

Isle of Kent - 1631

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

NEWSLETTER OF THE KENT ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC.

SUMMER 2021

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President's Message



This past quarter has continued the challenges of the pandemic, but with the improving public health situation we are increasingly optimistic. Although we've cancelled our public events, including our iconic Kent Island Day and our general meetings, we've been quite busy in support of our mission. The Board continues to meet virtually and expand our presence, both within our heritage related activities and on the broader community level. We are working on repairs and improvements to our historic properties

which include periodic maintenance at our Stevensville sites and repairs to the damaged fence at the Kirwan house (fully covered by insurance).

I'm sorry to share the sad news about the passing of a devoted Kent Island Heritage supporter and long-time heritage board member, Myrtle Bruscup, at the age of 101½. See our tribute to Ms. Myrtle, Grand Marshal of the 2017 Kent Island Day Parade, in this Newsletter.

We have focused a considerable amount of recent effort recently on the potential acquisition of the historic Stevensville Bank. Our capital grant request was finalized and submitted to the Maryland Historic Trust in April. We appreciate the strong support from our QA County Tourism Office, our QA County Commissioners, Delegate Steve Arentz, and Senator Steve Hershey, each of whom filed letters of support on our behalf. If approved, the grant will require matching funds. We will be announcing our fundraising plans this summer.

In support of efforts to enhance historic Stevensville, where most of our sites are located, we are actively engaged with the Stevensville Arts and Entertainment District, in coordination with QA Tourism, KI Federation of the Arts, and local artists and businesses in Stevensville.

Kirwan house intrigues many people far and wide such as a movie scout for Apple films, looking for a house and farm for a possible location for a Civil War era film. (Stay tuned on that one!). Then we were contacted by our new QA Tourism Manager, Katie Clendaniel, for a photo shoot at the Kirwan House for potential tourism promotion. We readily obliged. Senator and Mrs. James Kirwan (aka John Conley and Linda Collier) were on hand to pose for an impressive array of photos around the house.

Then we had a problem visitor that was not welcomed! After a recent KI Garden Club outdoor event, several ladies were taken inside to see the Kirwan Store. There they were greeted by a very unhappy and sick raccoon. They made a swift and safe exit. We contacted QA Animal Control, who responded immediately. Because the raccoon was inside and obviously sick, they were able to assist and remove him. Our thanks to Officers Derrick Leonard and Shannon Cross for a job well done. We think we know how the intruder got in – we're taking future precautions.

(Continued on page 2)

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Jay Gibson

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Marilyn Wilson

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PROGRAMS

Kent Island Day

Jack Broderick, *Chair*

John Conley

Nancy Cook

Carole Frederick

Bob Lowe

Picnic

Carole Frederick, *Chair*

Toni and Jay Gibson

Linda and Butch Collier

June General Meeting

Jack Broderick, *Chair*

Annual Election Brunch

Toni Gibson, *Chair*

(Continued from page 1)

One other type of Kirwan critter deserves special mention and a special story here in our Newsletter. This is in the "who knew?" category about milkweeds and monarchs. Neat story - check it out.

Meanwhile our plans to expand into the virtual world are ongoing. Our efforts include online presentations of stories and characters of Kent Island's history. Just contact us and we can tailor the presentation to your group and your interests. We have also engaged with QACTV to produce a series of brief video presentations of visits to each of our historic sites. Docents from our board are sharing the history and stories from each site. Filming is complete and the virtual visits will be shown on QACTV as well as on our website, YouTube, Facebook, and other social media outlets. We are always looking for ways to expand our social media presence and welcome your ideas and suggestions.

On the broader community level, we are actively involved in the update of the County Comprehensive Master Plan. Because of seeking protection for our important historic and cultural resources we have participated in virtual meetings and workshops. The support of our county planning professionals and their excellent contractors deserve commendation in this effort. We are also participating in virtual meetings in support of the new tourism grant and program to strengthen heritage tourism in QA County.

Looking toward the next several months, we plan to open each of our historic sites for first Saturday tours in August. In the meantime, we will open the largest of our sites, the Kirwan House and Store, by special appointment starting in June. Check our website and social media for details and for scheduling an appointment. Then on August 26 we will welcome an outdoor event on the Cray House Green in Stevensville - a concert sponsored by the QA County Center for the Arts as part of their summer "Concerts in the Park" series. Check our website and local papers for details as the time approaches. We also look forward to hosting our Fall Picnic at the Kirwan's farm in late September - a "welcome back" affair.

There are several other local projects that will involve our participation. One involves archaeology, the other the Smithsonian. The archaeology project on Parson's Island led by Dr. Darrin Lowery will resume in June. Much of his planned activity there in 2020 was postponed due to the pandemic. He has invited KI Heritage Society members to assist in the on-site work. If you would like more info on this, check our website, social media, or call me at 410-829-7760. The Smithsonian project will be set up at the Kennard Center in Centreville, mid-June through July, and involves a large traveling historic exhibit by the Smithsonian entitled "Voices and Votes". It will feature stories and examples of citizens' participation in our democracy to influence government, make a difference, and affect public decisions. In addition to the traveling portion developed by the Smithsonian, there will be a local portion, with displays telling local stories. We were invited by the QA County Historical Society to have a display telling the Kirwan Story - the saving of Kent Island. Of course, we'll be there. Our website, social media, and the local papers will have details.

I'm sure you've seen the information put out in various formats and media about the State's proposal to put in a third Bay Bridge connected to Kent Island with new supporting highway infrastructure across Kent Island. We responded on behalf of the KI Heritage Society Board against the proposal with both in-person testimony and in a written statement. The "Study" and its recommendation present a clear threat to the heritage of Kent Island and to life as we know it. Read our statement in this newsletter.

Also in this newsletter is a letter written by our KIHS Board Member and Secretary, John Conley, to the Washington Post and published on May 15. This letter raises the concern about that age-old claim that St. Mary's, settled in 1634, by the Calverts, was the first permanent settlement in Maryland and the third permanent English settlement in America - actually, that was Kent Island, 1631, by William Claiborne. Maybe we should invite them "Calvert Folks" to our big Kent Island Day Parade in 2031 when we'll celebrate our 400th Anniversary!

Meanwhile, keep your spirits up and celebrate this great place - Kent Island!

