President’s Message

Summer on Kent Island brings its own adventures and challenges — all in a wonderful setting. Of course there are those nemeses: for me - mosquitoes, ticks, sea nettles, snakes, an occasional skunk, bay bridge traffic, and the sometimes cantankerous weather. But the magic of this place, its heritage and its people make it all worthwhile. Consider our steamed crabs, crab cakes, fried soft crabs, rock fish, ospreys, evening breezes, “diamonds on the water” when the sun is just right, the boat ride down the creek, the visit out on the deck with friends, neighbors, and sometimes visitors from far away. Each of us has our own favorites. I often think old Capt. John Smith was right when he first sailed up the bay over four centuries ago and wrote poetically about the Chesapeake country in his journal, “Heaven and Earth never agreed better to frame a place for man’s habitation…”  He got it right, especially here on our island.

The Kent Island Heritage Society is committed to celebrating our heritage through special events and preserving and sharing historic sites. This year we’ve experienced the highs and lows of that commitment. In May we were challenged by the weather — torrential rains for nearly a week that washed out plans for our iconic annual event — Kent Island Day. Being the big outdoor event that it is, we need good weather. Check out the copy of the announcement that we shared with our community when we decided we had to cancel. But it is such a great event when it all comes together that it is worth our time, effort, and energy. We have a strong planning team in place, a great plan, and are optimistically looking forward to next year. You can visit our website at kentislandheritagesociety.org and view some wonderful pictures of previous Kent Island Day activities and memories. We hope to see you there taking pictures and making new memories next May!

Our two other recent events went quite well. In March we hosted a well attended meeting entitled “The Bay Bridge – Its Past, Present, and Future” at the Historic Christ Church in Stevensville. We outlined the island’s unique history, and took a trip down memory lane – through the island’s centuries-old culture of farmers and watermen, through the changing transportation patterns brought on by steamboats, trains, and car ferries. We reflected on what was called the heyday of Kent Island, (the 30s and 40s) when the car ferries brought positive growth and prosperity but at a slow nostalgic pace that most Islanders happily embraced. Then there was the sudden and overwhelming change that few anticipated or were prepared for - the opening of the bay bridge in 1952. That change has had an impact on island culture continuing through today. We explored how the traffic challenges are being met in a discussion with the bay bridge administrator and heard how the state is exploring options for the future in the ongoing study of the bay crossing. It was an informative and stimulating
Continued from page 1
evening which dovetailed our history and culture with the challenges of today and tomorrow. For an in-depth review of the March meeting you can see the excellent article that appeared in the April 4th issue of the Bay Times.

Then in June we relaxed and enjoyed a celebration of our maritime heritage on a memorable evening dinner cruise aboard the Chester River Packet. The Packet came down from her home port of Chestertown to share the evening with our members and guests. We boarded at the county’s Heritage and Visitors’ Center at Kent Narrows and set out on a leisurely three hour cruise in the mouth of the Chester. We enjoyed a great Chesapeake buffet and periodic narration reflecting on the island, the bay, and many interesting events that have tied them together through the centuries. It was a great evening and John Smith’s quote was the perfect thought as we pulled back into the narrows at sunset. Check out some great pictures of our evening on the water here in our newsletter.

Meanwhile, back at the farm – the Kirwan Farm, we have continued to maintain and improve the historic gem that was the home and farm of Senator James Kirwan “The Grand Old Man of Kent Island” who successfully worked to spare Kent Island from becoming a proving ground during World War I. Last year we completed the downstairs renovation with the help of a generous grant from the Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland. This year we are completing the renovation of rooms on the second floor to bring them to museum quality. And of course we continuously work to improve the General Store Museum through the tireless efforts of our Kirwan curator, Linda Collier. We are proud to announce that, thanks to Linda’s leadership, next year the Kirwan House will be featured on the 2019 House and Garden Tour of Queen Anne’s County. There will be more to come about the tour in the future. In early June we were happy to host a wine and cheese reception for the Kent Island Garden Club at the Kirwan House. We really appreciate the Garden Club’s work to help beautify the grounds at all of our historic sites.

