables are also available. Security would be the responsibility of KIHS. People could be bused from local parking. There are three restrooms. Perhaps KIHS could consider the building in

1993.

Plans for the Colonial Weekend are set for the Cray House Oct. 17-18, depicting living history. Featured will be settlers, a blacksmith, a mountain man, demonstrations of soap and candle making. Strolling player John Douglas plays early music. Midwife Sarah Lewis will be present. Janet Ellis will chair Colonial Days.

MINUTES

February 20, 1992

It was noted that Christmas cards were sent KIHS by Friel Lumber, Goehring Printing, and Special Tees.

A check for \$25 in memory of Julius Grollman to be used for the train depot was received

from Liz Bukowsky.

The Queen Anne's County Visitor Service invited KIHS to attend a meeting Feb. 26 at the River House at Queenstown Harbour Golf Links. Mrs. Hawkins and Bill Denny will repesent KIHS.

A letter from *Ellen Klages* asked us to help advertise the *Island Garden Club*'s Fashion Show and luncheon at the Kent Manor Inn April

2nd.

Audrey reported that she has discussed placing the Stevensville Train Depot on the National Historic Sites list with Gil Dunn and Orlando Ridout. No action has yet been taken.

Audrey reported on her meeting with the Narrows Association re: 1992's Kent Island Days. KIHS cannot accept the invitation due to the short preparation time and the already scheduled Depot Dedication and October Colonial Weekend. We will consider 1993 at the Narrows. Meanwhile the Narrows Association is proceeding with a Waterman's Day in June.

Darrin Lowery, the archaeological researcher, will be speaker at the membership meeting March 19th. Darrin will give a status report on his research so far.

Charlie Koegel will need help setting up chairs for the meeting from early birds.

COMMITTEES

Besides the Board of Directors and Officers of the Kent Island Heritage Society elected in December and published in the Winter Newsletter, the following members have agreed to serve as chairmen of the special committees for the Society:

Audit

Florence Dunn

Archaeology

Paul Wilderson

Cray House Events

Janet Ellis

Cray Furnishings Myrtle Bruscup & Mary White

Cray House Gardens

Island Garden Club

Cray House Exterior

Gil Dunn

Genealogist/Library Mary White Membership/new Catherine Kirwan Membership Secretary Mae Hutchison Newsletter Bettye Speed Programs/Computers Charlie Koegel Publicity Jonathan Slocum Refreshments Virginia Donaldson Depot Gil Dunn

LIBRARY REPORT

Mary White

Since our last report we have added the following titles to our collection of resource materials:

Maryland Eastern Shore Newspaper Abstracts by F. Edward Wright Vol. 1. 1790-1805 Vol. 2. 1806-1812 Vol. 3. 1819-1824

Index of Maryland Colonial Wills compiled by James M. Magruder, Jr.

Maryland Militia, War of 1812, Vol. 1., F. Edward Wright

Early Manor and Plantation Houses of Maryland by H. Chandlee Forman

The James Adams Floating Theater by C. Richard Gillespie

Malvern Schoch brought in two noteboks he recently found from Mildred Schoch's collection containing a list of the baptisms, marriages, and deaths from the Kent Island Methodist Church records, 1854-1895.

These notebooks, along with the research we did on Christ Church records, provide a fairly complete coverage for that period.

Malvern also gave us Mildred's research on the Queenstown Courthouse, general research on jails, constables, sheriffs, road overseers, and copies of some early Maryland archival research. We are indeed grateful and always amazed at the scope and depth of her research.

Catherine Jones brought in four ledgers belonging to Mrs. Mollie Benton and her daughter Miss Annie, whose store was located onthe corner of Rts.18 and 552 in Chester.

I was particularly interested in Miss Loleta Bryan's account. She taught 2nd grade at Chester Elementary School when my husband

Alfred was a student there.

His recollection was mainly of her death during the influenza epidemic and the fact that the children in that class walked from the school to the Stevensville Cemetery for her funeral. Afterward they not only had to walk back to the school but also to their homes as far away as the Beach Farm, White's Heritage, etc, since there were no school buses.

No psychologists or counselors were in the school to help them with their grief, or even to ask them how they felt about it. In those days death was considered a part of life and for the children, a learning experience. Their families

dealt with it.