Jack Broderick

CALENDAR 2021

JANUARY 20
BOARD MEETING

FEBRUARY 17
BOARD MEETING

MARCH 17
GENERAL MEETING

APRIL 21
BOARD MEETING

MAY 19
BOARD MEETING

JUNE 16
GENERAL MEETING

JULY 21
BOARD MEETING

AUGUST 18
BOARD MEETING

SEPTEMBER 21
BOARD MEETING

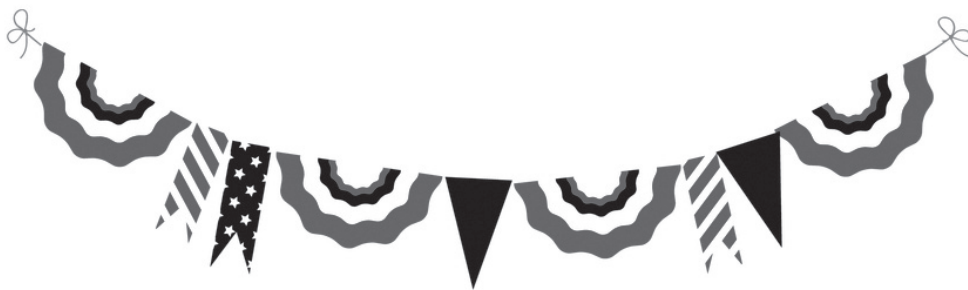
SEPTEMBER 26
ANNUAL PICNIC
@ KIRWAN HOUSE
1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

OCTOBER 20
BOARD MEETING

NOVEMBER 17
BOARD MEETING

DECEMBER 11
ANNUAL MEETING/BRUNCH
ELECTION OF OFFICERS

*Other than board meetings,
all other dates depend on
the state of COVID19.*



KENT ISLAND DAY PATRONS -2021-

It is evident that when this many members patronize a Kent Island Day that had to be cancelled once again this year, there is a deep regard and interest in our island's history. This has not gone unnoticed by your board, thus, spurring us on even more to help identify and preserve our heritage.

M. Lorraine Aaron
Phyllis and George Abendschoen
Aggravation Acres
Mark A. Anderson
Roz and Marty Appel
Holly and Wheeler Baker
Nancy Crouch Bly
Diana Bonner
Janet B. and Theophilus C. Breeding
Mr. and Mrs. Richard C. Britt
Don and Rose Broderick
Jack and Liz Broderick
Jim and Donna Brown
Madison and Ethel Brown
Lee and Jim Butera
Dr. Earl L. Chambers, Jr.
Curtis Chance
Chesapeake Light Tackle
Forrest Chisman
Deborah H. Clarke
Dolores B. Cockey
Linda and Francis Collier
John and Darlene Conley
Nancy MacGregor Cook
Mackenzie and Andrew Costello
Don Crouch and Susan Walters
Lou Crouch
Norman Davidson
Pamela Dawson
The Dobson Foundation
Carolyn T. Dobyns
Doris Key Nevertoolate Fitness
Rena and Roger Dye
Julie Eaton
Linda Elias
James Ferrier
Betty and Walt Folz
Carole P. Frederick
Frank and Donna Frohn
Evelyn Colonna Garcia
Jay Gibson Family,
the Burlsons Gibsons and the Krausses
Sharon and Andrew Goss

Jeanne and John Guidera
Nancie Lewis and Bryan Hall
M. Hamilton & Sons
Jerry Harris
Harris Tag and Title
In Memory of Audrey Hawkins
James and Sandra Herbert
Valerie and Thom Hirsch
Ava Kelley Honeycutt
T. and Wayne Humphries
Alva and Robert Hutchison
Lula Mae Hutchison
Cindy Ringgold Johnson
Claire and David Kelley
Kent Island Federation of Arts
Kentmorr Marina Properties
Ernestine Kopley
Joyce K. Kerlin
Tracy and Jamie Kinsel
In Memory of Harry and Ellen Klages
Darlene Councill Koemer
Eddie Larrimore
Jean and Dave Leathery
Sarah E. Lewis
Mark L. Lidinsky
Debbie and Rudy Lukacovic
Carolyn and Scott MacGlashan
Shelly B. Martin
Angie and Scott Monzeglio
Art and Karen Oertel
Jim Parker
Norma and Bill Patton
Fran Peters
Sally and John Prascus
Lisa and Chip Price
Mildred Price
Claire Ransom
Gene M. Ransom
Nicole Ransom
Theo Ransom
Sandy Reinhard
Lynne Riley-Coleman
Elizabeth and Stan Ruddie

Carol and Harry Sanders
Marie A. and Henry A. Schmidt
Patricia and Robert Schocke
Tracy T. Schulz
Jane P. Schwarz
In memory of Edward Severa, Jr.
Mindy, Jamie, and Cam Sewell
Jarrett and Frank Smith
Gina and Bill Smouse
Flora and Richard Sossi
Jane G. Sparks
Beth and Wayne Stanley
Tom Tate and Anne Baker
Margaret and Bob Tessier
The Grooming Place Pet Shop
Dorothy F. Tolson Thompson
Kay Shaun Thompson
Don Thomson
Rosalie U. Tillman
Tracy Diamond Team of EXP Reality
Carole Tulip
Anne Kyle Tyler
Rev. Ken and Cheryl Valentine
Mindy and Mike Voelker
Dottie Wagner
Hanna Wall
Gayle and Jim Walls
Paula Warner
Marmaduke Goodhand White
Pauline K. White
Marilyn and Hal Wilson
Bucky and Jim Wills
Joyce and C. Marquess Wood
The Woodford Family
Ann and Jim Ziegler
Clare and Joe Zimmerman
Jacqueline Moody Ziskind



ANOTHER CHESAPEAKE BAY CROSSING NEEDED NOW

By David Humphreys Guest columnist

The purpose of the Bay Crossing Tier 1, NEPA Study is to consider corridors for providing additional capacity and access across the Chesapeake Bay to improve mobility, travel reliability, and safety at the existing bridge” in design year 2040.

The Purpose and Need Statement for the study was not created in an open or inclusive manner that involved public discussion and input. As a result, a single Maryland Transportation Authority metric, “which alternative gave the greatest relief to traffic on the existing Bay Bridge,” was used to evaluate each alternate (corridor) bridge location.