Two other projects are underway this summer at the Kirwan House: the restoration of the garden gazebo, an Eagle Scout project by Josh Brown, and the inception of our working blacksmith shop.

At our historic sites in Stevensville we recently completed the restored the Cray House fence as well as the smoke house and way “out back”, the outhouse – a humble reminder of the reality of life on the island in years gone by.

Of course, our historic sites are open on the first

Continued on page 3
President’s Column  ... continued from page 2

Saturdays from April through November and by special request. This spring we also hosted special tours for two student groups from Stevensville Middle and Bayside Elementary, hoping to plant seeds and stimulate interest for tomorrow’s Heritage Society members. We extend thanks to each of the dedicated docents who bring the sites alive with colorful stories. We are always looking for a few good men and women to join us to share the docent experience. If you think you might be interested contact Sally Lewis (443 249 3203) or Nancy Cook (410 758 2502).

Our new website, by Joslyx of Stevensville, has been up and running for about a year, under the capable guidance of our Vice President, Bob Lowe. It tells our story and adds timely information about the sites, activities, and special events. Check us out regularly at kentislandheritagesociety.org. Those who are active in social media can link to our Facebook and Twitter accounts through the website.

In addition to focusing on our immediate Heritage Society business, we also work to stay aware of broader, community-wide issues that could impact our heritage and our quality of life. I’d like to update some thoughts expressed in a previous newsletter. You may have seen in the local papers that the Four Seasons project in Chester, north of the Castle Marina circle is moving forward with Phase I (162 homes and condos). After a delay due to environmental violations, it now has the green light to proceed. The new water tower that now looms above Macum Creek is part of Phase 1. Total build-out will be close to 1200 new homes. It has been a long and complicated process, spanning nearly 20 years. The county intends to move forward, amid local concerns about traffic, environment, and local compatibility. Each of the next three phases will require separate hearings and decisions. So stay tuned. Also potentially affecting growth in the Chester area are ongoing efforts to develop the Lowery Farm into a town center. However, the major infrastructure requirements under current county policy are an impediment. The critical issue will be whether or not these requirements will remain in effect. The County Comprehensive Plan is due for renewal in 2020. We believe it is imperative to keep these protections in place and we will stay close to this process.

At the county planning level, we are supportive of a proposed ordinance which would require documentation and protection of underground archaeological sites and resources in the county, affecting major site plans, major subdivisions, and certain other projects. We look forward to continuing to work with the county planning director on these issues. We have also worked with the county to help develop and implement new policy requirements dealing with preservation or destruction of above ground historic buildings. We appreciate the county’s support in this effort.

In September, we look forward to our Fall Heritage Picnic at the Kirwan Farm. This is a great tradition. We hope you’ll plan to join us for this special down home family picnic in a very special setting. See our invitation inside.

Thank you to each of our members for your continued generosity and support. Happy Summer!

Jack Broderick

Here is a copy of the public announcement that appeared in local papers re: cancellation.

Kent Island Day
Saturday, May 19
Cancelled Rain

The sign in the flooded Packet Park in Stevensville shared the news clearly, as did the other banners around the Island. And Yogi Berra’s quote came to mind, it was like “déjà vu all over again”! It happened in 2016 and again this year. I am compelled to convey a similar message to our community now as we did then. The decision was made on Wednesday, 5/16, based on the unusual weather forecast. The notice then went directly to many hundreds of players and on social media.

“Bad News – Heavy Rain!
Kent Island Day 2018 is cancelled, both the parade and the in-town festival. We’re sorry to announce that the weather will overwhelm our Kent Island Day 2018 plans. Based on the dismal weather forecast of heavy rain and storms all week through Saturday we’ve had to take preemptive action. There is no rain date. We’ll look forward to a bigger and better event next year. We thank our community for their understanding and for their continuing support of Kent Island Day.”

