

# Isle of Kent - 1631

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

NEWSLETTER OF THE KENT ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC.

SUMMER 2022

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## Kent Island Day Returns with the KI Day Parade



## President's Message

Yes! We celebrated Kent Island Day this year after a two year hiatus!

On Saturday, May 21 the weather sparkled in Historic Downtown Stevensville and the community came out as we had hoped. We had the estimated largest crowd ever, with the largest number of vendors and exhibitors ever. After the opening ceremony led by Sen. Steve Hershey and Commissioner Chris Corchiarino, the colorful Parade followed, honoring Dr. Earl Chambers as Grand

Marshall. Dr. Earl, a Director Emeritus of the KI Heritage Board is a highly respected long-time community leader and advocate. As the weather warmed up during the day, the visitors and their families enjoyed the food, fun, and friendship of Kent Island Day. Enjoy the pictures of our celebration here in this Newsletter.

*(Continued on page 2)*

There is one important note I have to mention. After, I was injured in a golf cart accident during early preparations, our Board, led by VP Bob Lowe, and our KI Day Team stepped up and insured success throughout the day. My heartfelt thanks and hardy congratulations to each of them!

In addition to our “Post-Covid coming out celebration” for Kent Island Day, we’ve opened all of our historic sites the first Saturday of the month through November and for special tours upon request. Just call or email to request a special tour.

We are also hosting a number of other events through the year. On Tuesday June 14 in Historic Christ Church in Stevensville, we held a public presentation on the newly designated Underground Railroad Network to Freedom site on Kent Island, about the Stoopley Gibson / White’s Heritage Manor House in Gibson’s Grant. The presentation was by Andrew Costello, who with his wife Mackenzie, owns the Manor, and Matt LaRoche, University of Maryland, Graduate Assistant. A large crowd was treated to a fascinating evening. See the article here in this newsletter.

In September we plan to host our annual Fall Heritage Picnic at the Kirwan House, showcasing the Kirwan Place itself along with Kent Island’s autumn glory. In December we plan to host our annual Holiday general meeting and elections at Cascia Vineyards. We also plan to participate again in the annual Queen Anne’s County Festival of Trains in December, highlighting the railroading heritage of Kent Island. During the summer, we plan to join our partners in the Stevensville A&E District for a “Thursdays in the Park” concert sponsored by the Queen Anne’s County Center for the Arts. This year the concert will be held in Stevensville on the green next to the train station. Check local press and social media for details. We also plan to host a book signing event for local author and friend, Jack Shaum, for his new book on the history of the famous “Old Bay Line”, after it is released in the coming months. Check social media for details. We held a similar event several years ago for Jack’s first book, “Lost Steamboats of the Chester River”.

Our plans to explore and celebrate our Native American history on Kent Island are still in a holding pattern pending availability of new exhibit space for the famous Marks collection of artifacts, with the assistance of Dr. Darrin Lowery. In addition, we look forward to the completion of the archaeological project on Parson’s Island, overseen by Dr. Lowery and Dr. Mike Walsh of Texas A&M.

There is an exciting new project that we are supporting, as mentioned in our last Newsletter. The project is documenting part of our local African American history, the seafood shanties of Kent Narrows. Supported by several grants, the “Shantytown” project is being spearheaded by historical researcher Yolanda Acre. We look forward to sharing access to our heritage files and to offering research assistance. The goal of the project is a new exhibit at the Kennard African American Heritage Center in Centreville and a possible future book.

Much of our Heritage Society work in the past two years was done virtually, due to the pandemic. However, we are still experiencing greatly increased demand for on-line genealogical and historical research. Our Board Members, Lou Crouch, Annie Mae Price, Bob Lowe and Linda Collier, continue to step up to provide priceless information for inquiring families and researchers. We expect that trend to continue. We also will continue to develop and present sessions, both virtually and in person, on Kent Island’s history to local groups upon request

On the broader community level, we have participated in a number of ways to help strengthen and protect our heritage. Some of the efforts shared in our last Newsletter bear repeating and updating. We continue to work closely with our QA County Tourism Office in our mutual commitment to strengthen heritage tourism. We are now partnering in a new program to have our Stevensville sites documented in a new Iphone app using information in our Historic Stevensville Walking Tour pamphlet as a guide. We really appreciate our QA Tourism partnership. We are also actively engaged in the process to revitalize the Historic Stevensville Arts and Entertainment (A&E) District, where most of our historic sites are located. We’ll be partnering with the new A&E leadership team in numerous events in 2022. Updates will be on our website and social media. Likewise, we are engaged with the QA County Library in their KI Branch expansion efforts to support our future records storage and research activities.

