

Isle of Kent - 1631

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

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE KENT ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC. ■ SUMMER 2006

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President's Message

THE KENT ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY HAS HAD A VERY BUSY SPRING AND SUMMER!

Our docents have greeted and served more than 1000 visitors since our last newsletter in May (including attendees at Kent Island Day and our June 8 concert).

Our projects are many and varied, and surely there is some area of interest that would engage history buffs:

- ◇ The 1909 B&O railroad caboose is now in place near the old Stevensville Train Depot and restoration efforts will begin soon with several persons who have offered their volunteer services;
- ◇ The Kirwan House Store Museum is an ongoing project, and work will soon begin on the kitchen restoration;
- ◇ The old 1903 Stevensville Bank is now open, and the original tellers cages have been installed [see accompanying article]; and
- ◇ The Cray House (1809), the Stevensville Train Depot (1902) and the old Stevensville Post Office (1877) continue to be the jewels in Stevensville's history sustained by The Society.

If you know of someone who might be interested in participating in any of the above projects or joining The Society, please spread the word that we are a vital and viable historic organization.

Nancy M. Cook

Restored Stevensville Bank Reopened for KI Day

With its original teller cages reinstalled, its beautiful vault and original ornamental pressed-tin ceiling still intact and freshly painted interior, The Stevensville Bank was reopened just in time for Kent Island Day, where it attracted much interest and became the talk of the town.

Built in 1909 of stucco with Greek Revival ornamental pilasters and a chain-supported marque-style entrance hood, it clearly was the most elegant structure in the heart of what is now Historic Stevensville, though it contained only two rooms and a vault. It also lacked running water and thus suffered the dubious distinction of being the last bank in Maryland to have outdoor toilets, a deficiency not remedied until after the bank closed in 1960.

With limited resources and a concerted effort, The Stevensville Savings Bank of Queen Anne's County — Kent Island's first bank — was formed in 1903. Its name was changed to The Stevensville Bank of Maryland in 1912.

Continued on page 2

Mark Your Calendar

Kent Island Heritage Society GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, September 13
Kent Island Free Library

7:00 p.m. Refreshments

7:30 p.m. Program

"Born and Bred on Kent Island"

A video presentation by QACTV
featuring Melvin Clark, Bill Denny and
Nick Hoxter
(Melvin and Nick will be our guests)

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Library Files

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Scholarship

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Social

Janet Denny

Cemetery Identification & Preservation

Lora Lake

Editor

John Bonner

Genealogy Report

Lost Family Found

By Mary J. White

Readers may remember reading an article in the fall 2005 newsletter about the "Lost Bible" being identified and placed with our archival records in the library. I had a deep sense of satisfaction that the "Timms" family Bible at last found a home. This brought our total of Bible records up to 127.

But it reminded me that when our committee was copying the records on the Stevensville Cemetery, we found plots where the stones or markers had the family name but nothing further. No other names or dates. Since we could copy only what information was there, we had "lost" families.

Several years after the records were published by the Upper Shore Genealogical Society Mae Hutchison brought to my attention that we had not included the names, dates, etc. from her grandfather John Clendaniel's plot. His was one of those "lost" family markers.

When she assured me that other family members are buried there, I asked her to provide the names and dates so they could be added to our records and also those of the Upper Shore Genealogical Society. They are:

John Oscar Clendaniel

Died June 2, 1929

Age 46 years

Lula Virginia Gardner Clendaniel

Died July 5, 1955

Age 70 years, 9 months

Marion Oscar Clendaniel

Died June 10, 1951

Edna Mae Benton Clendaniel

Died March 23, 1933

Lolita Clendaniel

Margaret Clendaniel Lingner

Alice (died young)

John Charles

No dates available

If any reader should have further information on this or other incomplete family markers in Stevensville Cemetery, please contact me.

Stevensville Bank

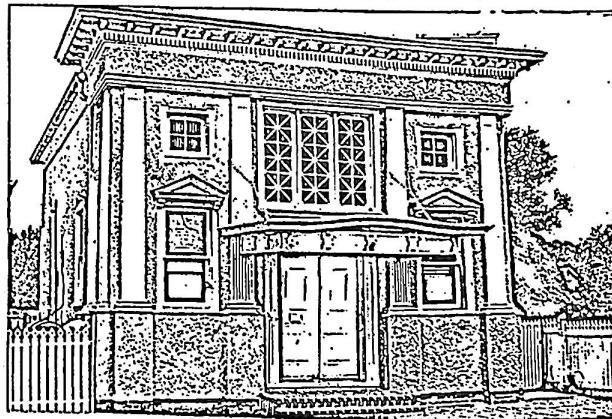
Continued from page 1

The president of the new corporation was Charles B. Downs. Original directors were Charles Percy Kemp, Milton Hysore Price, Isaac Grollman, B. Harrison Bright, William E. Denny Sr., Hugh A. Legg and John Fletcher Ruth. Capital stock consisted of 160 shares at par value of \$50.

