Isle of Kent - 1631

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

NEWSLETTER OF THE KENT ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC. SUMMER 2014

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Hugo Gemignani	95 -- 98
Nancy M. Cook	99 -- 08

President's Message

What a day we had for our annual tradition - **Kent Island Day** - our signature event of the year. Saturday, May 17, was as perfect as May weather could be on Kent Island. And after our challenging winter and a cold and wet spring, many local folks were ready for a great family day outside – and we had it.

We estimate that the largest crowd we've ever experienced was there to see our biggest parade ever and share the many activities and entertainment events throughout the day. They enjoyed the onstage musicians and dancers, the open historic sites, docents, demonstrations and exhibits, artisans, crafters, vendors, great local food and many new kid's events.

Our colorful parade was graced by many local community groups, school bands, police and fire units, antique cars, horses, political officials, and – this being an election year - many, many local political candidates. The parade was set to honor, as Grand Marshall, Ms. Wally Dashiell, for her many years of positive influence and leadership through her Daschiell School of Dancing. But unfortunately due to a health issue she was unable to attend. We think the world of Ms. Wally and, we hope to bestow that honor on her next year.

We wish to express our appreciation to our major sponsor, First National Bank for their generous contribution in helping to defray our growing costs. We are also grateful to our new sponsors, Dr. Jennifer Russell, the KI American Legion, and the KI Elks and to the many patrons who contributed to help bring this great annual tradition to our community. You can see the list of KI Day patrons in this newsletter. I also want to thank our hard working Kent Island Day Committee for their many tireless efforts to make this day happen: Nancy Cook, Joyce Woodford, Gary Walters, Jamie Sasse, Dr. Earl Chambers, Carole Frederick, Toni and Jay Gibson, Alex Johnson, Lynnda Kratovil, Frank and Donna Frohn, Karen Pavlik, and Michael Thomas. What a team – Thank you!

We also offer a special note of thanks to the State Highway Administration for finishing the new road work in Historic Stevensville to allow the parade to march through town as planned. We hope you enjoy the pictures that appeared on You Tube, in the Bay Times, and here in our newsletter.

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Annual Dinner

Toni Gibson
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Development

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Kent Island Day

Jack Broderick
Earl Chambers
Carl Gerg
Toni Gibson
Alex Johnson
Jamie Sasse
Joyce Woodford
Gary Walters

Oral History

Brent Lewis

Membership

Carole Frederick
Nancy Cook

Website

Carole Frederick
Amanda Jenkins

Congratulations are extended to Rebecca Molnar, this year's winner of the Kent Island Heritage Society Scholarship, presented at Kent Island High School Award Night on May 27. Rebecca is a multigenerational Kent Islander who is aware of and proud of her Island heritage. She shares that pride in her essay reprinted here in this newsletter.

As we now look toward the summer months, we invite you to take advantage of our "First Saturday" open historic sites to spend some quality time with our docents in the authentic surroundings of each of our unique locations. A visit to our sites can offer genuine insight into the heritage of Kent Island. It can be a great experience for your whole family or a special memory for your summer visitors. Our sites are also available for special tours for groups or individuals. For Stevensville sites call Nancy at 410-758-2502. For the Kirwan Store Museum call Linda at 410-643-2731.

At our general meeting at **7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 18, at the QA Heritage and Visitors' Center at Kent Narrows** we will honor the tradition of the Watermen of Kent Island. The evening will feature a panel of Island waterman led by Moochie Gilmer, President of the QA County Watermen's Association. They will discuss their life on the water and share stories and insights of their unique heritage. Our meeting will be open to the public, so consider bringing a friend. We hope to see you then.

Jack Broderick

Calendar of Events

January 15
BOARD MEETING

February 19
BOARD MEETING

March 19
GENERAL MEETING
"War of 1812" ~ Bert Hubinger
Kent Island Public Library
6:30 -- refreshments ~ 7:00 -- program

April 16
BOARD MEETING

May 17
KENT ISLAND DAY

May 21
BOARD MEETING

June 18
GENERAL MEETING
"Watermen of the Chesapeake"
Chesapeake Heritage & Visitor Center ~ 7pm

July 16
BOARD MEETING

August 20
BOARD MEETING

September 17
BOARD MEETING

September 28
ANNUAL PICNIC
Kirwin House ~ 1pm - 5pm

October 15
BOARD MEETING

November 19
BOARD MEETING

December 14
ANNUAL MEETING
Election of Officers

Join us for our...

