

Isle of Kent - 1631

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

NEWSLETTER OF THE KENT ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC.

SPRING 2025

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Audrey Hawkins 90-92

Charles Koegel 93-94

Hugo Gemignani 95-98

Nancy M. Cook 99-08

Celebrate!

General Membership Meeting

Tuesday, March 25, 6:30 p.m.

Historic Christ Church, Stevensville, MD

Jack Broderick, KIHS President and John Conley, Isle of Kent Newsletter Editor and Outreach Coordinator will share the highlights of half a century of accomplishments, adventures, and successes in our quest to preserve and enshrine the Heritage of Kent Island in our State, our Nation, and our hearts.

A lively Q&A to follow!



1975 to 2025!

Open to the Public.



President's Message

It's our Golden Anniversary Year – 2025! The Kent Island Heritage Society is celebrating 50 great years, 1975 – 2025. The Society was founded by five visionary Kent Island women, Marian Stewart, Mary White, Emily Denny, Mildred Schoch, and Annie May Price, with the mission to “discover, identify, restore and preserve the heritage of Kent Island.” I’m proud to say that the mission has continued through half a century of success and accomplishments. We are as committed as ever to continuing that effort into the foreseeable

future. Throughout this year, our Golden Anniversary theme will be incorporated into all of our activities, especially Kent Island Day, the opening of our new Heritage Center, and our March General Meeting. In our last newsletter we shared our successes of the last year, and we look forward to building on that success this year.

We closed out 2024 with our annual Holiday Brunch and Annual Elections at the Cascia Vineyard Tasting Room. We shared a great buffet prepared and served by Chesapeake Celebrations and enjoyed the company of our fellow Society members, while recapping our past year and sharing plans for this new year. We elected and swore in our returning Board Officers and new Recording Secretary, Lou Crouch. We thank Lou for stepping up to the Recording Secretary duties, after serving in an acting capacity this past year. Lou is the

(Continued on page 2)

KIHS Committees

Membership

John Conley, *Chair*

Budget

Bob Lowe, *Chair*

Linda Collier

Erica Kriegisch

Library/Genealogy

Bob Lowe, *Chair*

Lou Crouch

Newsletter

John Conley, *Editor*

Carole Frederick

Docents

Bank

Jack Broderick

Post Office

Needed

Train Station

Chris Killian

John Conley

Cray House

Carol Mylander

Hanna Wall

Historic Christ Church

Nancy Cook

Kirwan House

Linda Collier

Renee Dye

Curtis Chance

“perfect man for the job”. We elected two outstanding new Board members, Joan Stoer and Wheeler Baker. They both bring new talents, energy, and insights to our leadership team. We welcome them enthusiastically. Board Member Chip Price is stepping down to spend valuable time caring for a close aging family member. We respect and admire his decision. We thank Chip for his service on the Board and extend our best wishes in the future. Also in December, we shared our popular Kent Island Railroad display at the Queen Anne’s County Holiday Train Show the first two weekends in December. We thank John Conley and several of you who volunteered to meet the many enthusiastic visitors and share our stories.

During the year we continued to complete important renovation efforts on our new Heritage Center, including major HVAC improvements. Our new Heritage Center sign is in place and our museum displays are being professionally completed. We look forward to opening by Kent Island Day in May. Another significant effort this past year was the major renovation of our Historic Caboose thanks to another generous donation by the MacLeay Family of Stevensville. Thank you, Ashley and Geoff!

In opening and showing our historic sites, our docents are the keys to our success. We’ve just completed a special training event on March 8 to welcome a new team of docents. Many thanks to our Docent Coordinator, Hanna Wall, for developing a new Docent Training Manual and for organizing the successful event. We are grateful to our new docents as they take their place this coming year to meet and greet our visitors as the human face of our Kent Island heritage. Our sites are open for visitors on the first Saturdays from April through November, on Kent Island Day, and during special tours by visiting groups. We extend a big thank you to all of our docents!

This year we will also host a special event on May 3. Three of our Stevensville sites will be open to visitors as part of the Maryland House and Garden Tour of Queen Annes’ County. The Historic Bank, the Train Station / Caboose, and the Cray House will receive visitors from around the area, along with Historic Christ Church. Look for more information on the Tour and on our Heritage Society website and our social media postings.

Of course, our biggest day is our popular Kent Island Day, Saturday, May 17 in Historic Stevensville with our big KI Day Parade, on-stage entertainment, great local food, and over 100 vendors and exhibitors. Celebrating our Golden Anniversary will be a central theme this year. I’ll take this opportunity to thank Stacy Bernstein, our outstanding vendor coordinator for the past two years. Stacy was a real game changer in our planning and coordination effort, but unfortunately, she won’t be able to continue due to health challenges. Thank you, Stacy, for everything you have done for us. We wish you the best in the future. Luckily, we have been able to secure the services of a new Vendor Coordinator, Emily Brown. Emily has a local event planning business, Woven Dreams, and has been able to pick up and carry our effort forward. Our plans for KI Day 2025 are well underway. We are looking forward to our biggest and best Kent Island Day ever!

At our March General Meeting, on March 25, at 6:30 at Historic Christ Church, emphasizing our Golden Anniversary theme, we will focus on our 50 years of Heritage Society accomplishments, adventures, and successes. John Conley and I will share an enthusiastic presentation and invite questions, discussions, and stories with some special Island “Originals.” Check out our meeting announcement in this newsletter. We hope you’ll join us.

In working to strengthen and broaden our heritage mission, we maintain an active social media presence and in-person community outreach effort. We also coordinate and partner with local organizations, including: the Historic Stevensville Arts and Entertainment (A&E) District, Historic Kent Island, the QA County Historic Sites Consortium, the Kent Island Federation of Arts, and the QA County Economic and Tourism Development Department. We appreciate that the County has just created and filled the new position of Heritage Tourism Coordinator. We welcome Penny Young-Carrasquillo and look forward to working together to accomplish our mission. Penny will be assisting the A&E District and will be leading and coordinating the work of the county-wide Historic Sites Consortium. That role until recently was filled in a volunteer capacity by our own Ms. Nancy Cook. We offer our sincere thanks to Nancy for her many years of extraordinary effort in that county-wide leadership role.