The rain held through the week. We saw one of the wettest May weeks since, well 2016! Over the years Kent Island Day has grown to be an annual rite of spring on Kent Island, like a ritual that helps bind our community together and that many folks look forward to. It’s a celebration of the best of our heritage, our culture, and our life on this wonderful Island we call home. But, as an iconic outdoor event, it is dependent on good weather. We were lucky with a long stretch of good weather good weather for many years. But in 2016 and 2018, the odds caught up with us. We are thankful we had accurate warning to make the right decision.

Some have asked if we couldn’t do a rain date. We have looked at that over the years and concluded that there are just too many players, the preparation is too long and complex, and the time of the year is just too busy to make a rain date possible. We want to express our thanks the many hundreds of folks who had a part and have worked for months in planning and supporting our Kent Island Day effort: our Ki Day Team; our vendors; food folks; entertainers; parade members; logistics supporters; the business folks in Stevensville; our local first responders; and all our friends and neighbors who are always so supportive. We have felt that support as we made this difficult, unavoidable decision. We are looking forward to next year. We extend our heartfelt thanks for such a supportive and understanding community. We’ll see you at Kent Island Day 2019.
We all did crazy things when we were teenagers and sometimes when we look back they were pretty funny. Please share events in your young life that would fill this bill. I’m going to start with one of my stories that could only have happened in the 50s up on the farm where I grew up (or at least I think so).

Every Easter Monday there was a vestry meeting at our church and of course my parents always went. That meant freedom for me as a teenager whose father kept pretty close wraps on. The last command was not to have anyone come up while they were gone. We didn’t have a phone so I couldn’t call and cancel our plans so the boys parked out by the woods and walked across the field for a visit when they saw our car go out the lane.

We were having a nice visit when we saw headlights coming in the lane!! Oh dear, what should we do? The house is of the revolutionary style: one room wide with huge windows and wide windowsills. When coming in the lane it would be easy to see someone leaving the house – front or back. There was only one thing to do – so I, the mastermind, told the boys to get in the back windowsill and stand very still behind the curtains. One of the boys was Paul Mylander, who couldn’t keep still unless his life depended on it (which he thought it did because everyone was afraid of my father).

As we thought, Mother and Daddy came in the living room to give us a run-down of the vestry meeting (all six siblings were sitting around). It seemed like they would never leave so finally I called my brother to the hall and told him to ask Mom to fix him a sandwich, which he did, because I knew my father would follow her to the kitchen, which he did. After they were safely at the other end of the house, the boys came out of the windowsills, out the front door, across the field and into their car! Phew!! Close call...

By the way, the other boy was Paul Jefferson – just so you know. If you would like to share an experience you had a young lad or lady you may email the story to frederickcarole521@gmail.com or snail mail to Carole Frederick, 521 Love Point Road, Stevensville, Maryland 21666. Please do.
An Old Fashioned Picnic

for

Kent Island Heritage Society Members and Guests

The Kirwan House and Farm

Sunday, September 23, 2018          1:00 – 5:00

Bring a Covered Dish to Share

The Society will provide
Fried Chicken, Hot Dogs, Iced Tea, Lemonade, and Coffee
Bring a lawn chair for comfort and join us for
hayrides, corn hole, chickens to feed, good conversation, games, displays + a 50/50 Raffle

RSVP: by September 19 (include information on form below if emailing or calling)

Email: frederickcarole521@gmail.com  or call Carole Frederick at 410 643 3776
Or you may mail this form to
Carole Frederick, 521 Love Point Road, Stevensville, MD 21666

Name________________________________

We would love to attend the heritage society picnic and will have the following number of people in our party: Your phone #___________(in case of inclement weather)
No. of Adults_____    No. of Children_____    Ages of Children___________

(for game planning)

 NAMES OF EVERYONE ATTENDING IN YOUR PARTY
Kent Island and the first dispute with Maryland

In 1629, George Calvert, 1st Baron Baltimore, arrived in Virginia, having traveled south from Avalon, his failed colony on Newfoundland. Calvert was not welcomed by the Virginians, both because his Catholicism offended them as Protestants, and because it was no secret that Calvert desired a charter for a portion of the land that the Virginians considered their own. After a brief stay, Calvert returned to England to press for just such a charter, and Claiborne, in his capacity as Secretary of State of Virginia colony, was sent to England to argue the Virginians’ case. This happened to be to Claiborne’s private advantage, as he was also trying to complete the arrangements for the trading post on Kent Island.