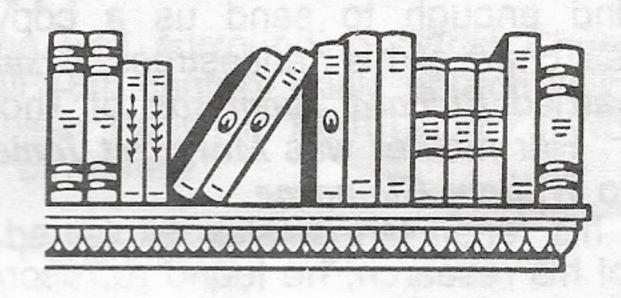
Back to Miss Bryans' account. She obviously did a lot of sewing indicated by the muslins,

calicos, laces she purchased.

For instance, on April 22, 1912 she bought 10 yards of muslin for 9 1/2 cents a yard and 2 yards of calico for 2 cents a yard. A spool of cotton (we call it thread now) sold for 5 cents. Now, not only do we pay at least \$2.98 a yard for muslin (unless it's on sale), we can't even buy it on Kent Island but must travel to Easton or Annapolis to get it. Progress???

Anyway these ledgers are fascinating and we

hope to have them on display soon.

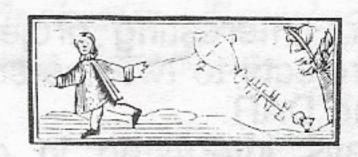


We are gradually accumulating a good collection of resource material for the serious researcher. Recently we were able to provide information on the Narrows to *Karen Harris Oertel* for her daughter *Debbie*, an architectural student, who is doing her thesis on the area.

In addition we were pleased to have a considerable amount of material for Jane Sparks and her group who are forming a Stevensville

High School Alumni Association.

We are always interested in preserving any older family material to add to our continuing collection of the history of Kent Island.



GENEALOGY

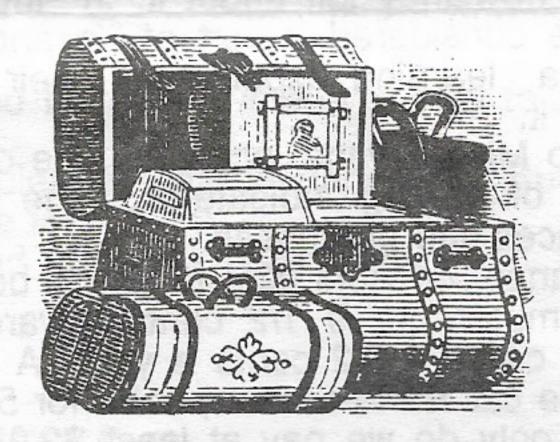
Mary White

Our genealogy files are growing. We have received the latest copy of the "Baxter Chronicles" thanks to Hugh Baxter of Park Ridge, Illinois. Mr. Baxter is conducting extensive research on the family and hopes to establish a connection to Kent Island's Baxter family.

Another interesting addition to our files is a history of the WIlliam Bishop family. This was given to us by an old classmate of mine,

Catherine Bishop Cantrell.

Of special interest is the marriage of Edythe Bishop to William Henry Goodhand, whose son William Edward "Ed" Goodhand married our own Elma Kersey. This marriage linked two of our old Kent Island families.



We have had correspondence with William TInsley from Pflugerville, Texas regarding his Kent Island connections: Thompson, Byshe, Youall, and Sturman. We were able to send a fair amount of information to Mr. Tinsley and he was kind enough to send us a copy of the Pedigree chart of his ancestress Ursula Byshe who married Richard Thompson of Thompson's Creek. Her mother was Margaret James, a half sister to William Claiborne.

In his letter Mr. Tinsley explained that, in some of his research, he found a record stating that "Richard Thompson was a cousin and indentured servant of William Claiborne."

To verify the James connection our records show that the first Anglican (Episcopal) priest on Kent Island was *Richard James*, also a cousin of Claiborne's.

We continue to correspond with *Mrs. Marie Muldonian* of Kensington, Maryland regarding the *Stevens, Coulter*, and *Johnson* families of Kent Island. She has provided us with additional information for our files and we have been able to fill in some blanks for her.

One of our more interesting projects has been assisting with projects to two persons who been invited to join the DAR.

We are always interested in copying Blble

records, in finding old burial grounds and in receiving other old records, either genealogical or historical, to copy for our files.