It is obvious that the closer the alternate bridge is to the existing bay crossing the more traffic it will draw off. It is quite easy to select the two locations out of 14 candidates that are in closest proximity to the third location, the existing Bay Bridge. All three bridge locations are, in reality, only one corridor, Route 50/301.

While the term corridor is used extensively in the report, there is no analysis of any of the 14 “corridors” beyond projected traffic volume reductions on the existing bay crossing on a daily and weekend basis. The existing Bay Bridge is not a corridor. It is merely the weakest link within the existing 50/ 301 Corridor.

None of the other bridge locations consider the corridor beyond the connections to existing roads. This is essential in the most cursory of alternate corridor analyses.

Does the Tier 1 DEIS report represent a Corridor Analysis or more pointedly a traffic study of the existing bay crossing? If the latter, we very well might have all the justification we need to repair or replace the Chesapeake Bay bridges.

But we do not have even a minimal amount of knowledge to assess other corridors on their merits as well as their ability to drain off volumes from the existing Chesapeake Bay bridge on the 50/301 corridor.

I recommend the MDTA institute a pause sufficient in length to address and correct the issues presented above and not submit a record of decision until the Purpose and Need portion is extensively modified. Such modifications should include:

Undertake a true detailed analysis of the 50/ 301 corridor as a major component of the Tier 1 NEPA study. Understand the ramifications of corridor modifications and potential widening upon local access roads.

Create a Study Advisory Committee more inclusive of critical stakeholders to provide oversight during the “pause” and for the remainder of the Tier 1 NEPA study.

Utilize Kent Island traffic operations on Route 50/301 leading to the Bay Bridge as the testbed for the application of technologies to maximize throughput such that Route 50/301 is the quickest way to the bridge rather than Route 18 currently used to bypass 50/301 congestion. Consider a ban on truck traffic (over 5 tons) on Sundays during the summer between the hours of noon to midnight.

Recognize that the existing twin spans across the Chesapeake are substandard both in design and safety considerations; are over capacity with extensive queues on an increasing number of weekdays and weekends; regularly operate with a dangerous contra-flow on the westbound span during afternoon and evening peak travel periods; bring grid-lock to Kent Island during summer Sundays, have on-ramps right at the bridge approaches; and represent the only land access to hospital care for significant injuries and critical illnesses for Eastern Shore residents.

Recognize the need to immediately begin the planning process to identify a new more southerly corridor to serve the present and future mobility needs of the region. The completion of this second corridor and Bay crossing should precede modifications to or replacement of the existing twin spans.

Once there are two corridors across the bay, they will serve to balance each other in times of heavy travel demand, maintenance schedules, accidents, and unplanned incidents.

David Humphreys served as executive director for ARTMA, the Annapolis Regional Transportation Management Association from 2010 to 2020.

Myrtle Bruscup 1919 - 2021!



We were all saddened to learn of Ms. Myrtle's death in April at the impressive age of 101½. Some of us were able to attend her funeral where her former pastor at Galilee Lutheran Church, Rev. Chuck Braband (Ret.) shared some wonderful thoughts and memories about Ms. Myrtle. She was a friend of many of us, having served for decades as an active member of our heritage board. We were happy to honor her as the Grand Marshal in the Kent Island Day Parade in 2017.

The following are excerpts from an article Doug Bishop wrote for the Bay Times about Ms. Myrtle after her 101st birthday celebration last September:

Longtime Kent Island resident Myrtle Bruscup celebrated her 101st birthday, Thursday, Sept. 17. Ms. Bruscup has lived on Kent Island since she moved here with her late husband Roland Bruscup in 1982, from Pasadena. She resided at Terrapin Grove Senior Center in Stevensville since 2011. Prior to that, she had homes at Blue Bay Farm, and in the Marling Farms community.

On Thursday, September 17, friends and one of her two sons, Ronald Bruscup, who resides in Prospect Bay, joined her for a small party to celebrate her birthday at Terrapin Grove. Several of the Queen Anne's County Commissioners, and QA Sheriff Gary Hofmann, were also there. Myrtle's other son, Randy, resides in nearby Annapolis...

...Since moving to Kent Island, Myrtle has been a member at Galilee Lutheran Church in Chester. She also joined and was a very active member of the Kent Island Heritage Society where for many years she served on the Board of Directors. She was instrumental in the KI Heritage Society's forming a collection of historical documents kept in the Kent Island Free Public Library.

Her niece, Virginia Ingling, who grew up on Kent Island in the 1950s, and has lived in College Park for the past 50-years with her husband, said, "We always would come to visit Aunt Myrtle, especially during the holidays. She is a great cook! And she always kept us well fed."

Her next-door neighbor for many years in the Marling Farms community was local historical author Mark Lidinsky. Lidinsky has written three semi-fictional historical novels about Kent Island; "Captain's Boyle's Treasure" (about the War of 1812), "The Headless Oysterman" (about the Oysters Wars on the Chesapeake Bay), and "Clinectes Sapidus, Steamed Hon". Latin translation — Beautiful Swimmers (about crabbing around Kent Island in years past). In each novel Lidinsky wrote about Myrtle through a character he called "Missy Biscuit" — a reference to her great cooking skills, especially her famed black walnut cake she would bake for him each Christmas. Lidinsky added, "There are people on Kent Island who'd love to have Myrtle's recipe for that cake! She is an amazing person. It's because of her that I became a member of the KI Heritage Society."

Asked what she attributes to her longevity of life? She replied, "Good genes! I've always been healthy all my life. Other than that, I don't know." She also said, I'm hoping to pass the mark set in our family by my late uncle. He lived to be 108.

We thank Doug for sharing his comments. Well, Ms. Myrtle didn't quite make it to 108, but she sure did well! I recall the conversation I had with Ms. Myrtle at her last Kent Island Day 2 years ago. She and her niece, Ginger, had walked down into town from Terrapin Grove where she lived! That's a pretty good stretch!. We chatted briefly and when I expressed surprise that they were on foot she basically said no big deal, she had her walker with the little seat on it and if she needed to she could sit a while and rest!. Standing, I watched them slowly make their way up Love Point Road. I couldn't help but think of that same positive strength, will, and determination that had served her through a long and sharing life. We thank Ms. Myrtle for all of herself that she shared with The Kent Island Heritage Society and with our community for so many years.