General Meeting

Honoring the Watermen of Kent Island

A Roundtable Discussion

Featuring:

Moochie Gilmer	*Captain Warren Butler*
Harold Smith	*Reginald Jones*
Phil Whitby	*Bill Benton*
John Thomas	*Mike Ruth*
Joe Horney	*Lamont Wright*

Wednesday, June 18th, 2014 at 6:30 pm

Chesapeake Heritage and Visitor's Center

425 Piney Narrows Road
Chester, Maryland

IN MEMORIAM

Emma Larrimore Thomas

Only in the agony of parting do we look into the depths of love -- George Eliot

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Bette & John Coursey
Jacquelin W. Horney
Alva & Robert Hutchinson
Jennifer & David MacGlashan
Judith Pennington
Jane P. Schwarz
Marcie Wachter
Martha J. Walls

KIHS Scholarship Awarded

One of the requirements of the KIHS Scholarship is for the applicant to write an "essay on the importance of preserving the heritage of Kent Island (the first paragraph of which should contain a brief biographical sketch)." This year's winner is Rebecca Lee Molnar and her essay follows:

Hello, my name is Rebecca Molnar. My parents are Pete and Jennifer Molnar. My mother's family has a long and rich history in the Kent Island area. If I had known my Grandfather, "Jackie" Crouch, he would have taken me fishing and crabbing in the Bay just like how his father before him had. However, he was killed in the line of duty working as a police officer on the Chesapeake Bay Bridge before I was born. My Great Grandfather, John Walter Crouch, owned and operated Crouch's Seafood – an oyster packing house which was located in Dominion. My Great-Great Grandmother, Mary Elizabeth Collier was very active in the community and served as Sunday School Superintendent and teacher oat Kent Island United Methodist Church and twice served as President of the Women's Society of Christian Service.

I believe that the heritage of Kent Island should be preserved. A lot of my relatives that lived on Kent Island were by trade either farmers or watermen since the 1800s. However, over the years a lot of people moved to our Island and a lot of farm land was sold to make room for the developments. The Chesapeake Bay became polluted which in turn affected the Seafood Industry. Since the farmers have had to sell their land and the waterman cannot make a living on the bay, the old way of life is slowly disappearing. This heritage needs to be preserved so that my children's children can know and appreciate where our parents came from and how they lived.

I will be attending York College of Pennsylvania and plan on studying Secondary Education. After graduation, I plan on working as a Middle School Math teacher and plan to return to Kent Island, my hometown. I would like to thank the Kent Island Heritage Society for taking the time to consider my application.

~Rebecca Molnar

The Johnstown Floods of 1889 and 1936

by Carole Frederick

This is the Preface to the next article by Carl Gerg who spent countless hours finding maps and books that gave first hand accounts of the floods. My thanks to Joanne and Carl Gerg for teaching me the geography and history of this tragedy.

One of the tales of yesterday that I recall hearing from my grandfather was about these tragedies. He would tell us how people on the island would go to the shores of the Kent Island and collect the logs and timber that were sent down here by the massive flooding that took place in both 1889 and in 1936. A sawmill was erected on our farm bordered on the west by the Chesapeake Bay after the 1936 flood. The following is a first-hand account of the 1889 flood by Willis Fletcher Johnson: The History of the Johnstown Flood , page 454:

> *Navigation on Chesapeake Bay was seriously interrupted by the masses of logs, sections of buildings and other ruins afloat. Several side-wheel steamers were damaged by the logs striking the wheels. Looking southward for miles from Havre de Grace, the mouth of the Susquehanna, and far out into the bay the water was thickly covered with the floating wood. Crowds of men and boys were out on the river securing the choicest logs of hard wood and bringing them to a safe anchorage. By careful count it was estimated that 200 logs, large and small, were swept past Havre de Grace every minute. At that rate there would be 12,000 logs an hour. It is estimated that over 70,000,000 feet of cut and uncut timber passed Havre de Grace within two days. Large rafts of dressed white pine boards floated past the city. The men who saved the logs got from 25 cents to $1 for each log for salvage from the owners, who sent men down the river to look after the timber. Enough logs have been saved to give three years' employment to men, and mills will be erected to saw up the stuff.*

Some conflicting information has been circulated in the last few decades, that the lumber from the Johnstown flood could not have come to the Chesapeake Bay because of the way the rivers and streams flowed. In the following article by Carl Gerg (native Pennsylvanian) you will see the path that this flooding took. Surely much of the timber that came to the Chesapeake Bay was from mills east of Johnstown, however it was the force of the Johnstown flood that sent it raging along. You must remember that the Susquehanna River and all of its tributaries were much deeper during this time. Since then, because of deforestation and the population increase they have become built up with silt. Also, by the work of the Army Corps of Engineers, preventive measures have been put in place to keep these kinds of tragedies from ever happening again.

Do you have stories handed down to you about these floods? If so, please share them with us. Maybe you know of some of the houses in this area that were built with this lumber. Maybe some of your ancestors retrieved some of the logs and lumber for the mills along the way. You may call Carole Frederick (410 643 3776) or email: www.cpfred@verizon.net or snail-mail to her at 521 Love Point Road, Stevensville, if you have stories to share.