A Gem in Our Midst Wildwatch at Wildfowl Trust

Some snow remains dotted among the meadow grasses. The stiff marshgrasses stand sentinel-like, their seedpods responding to March's northwest winds blowing across Marshy Creek at Kent Narrows: The Wading Place.

Alerted, a small herd of deer watch a visitor carefully before resuming their evening meal. A sassy hen mallard gossips loudly to her mate bringing a response from the tiny teal hen who joins the conversation, apparently uninvited,

about the lazy Canada geese who live year round at Duck Head Pond where the shore's wildfowl depend on daily meals and ample habitat.

Gleeful children, armed with bags of cracked corn and "quacking" loudly at the winter wildfowl who reside at Grasonville's old Horsehead Farm or "Wading Place" Farm, have

all left for the day.

While the rare say

While the rare sandhill cranes cluck at their offspring, the red head ducks join the canvasbacks and wood ducks swimming lazy circles in the ponds among the snowgeese and brandt, before settling in for the night. Shy black ducks fly in from the Narrows to join their cousins for the evening.

"Kwark". A cantankerous blue heron, disturbed, flaps overhead to Cabin Creek to resume his vigil as the promise of spring sends early fish into the shallow waters.

As the sun melts into liquid flame reflected on the ponds' surfaces, a shy red fox emerges from its dry meadow den, antennae like ears projecting from its small, sharp-

nosed head. He watches a dark cloud of red-winged blackbirds rise at his appearance. Harbingers of spring activate the wild residents

as the promise of new life releases the pent up doldrums of winter. Mating season nears.

Just across the Kent Narrows from Kent Island this 310-acre wild world offers a visitor a glimpse of what life was like on Kent Island before the Bay Bridge was built and development gobbled up farm fields and ponds.



1920's and 30's farmers like Kent Island's Whites, Palmers, Lowerys, Tanners, Breedings, Cockeys, etc. and Horseheads' Robinson and Ibex families, kept their shotguns well oiled to help put a welcome meal on the table in winter. Wildfowl was plentiful on and around Kent Island's waters and fields.

From around 1900, when John M. Browning's automatic shotgun was introduced, market gunners supplied city restaurants and clubs with ducks all winter. In 1918, laws were passed to end the practice. Later, health regulations banned retail sales of wild game.

And still the flocks were heavy over most of Kent Island's fields, ponds, and inlets. They're here still, but not in the numbers that Kent Island once saw, due to the deterioration of habitat, aquatic vegetation, and corn fields to provide food.

For newcomers to the area, Grasonville's old Horsehead Farm is a specialized local zoo. Children are welcome to feed the many ducks and geese who winter there, and watch for the shy deer who graze at dusk or learn how the Shore's famed muskrat lives.

School science classes visit for lectures and films on the wildlife dependent on the ecology of the Chesapeake Bay. Adults have a brief glimpse in microcosm of wildlife as it once existed in and around Kent Island.

MYSTERY TONGER IDENTIFIED

Warren Sadler of Stevensville was the first among others to identify the photograph of the lone oyster tonger at Kent Narrows in his boat "Medicare".

Warren called to tell us about *Leroy Smith* of Grasonville. Warren said Leroy always worked alone, never even hiring a culler to help sort his catch.

Always independent in nature, Leroy's boat once was stopped by the Tidewater Fisheries Inspector who asked, "Where is your life preserver?" According to retired waterman Medford O'Donnell, Leroy abruptly replied, "I'm standin' in it!"

Sadler knew Leroy through his father-in-law, Rufus Lewis, who was in Navy boot camp with Leroy at Bainbridge Training Base at the start of World War II. Rufus chuckled at Leroy's description of the ridiculousness of their situation and military life in general:

. "First they cut off all my hair," Leroy would laugh, "and then the dummies issued me a g.d. comb! Next the Navy cleaned and pulled most of my teeth. Whad'dya know, they turned around and handed me a d---d toothbrush! Don't that beat all!"

After losing his driver license, Smith rode his bicycle everywhere. Early mornings found him riding down to *Marshy Creek* or to *Wells Cove* where he kept his boat. He usually tonged near *Hog Island*.

His younger brother, *Ernest M. Smith*, a former County Commissioner, says Leroy was known as a hard drinker.