Jack Broderick

THE LAST LOG CANOE

by Linda Severa Collier

As did many of us during the pandemic, I found myself going through boxes and bags of photos, receipts, and papers that I had put off way too long. This is very labor intensive as I have to read every letter and clipping that I come across. My Mother died in 2000 and much of her paper cache still remains. It is very painful for me, as I have a generational defect when it comes to getting rid of things.

This particular day in October, I came across a newspaper article from the March 30, 1977 Bay Times entitled, *Island Family continues boat building heritage, four generations of Thompsons*. I'm sure she kept it because these guys were her cousins (my grandmother Daisy was a Thompson), and because my father and his brother were mentioned, but something else caught my eye, the phrase, **he built the last log canoe on Kent Island**. You need to understand that although I was born on Kent Island and lived on the island all my life, when reading **log canoe**, I immediately thought of a log, hollowed out and pointed on both ends, being paddled by a native American. I needed to do some research and find out exactly what a log canoe was. I didn't even know what

I really wasn't so far off, as the boats you see in the picture are indeed pointed on both ends, made of logs that have been hewn with an axe and an adze. I happened to mention at a board meeting that the last canoe to be built on the island was built by Joseph A. Thompson, the patriarch of the Thompson boat building family, and it might make a good newsletter article. One of our members said, "that log canoe is at the Maritime Museum in Saint Michaels". "Really", I said. "It's still around after all these years?" I now knew where I would start my investigation.

I had met Pete Leshner, the curator at the museum, when he came to Kirwan House after our 2007 disaster. I gave him a call the next day (Friday) and he said that they did indeed own the log canoe named the Alverta. She had been on display but, during hurricane Isabel she had taken a little journey and when they retrieved her, she went into storage. By some strange coincidence they were taking her out on Monday to have some sprucing up as she may go back on display, and while she was out, he would take a picture for me. Note: not all their boats are on display at one time.

*Watermen
with log
canoes at
Little Creek*



*The Alverta,
a five log
canoe at
CBMM,
2020*

one looked like, but I wanted to find out - I could write a story about it. I would educate myself first. I would google it.

I discovered that the log canoe is the boat most closely associated with the Chesapeake Bay and indeed the first settlers found the native Americans using dugouts of loblolly pine and poplar trees. They burned the center with hot rocks and then scraped out the middle with oyster shells. Lack of boat builders forced the first settlers to adapt the log canoe to their needs, including the joining of logs together and the use of sails. Around the turn of the century the log canoe was the most popular boat with the local watermen. The thickness of the bottom made it ideal if they scraped an oyster shell bottom. They were virtually indestructible. They were made of either 1, 3, 5, 7, and even 9 logs. A one-log canoe was called a punt. There were mainly three styles: the Poquoson, Pocomoke and Tilghman. Joshua Thomas, ("Parson of the Islands") sailed a punt named The Methodist as he spread the gospel to the lower islands of the bay.

He told me of a book he and a colleague wrote describing all the wooden boats at the museum and I promptly ordered it. Between the article in the old newspaper, Pete's book, Maryland Historic Trust, the Silver Heel foundation and some old newspaper articles, I have learned a lot about log canoes, but I am going to concentrate on the Kent Island involvement.

The Alverta did not start out with that name. It was built for Pete Baxter in 1908 and named for his beloved daughter Isabel. Yes, our own little Isabel Porter who just passed away in 2014. The name change came about when a subsequent owner renamed it after his wife. John A. Gardner, LeRoy Smith, Phil King (husband of Alverta), Delbert Baker and finally Delbert's sister, Joyce Ferris, were all owners, with the Ferris' donating it to the Maritime Museum in 1951. The hull was begun by Walter Gardner from Kent Island, who injured his knee with an adze and was unable to finish it. Work was continued by Joseph A. Thompson and he always bragged that he had built

the last Kent Island log canoe. Joseph started his business around 1900 when boats were powered by sail, but the Isabel was originally built with a one-cylinder engine. Later, Joseph's son Lemuel, Sr., who was good friends of Eddie and Monk Severa, would build most of his boats for use with power. Lem Sr. built the boats and the Severa brothers would handle the engines. They had to have good lumber to build these boats and it often came from Cap'n Kirwan, St. Michaels or Jim Cockey, the only other boat builder around. By 1920 the sail canoe was no longer being built and the Thompson family was splitting the log canoes down the middle to make them wide enough for engines. Joseph A. also had a brother Eugene, who made boats and in 1902 made a log canoe for a man in Kent county. The boat was named the Silver Heel. She is significant in that she is one of the last 22 surviving Chesapeake Bay racing log canoes that carries on the tradition of racing that has existed since the 1840s. The Queenstown News of June 16th, 1900 states that Kent Island would be having horse racing on the 4th of July and canoe races on the 18th.

The Silver Heel is supported by a foundation in Chestertown that still maintains and regularly races the Silver Heel today - 113 years after Eugene Thompson built her.

The *Marianne* is the smallest surviving racing log canoe and belonged to my father for a lot of its life. It was built in 1916 with an engine and used for oystering and then at some point, he converted it to sail. I had heard it was at the Maritime Museum, and it was confirmed in Pete's book, *A Heritage in Wood*. Constructed of three yellow pine logs, it was a Tilghman boat, as most were in our area.

The *Marianne* was built in Bryantown but spent most of its life at Little Creek. Teddy Lee told me he remembered seeing my parents sail up and down Crab Alley Creek in this boat. I have one recollection of riding in it as a little child with my brother at the tiller and being totally terrified that I would drown. It was sold in 1956. The new owner rigged it for racing, participating in the log canoe races at St. Michaels for a number of years. It didn't do very well because of its small size. The Miles River Yacht club sponsors log canoe races to this day. After the owner donated it to the Maritime Museum she continued to race but was eventually retired.

