

Islc of Kent - 1631

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

NEWSLETTER OF THE KENT ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC.

WINTER 2025-26

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C. Gilbert Dunn 87-89

Audrey Hawkins 90-92

Charles Koegel 93-94

Hugo Gemignani 95-98

Nancy M. Cook 99-08



The 2026 Kent Island Heritage Society Officers and a new board member were sworn in at the Holiday Membership Luncheon at Cascia Vineyards on December 7. Pictured from left are Jack Broderick, President; Erika Kriegisch, Treasurer; Joan Stoer, Recording Secretary and new Board Member Kate Wise. They were sworn in by QAC Orphan's Court Judge Kim Cascia. Not pictured is KHS Vice President Bob Lowe.



President's Message

Welcome to fall on Kent Island. We finally shifted from the heat of this past summer to that pleasant fall chill in the air, even a hint of the coming winter! After those crazy high tides in late October, the strong winds in November normalized our waterways and brought most of the leaves down. But the geese are welcoming the change of seasons in the air and on the water. It is in that spirit of celebrating fall that we gather each year in late September in the back yard of the Kirwan place for our Fall Heritage Picnic. We were there on Sunday, September 28 to share our annual old fashion

country family picnic. We were blessed with beautiful early fall weather with close to 100 friendly Heritage members, guests, and their families to share that day. Our great food and drinks included lemonade, apple cider, homemade ice cream, fried chicken, hot dogs, and special covered dishes of all types brought from our homes. Families and kids enjoyed the music, games, live chickens, hayrides, and tours of the historic Kirwan House and Store. It was a memorable day with a warm family atmosphere, celebrating the best of Kent Island culture! We are especially thankful this year for the team effort by our Board and Society Members, led by Linda Collier, our Kirwan House Curator, for such a successful event.

In looking back on our year, our activities were infused with the energy of celebrating our 50th Anniversary of the Kent Island Heritage Society. Our general meeting in March

(Continued on page 2)

emphasized our founding, early history, our sites, and accomplishments. In early May, we were invited to help celebrate the Queen Anne’s County House and Garden Tour, welcoming several hundred visitors to our open sites on May 3. Of course, our largest event of the year, Kent Island Day, was celebrated on May 17, with our parade and largest ever number of vendors and visitors. We look forward to an even bigger celebration next year honoring America’s 250th Anniversary. We partnered with Kent Island Federation of Arts in the summer for several Art contests and shows highlighting the theme of Kent Island Heritage in art, in celebration of our Anniversary. We continued our First Saturdays Open Sites tradition, April through November. Our largest number of visitors was during the two recent fall events sponsored by the Historic Stevensville Arts and Entertainment District, with whom we work closely. They were the Artoberfest Arts and Crafts Festival on October 4 and the Kent Island Cruisers’ Antique Car Show on November 1. (Check out the pictures.) We hosted two docent training events in March and September to help recruit and train new docents to be a welcoming, knowledgeable friends when our sites are open. If you think you might enjoy being a docent, consider coming to our next session in the spring.

Although we had hoped to open our new Kent Island Heritage Center this fall, we’ve continued to experience some unexpected delays and challenges which we are working to resolve. The Heritage Center will become our new headquarters / museum / records storage / research center, right in the heart of Historic Stevensville. We are hopeful that we’ll be able to open this spring in time for Kent Island Day. Stay tuned for future announcements.

Two new developments this year were shared in our last Newsletter, but bear reemphasizing. We are invited to participate in the Centreville based Institute of Adult Learning (IAL), a seniors’ educational organization, to present three classes on Kent Island history in November, followed by a day of tours of our historic sites in December. It’s a great opportunity to help enhance appreciation of our unique history and potentially expand our membership base. Our second new and exciting opportunity is the invitation to develop a partnership with Kent Island High School. We anticipate students being involved in our heritage programs and events and earning community service credits in a variety of ways. We’ll be working with teachers and staff to infuse Kent Island history and heritage in a variety of subjects. Pretty exciting stuff!

We reach out regularly to expand our heritage presence in partnership with local organizations, on social media, and in print media to tell our heritage stories and share our accomplishments. We partner with the Kent Island Rotary, sharing our common Kent Island heritage, and anticipate a large number of Rotary flags this year helping us celebrate America’s 250th! Our long standing partnership with the Queen Anne’s



County Chamber of Commerce was recognized recently at a Chamber recognition event where we received a 50th Anniversary plaque and certificate.(Check out the picture). We also anticipate increased involvement with the Queen Anne’s County Historic Sites Consortium. The Consortium is now led by the County Heritage Tourism Coordinator, Penny Young-Carrisquillo, under the Economic and Tourism Development Office, and is helping to coordinate and support our efforts. The County Public Information Office is helping us get the word out. We have never had stronger support from our County Government !!