With sadness we want to mention the recent passing of a friend and long-time active Heritage Society member, Don Thomson. Don was a tireless advocate and researcher of Kent Island history. He worked together with Cindy Schmidt of Upper Shore Genealogy to develop a detailed record and map of early Kent Island land patents (1600’s). Don created a large hand drawn map of those Kent Island patents and donated it to the Kent Island Heritage Society. It has been on display in the Kent Island Library History Room and will soon be moved to our new Heritage Center, representing an important part of our earliest Kent Island History.

In this issue of our Newsletter, we’ve included a detailed article on Queen Anne’s County and especially Kent Island history by KIHS members Paul and Rebecca Placek. Both are very involved in Kent Island organizations and events. We thought it appropriate to share this article in this first issue of our Newsletter this year of our Golden Anniversary. We will print additional copies of this newsletter to share throughout our community. Thank you, Paul and Becky.

Again, check out our meeting announcement for our March 25 General Meeting. We hope to see you then and at Kent Island Day in May.

Thanks for your support and best wishes for a great 2025! See ya ‘round the Island.

Jack Broderick



CELEBRATING 50 YEARS!

KENT ISLAND Day

Looking for Selling/Craft Vendors, Food Vendors, Local Authors and Non-Profits!

Event By: The Kent Island Heritage Society

Saturday, May 17th, 2025

At 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

408 Love Point Rd, Stevensville, MD

- Parade
- Food Vendors
- Live Music
- Kids Activities
- Selling/Craft Vendors
- Authors Corner
- Local Non-Profit Info

More Information:
info.kentislandday@gmail.com



2025 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MARCH 8
DOCENT INTRODUCTION EVENT

MARCH 25
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

MAY 3
MARYLAND HOUSE AND GARDEN TOUR STEVENSVILLE SITES

MAY 17
KENT ISLAND DAY 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

JUNE 17
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING TBA

SEPTEMBER 28
MEMBERSHIP PICNIC

DECEMBER 14
MEMBERSHIP LUNCHEON AND ELECTIONS

KIHS HISTORIC SITES ARE OPEN
first Saturdays from April to Nov.

KIHS BOARD MEETINGS
are held on the third Wednesday of the month at the Kirwan House. All Society members are welcome to attend or suggest topics for consideration.

FOR INFORMATION on these and other events, visit our website kentislandheritagesociety.org

THE KENT ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY MAINTAINS A SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE ON-LINE AT kentislandheritagesociety.org and on Facebook, X (Twitter), YouTube, Instagram, Tiktok, Pinterest, Hashtags, and E-Mail.

QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY AND KENT ISLAND HISTORY, 1824-2024

by Paul and Rebecca Placek

This article attempts to briefly highlight some of the more recent 200 years of Queen Anne's County history.

THE BEGINNINGS | Kent Island and surrounding areas have been inhabited for 12,000 years. William Claiborne was born in 1600 in Kent County England, and he became a surveyor in the Virginia colony of Jamestown. Jamestown was the first English settlement in the New World in 1607. While surveying the Chesapeake Bay, he "discovered" Kent Island in 1631, claimed ownership, and built Fort Kent on the southernmost tip. The island was then inhabited by about 100 Matapeake Indians of the Algonquian nation. They taught the English the wonders of tobacco farming, which soon dominated trade with Europe. Because the Calverts obtained the Maryland charter from King Charles, Claiborne lost "The Isle of Pleasant Living" in 1657. He died in 1677. The Matapeakes all departed Kent Island in 1770. Queen Anne's County was formed from Kent and Talbot Counties in 1706. It is named for Queen Anne (1665-1714) who ruled Great Britain. The first authoritative map of Queen Anne's County in some detail was not published until 1866.



William Claiborne and Matapeake Indian

FROM FORT KENT TO BROAD CREEK TO STEVENSVILLE | At Fort Kent, there was a fort, church, barrel-making, and homes. Three decades after 1631, the English settlers from the Fort Kent had migrated to a new town which they named Broad Creek. Fort Kent has vanished due to erosion and is now under the waves of the Chesapeake Bay. Soon Broad Creek (where Bay City subdivision is now) had a Post Office, ferry service to Annapolis and beyond, a church, a jail, courthouse, and a shipyard. However, now, only an old cemetery and a historical marker remain. By the 1870's, Broad Creek's population had moved to Stevensville. Many of the early structures (mostly 1870-1900) in Stevensville still remain, and this area is now state-sponsored as the Historic Stevensville Arts and Entertainment District, one of 29 such districts in the State of Maryland. Also, the entire town of Stevensville is now on the National Register of Historic Sites. The deep-water port of Broad Creek, once busier than Port of Baltimore, has silted in and the entire town has been replaced by 800 homes in the Bay City subdivision.



Getting a Tobacco Hogshead Ready for Market.

TOBACCO BECAME KING | The Indians taught settlers how to grow and process tobacco, with trade often to European countries. Tobacco leaves were compressed into hogsheads. Hogsheads were large wooden barrels used to store and transport tobacco from the colonial period through the early 1900s. They were typically 48 inches long and 30 inches in diameter at the head, and were made from oak staves and hoops. The barrels' shapes allowed them to be rolled and loaded onto merchant ships. Hogsheads weighed almost 1,000 pounds each. At destinations, workers then broke the hogsheads apart, emptied out the tobacco, and sold the barrel parts for scrap wood or firewood. Tobacco remained the chief Queen Anne's County export crop until the later 1800's, when crop exports were Chesapeake Bay seafood, wheat, corn, peaches, tomatoes, and soybeans.