In 2015, the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum built a new canoe named the Bufflehead and used the *Marianne* for a pattern. It is such a lengthy process, starting with picking out 3 good straight loblolly pine trees and then carving them into shape. You can see a video on the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum web site. (www.cbmm.org)

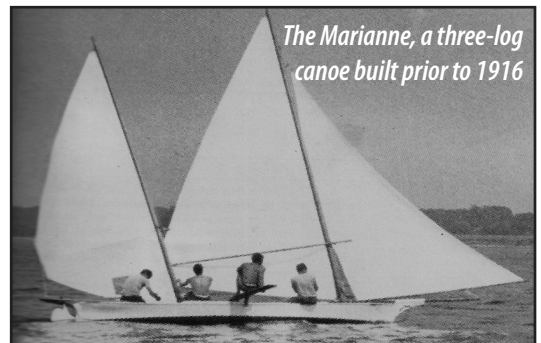
The four generations of Thompson family boat builders have now been extended to five. **Joseph A.**, builder of the Isabel (Alverta) in 1908., **Lemuel Sr.** saw the canoes converted to combustion engine, **Lemuel Jr.** got into building and racing hydroplanes, **Sandy**, and now his son **David**, say they'll work on anything, as long as it's a boat!

As you can see, these log canoes are much more sophisticated than a Native American dugout but built on the same principles. They are beautiful, fast boats and of the 22 left, 3 are still functional and have Kent Island connections.

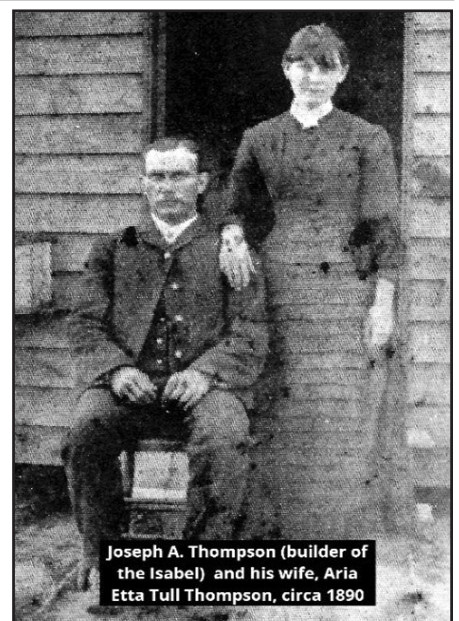
When your boats are still floating after 100 years and generations have followed in your footsteps, you must have been a darn good boat builder. Although St. Michaels and Tilghman were the epicenters of canoe building around the bay, they also really knew how to build them on Kent Island!



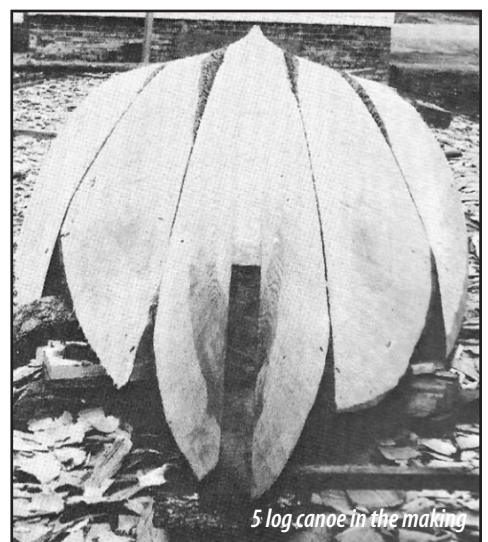
The Silver Heel built 1902



The Marianne, a three-log canoe built prior to 1916



Joseph A. Thompson (builder of the Isabel) and his wife, Etta Tull Thompson, circa 1890



5 log canoe in the making

The Monarchs of Kirwan's – Who Knew!

by Jack Broderick

It was just a bunch of weeds in an isolated couple-acre field just north of the Kirwan House. It was too small for our farmer to plant and was not included in the Cropland Reserve Program (CRP) acreage - so it just grew naturally. Each fall we would mow it down for overflow parking for our fall heritage picnic.

No harm? Right? Our friend, Andi Pupki, reached out to us a couple years ago with a request and an amazing story. Andi is the Education/Outreach Director for Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage (CWH) located at Barnstable Hill Farm at the mouth of Kirwan Creek. It seems that our "ugly" patch of weeds was, in fact, one of the largest stands of native milkweeds on this part of the island and was

a critical nursery for many thousands of Monarch butterflies!

Of course, we listened and took her request to heart. We learned that Monarchs lay their eggs on the milkweed plant. When they hatch, the only thing the baby caterpillars can eat is milkweed sap, that sticky white juice that gives the milkweed its name. They form a protective shell-like structure called a chrysalis hanging from a stalk then finally emerge as the beautiful Monarch butterfly. So, the Monarchs that are born and raised here on Kent Island, in our field, will fatten up on nectar then migrate to Mexico for the winter. Here is our story from Andi's professional perspective...

"The Kent Island Heritage Society has made vast improvements managing the milkweed patch north of the Kirwan General Store. It had been mown in the past in September. In the last two years the mowing has been delayed. By delaying the mowing, Monarch caterpillars that were still feeding on the Milkweed were protected.

The Milkweed plant is the host plant of the Monarch Butterfly. The caterpillar (larvae) can only survive on milkweed, (*Asclepias* sp.). In the last 20 years we have lost over 80% of our population of Monarchs, due to habitat loss, insecticide use and other intensive land management like ill-timed mowing. A critical part of the Monarch's habitat are the milkweed patches that are found in old field areas like that of the Kirwan General Store site.

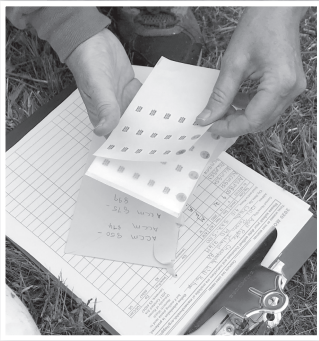
The September mowing was done for overflow parking at the General Store for a fall event, but once the KIHS learned of the mowing's effects on the monarch's population they were happy to discuss a better mowing strategy that may work for the event as well as the Monarchs. Since that time, the area that has the most milkweed has not been mowed during the time that Monarchs and many other critters may be using it. The Heritage Society has worked to manage the milkweed patch to benefit our native wildlife especially our local Monarch population.

During the fall, the Monarchs migrate south to Mexico, as they migrate, they must gain weight to survive the winter. Throughout the migratory path of the monarch, intensive land management practices such as frequent mowing, non-target impacts of insecticide use and increased developed areas deplete the habitat needed for the Monarch to survive the arduous trip, much less gain and store weight for the winter.