THE IMPOSSIBLE CAN HAPPEN IN MINUTES

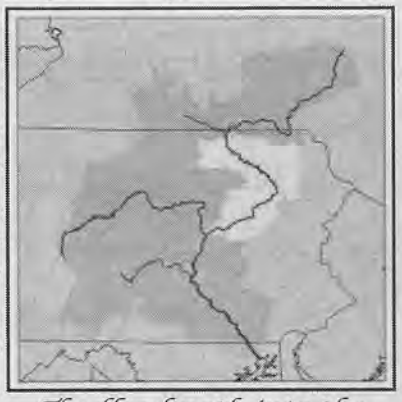
by Carl Arthur Gerg

The catastrophic Johnstown flood of 1889 in Pennsylvania hit the towns along the Conemaugh River with devastating power. Heavy rains filled the Conemaugh Lake Reservoir and saturated its South Forks Creek Dam. The reservoir was originally built in the 1830s to supply constant water for the Main Line of Public Works, Western Division Canal. The Laws of Nature were destined to put the water behind the Dam to a new and tragic purpose. The Pennsylvania Railroad had initially purchased this collection of canals and railroad tracks during the War Between the States. From the History of Pennsylvania Railroad, Brompton Books Corporation, Connecticut 1988, pg. 54, comes the following first hand account:

> *On 30 May 1889, an abnormally fierce storm dumped torrential rains on the area, and the dam's spillway could not release enough to relieve the tremendous pressure on the dam caused by the huge volumes of water which were pouring into the reservoir. On 31 May 1889 a telegrapher at South Fork, Pennsylvania tried to get a warning message of this situation to Johnstown, downstream from the Conemaugh reservoir, but was unable to do so because the storms had swamped the lines. ...*
>
> *The Conemaugh Valley towns of* ***South Fork, Mineral Point, Conemaugh, Woodvale****, and south to* ***Johnstown, Cambria City, Sheridan****, and* ***Sang Hollow*** *were about to be struck by a 20 foot tsunami. On the afternoon of 31 May,*
>
> *the dam burst, all across its front, releasing a wall of water 20 feet high. Railroad tracks for 10 miles were*

obliterated; 43 locomotives, 24 passenger cars, and 561 freight cars were destroyed. Even locomotives were swept away by the tremendous force of water, some them being found more than a mile downstream. Thirty passengers were drowned and some 2500 people were killed at Johnstown, trapped in railcars, houses and caught on the streets by the flood. Ibid. More than 1600 homes, shops, business and factories were destroyed and as soon as the flood waters had receded, fires started by quicklime which had been contained in some of the now-destroyed railcars finished off what was left. Ibid.

What we do know about the *Great Pennsylvania Flood of 1889* is that it was caused by a series of torrential rain storms from the west, resulting in unprecedented flooding throughout the Susquehanna River Basin. One hundred and twenty-four years ago, the tributaries including creeks and rivers were much deeper and wider than they are today. Johnstown is located in Cambria County which is on the western border of the Susquehanna River Basin. The Western Branch of the Susquehanna River was much larger and deeper then and allowed the creeks feeding into it to flow ultimately to form the headwaters of the Chesapeake Bay. This is the reason that it is entirely possible for lumber and wood from Johnstown and mills along the way to have arrived in the Chesapeake Bay, either through floating freely or being carried from rail cars that were swept up by the flood. The potential path of the wood products carried by the flood waters is as follows. After devastating the town of Johnstown from the burst South Fork Creek Dam to the north, the flood waters rushed east into the Little Conemaugh River that becomes the East Conemaugh River. To the east at Shankertown, the East Conemaugh River meets the Chest Creek and the Chest Creek flows into the Western Branch of the Susquehanna River at Mahaffey. Also at Shankertown, the East Conamaugh River meets the Clearfield Creek which flows into the Western Branch of the Susquehanna River at Clearfield - further east of Mahaffey. It is possible for either or both of these to flow to the Western Branch of the Susquehanna River. Next, the Western Branch of the Susquehanna flows into Lock Haven and then Williamsport, where there was also a large supply of lumber from timbering in May of 1889. From Williamsport, the West Branch of the Susquehanna River flows south to Sunbury, Pennsylvania where it meets the Susquehanna River that flows south from Otsego, New York, down to Harrisburg and ultimately past Port Deposit, Maryland on the Chesapeake Bay.



The flood path into the Chesapeake Bay

The Ethel & Lindy Jones House

There are accounts of huge amounts of lumber and wood that suddenly appeared in the Chesapeake Bay at the end of May into June, 1889 that were retrieved and sold for use in lumber mills that appeared all over the Baltimore region. We are also told that wood and lumber salvaged at this time was used to build the kitchen and general store additions to the Kirwan House. The Kirwan House is now preserved and maintained by the Kent Island Heritage Society. In addition, the farmhouses on the Porter Farm and White Farm on the west side of Love Point Road are known to have been built from lumber salvaged from the Bay. Also, the Jim White house (now 328 Main Street in Stevensville) is said to have been built with the wood from the Johnstown Flood of 1889. Further southeast on Kent Island, it was told to Ethel and Lindy Jones that the house on Dominion Road where they raised their family was built of wood from the Johnstown Flood.