EMORY'S TOME | From this early period of 1631 to 1888, the most comprehensive and scholarly history of Queen Anne's County was published in the 629-page tome by Frederic Emory. *The History of Queen Anne's County* is a series which was originally published in the "The Centreville Observer", totally consuming weekly issues during the years 1886-1887. The series of articles from this newspaper started as a scrapbook and was reprinted in book form in 1950 and again in 2022. We used it extensively for this article.

QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY ESTABLISHED 1706 | Just 20 years before the year 1824, official monetary dealings in the area were in pounds, shillings, and pence. Tobacco was as good as silver or gold. What is now Queen Anne's County was originally comprised within Virginia, but now is bordered by Anne Arundel, Talbot and Kent Counties, Maryland. After much consternation, in 1706, Kent Island became part of Queen Anne's County.

THE RECORD OBSERVER: 1824 - 2024 | In 1824, the *Centreville Times* was the first weekly newspaper published in Queen Anne's County. Within 10 years, it had grown to four pages and its name was the *Centreville Times and Eastern Shore Public Advertising*. Subscriptions were \$3 per year. A Democratic Party newspaper in Queen Anne's County was established in 1839 in Centreville and it was called *Freedom's Sentinel*. In 1842, it evolved into *Queen Anne's Telescope*. By 1846, it was the *Sentinel and Advertiser*. With a new owner in 1857 it became the *States Rights Advocate and Maryland Sentinel*. This newspaper office was burned in 1864 and the paper expired. The *Centreville Observer* was established in 1864 to take the place politically of the *States' Rights Advocate*. This paper transitioned to the *Centreville Record* in 1874. Other Queen Anne's County newspapers have been: *The Crumpton Gazette*, *Church Hill Air Line*, the *Queenstown News*, and the *Church Hill News*. The *Record Observer* and the *Bay Times* were separate papers for decades but are now combined. Its roots go back 200 years, to 1824.

KIHS HOLDS DOCENT MEETING AND ENCOURAGES MEMBERSHIP INVOLVEMENT IN 50TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR



"WE NEED YOU!"

This will be an exciting and busy year as the Kent Island Heritage Society celebrates 50 years of service to our community. All KIHS members are requested to help make the year a huge success through their involvement in a variety of areas from serving as docents to offering their time and skills in many other areas.

Several current and prospective Kent Island historic site docents attended a meeting at the Kent Island library on March 8. Docents play a key role in sharing Kent Island history with local residents and visitors from around the world. The docents for the Kent Island Heritage Society are the front-line representatives to the public at our open sites. No other part of the Society comes in such close contact with the general public as do our docents. They present a brief, well-researched history of the site they represent. They give their time willingly and freely so that we can educate our community and visitors and fulfill our agreement to hold these sites open the first Saturday from April through November and for special events and tours. Docents also help educate students from our local schools at their schools and during visits to our sites. Most of the stints are two hours in length but some docents prefer to serve the entire four hours. You do not need to be a history expert, just enthusiastic about our history. Period dress (provided) is optional but adds a nice touch.

Attendees were provided a revised handbook that details the history and contents of several Kent Island sites, including the Kirwan Museum, Cray House, Stevensville train station, and the Stevensville bank, and the new Kent Island Heritage Center in Stevensville. The handbook contains several "helpful hints" on conducting tours and engaging with the public. New docents will start out with more experienced docents.

KIHS Board Member and Docent Coordinator Hanna Wall developed the new handbook and led the March 8 meeting. Copies of the new Handbook are posted on our website kentislandheritagesociety.org under docents. If you have an interest in becoming a docent, please email us at hwall506@gmail.com.

KIHS encourages its members to get involved in supporting the organizations in ways other than serving as docents. Some of these areas include opportunities to: help maintain historic sites, help with special events like Kent Island Day and the Membership Picnic, lend special unique talents to our organization in the areas of legal, financial, planning and organizational skills, marketing and membership efforts, graphics and web design, history and genealogical research, technology, art and entertainment, news and grant writing, teaching, renovations and maintenance.

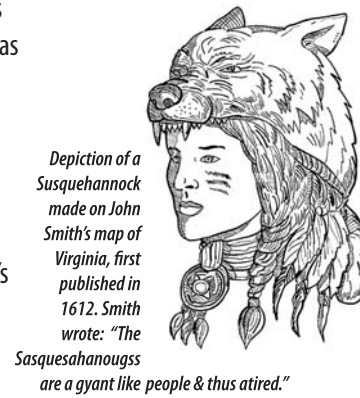
If you are interested in helping the Kent Island Heritage Society, please contact Jack Broderick at broderickjack0407@gmail.com or any KIHS Board member.



Members of the Kent Island Photo Club visited the Cray House in Stevensville in January and shared photos taken inside the historic building that traces its roots to the early 1800's. The house is on the National Register of Historic Places. The site is open on the first Saturdays of April through November and for special events or by appointment.

SLAVERY | By 1820, the time of the fifth U.S. Decennial Census, the population of Queen Anne’s County was 14,952 persons. Of these, 7,226 were classified as “White”, 5,588 were classified as “Slave”, and 2,138 were classified as “Free Colored”. County population size was stable from 1790 through the Civil War, and in each decade there were more “Slave” than “Free Colored”. Currently, using 2023 Census statistics, the population of Queen Anne’s County is 50,316. The breakdown is 85.4 percent White, 5.9 percent Black or African-American, 4.8 percent Two or More Races, 2.8 percent Other Race, 1.1 percent Asian, 0.1 percent Native American and < 0.1 percent Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. Much of the Black population has migrated to urban areas in search of new opportunities. Therefore, in the past 200 years, Queen Anne’s County population has transitioned from about half Black and half White in 1820, to 85 percent White now (and more diverse).