Fall flowering species are also vital for the monarch to fuel up during the migration. In the mid-shore region plants like Asters, Golden rod, and Tick seed sunflower, offer nectar late into the fall. Milkweeds are nectar-rich plants when in flower and they benefit many bee species and other pollinators as well as the monarch, but in our area, they flower in mid-summer, not during migration. Shallow wetlands that dry up during the summer are often in full bloom late into the fall offering a variety of flowering plants for nectaring butterflies.

What can you do along the Monarch's migratory routes? Planting and preserving not only milkweed plants but also flowering species that offer nectar throughout the breeding and migrating season will help the Monarch reproduce and migrate to their wintering grounds. Time your mowing outside the breeding and migrating season so you will not remove vital habitat and use less insecticides."...



As we learn more from Andi about the milkweed and the Monarchs and our role as stewards of the natural environment at Kirwan's, she has continued advising us on better management practices for our milkweed patch. Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage, works to protect, enhance, and establish wildlife habitat. Andi is fulfilling that mission in her work with the heritage society as we have switched our mowing to the late winter. We thank Claude Lowery, who is a member of the Hunt Club that leases the farm, for switching his annual pro-bono mowing of that field from early fall to late winter.

There is another fascinating part of Andi's Monarch story. Since 1999, Andi has participated in a research project that tags and tracks migrating Monarchs. Yes, you can actually tag a butterfly!! Last September, after she stopped by the Kirwan place to "harvest" milkweed pods for her seed bank, we went down to Barnstable Hill Farm to her huge butterfly meadow and watched her catch, tag, and release them off to Mexico. And we have the pictures!

Each fall Andi holds a workshop at Barnstable Hill teaching visitors about the life cycle and migration of the Monarch butterfly. During her workshop

participants can actually help tag the fall generation of Monarchs that are heading to Mexico. We are considering a special excursion there next fall for KIHS members. Meanwhile, CWH continues to work with numerous landowners to establish habitat on their property for the Monarchs and many other critters.

We are grateful that Andi Pupke reached out to us on behalf of the Monarchs. We have learned a great deal in the process and are proud to be able to do our part for the success of the Monarchs and to share our story with our members and visitors. So this year the field was cut in March, thousands of milkweed plants are flourishing and covering the field as of late May. We'll await the return of a new generation of Monarchs this summer to lay their eggs on our milkweeds, as another natural cycle begins.

Now we know...

We not only have a wonderful past history at Kirwan's but a fascinating present!

Thank you, Andi.

Milkweeds and History – What a Plant!

by Jack Broderick

We explored the role of the “lowly” milkweed in the life of the Monarch butterfly and were amazed to learn of the role of this plant in the Monarchs long and fascinating history. As documented in our article on the Monarchs, that beautiful and famous butterfly is totally dependent on the milkweed plant alone from egg to its birth as a fully-grown butterfly.

Our research shows that humans have also been dependent on milkweeds for centuries, if not millennia. Native Americans used it as a medical staple for myriad problems. The Omaha people called it “wah’tha” meaning “raw medicine”. The milky sap was used as a salve for all sorts of skin wounds and abrasions, the root was boiled to make a healing tea for abdominal and intestinal ailments. The shoots and leaves were used for food, after boiling to remove some of the natural toxins. The bark fibers of the stalk could be stripped and twisted into a strong rope like hemp. Another use lent itself to clothing. The soft floss (fibers that surround the seed and carry it off in the breeze) were combined with cottontail rabbit fur to spin a soft, strong yarn which was then woven to make a six-foot-long loin cloth – the Native American version of underwear!

Early American Colonists borrowed many ideas and uses of native flora and fauna from the native peoples, including the myriad uses of the milkweed. We can infer that the same was true in the early exchanges here on Kent Island.



A more recent part of the plant’s history tells how the milkweed was used to save lives in World War II. Apparently, as various traditional products came into short supply during the war, one critical item that was affected was the life preserver. The flotation in most life preservers was derived from kapok, a buoyant cotton-like product, stuffed in sealed plastic bags. But the kapok supply was cut off with the Japanese invasion of Java and other Pacific Islands where it grew. It was discovered that milkweed floss had the same waterproof and buoyant qualities as kapok, so a national emergency call went out for milkweed pods! KI Heritage Society Board Member, Lou Crouch, has found articles in the QA Record Observer from the summer of 1944 documenting the local effort. The project was coordinated statewide by the University of Maryland and locally through the county agricultural agents to engage farmers in harvesting milkweed. Also, the Junior Red Cross, FFA, 4H, and the Scouts engaged young boys and girls to collect the pods. Lou Crouch (board member) has shared some childhood memories from his brother, Don, about his direct role here on Kent Island in that unique war effort.

As I recall, the milkweed collection was a single time project near the end of the war when the standard life jacket flotation materials, rubber/air bladders, cork, and later, kapok, were beginning to run low. Synthetic materials were just beginning to emerge from their invention laboratories. I believe the one-time milkweed pod collection project was taken on by our newly formed Boy Scout Troop #164 in 1943/44 where we met weekly at the old Chester Grades 1-4 Elementary school, previously located on the SW corner of Main and Dominion Roads. The milkweed pod recycle-facility-folks preferred that we collectors picked the maturing pods just before they burst and released the fiber-born seeds into the prevailing wind-streams.

We were told to use discarded onion bags for collecting the milkweed pods because the wide spacing of the bags' material permitted continued drying of the pods after their collection. As usual, Billy Denny and Donnie Crouch partnered for this patriotic task and we set off for the Kent Island shorelines in search for the pods in a manner similar to collecting wild asparagus, berries, etc. Other scouts searched along railroad tracks, roadside drainage ditches, fence lines, farmers' fields, etc but the total yield was much lower than we had expected. As I recall, I think our Troop 164 collected somewhat less than 20 bags of pods which would have yielded enough floss to fabricate 10 life jackets.

- Don Crouch

Not bad, considering that Don and his scout troop could have saved the lives of 10 American sailors with their efforts! We thank Don for sharing those memories.

Other uses of that weed have been considered for industry, including processing of the oily seed itself for use as a lubricant. Even Thomas Edison dabbled with milkweeds, when he experimented with possibilities

that the sticky white sap could be a possible source of a type of latex to produce rubber! It doesn't seem like that idea went very far.

Today, the main users and beneficiaries of the milkweed are the beautiful, famous, Monarch butterflies.