Claiborne sailed for Kent Island on 28 May 1631 with indentured servants recruited in London and money for his trading post, likely believing Calvert’s hopes defeated. He was able to gain the support of the Virginia Council for his project and, as a reward for London merchant Maurice Thomson’s financial support, helped Thomson and two associates get a contract from Virginia guaranteeing a monopoly on tobacco. Claiborne’s Kent Island settlers established a small plantation on the island and appointed a clergyman.

While the settlement on Kent Island was progressing, the Privy Council had proposed to Sir George Calvert, former Secretary of State for the King, that he be granted a charter for lands north of the Virginia colony. Calvert accepted, though he died in 1632 before the charter could be formally signed by King Charles I, and the Royal Grant and Charter for the new colony of Maryland was instead granted to his son, Cecilius Calvert, on 20 June 1632. This turn of events was unfortunate for Claiborne, since the Maryland charter included all lands on either side of the Chesapeake Bay north of the mouth of the Potomac River, a region which included Claiborne’s proposed trading post on Kent Island. The Virginia Assembly, still in support of Claiborne and now including representatives of the Kent Island settlers, issued a series of proclamations and protests, claiming the lands for Virginia and protesting the charter’s legality.

Claiborne’s first appeal to royal authority in the dispute, which complained both that the lands in the Maryland charter were not really unsettled, as the charter claimed, and that the charter gave so much power to Calvert that it undermined the rights of the settlers, was rejected by the Lords of Foreign Plantations in July 1633. The following year, the main body of Calvert’s settlers arrived in the Chesapeake and established
Claiborne made clear to Calvert that his allegiance was to Virginia and royal authority, and not to the proprietary authority in Maryland. In 1635, a Maryland commissioner named Thomas Cornellis swept the Chesapeake for illegal traders and captured one of Claiborne’s pinnaces in the Pocomoke Sound. Claiborne tried to recover it by force, but was defeated; although he retained his settlement on Kent Island. These were the first naval battles in North American waters, on 23 April and 10 May 1635. Three Virginians were killed.

Meanwhile, an attorney for Cloberry and Company, who were concerned that the revenues they were receiving from fur trading had not recouped their original investment, arrived on Kent Island. The attorney took possession of the island and bade Claiborne return to England, where Cloberry and Company filed suit against him. The attorney then invited Maryland to take over the island by force, which it did in December 1637. By March 1638 the Maryland Assembly had declared that all of Claiborne’s property within the colony now belonged to the proprietor.

Claiborne was an Anglican and deeply resentful of the Calverts’ Catholicism. He sided with Parliament during the English Civil War of 1642–1651 and was appointed to a commission charged with subduing and managing the British colonies of the Province of Virginia and Province of Maryland. He died around 1677 at his plantation, “Romancoke”, on Virginia’s Pamunkey River.

**Sources:** Brenner, Robert (2003). Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London’s Overseas Traders
Browne, William Hand (1890). George Calvert and Cecilius Calvert: Barons Baltimore of Baltimore
Fiske, John (1897). Old Virginia and her Neighbors
Hatfield, April Lee (2004). Atlantic Virginia: Intercolonial Relations in the Seventeenth Century
Wikipedia: William Claiborne

Much more information about William Claiborne is located in the Kent Island Heritage Society files at our Kent Island Library.