We are also participating in a unique traveling Smithsonian / Maryland Humanities event, “Museum on Main Street” Nov. 30 – Jan 11, at the Kennard Center in Centreville. The theme is “Spark – Places of Innovation” in rural communities. We are highlighting the spark that ignited the Kent Island Heritage Society 50 years ago. Check out the picture of our display and consider visiting the show. For info: kennardheritage.org.

Our final official Heritage event was our important Annual Holiday Party - Brunch and Elections - on Sunday, December 7 at beautiful Cascia, Vineyards. A separate invitation and RSVP was mailed out this year and the response was good. In addition to our warm Holiday gathering and some great food, we held our annual board and officer elections. Joan Stoer will assume the position as Recording Secretary. Lou Crouch will shift from Recording Secretary to Board Member. Kate Wise will become a new Board Member. John Conley, our longstanding versatile Board Member and former Recording Secretary will be stepping off of the Board, but still plans to serve as an active Society Member, as Newsletter Editor, Docent, and helping with other activities. We thank you John for your years of dedicated service. Officers continuing to serve in the coming year are Ericka Kriegisch as Treasurer, Bob Lowe as Vice President, myself, Jack Broderick as President. See more info and pictures here in this Newsletter.

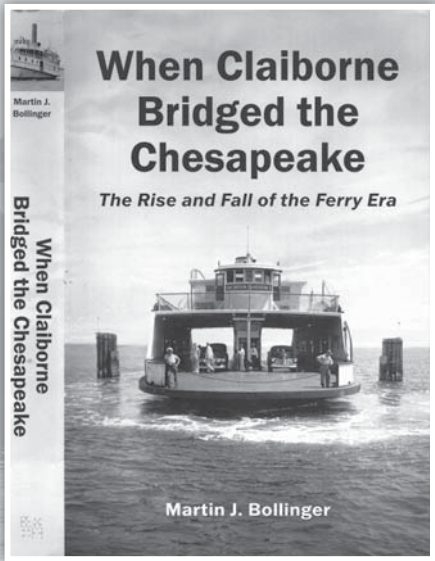
Thank you for your support this past year. We look forward to a great 2026. We extend to you and your family our warmest wishes for a happy holiday season.

Jack Broderick

New Book Records History of the Chesapeake Bay Ferry System

Did you know that a canal across Kent Island was proposed in 1929 to shorten the route from Annapolis on the Western Shore to Claiborne on the Eastern Shore? You will if you read *When Claiborne Bridged the Chesapeake: The Rise and Fall of the Ferry Era* by Claiborne resident Martin J. Bollinger and/or attend the lecture he will give on March 17 at Christ Historic Church.

The canal would have reduced the trip from Annapolis to Claiborne by about eight miles and shortened the trip by about a half an hour. Those plans were discarded after extensive study, and in January 1930 a plan for a direct ferry line from Annapolis to what would become known as Matapeake were announced. That terminal opened during a driving rain storm in July of that year. Clearly, construction projects moved quicker in those days, especially if the “right people” were involved.



The new ferry terminal at Matapeake took traffic away from Claiborne which had dominated cross Bay traffic since before the turn of the 20th Century. A new terminal was opened at Romancoke in 1938 to take passengers and cars to Claiborne where they could board trains and later buses to Easton, Cambridge and Ocean City. The Western Shore terminal was moved from Annapolis at the foot of King George Street to Sandy Point where some of it pilings can still be seen at the entrance to the Eastbound Bay Bridge which opened in 1952. Ironically, the last trip of a Chesapeake Ferry was from Romancoke to Claiborne on December 31, 1952.

BECOME A DOCENT TO HELP SHARE KENT ISLAND HISTORY

If you have received this newsletter and are reading this article, it means that you are a member of The Kent Island Heritage Society. We have a large membership, but we need your help! I have heard members say, “I am not a native Kent Islander, and I don’t know the local history.” Neither did most of our current docents. I am inviting you to learn more about how you can help share the enjoyment of visiting our Historic Sites.

We are planning a training session at 1 p.m. on March 14 at the Kent Island Library for anyone who will consider becoming docents or other activities to support our mission of researching, preserving, and sharing Kent Island History.