Prior to the Civil War (1861-1865), the importation of slaves to Maryland by slave-hauling ships from other continents was a stable “industry” in Maryland. Furthermore, the conflict between William Claiborne and the Calverts over Kent Island ownership complicated the first 40 years of the island’s history. Also, Indian tribes in the Chesapeake Bay area were often in conflict between each other and the new English settlers. Ominously, the six-foot-tall Susquehannock Indians from the northern parts of the Bay territory made bloody raids in mid-Bay settlements. They were known for wearing a wolf or bear’s head in battle. After vanquishing an enemy and cutting out the beating heart of the body, they ate it. Then they brought the surviving women and children back to their villages in the northern areas of the Chesapeake Bay. The legislature passed a law requiring settlers to take their Flintlock guns with them to Sunday church. In this conflicted context, the area around Queen Anne County attempted to become “civilized”.



Depiction of a Susquehannock made on John Smith’s map of Virginia, first published in 1612. Smith wrote: “The Sasquesahanougs are a gyant like people & thus atired.”

CIVILIZED IN 1824? | By 1824, the County had an Almshouse with an overseer and a doctor who was paid \$75 per year. In 1824, there were 50 White and 7 Black paupers in the Almshouse. Misbehaving almshouse vagrants and vagabonds were punished by ten lashes at the whipping post.

In Queen Anne’s County, travel by horse, buggy, and stagecoach were most common in the early 1820’s to 1910. Horse racing was a popular sport. Cock fighting was an officially recognized sport.

In 1824, the famous patriot General Lafayette, the distinguished French soldier and statesman, visited this area with much adulation. Lafayette had fought alongside George Washington in the American Revolution (1776-1883).

In 1824, the Maryland Legislature passed an act authorizing gates on all public roads in Queen Anne’s County. This greatly impeded travel by stagecoach and many complaints were made. Finally, the legislature rescinded the gates rule and ordered them removed in 1871.

POLITICS AND POLITICAL PARTIES | Party labels for early U.S. Presidents were fluid and ill-defined. Washington (1789-1797) and J. Adams (1797-1801) were Federalists. Jefferson (1801 -1809), Madison (1809 – 1817), and Monroe (1817-1824) were Democratic Republican. J. Q. Adams was a National Republican, but Andrew Jackson was a populist Democrat who really shook things up. And during 1841 to 1853 came the “Whig” Presidents Harrison, Tyler, Taylor and Fillmore. A different political philosophy came to imitate the revolutionary “Whigs”, who had resisted British aggression in earlier decades. Constituents became the “Whig Party” in 1834. The Easton Whig newspaper was established to promote that party. The Whig convention met in June 1839 and in Easton in July 1839. The Whig State Convention for 1842 met in Baltimore and in 1844. The Whigs met in Centreville in 1846 to prevent “. . . the frequent instances of the abduction of our slaves by undue and unlawful means, by the aid of ill-designing and wicked men and require that effectual steps be taken to arrest the growing evil”. Yet another new political party grew in strength until 1854—the “American, Native American, or Know-Nothing Party” ascended. Its goal was to prevent immigrants from other countries from migrating to Maryland or gaining positions of power. This party disbanded in a few short years. Locals were caught in the middle of these and other conflicting philosophies.

LINCOLN AND EMANCIPATION | The Presidential Campaign of 1860 resulted in the election of the Republican candidate Abraham Lincoln in 1861. Soon after came the Civil War. It is significant that Abraham Lincoln did not receive a single vote in Queen Anne’s County. President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, during the third year of the Civil War. The Proclamation declared “that all persons held as slaves within the rebellious states are, and henceforward shall be free”. However, the Proclamation was limited. It applied only to states that had seceded from the United States, leaving slavery untouched in the loyal Border States. It also expressly exempted parts of the Confederacy (the Southern secessionist states) that had already come under Northern control. Importantly, the freedom it promised depended upon Union victory over the Confederacy. The Proclamation involved the acceptance of black men into the Union Army and Navy, enabling the liberated to become liberators. By the end of the war in 1865 almost 200,000 black soldiers and sailors had fought for the Union and their own freedom.

Many local militias arose in this area with sympathies in line with the South. Searches for the quantities of long guns, cannons and powder were undertaken by Southern sympathizers and by Union forces. The control of these activities in Queen Anne’s County and all through Maryland were taken over by a pro-Union semi-military government supported by President Lincoln. Many families were split politically, with half taking an active role on the Union side and others favoring Southern sympathies.

The recruiting of “colored troops” began in 1863 in Queenstown and on Kent Island. Simultaneously, this was followed by the “running away” of many slaves, many of whom joined the Northern Army as soldiers. Local Queen Anne’s County residents who expressed pro-slavery sympathies were



Thomas Nast was a political cartoonist who published his sketches in Harper’s Weekly for over 20 years. This is one of his most famous and the original is in the Met Museum in New York.

PROHIBITION AND “DRY” COUNTIES | Prohibition became an issue in 1874. In that year a law was proposed prohibiting the sale of liquors in Maryland. Most Queenstown districts (Dixon’s, Church Hill, Centreville, and Kent Island) approved of prohibition, and Queen Anne’s County became a “dry” county for decades.

THE RAILROAD, PHONE, AND TELEGRAPH | There had long been interest in expanding Queen Anne’s County rail lines to Kent Island, but the Civil War postponed those plans. Finally, by 1876 the Queen Anne’s and Kent Railroad were established. Soon this railroad was linked with Philadelphia and Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad systems. In 1876, the first telephone line for Western Union Telegraph wires were placed, and by 1882, telephone service came to Kent Island. In 1894, the Queen Anne’s Railroad Company constructed a 60 mile track from Lewes, DE to Queenstown, MD. Then in 1902, a 13-mile rail line connected Queenstown to Love Point and stations in between.