On the controversial Bay Bridge front, several important new announcements have been made. As previously discussed, we opposed the third span proposal, advocating instead for a larger replacement of the two existing bridges. Our QA Commissioners have supported a similar proposal. The State has announced the decision (supported by the Federal Government) to approve the Tier 1 Study for a Third Span and move on to the next phase, a Tier 2 Study. The Governor has just announced a commitment of \$28 M to support the Tier 2 Study. The key factor is whether it will be a new third bridge or a replacement of the two older bridges. This will be a long-term effort but will bear close watching and involvement, as the potential consequences for Kent Island are huge.

And importantly, from the long-range planning perspective, we were actively engaged with the QA County Department of Planning and Zoning in drafting the update of the County Comprehensive Master Plan relating to preservation of our historic and cultural heritage over the next decade. Working in concert with our heritage partners of the QA Historic Sites Consortium we anticipate a strong approach from the County level in support of our heritage and cultural preservation. The Plan was approved by the County Commissioners in early June.

In our last Newsletter we shared the news welcoming our four new Board Members. However, it is with profound sadness that I share the news that Mindy Voelker died in mid-June. Mindy was excited to join the Board but became quite ill during the last several months. She was a long-time friend of several of us. We will miss her energy and enthusiasm. We offer our condolences to Mike and their family. Mindy's obituary is here in the Newsletter.

With our plans to reopen our historic sites having started in May, we want to emphasize the important work of our docents, our guides, at each site. Our docents are the folks dressed in authentic historic period outfits who meet and greet our visitors and tell our stories. Being a docent can be stimulating and fun and educational. If you appreciate our Kent Island History and enjoy meeting people, consider becoming a docent.

We want to close on a positive note. In late May, we presented our Heritage Society Scholarship to Noah Wigglesworth, an impressive graduating senior from Kent Island High School. Check out Noah's winning essay and picture. According to the Scholarship judges, there were several outstanding entries for the award this year.

On Memorial Day weekend, we hosted our first wedding at the Kirwan House for the Brown Family of Kent Island. It's a great story. The Bride's brother, Josh Brown, several years ago as an Eagle Scout, had rebuilt the Kirwan gazebo to the beautiful structure that it is today. The Brown Family has assisted in helping to restore the area around the gazebo. On May 29, Josh's sister, Jessica, was joined in marriage with Justin Hartman under the gazebo. Their story and pictures are here in this Newsletter and we hope to be able to offer the site as a wedding venue to the public sometime in the future.

We thank you for your continuing support as we look forward to continuing a "recovery" year of activities and events in support of our mission to discover, identify, restore, and preserve the heritage of Kent Island.

Stay cool. Enjoy your summer!

*Jack Broderick*

## SEARCH FOR POTTERY ID LEADS TO USEFUL INFORMATION

We ran these pictures of pottery found by KIHs member Marvin Barrash in our Spring 2022 newsletter and asked for information. We are most appreciative of responses from Dr. Matthew D. McKnight, Chief Archaeologist-Maryland Historical Trust, Maryland Department of Planning, and Elizabeth A. Seidel, Director/Senior Staff Archaeologist, Past Is Present Archaeology Lab, Washington College, Chestertown, MD. Dr. McKnight responded, and Director Seidel agreed, the following:



These are likely 20th century sherds. I forwarded on to some folks at the MAC Lab and this was their response. "The pieces were thrown on a wheel rather than molded, as evidenced by the heavy throw rings on the interior. The black on the exterior appears to be some sort of glaze that is wearing away. The inscribed leaf design and the glaze suggest to me that this piece probably dates to the early 20th century or later. Art nouveau or deco, perhaps? Some sort of art pottery, which was quite common at that time, and that overall vessel shape was popular then, too. But I have never seen

anything like this, so I can't be sure. But I'm virtually certain it doesn't date any earlier."