The fledgling bank opened for business accepting deposits and making loans at an unknown temporary location. A building site, purchased from Dr. William E. Denny, had previously contained an apothecary shop operated by Dr. Denny's sister and niece, Miss Anne and Miss Lucy Denny. The bank moved into its new quarters six years later.

The Stevensville Bank was the financial center of Kent Island for 50 years. Its capital stock increased in value with good times, and it weathered the severe economic depression of the early 1930s. Completion of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge in 1952 brought new growth and dramatic changes. The bank changed its name again to The Tidewater Bank and moved to the Kent Island Shopping Center in 1960.

The original bank building was sold to Harper M. Smith. It housed the office for The Bay Times, a weekly newspaper newly created



by Chris and Mary Lou Rosendale, and a succession of other businesses. It is presently owned by Robert L. Marsteller.

The building was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983. It has been leased by The Kent Island Heritage Society, where it makes a vitally important contribution to The Society's mission to identify, preserve and maintain the heritage of Kent Island.

The Heritage of Kent Island Is Important

By Jackie Lynn Stowe

Kent Island Heritage Society's scholarship recipient, Jackie Lynn Stowe, will be attending Villa Julie College in the Fall, where she will be majoring in accounting. She is the granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Stowe and the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Stowe, all of Chester. Here is her winning essay:

I was born and raised here on this beautiful island. I have watched it grow and change from day to day and year to year. Many of the changes were not beneficial.

My grandparents started their family here in 1950 and are still here to this day. They had two children, one being my dad. He grew up and moved into his grandmother's house, which was right next door. I still live in that house today, right next to my grandparents.

I have always pushed myself to achieve only the best grades possible. Now comes the huge turning point in my life: College.

I am not going far from my home that I have grown



KIHs President Nancy Cook introduces scholarship winner, Jackie Lynn Stowe.

to love. Now that I am older I realize the changes that Kent Island has overtaken. I would stand behind anyone or anything that would preserve the island as it is now.

I look back to the days when I was younger, and I

can remember all the farms and empty fields. I have watched each progression of the buildings that filled those beautiful fields. Deep in my heart I wish for the island that Kent Island used to be. But, since we can't undo or take back things

that have already adjusted, we have to preserve what we have.

Many families live in this area. It was once a family community, but now it is filled with business and trade. We did not need more houses on this island, and if it continues to grow the way it has these past few years there won't be any more of the wonderful landscape we once had.

I feel as though we are making not needed developments, such as upgrading the Safeway. We need to leave room for the beauty and not develop all of it. The heritage of this island is not only important to me but also my entire family, which continues to grow within Kent Island.

MANY THANKS TO THESE DONORS TO THE 2006 SCHOLARSHIP FUND

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Queenstown

Tricentennial Concert at Kirwan House

🎵 A Grand Night for Singing 🎵

What a wonderful program of singing and instrumental music was presented at the Tricentennial Concert on Thursday, June 8 on the grounds of the Kirwan House and Store Museum!!

More than 325 people attended this concert presented by three of Queen Anne's County's premier musical organizations —