**William Claiborne: Recap**

Claiborne was born in the county of Kent in England in 1600

Claiborne was offered a position as a land surveyor in the new colony of Virginia, and arrived at Jamestown in 1621

His financial success was followed by political success, and he gained appointment as Councilor in 1624 and Secretary of State for the Colony in 1626

Around 1627, he began to trade for furs with the native Susquehannock Indians from further north

Claiborne sailed for Kent Island on 28 May 1631 with indentured servants recruited in London and money for his trading post

Royal Grant and Charter for the new colony of Maryland was granted to Cecilius Calvert, on 20 June 1632

In 1635, a Maryland commissioner swept the Chesapeake for illegal traders and captured one of Claiborne’s pinnaces in the Pocomoke Sound. Claiborne tried to recover it by force, but was defeated; although he retained his settlement on Kent Island. These were the first naval battles in North American waters, on 23 April and 10 May 1635

Maryland temporarily won the legal battle for Kent Island and won again when Claiborne’s final appeal was rejected by the Privy Council in April 1638

During the English Civil War of 1642–1651 Claiborne was appointed to a commission charged with subduing and managing the British colonies of the Province of Virginia and Province of Maryland

Claiborne retired from political affairs in 1660 and spent the remainder of his life managing his 5,000 acre estate “Romancoke” on the Pamunkey River in Virginia. He died there in about 1677
Stevensville Middle School students from Thomas Crise’s Seventh Grade Law, Economics, and History class visited KIHS sites in Stevensville on April 17.

Following a presentation at Christ Church by KIHS Board Member Nancy Cook, the students visited the old post office, bank, Cray House, and the train station. They asked a number of questions and many said they would like to visit again. Based on thank you notes from many of Mr. Crise’s students, they especially enjoyed the materials displayed at the Cray House, the vault in the bank and details on early train and steamboat travel at the train station. KIHS President Jack Broderick treated the students to an old time “whistle-stop tour” speech from the caboose. Many students observed in their notes that Kent Island was founded in 1631. KIHS welcomes the chance to share the history of our island with students of all ages.
Chester River Packet Cruise Welcomes New Members

The June 20th KIHS Membership Cruise on the Chester River featured nice weather and great views of the shore from Love Point. Osprey all along the route were happy to provide many photo opportunities. KIHS President Jack Broderick reflected on the oyster wars that took place on the oyster rich Chester River. Sen. James Kirwan and Kent Island resident John W. Jones served in the Oyster Navy which engaged aggressive dredgers and crafty watermen on the river. For many, it was the first time to view the Kent Island skyline’s new water tower at Four Seasons from the river. As usual, the cruise ended with an impressive sunset.

Welcome
To New Members
Ed Dashiell
Michelle Fate
Diane and Peter Pappas

Postcard: Travel to the Eastern Shore in Early 1900s

“Going Down the Ocean” from Baltimore and the Western Shore in 1908 started with a pleasant two-hour ride across the Bay on steamers like the Love Point. Passengers could catch a Maryland, Virginia and Delaware Railway Company train to the beaches or just stay on Kent Island and enjoy great food and hospitality at Love Point. Note that the roundtrip fare was 50 cents. KIHS member Jack Shaum writes in his book “Lost Chester River Steamboats” that the steamer Love Point was constructed from the old Chester River steamer Emma A. Ford, which had been heavily damaged by fire in 1906. Alas, the Love Point herself was destroyed by fire in 1909, ironically at the pier in Love Point.

In 1629, George Calvert, 1st Baron Baltimore, arrived in Virginia, having traveled south from Avalon, his failed colony on Newfoundland. Calvert was not welcomed by the Virginians, both because his Catholicism offended them as Protestants, and because it was no secret that Calvert desired a charter for a portion of the land that the Virginians considered their own. After a brief stay, Calvert returned to England to press for just such a charter, William Claiborne (c. 1600 – c. 1677) was an English pioneer, surveyor, and an early settler in the colonies/provinces of Virginia and Maryland and around the Chesapeake Bay. Claiborne became a wealthy planter, a trader, and a major figure in the politics of the colonies. He was a central figure in the disputes between the colonists of Virginia and the later settling of Maryland, partly because of his earlier trading post on Kent Island, which provoked the first naval military battles in North American waters. Claiborne repeatedly attempted and failed to regain Kent Island from the Maryland Calverts, sometimes by force of arms, after its inclusion in the lands that were granted by a 1632 Royal Charter to the Calvert family by the reigning King of England, Charles I, thus becoming Maryland territory.