Dr. McKnight recommends an app called mdFIND which is designed to allow members of the public to record artifact discoveries and report them to the Maryland Historical Trust Office of Archaeology. It can be downloaded for free at: <https://mht.maryland.gov/documents/PDF/research/mdFIND.pdf>.

Dr. McKnight would like to conduct further archeological research with his team in the Kent Fort area. He has already written a chapter on "The Claiborne Fort on Kent Island" in his book *The Archaeology of Colonial Maryland* which is available from the Maryland Historical Trust Press. He can be reached at [matthew.mcknight@maryland.gov](mailto:matthew.mcknight@maryland.gov).

KIHs member Elizabeth Seidel has offered to conduct a joint event with KIHs to examine pottery shreds and other items of archaeological interest. While she would not be able to evaluate items for monetary value, she would provide information on the ware type, decorative treatment, age, etc. We will plan an event for this fall and keep members informed through our website and local media.

Thanks, Marvin, for providing your "finds" which clearly resulted in useful information for today and the future.



## LET US HEAR FROM YOU!!!!

Please contact KIHS if you have comments on items in Isle of Kent 1631 or if you have questions about Kent Island history that we can try to answer. We welcome topics you would find of interest and especially information you can provide for future issues.

Contact: John Conley  
jconcomm@gmail.com  
cell: 703-216-0449



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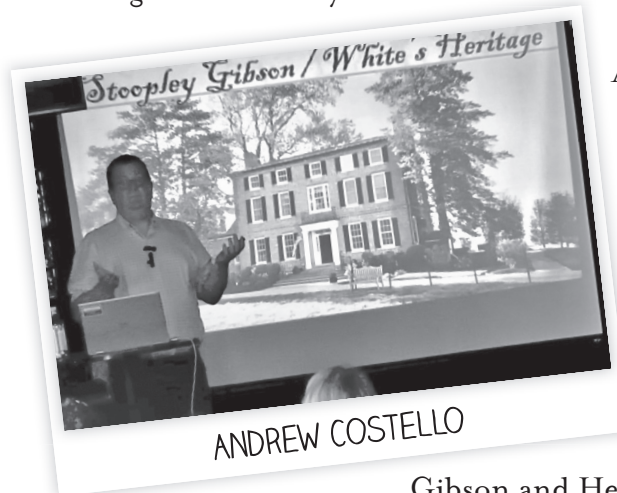


Quick Response (QR) Code

You can reach our Kent Island Heritage Society website with most Smartphones which are equipped with QR Code readers in their cameras. Hold your Smartphone camera over the QR Code so that it is clearly on the phone screen. The phone will scan the code and connect to the site. Some phones might require you to take a picture of the QR Code.

## STOOPLEY GIBSON PRESENTATION

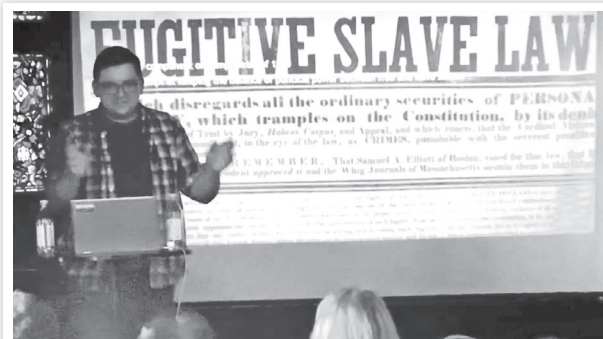
The June 14 Membership Meeting at Historic Christ Church in Stevensville featured a presentation on the historic Stoopley-Gibson (White's Heritage) property and the designation of the location of today's Gibson's Grant as a site on the National Park Service Network to Freedom Underground Railway Trail.