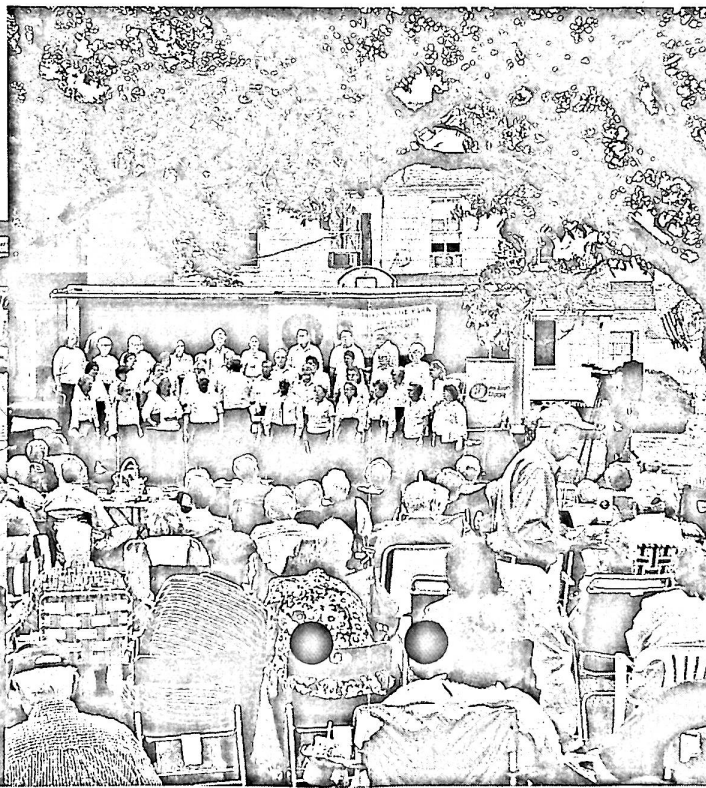
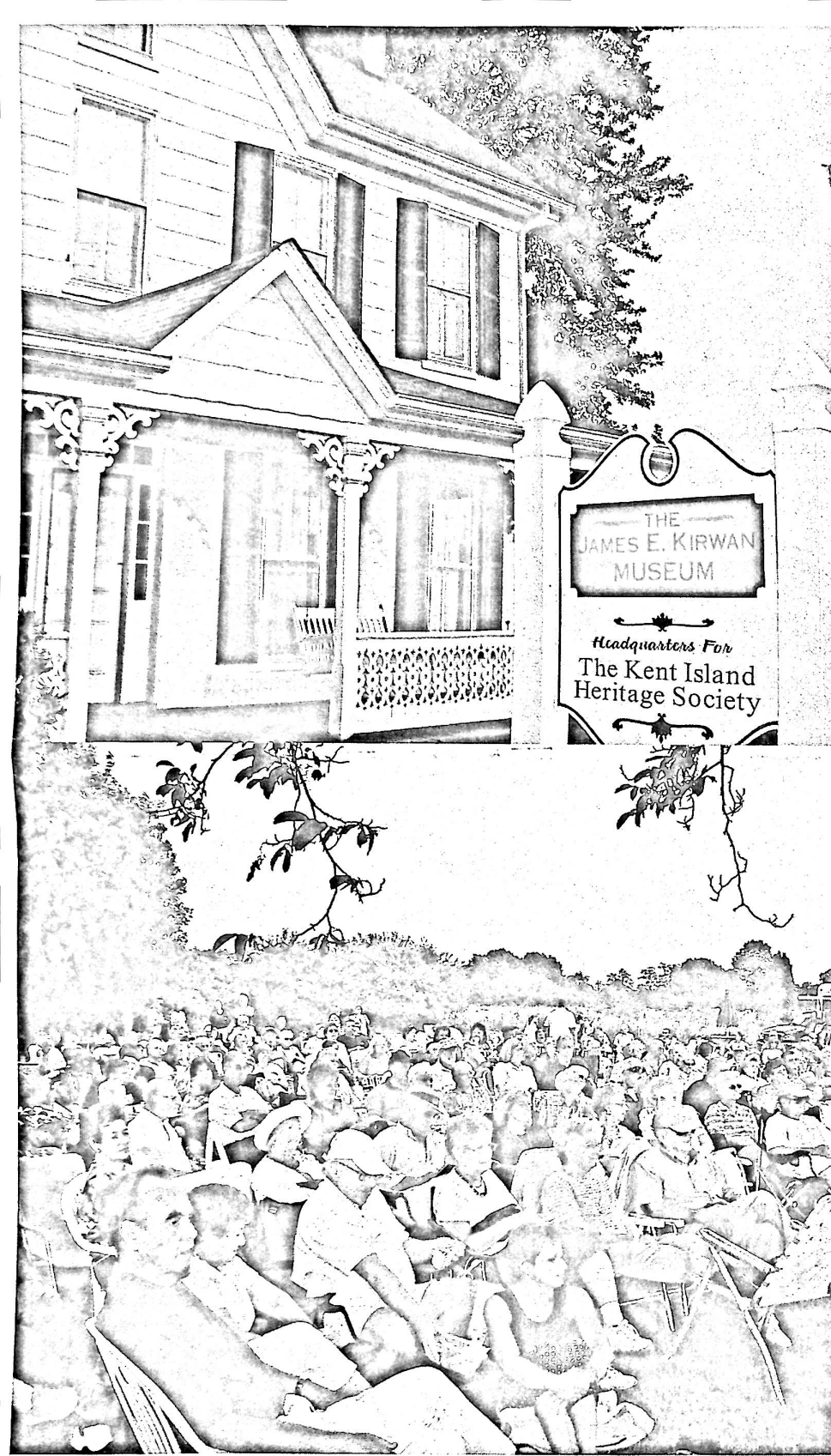
the Queen Anne's Chorale, the Pride of the Bay Barbershop Ensemble and the Kent Island Big Band. The Kirwan Museum was open, and Linda Collier and Lora Lake were docents for the store, while Midge Kirwan and Jane Sparks officiated in the house.