As our Vice President of the Heritage Society, Bob Lowe has reflected, "we're glad to be the conservators of the milkweed patch at the Kirwan Farm. Just another great thing about the Kirwan property!". We hope you think of those beautiful Monarchs and the history of those milkweeds when you drive by the Kirwan Farm. We certainly shall.



STATEMENT ON THE THIRD BAY CROSSING TIER 1 NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA) STUDY

May 10, 2021
by Jack Broderick

The recommendation of the Bay Crossing Tier 1 NEPA Study is that the third bay bridge should be constructed in Corridor 7, across Kent Island. This is in direct opposition to The Kent Island Heritage Society Board of Directors wishes. The mission of the Kent Island Heritage Society is to discover, identify, restore, and preserve the heritage of Kent Island. This proposal is a clear threat to preserving the heritage of Kent Island.

The Corridor 7 option adjacent and to the north of the current westbound span, would necessarily require a huge swath of Sandy Point State Park on the Western Shore and Terrapin Park on Kent Island on the Eastern Shore. It would incorporate the existing road network from west of the Severn River in Annapolis to the 50/301 split in Queenstown, with a great deal of necessary expansion. This option incorporates a two-mile-wide swath along the existing corridor to facilitate the additional infrastructure that would be required. The exact location(s) within this swath, roughly 1 mile north and south of the existing highway would be left to the discretion of the State and Federal decision makers, during the Tier 2 process, requiring a “just trust us” approach. Based on recent experience with Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) and State Highway Administration (SHA), that trust is just not there. Very few Kent Islanders think that the Corridor 7 option is reasonable or responsible.

We shall focus our comments to the Eastern Shore side. If you look at Corridor 7 across Kent Island you are impacting and potentially destroying the historic, cultural, and economic heart and soul of Kent Island. This would include:

- ◆ a number of residences including those in historic sites in the nationally recognized Stevensville Historic District
- ◆ the Stevensville Cemetery
- ◆ many historic assets along the route and in the unique Kent Narrows location
- ◆ hundreds of businesses located on both sides of Rt. 50
- ◆ many parks and public assets
- ◆ QA County Public Schools
- ◆ the Kent Island Library
- ◆ the Kent Island Volunteer Fire Dept
- ◆ the Anne Arundel Medical Center,
- ◆ two of the Island’s largest churches
- ◆ the Cross Island Trail from Kent Narrows to Terrapin Park (which follows the route of the historic railroad line across the Island)
- ◆ thousands of acres of wetlands and water access

We have studied the details of the Tier 1 Study and have also reviewed the detailed analysis and critique offered by the Queen Anne’s Conservation Association (QACA). We have also reviewed the critique presented by professional traffic engineer and analyst, Kent Island resident, David Humphries. Frankly, they both make a great deal more sense than the State’s Tier 1 Study. They both argue that the emphasis is primarily on questionable traffic analysis and projections with no real analysis of any of the so-called “corridors”. The QACA critique convincingly argues that, in what is supposed to be an Environmental Impact Study, there is no legitimate analysis of the real environmental

impact other than the assertion that such details could be determined in the next Tier 2 Study!

These are well thought out, documented analyses by professionals, particularly the painstaking detail of the QACA critique. But the concerned non-technical citizens of the Kent Island Heritage Board have come to the same conclusion. The Corridor 7 option across Kent Island is not logically supported, and just makes no sense.

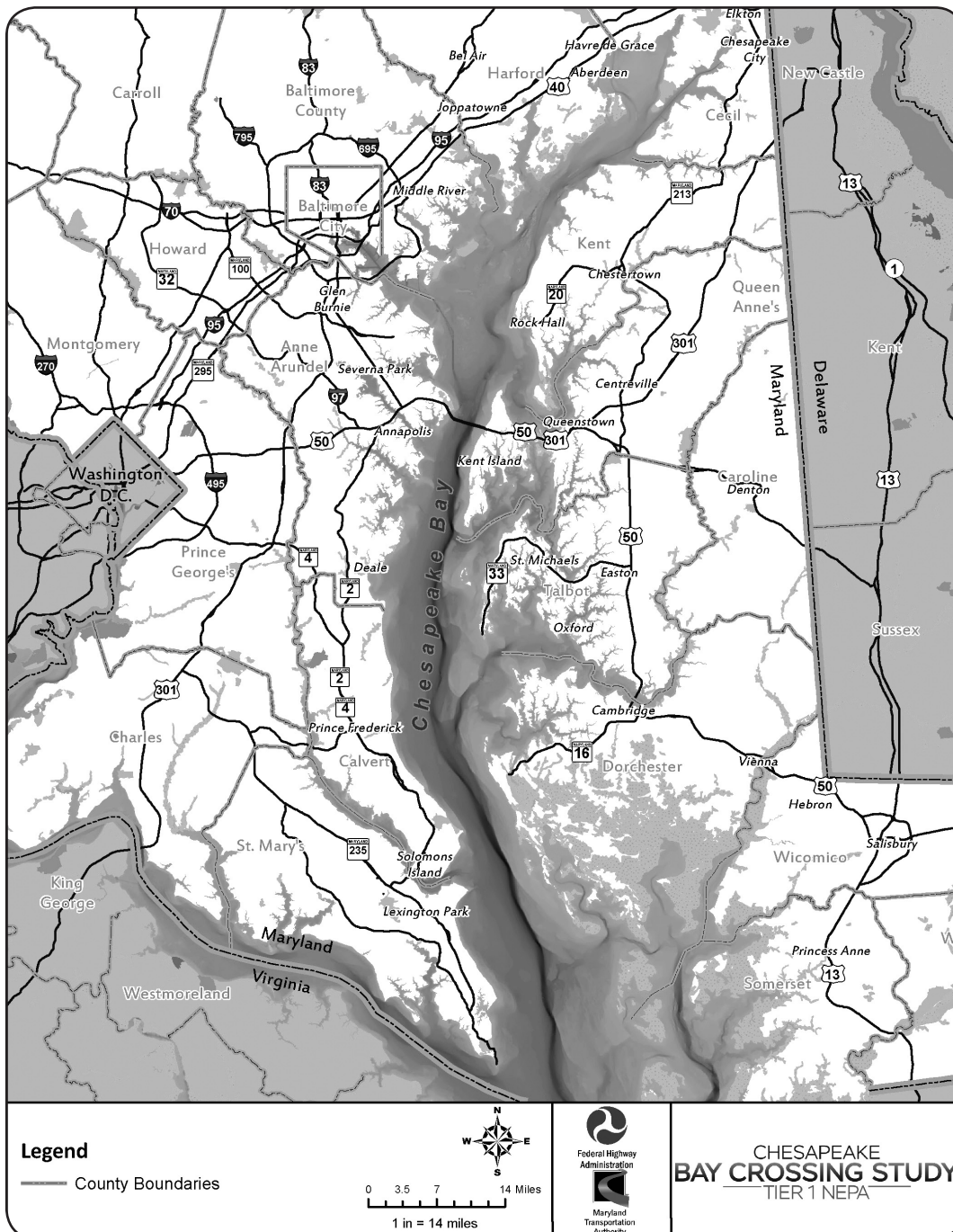
Furthermore, the public statement made about a year and a half ago that Corridor 7 would