Andrew Costello, who with his wife Mackenzie own the historic house, detailed the history of the property from its land grant of 150 acres to John

Gibson and Henry Stoop in 1656 through today. Matthew LaRoche from the University of Maryland told the story of Henry Massey, the enslaved person who escaped from the property at age 14 around 1849. He was captured five years later in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and returned to Kent Island.

The full presentations can be found on our website [kentislandheritagesociety.org](http://kentislandheritagesociety.org). We encourage you to view them and to share them with others who might find this subject of interest.



MATTHEW LAROCHE

*Many thanks to Andrew, Matthew and to the Friends of Historic Christ Church for use of their space.*



## KENT ISLAND DAY PATRONS 2022

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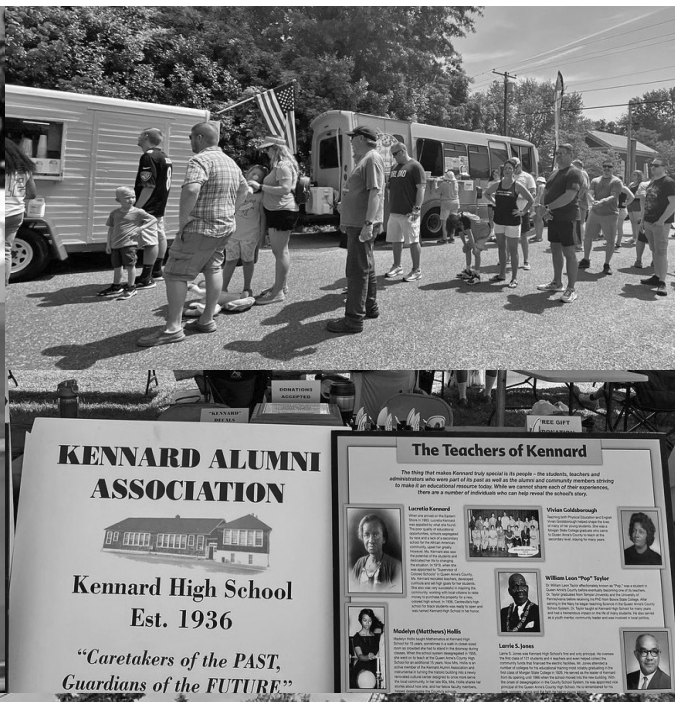






# KENT ISLAND





# ND DAY 2022





# The Kent Island Heritage Society Scholarship

Each year The Kent Island Heritage Society offers a one-year scholarship to a graduating senior from Kent Island High School who plans to attend college. To be eligible, the applicant must have a 3.0 GPA or higher and have performed community service. This year the scholarship was awarded to Noah Wigglesworth.

## SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION ESSAY



Noah Wigglesworth

4/26/22

Hi! My name is Noah Wigglesworth, I am a senior graduating from Kent Island High School this spring to attend the University of Maryland for a degree in Aerospace Engineering. I intend on pursuing a master's degree in some aerospace engineering specialization, and I want to utilize my abilities in math and science to apply my passion for aviation and astronautics. To me, aerospace engineering is more than rockets and planes-it is a diverse and ever-changing industry in which engineers have to consider modern problems and are challenged with solving more transportation, exploration, and efficiency problems than ever before. I want to fulfill the role of a modern aerospace engineer: to make forward-moving changes in the industry, with ethics and sustainability as the focus.

In writing about my life in the college application process, I always find myself describing my involvement in the Kent Island community. I am a responsible member of our community, and I work to preserve the deeply historical community found on Kent Island.

I am a recently distinguished Eagle Scout from Boy Scout Troop 1631, uniquely named after our host and my own church, Christ Church Parish, which was founded on Kent Island in the year 1631. Through Scouts, I have volunteered all throughout the Kent Island community, distributing medals at the finish line of the annual 10k Across the Bay, clearing trails at Terrapin Nature Park, and working on over ten Eagle Scout projects for other Eagles in my troop. These projects have included work at the James E. Kirwan house and multiple projects at Camp Wright, an episcopal day camp on South Kent Island founded under Christ Church in 1930. Aside from these Eagle projects, which have included handmade road signage, a large fire pit, fencing, and more, I have been otherwise deeply involved in Camp Wright since a young age. I attended the camp from grades K-8, just as my father did in the 1980s. I capped my Scouting career with my Eagle Scout project at Christ Church, in which I reconstructed a picnic area for clergy and the preschool students and teachers. I revitalized the area and built two picnic tables, a birdhouse, and a bat box. And, since the previous area fell into disrepair, I created a maintenance plan so that my project's impact will be sustained into the future.