Please contact Hanna Wall 410-924-1069, hwall506@gmail.com for more information about being a docent and dates for the training sessions.

2026 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MARCH 14
DOCENT INTRODUCTION EVENT
1:00 p.m. Kent Island Library

MARCH 17
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING 7 p.m. Historic Christ Church
Marty Bollinger will discuss Kent Island and other key parts of the Chesapeake Ferry System in his new book WHEN CLAIBORNE BRIDGED THE CHESAPEAKE The Rise and Fall of the Ferry Era

MAY 16
KENT ISLAND DAY Stevensville

JUNE 17
SUMMER MEMBERSHIP EVENT
TBD

SEPTEMBER 27
MEMBERSHIP PICNIC
Kirwan Museum

OCTOBER 3
ARTOBERFEST Stevensville

NOVEMBER 7
CLASSIC CAR SHOW Stevensville

DECEMBER 6
KIHs MEMBERSHIP LUNCHEON AND ELECTIONS

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.



FALL AND EARLY WINTER 2025 WAS A BUSY TIME FOR THE KENT ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY IN ITS MISSION TO RESEARCH, PRESERVE AND SHARE KENT ISLAND HISTORY. HERE ARE SOME PHOTOGRAPHS OF VARIOUS EVENTS. PLEASE CONSIDER JOINING THE KENT ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY FOR AN ENJOYABLE AND PRODUCTIVE 2026.

- 1 There was another great turnout for the **KIHS Membership picnic** at the Kirwan Museum in September. Join us on September 27, 2026. The picnic featured games for children and homemade ice cream and apple cider.
- 2 **Historic Christ Church and KIHS** hosted a visit for members of the North American Division of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church from across the country in September. They held a brief service at the church and toured the Stevensville sites.
- 3 **Artoberfest** features artwork from many talented artists and food and entertainment. The Kent Island Federation of Arts (kifa.org) was represented by Darline Conley and Susan Thau. KIHS Board Members Ericka Kriegisch, Jack Boderick, and Joan Stoer greeted visitors at the old post office, one of the historic sites open during Artoberfest. The 2026 event will be held on October 3.
- 4 **The Kent Island Cruisers Classic Car Show** on November 1 drew a large fleet of gleaming cars to Stevensville where attendees could also visit historic sites like the KIHS train station and Caboose. The 2026 car show will be held in Stevensville on November 7.
- 5 The Kent Island Heritage Society presented three classes on Kent Island history to students in the **Institute for Adult Learning** program and hosted students from the program on a tour of the Stevensville sites and the Kirwan Museum on December 3.
- 6 The busy KIHS year ended with a well-attended **Holiday Membership Luncheon** which opened with the Pledge of Allegiance and ended with Christmas carols and good cheer.
- 7 The Stevensville Arts and Entertainment hosted a **Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony** on December 6. Santa and his elves were well received and promised to return in early December 2026.

Help Prepare Queen Anne's County's Medical History Story for the Historical Timeline Wall at the New UM Shore Regional Medical Center

The Kent Island Heritage Society will assist others from Queen Anne's County in providing information and materials for a historical timeline on a wall in the new University of Maryland Shore Regional Medical Center which is scheduled to open in Easton in 2028. The facility will have 147 licensed beds and feature a variety of services.

The timeline wall will include representations from Queen Anne's, Kent, Caroline, Dorchester, and Talbot counties. Photographs, historical documents, news articles, and other items that can help document early medical care on the Eastern Shore, the evolution of local hospitals, public health challenges and accomplishments, and the support of local communities or organizations are among possible sources of materials.

We will be interested in hearing stories of how people obtained medical care services prior to expansion of such services in Queen Anne's County. This could be anything for special dental care, surgical procedures, and other more complicated physical or mental care. What stories or items can be shared from the earliest hospitals in the area?

From Kent Island, we would appreciate receiving any information or photographs about Dr. William E. Denny and other early physicians.

Please contact John Conley at jconcomm@gmail.com with any information, pictures, or other materials you can share to ensure Queen Anne's County has the best of the five county representations on the wall.



The General Store in the Kirwan Museum was the source of many patent medical products, some of dubious value and today controlled substances. They included Dr. Petzold's Genuine German Bitters produced by the Petzold Drug Company in Baltimore at the turn of the century and sold in the store. They could help cure "whatever ails you," including colds, diarrhea, appetite loss and nervousness. Items from the company like these cards are found on eBay. A bill to prohibit sales of the product on Kent Island was passed.