be the only option that would be supported undermined confidence in the veracity of the study. That statement led many to believe that conclusion was known from the beginning and that the study was done to rationalize the final decision.

Many Islanders are aware of the local historic hero, Senator James Kirwan, who stood up 100 years ago to defend against the Federal plan to take over Kent Island in 1917 at the onset of World War I. The Island was to become a bomb testing site and munitions depot. After a

huge local protest, it was ultimately moved north to a place called Aberdeen. We are reminded of that time as well as that threat.

Given the tremendous potential for the destruction of so much of Kent Island, including its rich and unique history, of the four options presented the only conclusion is the no build option, with the recommendation to go back and restart the process. In the meantime, MDTA should do everything possible to maximize the capacity of the existing spans, using all viable modern traffic management technologies and transportation options. The focus should be on repair or replacement as necessary of the existing spans while another "corridor" at a second distant location is studied and identified



GET TO KNOW THE BOARD MEMBERS



LESLIE MOORE

Leslie Moore hails originally from North Carolina's Outer Banks. He and his wife and fellow KIHS Board Member, Linda, resided in Severna Park, MD for 40 years before retiring to the south end of Kent Island in 2018. He enjoys boating, exploring the many rivers and

creeks of the Eastern Shore and spending time with his children and grandchildren when they visit. Leslie has a keen interest in the history of Kent Island. He has been working with the Board to develop a plan for possible fund raising should KIHS pursue acquiring the historic bank in Stevensville.

INTRUDER SURRENDERS WITHOUT INCIDENT



WANTED: FOOD TESTER, night shift.

Needs steady hands to sort vegetables and fruits; artistic ability helpful to design seasonal and sale window and floor displays. Must demonstrate cleanliness and willingness to wear a mask according to Pandemic guidelines...Pay: ten clams a week Call 555-555-5555 ask for Indiana Jack.

Covid or Rabid job seekers need not apply.

NB This unwelcome intruder who broke into the Kirwan Store on April 22nd (EarthDay!) gave Linda Collier, Museum Curator, and two Garden Club visitors quite a shock as they entered the Kirwan Store, witnessing firsthand the masked miscreant's mischief. The problem was efficiently dispatched when the intrepid QAC Animal Control arrived and escorted the scoundrel from the premises.

THE WASHINGTON POST
PUBLISHED THIS LETTER ON
SATURDAY MAY 15. WE SUSPECT
SOME FROM THE CALVERT SIDE
OF THE BAY WILL NOT AGREE.

Kent Island came first

Two recent Retropolis columns — “Md. dig unearths rare, nearly 380-year-old coin” [May 3] and “A 90-year search unearths lost fort” [March 22] — on important discoveries in St. Mary's City refer to its founding in 1634 as marking “the first permanent English settlement in Maryland.”

The first permanent English settlement in what is today Maryland occurred when Englishman William Claiborne sailed up the Chesapeake Bay from Jamestown and settled Kent Island in 1631. It was the third permanent English settlement in North America, following Jamestown (1607) and Plymouth (1620) Maryland did not exist in 1631, and Kent Island was then considered part of Virginia.

The Maryland Charter of 1632 was granted to Cecilius Calvert by King Charles I to establish the Maryland Colony, and it included Kent Island. This provision was immediately disputed by Virginia and certainly by Claiborne and his fellow Kent Island settlers. The first naval battle on the Chesapeake was fought over the issue in 1635. The Maryland Colony forces seized Kent Island in 1637 as a rightful part of their domain while Claiborne was back in England to dispute the jurisdiction claim. He lost, and Kent Island was verified as being part of Maryland.

Kent Island, established in 1631, was the first permanent English settlement in what is today Maryland. St. Mary's City was the first permanent English settlement established in the new colony of Maryland and — surely the Calverts of yore would agree — the second-oldest settlement in today's Maryland. Thanks for focusing on early Maryland (and perhaps Virginia) history.

John L. Conley, Chester, Md.
*The writer is a member of the
board of directors of the
Kent Island Heritage Society.*

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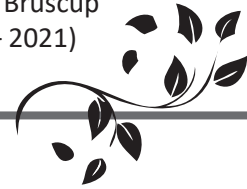
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Welcome New Members

Charles C. Chance - *Life Member*
Julie Eaton - *Life Member*

In Memoriam

Myrtle S. Bruscup
(1919 – 2021)



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| <input type="checkbox"/> Business Membership | \$50.00 | | |

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P.O. Box 321, Stevensville, Maryland
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Photographic Exhibition**

Exhibitor's Name *Miss E. H. Hulman*
Address *Belair Road &
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Title of Picture *Hotel Love Point*
Location *Love Point Md*
Camera used *#2 a Brownie*
Lens used *Messersch*
Plate or Film used *Eastman*
Exposure *Snapshots*
Stop *Larger*
Developed with *M. C. Allister*
Paper and Printing Process used *Vellox*

State if composition, posing or arrangement of the picture, the exposure, developing, printing, mounting or enlarging, is entirely the work of the exhibitor

*Pictures taken
by exhibitor*



POSTCARD

from Kent Island: Photo Contest 1914

Submitted from collection of John L. Conley

This issue's postcard is not really a postcard, but does show the type of photograph upon which postcards were made. The photograph of the Love Point Hotel was submitted for a photo exhibition sponsored by Hochschild, Kohn & Company in 1914. Since the men in the photograph are wearing straw hats, it was probably taken in 1913. Fortunately, information about the photographer, camera equipment and processing are on the reverse of the photograph.