Heritage of Kent Island:
William Claiborne
Compiled by James Parker

Kent Island and the first dispute with Maryland
Kent Island Day Patrons — 2018

Bobby and Lorraine Aaron
Phyllis and George Abendschoen
Roz and Marty Appel
Linda Armiger
Betty Baker
Holly and Wheeler Baker
Patty Baker
Diana Bonner
Janet and Theophilus Breeding
Richard & Deborah Britt
Jack and Liz Broderick
Madison and Ethel Brown
Lee and James Butera
Pat and Francis Carnes
Dr. Earl L. Chambers Jr.
Curtis Chance
Forrest P. Chisman
Deborah Clarke
Anita Collins
John and Darlene Conley
Nancy MacGregor Cook
John D. “Jack” Coursey
Don Crouch and Susan Walters
Clara B. Davidson
Norman Davidson
Carolyn T. Dobyns
Roger and Rena Dye
Julie Eaton
Linda Elias
Janet Euler-Knight
Janet and Irv Freedman
Frank and Donna Frohn
Evelyn Colonna Garcia
In Memory of Hugo Gemignani
Joanne and Carl Gerg
Jay and Toni Gibson
Pat and Sharon Goss
John and Jeanne Guidera
M. Hamilton & Sons
Jerry Harris
In Memory of Audrey Hawkins
Tom and Bobbye Helfenbein
Tony and Tracie Holtman
Mrs. Ava Kelley Honeycutt
Ann P. Horvath
Wayne Humphreys
Mae Hutchison
Laura and Mike Keene
David and Claire Kelley
Ernestine Kepley
Joyce K. Kerlin
Mr. and Mrs. William T. Key
Darlene Councill Koermer
Lynnda Kratovil
Phillip Kunzelman
Karla and Eddie Larrimore
Mary Jane Leaverton
Peggy and Brent Lewis
Sarah E. Lewis
Mark Lidinsky
Carolyn and Scott MacGlashan
Merri Mullaney
Diane White Nemeth
Karen and Art Oertel
James T. Parker
Bill and Norma Patton
Fran Peters
Placek Family
Annie May Price
Lisa and Chip Price
Mildred Price
Gene M. Ransom III
Lewis R Raszewski
Sandy Reinhard
Lynne Riley-Coleman
Harriet Russell
Bernie and Dorotheann Sadusky
Marie and Henry Schmidt
Sonny Schulz
Tracy T. Schulz
Jane P. Schwarz
John and Elizabeth Seidel
Jarrett and Frank Smith
Dick and Flora Sossi
Jane G. Sparks
Elizabeth Carville Ruark Spear
Beth and Wayne Stanley
Mrs. Rita Stowe
The Grooming Place Pet Shop
Karen A. Thomas
Dorothy Tolson Thompson
Kay Shawn Thompson
Rosalie and Richard Tillman
Mindy and Mike Voelker
Carl and Dottie Wagner
Hanna Wall
James and Gayle Walls
Paula Warner
Pauline K. White
Mr. and Mrs. William M. White & Family
J. Coursey Willis
Marilyn and Harold Wilson
Georgeanna L. Windley
Joyce Woodford
Bonel P. Zakarian
Joe and Clare Zimmerman
Alex Johnson’s Kent Island Countdown

Much to our credit (or dismay) we have:

13 Service Stations
12 Politicians
11 Spired Churches
10 Public Landings
9 Librarians
8 Fast Foods
7 Wide Beaches
6 Restaurants
5 Consignment Shops
4 Barber Shops
3 Bakeries
2 Pawn Shops
1 Grand Old Heritage Society

Warning: Do not try to sing this list to any popular seasonal melody! Do not hold me to these totals as numbers may have changed overnight.

Picnic Scenes
An Old Fashioned Picnic ... Sun., Sept. 23 Kirwan House

See full details on Page 5 of this Newsletter