One day Ernest and his son Joseph, who was oystering to pay his way through medical school, were tonging up near *Goodhand's Creek* around the Hog Island corner on a calm day. The tide began coming in. According to Ernest, they watched a fresh beer can float by. Shortly afterwards another floated by; in a little while they spied another, then another, and yet another. Ernest laughed to his son, "Your Uncle Leroy must be around the corner." Sure enough, as they rounded the corner there was Leroy in his boat. "I'd offer you a beer, but I ran out," Leroy said. "But I can offer you some Old Grandad." They laughingly declined his bottled hospitality.

Some years ago, after his wife *Cora (Jewell)* died and the children were grown, Leroy moved to a small apartment in Ridgely across from the firehouse, where he lives alone. He will be 82 years old this summer. Always known as a character, Ernest says Leroy watches his finances closely, drinking only Schaefer beer today. ""It's the cheapest I can buy," says Leroy, "But I sure don't like the d---d name!"

ISLAND FAMILY FOUND IN KENT COUNTY

On the wall surrounding Christ Church I.U., the small 18th century brick church which once was Chester Parish in Kent County's Worton, is this list of names:

Chester Parish Vestry 1767-1861

Thomas Smythe 1768

William Ringgold 1774

I.U Parish organized 1863

Another plaque on the wall enumerated this family:

idillily.	
William Smythe Thompson	1820-1879
Mary Groome Thompson	1820-1897
Elizabeth Morris T. Rankin	1841-1898
Dr. Samuel Groome Thompson	1843-1918
Sarah Matilda T. Eareckson	1845-1892
Mary Rebecca T. Weedon	1848-1924
William Augustine Thompson	1851-1920
Roderick Winchester Eareckson	1877-1891
Matilda Groome Eareckson	1875-189-

It wasn't clear whether this was simply a list of church members or whether they were buried in the old church yard, with no markers. No one was around to explain exactly what the plaques on the wall commemorated. Robert Hollett is Priest in Residence at the church which is now called Christ Church, I.U.

Another adjoining cemetery, beyond the church's walls, is named "Worton United M.E. Cemetery." The *Smythe* and *Thompson* families, both of Thompson Creek were inter- related by

marriage as well as near neighbors.

Dr. Roderick Winchester Eareckson built the white brick plantation house facing the Bay and now on the road to Hemingways'in 1854. He married first in 1844 Fredericka Goodhand who died at age 32. The first of their children were listed in Chester's Kingsley Chapel birth records. Frederick Goodhand Eareckson, one of their sons, married Sarah Matilda Thompson.

"FASHIONS & FLOWERS"

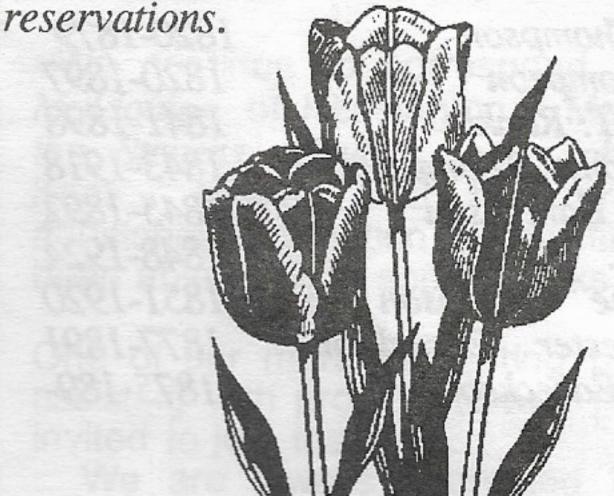
The Island Garden Club has announced their spring luncheon and fashion show to be held April 2nd at the Kent Manor Inn. They will feature:

- Cash bar at 11:30 a.m.
- Luncheon at 12:30 p.m.
- Flower cart
- Craft table
- Bake table
- Door prizes

Reservations: 643-2937 before March 27

Luncheon \$16.00: Choices: Chicken Marsala Shrimp Marinara Chef's Salad

Please specify your choice when making



CONGRATULATIONS from MAINE

The Isle of Kent had a letter in December from Maj. Gen. Gerald S. Maloney, Jr. of Brookline, Maine who told us that he enjoys our newsletter very much We appreciate hearing such things, sir. It's what keeps

us going!

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Effort is made to publish accurate information, but no responsibility can be assumed by the Kent Island Heritage Society or The Editor.

Membership dues are \$5.00 annually. Send applications to:
Catherine Kirwan, Membership Chairman Kent Island Heritage Society, Inc.
Rt. 1 Box 227
Chester, Md.