KENT NARROWS | Kent Narrows is a waterway which connects Eastern Bay and Chester Bay. In Colonial times, it was so shallow that it was called “the wading place”. In 1826, an earthen causeway was built with local materials such as logs, stones, and shells. This blocked off all boat traffic. Then In 1876, the causeway was removed and an 8’ deep 72’ wide channel was cut and a wooden bridge overhead was completed. A rail line was installed and the train to destinations on Kent Island resulted. By 1952, a drawbridge was built there, but highway traffic in both directions was blocked whenever a sailboat passed. When it was up, traffic between Annapolis and Ocean City sometimes backed up for miles. The old 1952 drawbridge remains in service to this date and is mostly used by locals. Pilings from the old bridge are still visible at the Narrows. Finally, in 1990, a six-lane bridge was built over Kent Narrows. It allows automobile traffic to pass in both directions over 50-301. Now, summer weekend traffic backs up for miles east and west of the Bay Bridges and the Narrows.

SAIL, RAIL, AND STEAMER | Water transportation has always been a major factor in the development of Queen Anne’s County, including sail craft, steamboats, schooners, sloops, and bugeyes, and motor ferries. The first across-the-Chesapeake-Bay ferry ran from Annapolis to Broad Creek. The first Broad Creek Line operated from about 1650 to 1858. Broad Creek had a Post Office until 1876. The *Claiborne-Annapolis Ferry System* included a route between Kent Island and Annapolis until 1930. After this, the *Matapeake and Annapolis Ferry Line* operated until 1952, when the first Bay Bridge was completed.

A transition from the age-old method of travelling by sailing vessel to modern methods of travel by steam began in the Chester River in 1817. In that year, the steamboat *Surprise* travelled regularly between Centreville in Queen Anne’s County landings and Baltimore. In 1820, the steamboat *Maryland* ran regularly between Chestertown, Queenstown, Baltimore, Easton, and Annapolis. In 1833, the *Governor Wolcott* steamboat made the circuit between Rock Hall, Corsica, Chestertown, and Baltimore. By 1848, Captain James Tilghman took command of *Cambridge*, which traversed between Baltimore and Easton. By 1850, the Chester River had three steamboats--the *Osiris*, the *Cambridge*, and the *Hugh Jenkins*. They landed at Chestertown, Corsica, and Kent Island. By 1880, the Steamboat Cecil had stops at Crumpton and Booker’s Wharf.

The Queen Anne’s Railway, Inc. began operating in 1902. It came from Lewes, Delaware across Kent Narrows with stops in Queenstown, Chester, Grasonville, Stevensville and Love Point. However, ferry and rail passenger services ceased in 1948, and freight and express handling ceased in 1952. The ferries could not handle the cross-Bay traffic quickly, so the first Bay Bridge was finally built in 1952. The 1952 Bay Bridge soon could not handle traffic, so the second span of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge was completed in 1973. Currently, there is planning for one ten-lane Bay Bridge to better handle traffic.

LOVE POINT, A VACATION DESTINATION | Love Point, the north tip of Kent Island, became a vacation destination from 1902 to the 1940’s for visitors who came by train and boat.



Train and steamboat at Love Point exchange passengers. Sidewheeler Westmorland with the train waiting alongside at Love Point

There were two large hotels which had big band dance halls, a merry-go-round, bowling alley, and a casino. There was an inland lake with paddleboats, shooting gallery, sport shooting of clay birds, wrestling matches, fishing, and swimming. Annie Oakley, the renowned trick-shot champion, visited Love Point twice.

The Great Depression of the 1933- 1940 period devastated Love Point, Maryland and the world. The hotels closed permanently in 1947. They became vacant and finally were destroyed by fire in 1965. Nothing now exists of the gaieties there. To see what's left, take Love Point Road north and



Steamer Dreamland at Love Point

GOLDEN AGE OF STEAMERS | Author Jack Schaum's book *Lost Chester River Steamboats* is about 26 specific steamboats now gone forever. All were built of wood. They averaged 135 feet in length with 25-foot beams plus they had enormous rotating side wheels. They could travel seven to fifteen miles per hour. Some had auxiliary sails in case of no wind or faulty steam engines. They were usually individually owned and often competed with each other. The largest ever was the Dreamland at 284 feet long and it could carry 400 passengers.

These steamers transported people and goods down the Chester River to Love Point on Kent Island and across the Chesapeake Bay to the port of Baltimore. For over one hundred years, vessels like the Maryland, the Chester and the B.S. Ford traversed Bay waters laden with fruit, grains, crabs and oysters. For a dollar, passengers could enjoy the novelty of a ride and the slow panorama of the shoreline. They could stop at Love Point on Kent Island for its carnival and vacation atmosphere. The last of the steamers--the Bay Belle--made its final passage in the 1950s. Take a trip with Jack and read his 2015 book.

THE WATERMEN AND THE "OYSTER NAVY" | By the mid-1860's, Bay-caught crabs, soft-shell crabs, oysters, and clams had become major exports to big cities. There was intense competition between fishermen on both sides of the Maryland/Virginia border for access and fishing rights in each other's territories. Tempers flared and violence erupted between Maryland and Virginia watermen. By 1868, the Maryland "Oyster Police" or "Oyster Navy" was in conflict with Virginia watermen.

Currently, Queen Anne's County fishing boats are seen amidst condominiums which have become bedrooms for Washington and Baltimore commuters. The watermen are now concerned that oyster beds have been killed by parasites, Dermo, and MSX. Legislation on power dredging for oysters, tidal fishing, noncommercial crabbing, aqua culture, Rockfish catching, and oil and gas drilling in the Chesapeake Bay have become their issues of the day.

AUTOMOBILES IN QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY | The first person to own an automobile in Queen Anne's County and on Kent Island was Dr. C. Percy Kemp, as reported in the May 12, 1900 issue of *The Queenstown News*. This was cited by Carole Frederick in the Fall 2016 issue of *The Isle of Kent* - 1631.

The first successful gasoline auto in the U.S. was the 1893 Duryea. Bicycle mechanics J. Frank and Charles Duryea of Springfield, Massachusetts won the first American car race in 1895, and then they sold the first American-built car in 1896. Soon, competitor Ransom E. Olds founded Oldsmobile in 1897 and by 1903 he was producing thousands of Olds cars on the assembly line using interchangeable parts. However, even much before all this, inventors had experimented with a clock-work-driven carriage (1692), a steam-powered car (1769), and one with an internal combustion engine (1826).