The Jim White House

(To be continued in the fall issue of the newsletter with Herman Dieck's account of The Johnstown Flood)

Kent Day

Island 2014

Kent Day

Kent Island Day Patrons 2014

Our patrons are a testimony to the spirit and dedication of our fine organization to preserve and maintain the history of Kent Island.

Bobby and Lorraine Aaron
Phyllis and George Abendschoen
Linda Armiger
Linda Lee & Dennis Backens
Patty Baker
Wheeler and Holly Baker
W. Raymond Baker
Carol and Bob Bateman
C R Bennett Construction
Harry and Nancy Bly
Sally and Daryl Boden
Diana Bonner
John P. Borders, Jr
Deborah and Richard Britt
Myrtle A. Bruscup
Joe and Ida Jean Buckel
Pat and Francis Carnes
Jane and Earl Chambers
Curtis Chance
Forrest Chisman
Deborah H. Clarke
Dolores B. Cockey
Nancy MacGregor Cook
Gordon and Alice Crouch
Clara B. Davidson
Norman Davidson
Aloyse Demuth
Janet Claire Denny
Carolyn T. Dobyns
Mr. and Mrs. Leo Wm. Dunn, Jr.
Roger and Rena Dye
Julie Eaton
Linda Elias
Mary Ford
Carole Frederick
Frank and Donna Frohn
Evelyn Colonna Garcia
Wilbur Garrett
In memory of Sandy "Gee" Gemignani
Mr. and Mrs. Carl Gerg
Leslie Giambalvo
Jay and Toni Gibson
John Green and family
Jeanne Guidera
Trudy Truitt Guthrie
John, Amy and Taylor Harmon
Jerry Harris
In memory of Audrey B. Hawkins
Lathern and Ava Honeycutt
Jackie W. Horney
Ann Parry Horvath
Kathy Hovland
R. Marilyn Baxter Hull
Wayne Humphries
Alex Johnson
Howard and Cheryl Johnson
Laura Keene
David and Claire Kelley
Louis and Gloria Kelley
Kent Island Yacht Club Auxiliary
Ernestine Kepley
Joyce and Hunter Kerlin
Harry E. Klages
Lynnda and Frank Kratovil
Rose T. Lane
Karla and Eddie Larrimore
Jean and Dave Leathery
Mary Jane Leaverton
Weldon and Katherine Legg
Brent and Peggy Lewis
Dave and Jennifer MacGlashan
Scott MacGlashan, Clerk of the Court for Queen Anne's County
Rawle Mannix
Bob and Suzanne Marsteller
Peeter and Judith Muhlberg
Greg Nizza
Delores C. O'Brien
Art and Karen Oertel
Patricia Orndorff
Carolyn Gaskill Osgood
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Sara W. Towers
Mike and Mindy Voelker
Hanna Wall
Jim and Gayle Legg Wall
Pauline K. White
Fred and Joan Wilhelm
Joann Wilkerson
Joyce Woodford
Ruth Wyatt

The *Kent Island Heritage Society* extends its sincerest gratitude to the following businesses and organizations whose generosity allowed for a greater variety of new activities for children and adults alike. We appreciate the opportunity to introduce fresh and interesting merchants and exhibitions thus making for the best Kent Island Days yet! Many thanks to ***Chesapeake Veterinary Hospital, First National Bank, Kent Island American Legion, and Kent Island Elks Club***

The Queenstown News

A Saturday weekly newspaper which started in 1882 and merged with other newspapers before finally merging with the Queen Anne's County Record Observer in 1956.

by Carole Frederick

This information was found because of a curiosity I had as to who owned the first car on Kent Island. I started asking if anyone knew and all I got were puzzled looks. Then of course, there is my aunt Clara Davidson. She seemed to remember that Dr. Kemp was said to have had the first car and that her father, Norman Bryan, had one early on but not the first one. She also mentioned that it would probably have been in the early news paper, *Queenstown News*. Maryland Archives has some early issues so I started reading. I couldn't pull myself away from this task.

Little did I know, until Linda Collier called me, that Mildred Schoch (*Of History and Houses – a Kent Island Heritage*) had gone through these same archives and typed everything pertaining to Kent Island that was written in the *Queenstown News* (1888 – 1906). There on page 27 of 50-some pages of tiny cursive type was a sentence that said Dr. Kemp had the first car on Kent Island – however, not only on Kent Island, but also in Queen Anne's County!

By that time I was charmed by this old country newspaper and decided to pass on some of the other information to you.