The Kirwan grounds were beautifully appointed by the Kent Island Garden Club and

the parking was facilitated by Greg Nizza. The setting proved to be just perfect for the event. There weren't even any mosquitoes around to ruin our night out-of-doors.

The program was a joint project sponsored by the Queen Anne's County Arts Council and The Kent Island Heritage Society.

Photos by
Doug Bishop
The Bay Times



1706: Events and Daily Life In Our County's First Year

By Brent Lewis

The citizens of Queen Anne's are celebrating our tricentennial anniversary as a county. Of course, there were Kent Islanders long before 1706, but that doesn't mean we can't look back with our neighbors and see what was going on 300 years ago.

Europe was at war. The Duke of Marlborough, bearing a title bestowed by our own namesake, Queen Anne, conquered the Spanish Netherlands in the war that will also forever be part of Her Majesty's legacy. The independent duchy of Savoy was fighting off the French, while young king Charles XII of Sweden defeated invaders from Russia, Poland and Denmark. You know, business as usual in Ye Olde Europe.

History was happening over here, too. The Englishmen of Charleston, S.C. successfully defended their colony against French and Spanish attackers. Ann Putnam Jr., one of the primary accusers in the 1692 Salem Witch Trials, sought public

forgiveness for her part in the persecution of innocent villagers. Benjamin Franklin, who would live to be the oldest of our revolutionary leaders, was born in 1706.

Our budding nation was primarily of British seed. Tobacco plantations drove the economies of the Tidewater colonies. The Chesapeake Bay was already a critical New World waterway.

The Port of Baltimore was designated in 1706. The town of Vienna, Maryland was founded. So was Chestertown.

The battle between William Claiborne and the Calvert family for control of Kent Island was long over. As our island went from being part of Kent County to Talbot to Queen Anne's, little changed in the daily lives of her inhabitants.

People lived off what they could grow, catch or hunt. Well water was hoisted to the surface via bucket, rope and crank. The primary source of

heat, wood, was said to warm twice: once when you shopped it and once when you burned it. Homes were simple constructions, and only the rich lived in houses with more than a couple of rooms. Clothing was typically made from wool.

Evangelists bringing the word to the colonists traveled the same routes as the crude circuses that brought cheap entertainment. Visitors from faraway places delivered news and were welcomed with friendly hospitality by everyone. Horse racing, dances, gambling and drinking alcohol were among the limited entertainment choices for people living a hard, close to the earth existence.

Many things have changed about life in the three centuries since the formation of our county, but many things have stayed the same. We're still a hearty, resourceful and sociable bunch. And we'll probably be that way in 2306, too.

THE LAST LAUGH

By Gil Dunn

It was perfect October football weather on a Saturday afternoon in 1970. Two military school teams were set to do battle at RFK Stadium in Washington, D.C. The stadium was packed with enthusiastic fans, including the entire brigade of midshipmen from Annapolis and the Air Force cadets from Colorado Springs.

The large crowd expected a head-to-head football battle. The teams had their pre-game warm-up and were ready for the kick-off. A rumor

circulating though the stadium had raised expectations that the President of the United States would be attending this event.

As the game was about to begin, the gate at the far end of the stadium suddenly swung open. A hush fell over the stadium as a long, black limousine slowly entered the stadium and stopped in front of the Navy brigade side. The passenger door swung open, and out he stepped in a long dark topcoat waving his hat to the middies, who snapped to attention and saluted.

Back in the limo, he continued to the Air Force side of the stadium, where the cadets were standing at attention. When the limo door was opened out stepped, not the expected President of the United States, but Ole Bill, the Navy goat mascot.