This building in Stevensville served as a pharmacy for many years and products from the early years are displayed in its windows. The building later served as home of the Dashiell Dance Studio for many years. Wally Dashiell lived above the studio and lived to be 100. The building and display are today maintained by her son Ed Dashiell.



These medical books belonged to Dr. William E. Denny who in addition to being a physician was involved in many businesses on Kent Island, as has been his family over the years



Photo by Rebecca Placek



Kristen Tull, Stephanie Zeiler, and Keith Summers pose in the Kiln Room in the newly opened Cascio Clay Center at the Kent Island Federation of the Arts at 405 Main St. in Stevensville. The kiln is used for firing pottery. For information on classes, volunteering, or teaching, contact Stephanie Zeller at cascioclayscenter@gmail.com.

Thank You Business Supporters

Chesapeake Light Tackle
Harris Marine Financing
Kent Island Learning Cooperative
Kentmoor Marina Properties (*Life*)
Kentmoor Restaurant
Lundberg Builders
Maryland CPR and Safety
Michael Rosendale Realty
The Grooming Place

Welcome New Members

Jane Acri
Ronald and Patricia Marcolini



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.

KENT ISLAND Day

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



Event By: The Kent Island Heritage Society

Saturday, May 16th, 2026

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



The Kent Island Heritage Society entry in the SPARK! Places of Innovation exhibit at the Kennard African American Cultural Center celebrates the Saving of Kent Island from becoming a Department of War weapons testing facility in 1917. SPARKS is part of the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service tour of the Eastern Shore. The show will run through January 11, 2026, at the Kennard Center at 410 Little Kidwell Ave. in Centreville. Hours are 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays, and from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.



KENT ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY SCHOLARSHIP

The Kent Island Heritage Society is offering a \$1000 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.

Please submit for review:

The application form a letter of recommendation from a teacher or guidance counselor accompanied by your high school transcript, and a one page essay on the importance of preserving the heritage of Kent Island (the first paragraph of which should contain a brief biographical sketch.)

Application Form

Complete the following and return it with the recommendation, transcript and essay.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Brief explanation of Community Service: _____

All applications must be postmarked no later than **APRIL 1st**. Send to:
The Kent Island Heritage Society Scholarship Committee
P.O. Box 321, Stevensville MD 21666

KENT ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC.

POST OFFICE BOX 321

STEVENSVILLE, MARYLAND 21666

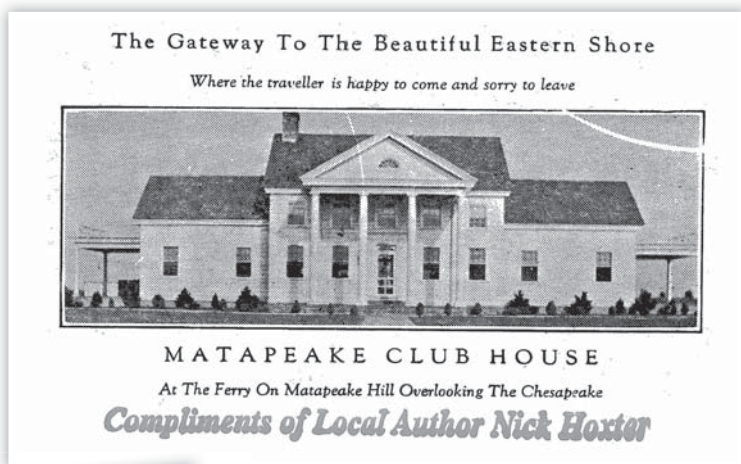
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POSTCARD from Kent Island: Matapeake Club House Still Welcomes Visitors

From John L. Conley Collection



Legendary Kent Island author and historian Nick Hoxter (1931-2024) issued this card to promote the Matapeake Club House which began greeting passengers from Annapolis at the Ferry Boat Terminal in 1936. Ferry service ended in 1952 with the opening of the Bay Bridge, but the building remains overlooking Matapeake Beach. It can be booked for special events. *For information, visit www.qac.org/1021/Matapeake-Clubhouse-Beach.*



Local author Marty Bollinger will discuss and sign his new book **WHEN CLAIBORNE BRIDGED THE CHESAPEAKE: The Rise and Fall of the Ferry Era** at a KIHS Membership Meeting at Historic Christ Church in Stevensville at 7 p.m. on March 17. The public is invited to learn about the system and Kent Island's special role in it.

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