One of the things I kept saying to myself as I read was, "Some things never change!" First and foremost it was a weekly paper, delivered on Saturdays. Secondly, politics was one of the main topics in every issue; the difference being the kinds of topics they chose. One of the topics was counting the Congressmen with same or similar names, i.e. three Allens, four Andersons, 12 Mc's but only two with the prefix O.

In the same vein, they reported on the number of widows with pensions of the Revolutionary War, their ages, the states having the most and, "The other old ladies are scattered about in Maine, Minnesota, Nebraska…"

Almost every issue had poetry, a short story (fictional), helpful hints and humor of the day. One of the helpful hints was, "Take a bucket of fresh water into your bedroom every night. It will absorb all poisonous gasses." An example of the type of humor of the day was, "When a washerwoman changes her place of residency one may ask her where she hangs out now without using slang."

There were correspondents from most of the small towns who reported their society news, each having a pen name: Centreville's was Earthquake, Kent Island's was Mezeppa, Carmichael's was Blizzard, Church Hill's was Hub, and Winchester's (now Grasonville) was Hurricane.

Tobacco advertisement from The Queenstown Weekly dated January 21, 1888

Before John M. Aker, Editor, had recruited correspondents to report on events, he reported that a couple of well known ladies from Centreville had gone on a vacation after reading a catalogue that gave a glowing description of Talapoosa, Georgia (of Honey Boo Boo fame). They were on the lookout for a lively town, "but they have concluded that Chestertown is after all just about lively enough." They also blamed the catalogue for false advertisement.

Help Wanted -- Docents

We need ***YOUR*** help in educating our visitors about our sites. The dialogue is printed for you and costumes are in the closet. This would take approximately 2 hours per month and is very rewarding. It could possibly serve as service learning hours for students; it could serve as acting experience... The benefits are immeasurable for you and for us. Please call Nancy Cook at 410 758 2502 to let her know you would love to participate!

"What Goes Around, Comes Around"

by Linda Collier

With the help of Butch Collier and Harold Thomas

Everyone likes new clothes, or at least, "new to you" clothes. Over the last decade, with such a poor economy, thrift stores have been popping up all over the area. Today's Yesterdays, Twice as Nice, Thrifty on Fifty, Second Hand Rose, Upscale Resale are a few currently on the island. However, what sounds like a great new concept, really isn't so new.

After reading Brent Lewis' article about Jack Coursey in the last newsletter, Butch and I began discussing exactly where some of these businesses were specifically located - like his grandfather King's packing house. Another establishment immediately came to mind - Jake Holland's second hand store.

While not technically on the island, plenty of islanders owned second hand items from "Holland's Emporium" at the Kent Narrows. Situated between the present Crab Deck and the Narrows restaurants, it was a long wooden building with windows down the left side and a door near the back. Mr. Holland dealt in used clothing, jewelry, shoes, silverware and just about anything a person could want or need.

When Butch and I were dating, one night we were looking through some of my mother's old pictures. We came to one of me in my Easter outfit, and Mom said, "Isn't that a cute little outfit Linda is wearing? I made it out of a bathrobe I bought at Jake Holland's for a quarter." I was mortified and told Butch how embarrassed I was. He said not to worry, "When I went into the service I was wearing a checked sports coat, blue shirt and yellow tie that my father had bought for me at Jake's. It was such a spiffy outfit several Army buddies asked to borrow it for special occasions." Butch went on to say that his father once admired a diamond ring Jake was wearing and eventually bought it right off of the man's finger! Butch still wears it and gets lots of compliments on it. As a matter of fact, Butch's father opened a satellite store in Centreville with some of Jake's inventory but it never took off and closed in a few months.

"Jake", Chester Holland, came here from Pennsylvania around 1943 after marrying Harold's Aunt Louise. Louise was the sister of Alec Thomas (father of Betty Thomas Schulz and Harold Thomas). He had been married before and had one son but he and Louise had no children. At first they lived in an apartment over Willard and Leola Jones' general store at the corner of Piney Creek Road and Rt. 18. Rena Jones Dye remembers Jake as a kind man and played many games of cards with him out on the porch. Later, he and Louise bought property and lived in a trailer on Cheslou Road. The road was named after them - Chester (Jake) and Louise. It is located off of Rt. 18 behind Red Apple Plaza.

Linda Collier wearing the Easter dress her mother made for her from a second-hand bathrobe.

We always wondered where Jake came up with all his stuff. Luckily, we talked to Harold Thomas and according to him, Jake had a stake bodied truck that he drove to the western shore to roam the countryside. He would pull into lanes and offer people $25.00 for anything they weren't using or wanted to get rid of. He would bring it all back and pile all the clothing in a corner that had a curtain around it. Nobody was to touch it until he went through it. When time allowed he went through the clothing with a fine tooth comb, going up and down the lapels and seams with his fingers over and over

again looking for jewelry and gemstones in linings. People used to sew gems in the linings and hems of clothing when they emigrated from another country. Sometimes a stickpin had been left on a jacket and pushed through into the lining of the lapel. At some point Harold said that Jake showed him a folded piece of black paper. When unfolded it was full of diamonds. Harold remembers that Jake would buy just about anything taken to him and try to sell you something else before you left. He dealt with black and white folks alike.