Within Maryland, Baltimore was the center of the upstart homegrown auto industry. In 1890, Carl Spoerer sold motorized



Duryea Motor Carriage and Chris Kilian with his 1915 Model T

SCHEDULE		
BALTIMORE TO LOVE POINT AND RETURN		
65¢ MORNING - AFTERNOON 65¢		
SCHEDULE (EASTERN STANDARD TIME) In Effect June 1st, 1939 DAILY AND SUNDAY		
Lv. Baltimore (Pier 5 Light St.) 7:00 A. M. - 1:00 P. M.		
Returning Steamers arrive Baltimore 11:15 A. M. - 8:20 P. M.		
REFRESHMENTS - SPECIALS		
The Love Point Route offers one of the most pleasant and attractive trips across the Bay to the Chesapeake Bay.		
ALL ABOARD! LET'S GO!		
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ADDRESS: BALTIMORE & EASTERN RAILROAD COMPANY 317 PENNSYLVANIA STATION PHOENIX TERRACE BLDG. BALTIMORE, MD.		

SCHEDULE		
BALTIMORE TO LOVE POINT AND RETURN		
In Effect May 27, 1938		
Lv. Baltimore (Pier 5, Light St.)	Daily 7:00 a. m.	Daily 1:00 p. m.
Ar. Love Point (Pier 5, Light St.)	8:15 a. m.	2:15 p. m.
Lv. Love Point (Pier 5, Light St.)	Daily 8:15 a. m.	Daily 2:15 p. m.
Ar. Baltimore (Pier 5, Light St.)	9:30 a. m.	3:30 p. m.
Med. Service on Steamer		
Passengers, Automobiles and Trucks Held on All Trips		
RATES		
Passenger, \$1.50 One Way, \$2.50 Round Trip (Day Length, One-Day Excursion \$1.75)		
AUTOMOBILES	\$1.00 each	MOTOR COACHES - BUSES \$3.00 each
TRUCKS (Single or Loaded)	\$1.00 each	and under in length
Under 25 feet in length	\$1.00 each	MOTOR COACHES - BUSES \$3.00 each
25 feet to 35 feet in length	\$1.50 each	35 feet to 45 feet in length
Over 35 feet in length in length	\$2.00 each	BEARERS, 15 feet and under in length
BEARERS, 15 feet and under in length	\$1.00 each	BEARERS, over 15 feet to 20 feet in length
BEARERS, over 15 feet to 20 feet in length	\$1.50 each	BEARERS, over 20 feet to 25 feet in length
BEARERS, over 20 feet to 25 feet in length	\$2.00 each	MOTOR CYCLES (with side car)
MOTOR CYCLES (with side car)	\$1.50 each	
Same Rate as Trucks		
TRUCKS, Unencumbered (Empty or Loaded)	Same Rate as Trucks	
Same Rate as Trucks		
TRUCKS, Unencumbered (Empty or Loaded)	Same Rate as Trucks	
Same Rate as Trucks		
TRUCKS, Unencumbered (Empty or Loaded)	Same Rate as Trucks	
Same Rate as Trucks		

1938 and 1939 steamer schedules: Love Point and Baltimore

turn right on Pier Avenue, which covers the old tracks. The State of Maryland bought the area and the Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources has a small building there.

The James Adams Floating Theatre, a two-story barge which held 500 people, made Queen Anne's County regular stops including at Love Point, Chester, Queenstown, and Stevensville. Between 1914 and 1941, actors performed melodramas, skits, and plays as that theatre-on-a-barge made its routes all around the Bay and beyond. Edna Ferber, the author and dramatist of the 1926 novel, *Show Boat*, modeled her book after real characters on the James Adams Floating Theatre.

carriages at 400-402 South Freemont Avenue in Baltimore. The Spoerer's sons partnered with John and BJ Reus from 1907 to 1914 where they built the Spoerer automobile in Baltimore. The Spoerer Model B sold for about \$3,000 in 1912. In 1908, the Motor Car Company of Baltimore advertised the Stevens-Duryea touring car manufactured by J. Stevens Arms and Tool Co. of Chicopee Falls, Mass. for \$2,500. From 1907 to 1910, the Sinclair-Scott Company sold assembled automobiles for \$2,500 in Baltimore, Maryland. However, competing with these were the least expensive and mechanically-simple automobile Fords. Henry Ford's Model T's were probably the most prevalent automobile early in Queen Anne's County history. Early in the 1910's and 1920's, Model T engines powered trucks, tractors, sawmills, and boats for the average man in Queen Anne's County. In 1909, Henry Ford revolutionized car production by selling his gasoline-powered Model T for \$825. By 1925, it had been lowered to \$260. (\$260 is equal to \$4,500 in today's dollars). About 15 million Model T's were built, and fewer than 1 percent have survived.

It is possible that the oldest running Ford now in Queen Anne's County is a 1915 Ford Model T currently owned by Chris Kilian, a member of the Kent Island Heritage Society.

On the first Saturday of the month, he sometimes docents at the Old Stevensville Train Station where he drives and displays this car. His car is mechanically like the 15 million Model T's built from 1909 to 1927 in that all 15 million had the same basic motor, transmission and chassis parts. Before the 1909 Model T, Ford actually named his cars as Models A, B, C, F, K, N, R, and S. Contrary to myth ("You can have any color as long as it's black"), many of these A - S cars were in colors other than black. The really new Ford after the Model T came out in 1929 started over again with the alphabet-- as "the new Model A". See the Newsletter of the Kent Island Heritage Society, Inc., Spring 2017, "My 1915 Model T Ford by Chris Kilian".