It is essential to work to preserve our beautiful community simply because those in the future should be able to experience what we have today. The experiences I have had in my childhood living on Kent Island should be *shared*. Everyone should be able to grow up on a Kent Island that provides the opportunities I have been given to become a strong, confident person and student. If the past was not preserved for me, I might not have had the constructive experiences that I had at Camp Wright, which my dad had first over 40 years ago. The conversations with my dad about our shared experiences at camp are some of my favorites! They introduce thought-provoking discussion about the past, and they make me appreciate the world around me today.

It is fulfilling to preserve the community I have lived in my entire life, and I wouldn't pick any other place to have grown up. I cherish the opportunities that I have had on Kent Island to make an impact and I strive to do everything I can to save the niche community that resides on this beautiful island for generations to come.



# A Lovely Little Wedding

By Linda Collier



Although we are not in the wedding business, we recently had an offer we couldn't refuse.

In 2019, Josh Brown, a boy scout with troop #1631 (no coincidence), was looking for a project that would help him become an eagle scout. He and his parents met with me and the garden club president, Linda Elias, to develop a plan. The project was completed in time for us to be featured in the Maryland House and Garden Tour on May 29th of that year.

He and his crew did a beautiful job and we have gotten many compliments on it. We were proud to be a part of this with Josh and his lovely family.

So...when Josh told us his sister, Jessica, would like permission to be married beneath the gazebo, of course, we said "yes".

The Brown family worked with us to get things in good shape (remember we hadn't been open for 2 years) and on May 29th, a beautiful day, under the gazebo, in the Kirwan back yard, a lovely little wedding took place. Congratulations Mr. and Mrs. Justin Hartman.

## MEET NEW DOCENTS

Carol Mylander and Tom Tate

CAROL THOMAS MYLANDER is a new docent at the Cray House in Stevensville. She was born in Stevensville in the James Cockey house before the first Bay Bridge was built. Carol descends from many of Kent Island's early colonists, including Robert Vaughn, Roger Baxter, Thomas Ringgold, James Hopkins, and Francis Stephens. Her love of Kent Island history started as a child with old stories from her grandfather Harrison Tucker Hopkins.

Her interest in the Cray House led her to Catherine Cray Ewing in the early 1970s who she asked for it to be saved for its great historical significance. In 1975, Ewing's heirs donated the house and lot to the Kent Island Heritage Society, which has restored and furnished it on the site on which it was constructed.

Carole studied painting at the Maryland Institute College of Art and History in Anne Arundel County, culminating in docent training with Historic Annapolis. She has three daughters, Ginger, Betsy, and Caroline, and six grandchildren. Carol is currently writing a book about Kent Island and her ancestors inspired by a legacy of Hopkins family papers and farm account books.

TOM TATE is a new docent at the old Stevensville Post Office for the first Saturdays of each month and on special occasions. He moved to Kent Island in 1993. "I so enjoy touring the historical sites of Queen Anne County and Kent Island and wanted to learn more about the History of Kent Island. I attended special events of the KIHS, and I joined the KI Heritage Society several years ago. An appeal for recruiting new docents in a recent newsletter caught my eye. So, after several hours of hanging out at the old post office with long-time post-office docent, Fran Peters, I am excited to learn more and share the history of the old post office (from 1870's to 1950's) with visitors during 2022 and beyond."

Tom says that "Visiting the old post office is like being in a time machine, modernization of communication milestones, that occurred between 1877 and 1959. I hope many will come and learn how Benjamin Franklin's vision of a U.S. postal system was tested and delivered right here on Kent Island".