My grandmother, Daisy Livingston, worked for him occasionally and we have a picture of her outside of the building stuffing new pillow ticking with feathers from old pillows and mattresses. Ava Honeycutt said she only had one new pair of ice skates her whole life, and the rest came from Jake Holland's store. When it froze, Jake could outfit the whole island in skates. According to Harold, he bought ice skates in the summer for 25 cents a pair and then sold them in the winter for 50 cents. He might buy the same ice skates back the next summer. Kay Roser remembers going there with her mother and buying a three-tiered piece of furniture, like a what-not shelf, for $1.50. It is still in use today. Ruth Wyatt said her husband, Donald, used to buy his books there. He loved to read, and we didn't have a library on the island then.

Whether you bought or sold, you could usually do business with Jake. We think his enterprise ran about 10-15 years before Jake got ill and could no longer wheel and deal, but, not before a lot of us were introduced to the world of a true "American Picker".

Help Wanted -- Caboose Stove

Our little red caboose is in need of the kind of stove that was used on trains. There was a rim around the top to keep the coffee from sliding off at those turns and bumps along the way. If you know of one, please call Nancy Cook at 410-758-2502.

A THANK YOU NOTE *to* DEDICATED MEMBERS

by Nancy Cook

The Walking Tour Brochure of Historic Stevensville was first published in 2002. John Bonner, then the editor of the society's newsletter, *Isle of Kent-1631* and Nancy Cook, then the president of the Society, collaborated in its creation. Underwriting the cost of that publication was the American Legion-Kent Island Post 278.

The brochure was formatted so that the numbered text corresponded to the same number placed on each house. Over the years, time, weather, and mischief have all contributed to the deterioration or disappearance of the numbers. A very active member of the KIHS who is now deceased, Willard Thomas, was responsible for the very time-consuming task of constructing and installing the twenty-three signs.

Because of the popularity of the walking tour and the formation of the Historic Stevensville Arts & Entertainment District, a request was made to reproduce the deteriorated signs. Before the major refurbishing of this project could begin, new signs were made by the carpentry classes at Queen Anne's County High School under the direction of Ron Frederick, teacher.

Michael Thomas, son of Willard Thomas, and his wife Monique, refurbished all of the twenty-three signs. Many hours of work, including receiving permission from each of the home and business owners to reinstall the numbered signs, repainting them, and reproducing new numbers were expended in this project.

We appreciate the contributions of our members, Ron Frederick and Monique and Michael Thomas for making the history of Stevensville more accessible to our residents and visitors again. Your personal time is one of the greatest of all gifts.

Save the Date... 9/28

An Old Fashioned Picnic

for

Kent Island Heritage Society
Members & Guests

at

The Kirwan House and Farm

Sunday, September 28, 2014

1:00 - 5:00

Bring a Covered Dish to Share

The Society will provide:

Fried Chicken, Hot Dogs, Iced Tea, Lemonade, and Coffee

Please bring some **old pictures** that we may copy

Bring your ***lawn chair*** and join us for hay rides, corn hole, genealogists, children's games, music,

plein aire painting, demonstrations and displays

+ a 50/50 Raffel

One HOT Chick

The 65th and FINAL Annual Delmarva Chicken Festival is being held at the Queen Anne's County 4-H Park, June 20th and 21st. As part of this year's activities, the festival organizers have invited some local nonprofit organizations to participate in a contest, decorating a large or small chicken. They will be judged and the organization with the winning chicken gets the prize. Then, the decorated chicks will be auctioned. The KIHS has decorated a chicken so, if you attend, please bid on our chick. Our chick says THIS FREQUENT FRYER IS ONE HOT CHICK and is sitting in a frying pan of hot oil with a suitcase full of traveling accessories. Chick it out!!

TOMBSTONE PRESERVATION

We have formed a new committee that is going to search for and document any tombstones or grave sites that are not currently in our records. Sandy Frederick is the Chairman of the Committee and Jamie Sasse and Alex Frederick are members. If you have any information that could help in this endeavor please call Sandy at 1-443-994-1919 and this team will investigate.

This project was started by Marian Stewart in the 1970s. Because of her efforts, several stones now reside at the entrance of the Stevensville Cemetery that may have been lost forever.