Linda Severa Collier published an article entitled "The Severa Brothers" in the Fall 2016 Newsletter of the Kent Island Heritage Society, Inc., She stated that the Chester Service Station was located in Dominion on Kent Island adjacent to Little Creek. The station was not far from the Kirwan House and Museum at 641 Dominion Road, Chester, MD. Linda's father served in World War I and opened an automobile and boat engine repair business with his brother after World War I. They built several cars from scratch with bicycle wheels for tires and re-used alarm clock faces for headlights.

In the Spring 2017 issue Heritage Society Newsletter, Butch Collier wrote of owning a 1939 Buick, a 1941 Oldsmobile, and a 1948 Plymouth. Cars like these are still often seen at car shows organized by the Kent Island Cruisers Car Club, started in 1994. The Cruisers annually organize a spring show, Father's Day show, Historic Stevensville show, Halloween show, and cruise-ins.

The increase in American cars is inversely related to the decline of horses in the USA. In 1920, there were almost twenty million horses in the USA, but by 2012 (the last year in which the U.S. Census counted them), there were fewer than four million horses in the USA. Obviously, autos have replaced horses. The Census Bureau reported that, in 1900, the U.S. population was 76 million people but only 8,000 registered vehicles on U.S. roads. Now in the U.S. there are 340 million people driving 290 million vehicles.

KENT ISLAND'S "WARS" WITH THE ARMY IN 1917 AND U.S. NAVY IN 1956 | In 1917, Kent Islanders learned of

The James E. Kirwan House and Museum, Chester, Maryland



Congressional budget plans to purchase all of Kent Island and remove over 2,000 islanders, and make the island a bombing range. Senator James E. Kirwan (politically) led the charge to oppose this plan. One hundred locals travelled to Washington, D.C. and they met with Congress to de-fund the plan. The Army caved and their updated military facility became Aberdeen, where a restricted area of the upper Chesapeake Bay is now used for bombing practice. Butch and Linda Collier of Chester help to maintain Senator Kirwan's House and museum. With the Kent Island Heritage Society they and other docents give free guided tours of Kent Island Heritage Society properties on first Saturdays of the month.

Also, in 1956, the U.S. Naval Academy proposed plans to purchase and annex the lower half of Kent Island for use as a flight training base. The acreage was just south of the Bay Bridge towards Kent point. Dr. Reginald Truitt opposed this plan and saved "the land of pleasant living" for us, the ducks, and the blue herons.

THIRTEEN AIRPORTS IN QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY | Readers may be surprised to learn that there are currently 13 public and private airports in Queen Anne's County. Private airports are used for small charter flights, private jets, private airplanes, military airports, and restricted landing zones. Public airports (Bay Bridge Airport, Kentmorr Airpark Airport) are for commercial and public flight planes and parcel delivery. Private airports are in Centreville, Chestertown, Church Hill (2), Annapolis, Crumpton, Queenstown, Stevensville, Sudlersville (2), and Millington. There are no space age facilities in Queen Anne's County (not yet, not that we know of).

CONCLUSIONS | In 2031, in just seven years, Kent Island will be celebrating its quadricentennial. This marks 400 years as Kent Island being the third oldest English settlement in the U.S. Only Jamestown (1607) and Plymouth (1620) were settled earlier than Kent Island's 1631 Fort Kent settlement. Now might be a good time to ponder what we should be celebrating in 2031.

(Continued on page 10)

SUGGESTED READING | To cover 200 years of Queen Anne's County history (1824 to 2024), this academic journey has taken us from the days of horse and buggy to modern times. Satellites now inform us of weather and driving directions. We have included a suggested reading list of historical pieces to encourage you to dig deeper.

- Janet Freedman, *Kent Island: The Land That Once Was Eden*, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, 2002.
- JFrederic Emory, *Queen Anne's County Maryland*, The Queen Anne Press, Queenstown, Maryland. 1981. This was first published in 1886-1887 in a series in *The Centreville Observer*. It was edited by Frances Schuler Heard and published in 1950 by the Queen Anne's County Historical Society. In 1981 it was reprinted by The Queen Anne Press. Reprinted again 2022 by S. N. Books World in New Delhi, India.
- JMick Blackstone and James Parker, *Sunup to Sundown: Watermen of the Chesapeake*, Acropolis Books Ltd, Washington, D.C., 1988.
- JDonald G. Shomette, *Shipwrecks on the Chesapeake Maritime Disasters on Chesapeake Bay and its Tributaries*, 1608-1978, Tidewater Publishers, Centreville, Maryland, 1982.
- JBrent Lewis, *Remembering Kent Island Stories from the Chesapeake*, The History Press, Charleston, South Carolina, 2009.
- JNick Hoxter, *Growing Up on Kent Island, The Author's Remembrance of Life in the 30s and 40s*, M.R.H. Publishing, LLC, 1996.
- JJacques Kelly, *Maryland: A Pictorial History... the first 350 years*, Chesapeake Publishing Corporation, The Donning Company/Publishers, 1983.
- JNick Hoxter, *Nick Hoxter's Kent Island: The Final Visit to the Island of Yesterday, Featuring Tales of The Three Olde Islanders*, Published by William N. Hoxter, Jr., 2005.
- JMildred C. Schoch, *Of History and Houses A Kent Island Heritage, With Architectural Notes*, James T. Wollon, Jr. architect, and Orlando Rideout V, architectural historian. Published by The Kent Island Heritage Society, Inc., Stevensville, Maryland, 1989.
- JReginald V. Truitt, *Kent Island Maryland's Oldest Settlement*, 1965. Pamphlet.
- JEmily Roe Denny, *Indians of Kent Island*, 1959. Pamphlet.
- JCatherine H. Jones, *History of The Schools of Kent Island Queen Anne's County Maryland*, Published by The Kent Island Heritage Society, Inc.
- JJack Shaum, *Lost Chester River Steamboats: From Chestertown to Baltimore*, Published by The History Press, Charleston, SC, Paperback – October 19, 2015.
- JThe Isle of Kent – 1631. To Discover, Identify, Restore and Preserve the Heritage of Kent Island. The Newsletter of the Kent Island Heritage Society, Inc., Fall 2016 issue, Spring 2017 issue, "My 1915 Model T Ford by Chris Kilian".
- JWilliam Warner, *Beautiful Swimmers*, Little, Brown and Co., 1976.