A native of Missouri, the "Show Me State", Tom had a career with the Cooperative Extension Service, in a variety of positions at the local, state and national levels. Tom provided national leadership to the implementation of information technology and telecommunications for the USDA. Tom serves as an adult 4-H leader to teams of youth involved in making maps about their community. ( [www.ace.org](http://www.ace.org) ) His passion for history includes working with a team of volunteers that preserve the history of the 4-H program across the U. S.



## IN MEMORIAM: *Mindy Voelker*

Kent Island Heritage Society Board Member Merridee "Mindy" Anderson Voelker of Chester, MD, died on June 13, 2022. She was 79 years old. She was born in Biloxi, Mississippi, the daughter of the late Dale and Doris Rassa Anderson. Mindy grew up in Baltimore County and was a graduate of Towson Catholic High. After high school she attended Salisbury State in Salisbury, MD.

In 1964 Mindy married Michael V. Voelker Jr. In 1974, they moved to Chester, MD where they raised their three sons. Mindy was a loving wife, mother, grandmother, great grandmother, and friend. She enjoyed sewing, cooking, baking, and embroidery. She was an expert quilt designer and avid golfer.

Mindy was best known for her spunky and determined personality and sense of humor. When asked for a picture of herself for this newsletter when she joined the Board, she replied that all of hers were in "black and white." When told we would run a picture of Marilyn Monroe if she did not send one, she replied "I'm really more of a Lucy....especially when working on the chocolate bon bon line. A vintage Lucy would be perfect! Shall I send you one of those?" (She did send one.)

Mindy will be missed by all who knew and loved her. She was a founding member of the Queen Anne's County United Way, a member of the Kent Island Heritage Society, and a faithful congregant at St. Christopher's Catholic Church in Chester, MD.

She is survived by her husband of 58 years, Michael V. Voelker Jr. of Chester, MD, her sons; Michael V. "Chip" Voelker III (Angela) of Still Pond, MD, and Josh Voelker of Chester, MD, five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. She was predeceased by her brother David Anderson and her beloved son, Andrew Dale Voelker. She was buried in the Stevensville Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Kent Island Volunteer Fire Company in her memory.

### **American Legion Gold Star**

Congratulations and Thank You to the Kent Island Garden Club for their work with American Legion Post 278 in Stevensville to establish a Gold Star Marker at the Stevensville post. The display of recognition is for families of military members who have died in the line of duty and is meant to honor the service member's ultimate sacrifice while acknowledging their family's loss, grief, and continued healing. The dedication on June 14 was attended by Gold Star families and many others and featured representatives of all branches of the military.







## Thank You Business Supporters



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## Welcome New Members

Norman Donough  
Joseph Getty and family  
Nathan Getty and family  
Nicole Goldstein and family  
Sherry and Allan MacLane  
Jeffrey Shultz and Family



## In Memoriam

Louise D. Price (1926-2022)  
Mindey Voelker (1943-2022)



## MEMBERSHIP FORM

Enclosed is a check to cover dues for the membership indicated below:

- |   |          |  |         |
|---|----------|--|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Life Membership | \$250.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Single Membership | \$15.00 |
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Property Maintenance \_\_\_\_\_

Special Interest \_\_\_\_\_

*Dues and contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.*

**Membership period:**  
**January 1 to December 31**

**The Kent Island Heritage Society, Inc**  
**P.O. Box 321**  
**Stevensville, Maryland 21666**  
**[www.kentislandheritagesociety.org](http://www.kentislandheritagesociety.org)**

KENT ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC.

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## POSTCARD from Kent Island: Membership Picnic September 25, 2022

*Submitted by John L. Conley*



While our 2022 Membership picnic will not be held at this idyllic site on the lake at Love Point near the old hotel, it will be held on Sunday September 25 at the iconic Kirwan Museum. Please mark your calendars and check our website [kentislandheritagesociety.org](http://kentislandheritagesociety.org) for more information. Also, please consider volunteering to help make this first Membership Picnic in four years a success.

*KIHS Annual Membership Picnic*  
**SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 25, 2022**

KIRWAN MUSEM  
CHESTER, MARYLAND

*Familys Invited: Volunteers Needed!!!*