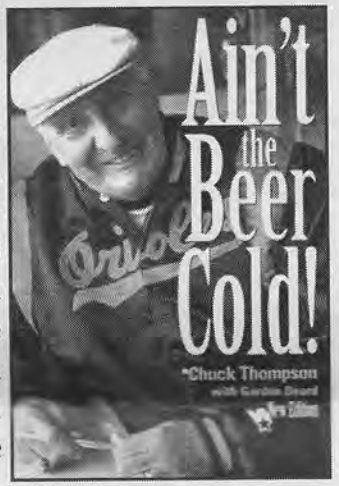
Book Review

by Alex Johnson

Ain't the Beer Cold

by Chuck Thompson, with Gordon Beard
Copyright 1996 Diamond Comm., South Bend, Indiana

Chuck Thompson, the great Hall of Fame broadcaster for the Baltimore Orioles and the Baltimore Colts, presided over the Golden Era of Baltimore baseball when they won five Pennants and three World Series beginning in 1966. His book begins with his early career in the entertainment field as a dance band singer in Reading, Pennsylvania. Later he became a sports broadcaster with several minor league teams, then with Philadelphia and Washington before he came to Baltimore.



The book is filled with humorous stories about such star players as Jim Palmer, Brooks Robinson, Reggie Jackson, and John Unitas.
It is beautifully illustrated with plates of Chuck's early life with his family, and on to his years with those great Oriole and Colt teams.

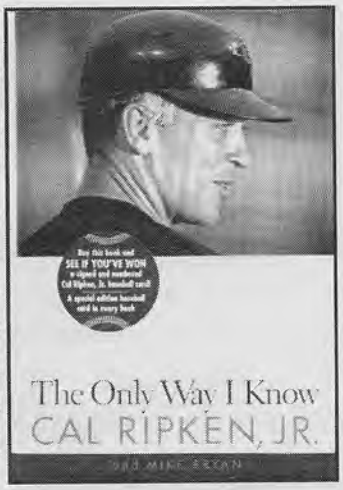
The Only Way I Know

by Cal Ripkin, Jr. and Mike Bryan
Copyright 1997 Penguin Books, NY, NY, 10014

Cal Ripkin's book describes his early life as part of a baseball family. His dad, who everyone called Senior, was a good minor league player and later a major league coach and manager with the Orioles.

Cal was called up to the big leagues in 1981 and they won the World Series in 1983. He won many awards in his career; the most memorable was breaking Lou Gehrig's consecutive game streak in 1995.

The book describes his warm relationships with his teammate Eddie Murray and the legendary manager Earl Weaver.



Cal, the Ironman, retired from baseball in 2001, having played his entire career in Baltimore. He was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in 2006.

Kent Island Heritage Society, Inc.

PO BOX 321 ~ Stevensville, MD 21666

Enclosed is my check to cover membership dues as indicated below:

Life Membership – $250

January 1 ~ December 31
Single Membership – $15
Organization Membership – $25
Family Membership – $25

Name(s): _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
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The Kent Island Heritage Society, Inc. is a private, 501C3 non-profit organization, to which donations and contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Clip this form and share with a friend!

THE LONG BALL

by Alex Johnson

Spreading feet splayed, knees bent, hips
Awaiting the shifting weight
Clenching hands held high, wrists cocked
Rolling into the swinging shift
Sounding like the tongue on the roof of the mouth
Click
Arcing out silently the ball
Falling between defenders
Watching the swinger, now runner
Curling out to get an angle on first
Finding the rhythm of the run
Searching out the pillow bases of second and third
Rounding the square, heart outside the chest
Returning home, breath visible
Pounding down the line
Gaining, the ball and man
Arriving together
Colliding with the defender
Reaching with the hand, the man
Rolling over, on his knees
Peering through the dust cloud
Pleading
Pleading for the call

The Philosophical Side of Brent Lewis

Oral history is storytelling in its most ancient tradition and at its most personal level. Thanks to the support and encouragement of the Kent Island Heritage Society, over the past dozen years or so, I've had the opportunity to conduct scores of recorded oral history interviews with prominent and everyday Kent Islanders, from watermen and farmers to preachers, teachers, business leaders, and elected officials; from trailblazers to archivists, and from those whose families got off the boat with William Claiborne to some of our more recent arrivals.

I've been fortunate to have been privy to the lifetime reflections of the many people in the community I've come to think of as friends.

Members, past and present, of the Kent Island Volunteer Fire Department told me compelling stories of compassion, bravery, dedication, and kinship. Island Centenarians have shared their earliest childhood memories with me. I've seen a big, important man in his nineties surprise himself with emotion recalling his favorite radio show from when he was a boy, a precious entertainment he'd not thought of in decades.

I've been told many off-the-record accounts of gossip and hearsay that would be included on-the-record if I were a more professional historian and a lesser neighbor. Many of the people I've gotten one last chance to talk to, one last chance to get their story, have passed away since. I regret the interview opportunities I've missed, but all in all, I've been honored to be able to record a history that otherwise might be lost, washed away with time like a Chesapeake Bay shoreline.

One of the things I like best about oral history is the fiction of an individual's perspective, the element of embellishment, of the teller improving the story, not to mislead, but not letting hard-line facts get in the way of a good story. The facts aren't always the truth. My favorite stories are the ones that give me a chuckle.