The authors wish to thank John Conley for loaning us his vintage postcard collection.

- USEFUL WEBSITES** | <https://www.stevensvilleartsandentertainment.org/> <https://kentislandcruisers.com/>
<https://kentislandheritagesociety.org/> <https://easternshorebrent.com/2016/06/26/the-love-point-hotel/>

JOAN STOER AND WHEELER BAKER JOIN KIHS BOARD

Longtime Kent Island residents Joan Stoer and Wheeler Baker joined the Kent Island Heritage Society Board of Directors, and new board officers were sworn in by Queen Annes' County Orphans' Court Chief Judge Kimberly J. Cascia in December. Board President Jack Broderick thanked outgoing Board Members Chip Price for his service.



Joan Stoer moved to Kent Island twenty-five years ago when she retired from Montgomery County Public Schools. She was an art teacher there for 21 years, and served as the Coordinator of Elementary Art, Theater, and Dance at Montgomery County Public Schools central offices. She has enthusiastically embraced the history and

heritage of Kent Island, a place that she has since called home. She is a life member of the KIHS. Currently Joan serves as the Membership Chairman of the American Antique Arts Association of Annapolis where she engages in historical and cultural activities associated with the Chesapeake Bay. She lives in Kirwan's Landing.

Wheeler Baker has had a lifetime of service to Queen Anne's County and Kent Island. An Air Force veteran, Baker has served as a Queen Anne's County Commissioner and in the Maryland House of Delegates. He has served several local and state commissions and groups. He is credited for strong support of local emergency services, including leading the establishment of the county's Advanced Life Support program. He was honored for his service at a banquet in 2024. He is the former owner of Baker's Liquors in Chester.

Kent Island Heritage Society Officers and new board members were sworn in at a Membership Brunch at Cascia Vineyards in December. Pictured from left are Bob Lowe, vice president; new Board Member Joan Stoer; Jack Broderick, President; Lou Crouch, Secretary, and Orphans' Court Chief Judge Kim Cascia who conducted the swearing in ceremony. Treasurer Ericka Kriegisch is not pictured.

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 Kentmoor Marina Properties (*Life*)
 Kentmoor Restaurant
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 Michael Rosendale Realty
 The Grooming Place


Welcome
New Members

Joseph Glynn

✉

Do We Have Your Email Address?

To enhance our communications with members on a timely basis, KIHS is expanding our membership email list. This will enable us to more quickly distribute information—such as changes to an event—and other announcements, and for members to communicate with KIHS. Member email addresses will not be shared with any other organizations and can be removed at any time. To receive our email communications, please send your email address to kentislandheritagesociety.com.


 Quick Response (QR) Code

SCAN KIHS QUICK RESPONSE (QR) CODE TO REACH OUR WEBSITE

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.

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 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organization Membership \$40.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Family Membership \$25.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business Membership \$50.00 | |

Name(s) _____

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(Cell) _____

Email address _____

Your Interests:

History _____ Genealogy _____ Photography _____

Docent Program _____ 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**

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POSTCARD from Kent Island: U. S. Marine Corps at Love Point 1915

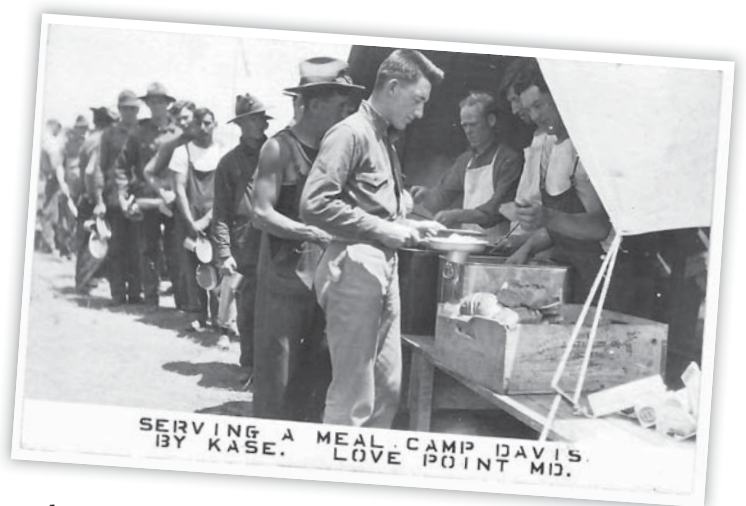
From John L. Conley Collection

These young men lined up for what was certainly a lunch of Eastern Shore delicacies (according to the "chef") at Camp Davis at Love Point on this postcard mailed in July 1915. According to the July 24, 1915, Army and Navy Journal:

The second company of the 1st Regiment, 1st U.S.M.C., 100 strong, is encamped on the highlands at Love Point, Kent Island, on the Chesapeake Bay, and will spend three months there practicing mine laying. Capt. Logan Feland, U.S.M.C. is in Command of the company with 1st Lieut. Julian C. S. Smith, U.S.M.C. next in charge. The busy section lays mines according to a chart prepared by Capt. Feland.

The 1st Marines were activated in Philadelphia in November 1913. U.S.M.C. officers at Love Point went on to illustrious careers. Capt. Feland went overseas to France with General Pershing in May 1917. He took part in many key battles and won the Distinguished Service Cross. He held several leadership positions and retired as a Major General in 1933. He is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

1st Lieut. Smith was born in Elkton MD in 1885. His career took him to Nicaragua, Cuba, and London, England, and several locations in the United States. In May 1943, Major General Smith took command of the 2nd Marine Division in the Pacific and led the assault on Tarawa. He became Commanding General, Expeditionary Troops, Third Fleet and in December 1944 took command of the Department of the Pacific. He died in 1975 and is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.



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