The entire Navy brigade burst out in laughter as the Air Force cadets silently sat down. The limo drove off. Ole Bill the goat crossed the gridiron with his handlers and watched the game from the Navy sidelines.

The Air Force Academy won the game, having the

last laugh. The faint response from Ole Bill was a barely audible "Baaaaa!"

Congratulations to member Alex Johnson who won a first prize in the 2006 Eastern Shore Poetry Contest. His humorous poem, titled "Out, Out, Out," will be included in his third poetry book, to be published in 2007.

Politically Ca-wreck

By Skeeter Philpot

Been seeing plenty of signs that we're nearing election time. Some are red, some are blue, some yellow and black. Some are for seats in the federal government, some for state, most for county. Some are placed in places that maybe say more about the candidate than the candidate probably means to say.

Politics around here have always been a little off. In the Revolutionary War, even though there were patriots among us, we mostly backed the losing side. Abraham Lincoln got zero votes in Queen Anne's County. We rejected the constitutional amendment giving women the right to vote. We've raised prestigious governors and senators, but we've produced our share of scoundrels, too.

People joke about politicians. You know, how they're like diapers. Both need regular changing and for the same reason. How George Washington was the only one to not blame his problems on his predecessor. How instead of giving them the keys to the city, we ought to change the locks.

But I'm glad there are folks out there willing to put their time and effort to making the world we live in work. Willing to risk their relationships, their riches, their reputations.

Willing to try.

Past local politicians have saved Kent Island from becoming an artillery testing ground, made sure Wye Island didn't become what became the city of Columbia, and kept the Kent Narrows drawbridge open when the state had other plans.

We went to a couple parades this summer where I saw a lot of fire trucks and politicians. On a day-to-day basis most of us don't think about either one of them much, but man, if you need one, having one you can count on is a blessing.

So, even though I like the line about how giving politicians power and money is like giving teenage boys whiskey and car keys, that doesn't mean I don't plan on voting.

I'd like to have a say in who's behind the wheel.

Calendar of Events

- **September 13, 7 p.m.**
KIHS General Meeting
Kent Island Library
- **November 4, 10 - 5 p.m.**
Historic Sites Bus Tour
Queen Anne's Historic Consortium.
- **December 1**
Tricentennial Time
Capsule Planting
Christmas Parade
- **December 9, 6 p.m.**
KIHS Annual Meeting
Kent Island Yacht Club

In Memoriam

WILLIAM HARRIS

The society is very thankful for and will miss the interest and support shown our organization by this member. Continuing our shared mission honors his memory.

Publications For Sale by KIHS

Of History and Houses A Kent Island Heritage <i>Mildred Schoch</i>	\$20.00
The Forgotten Seven: The Decoy Carvers of Kent Island <i>Hugo Gemignani</i>	\$15.00
The Isle of Kent - The 350th Anniversary A Commemorative History	\$5.00
Burial Permits - 1900-1922 - Kent Island Cause of death and burial site data compiled by <i>Mary White</i> ; prepared for publication by <i>Mary Jane and Josuha Leaverton</i>	\$10.00

Treasurers Report

FY 2005-06

Cash as of July 1, 2005	\$49,284
Income	
Dues & Donations	\$17,104
Operations	34,293
Interest & Dividends	12,328
Total income	\$63,725
Expenses	
Administration	\$9,426
Events	7,669
Operations	8,370
Programs:	
Cray House	647
Old Post Office	20
Old Bank	2,565
Train Station & Caboose	9,292
Kirwan Farm	10,531
Kirwan Store Museum	2,017
Preservation	210
Total expenses	\$50,747
Cash as of June 30, 2006	\$62,262

Isle of Kent

John Bonner, Editor

Isle of Kent is published quarterly by The Kent Island Heritage Society, Inc., a nonprofit corporation chartered by the State of Maryland, P.O. Box 321, Stevensville, MD 21666. Every effort is made to assure the accuracy of published information, but no responsibility is assumed by The Kent Island Heritage Society Inc. or the editor in the event of claim of loss or damage from any article. Statements attributed to individuals do not necessarily reflect official policy of the KIHS. Send correspondence regarding newsletter to Editor, 324 Columbia Lane, Stevensville, MD 21666. Email: jlbanner@verizon.net

THE KENT ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC.

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I wish to become a member of the Kent Island Heritage Society, Inc.

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

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

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

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