From his depression era childhood in Chester, my uncle, my dad's brother, **Roger Lewis**, remembered: "We had two gardens. One behind the barn filled up with Irish potatoes, sweet potatoes, turnips, cabbage, so much we gave a lot away, it was the Depression. People would stop by just to eat. In the garden up front there was a grape arbor, every fruit and vegetable you could imagine except rhubarb. When I was ten or eleven, I was down Dominion and those old men were out on their porches. One of them said, "Boy," everybody called you boy, you could be in your twenties, and he said, "Boy, you think the rain will hurt the rhubarb? I didn't know what rhubarb was, never heard of it, I said, "I don't know." That old man turned to his buddies and said, "That boy's dumb as hell, ain't he?"

Island raconteur and all around unforgettable character, **Wes Thompson,** told me about World War II. Wes came ashore at Normandy on D-Day plus two, landing into an ordeal of death, destruction, and despair. Wes was patrolling the French orchards battleground when heavy ordinance came screaming out of the sky. Wes, a young Kent Islander who'd never been farther than Baltimore, turned and ran in fear. "Thompson!" Wes imitated the shouts of his commanding officer, "Thompson! Why are you running, soldier?" "Because I can't fly," was Wes's answer as he blew past. Wes made Private First Class four times and "got busted down every time." When he was ready to muster out, "The guy at Fort Meade come along and said reenlist, we'll make you a corporal, I said I get back across this bay and get to my boat, I'll be a captain."

Writer and historian **Nick Hoxter** told me about the early days of the KIVFD, back when the fire department pretty much consisted of whoever happened to be around. "Late one evening we were in Denny's Garage when the siren went off. Julius Grollman was with us. He said, "Come on, boys, I need your help. We jumped in the car and got to the firehouse where they said the Silver Roof was on fire. Silver Roof is where

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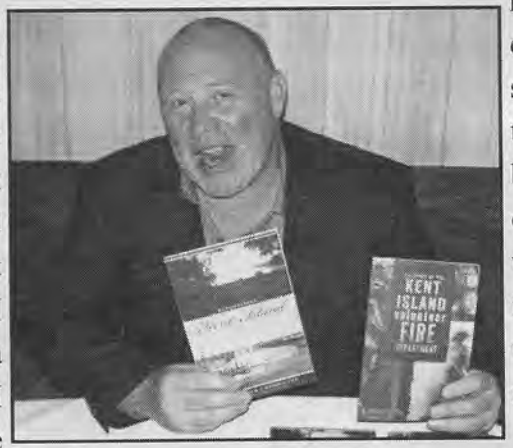
Ram's Head is now. We hopped on the back of that big old International with Josh Bullen, John Holden and some others. When we got there the building wasn't burning, but there were fires all around it. Fire was headed towards Owens Lane's big house over where they eventually built Rt.50. I grabbed a shovel, Denny grabbed a shovel, Juls and Josh grabbed Indian tanks, and we started fighting fires. It took us about an hour and a half. When we got done it was too dark to see where we were going. We were wet from walking through the marsh and decided to cut through the cemetery. As we got to the older section we got separated a little, but I could hear them holler when they'd stumble into a tombstone. All of a sudden my right leg went through the ground. My foot struck something solid and I realized I'd stepped thigh-high into a grave! It was so deep I couldn't get out. I was trying to pull myself up on a headstone. Man, I was so scared. I hollered, "Help! Help!" Here comes Denny, then Josh and Juls, and they were all laughing. When they finally got me out of there, and we made it back to the main road, Denny asked me if I was really scared! I said, "Are you kidding? I'm still shaking." I lost that shovel that night," Nick says, "and for all I care it could still be there."



But as much as I enjoy the stories that make me laugh, my favorite is one that reminds me to lighten up. **Jimmy Ewing**, one of the island's favorite sons once told me, "The Circle Restaurant wasn't always a success. I spent many sleepless nights, and more than once decided to close the place and go to work for somebody else. One man changed my mind for me, and I've been grateful to him ever since. Dr. (Theodor) Sattelmaier stopped by one day for a sandwich. I told him some of my troubles. He listened until I finished pouring out my heart and then, in his familiar German accent, said, "Stick it out, Jimmy. It won't always be this bad. Tomorrow is going to be better, you'll see." Though I still had my doubts, something about his encouraging and sincere remarks stuck with me. And from then on things kept getting better and better. I'll always be glad for the day ol' Doc stopped by and gave a worried man a much needed shot in the arm. He taught me not to worry. "Worry," Doc Sattelmaier said, "is a bad disease."

Eastern Shore folk are historically known for, among other fine qualities, their blunt and eccentric saltiness, a seasoning that comes natural to people living off the land and water. Our heritage society's goal to "discover, identify, restore and preserve the heritage of Kent Island" has enabled the oral history program to document one of our area's most prized natural resources: characters with character.