President's Message

AND THE RAINS CAME... thus Kent Island Day had to be rescheduled for its rain date, Sunday, May 19.

Many thanks must be given to chairpersons of the various committees who spent early Saturday morning, May 18, calling to notify their volunteers that the commemoration of the 371st anniversary of the founding of Kent Island would be rescheduled.

Eva Thompson, entertainment chair, Myrtle Bruscup, genealogy and bake sale chair, Audrey Hawkins, docent coordinator and vendor chair, Deborah Clarke, parade chair, Greg Nizza and John Smigo, facilities co-chairs, were well prepared with telephone numbers. Most participants were quickly contacted.

THEN THE SUN CAME OUT... and what a glorious day Sunday was.

Attendance at craft presentations and activities was excellent. The 18th century militia encampment, the quilts displayed by Queen Anne’s County Quilt Guild, coordinated by Mrs. Pat Wood; Joyce Moore’s Antique Doll display; the genealogical display, compiled by Mmes. Mary White, Myrtle Bruscup and Teresa Kilian; the antique clothing so beautifully arranged by Barbara Nash and her daughter, Tyra; and Mr. Joseph DiPietro’s wonderful wooden model boats were just a few of the attractions throughout the day.

A new activity added to this year’s celebration was a Walking Tour of...
Rain Delays KI Day
Continued from p. 1

came here and offered a service for a long, long time," said O'Donnell. The Dunns owned and operated a pharmacy in the Kent Island Shopping Center until 1999, when they sold the business.

"They have done so much for us and the community and they are such an instrumental part of The Kent Island Heritage Society and the Kent Island community," said Cook. Whenever Gil Dunn has seen a need for something lacking in the community he has taken action, said Cook. He was instrumental in starting the Kent Island Little League and a motivating force behind starting St. Christopher's Church.

"He always wanted Kent Island to have its own community band," said Cook, and it was through Dunn's hard work and effort that the Kent Island Volunteer Band was formed.

During his tenure as president of the Heritage Society, Dunn took a keen interest in restoration and brought a dilapidated train depot to Stevensville. With volunteers from the community pitching in Dunn helped turn the train depot into a legitimate historic site.

"The Dunns have always said Kent Island has been a blessing to them, but I must say they have been a blessing to Kent Island," said Cook.

After serving as grand marshals of the Kent Island Day parade the Dunns enjoyed the festivities, which included plenty of food, historic displays, 18th century settlers' campsites and crafts.

At the campsite blacksmith Spike Stoner made nails the old fashioned way with hot coals and iron, while dinner was being served next door.

"We are making what is called 'bubbles and squeak,'" said Shirley Stoner, stirring a small cauldron of stew made up of cabbage, potatoes, onions, sausage and salt and pepper.

"In the 18th century lots of other herbs were used to help disguise the rancid taste of the meat. They didn't throw anything away," said Stoner.

And why the name "bubbles and squeak?" "The bubbling from the boiling stew and the squeak was the sound of the pig," said Stoner, as she and the settlers sat down for their meal before starting their afternoon chores of soap and candle making.

Know Your Board

CHARLES "GIL" DUNN

Gil learned in the summer of 1953 that the builder of the Kent Island Shopping Center was looking for someone to open a pharmacy. "I didn't know where it was," says Gil. So he took a ride from his hometown of Baltimore, crossed over the new Chesapeake Bay Bridge—then a single span—and there was Kent Island. The shopping center was still under construction.

Thus began 40 years of operating the Kent Island Pharmacy, more commonly known as Gil Dunn's Pharmacy.

Gil's interest in baseball was evident in a display—unexpected in a pharmacy—of Jimmie Foxx memorabilia. Foxx, a Sudlersville native, was MVP in 1932 and '33 for the Philadelphia Athletics and in 1938 for the Boston Red Sox. This interest also led to his sponsorship of a little league team, the Lions, which led a couple of years later to the formation of the Kent Island Baseball Little League. Today, that league involves more than 1,000 boys and girls.

He also was very much involved in the establishment of St. Christopher's Catholic Church in Chester.

Gil became associated with The Kent Island Heritage Society in 1975. When he served as president from 1986 through 1988 he had such difficulty getting musicians for Kent Island Days that he formed the Kent Island Volunteer Band, which performs at numerous functions throughout the county. He also was significantly involved in restoration of the Old Stevensville Train Station, now a popular attraction.

"I enjoyed it," he declares. "Living on Kent Island has been a pleasure for me and my family. Many good things happened to us here."

FLORENCE DUNN

Florence came with husband Gil [see above] to Kent Island from Baltimore in 1954. The family's home for the first five years was the Stinton-Sudler or Cocke House that is pictured on the cover of Mildred Schock's book, "Of History and Houses," an overview of historic homes on Kent Island.

Florence has lived in the Town of Stevensville since 1960. Her 5 children, 3 sons-in-law and 12 grandchildren all think of Kent Island as home. "Moving to Kent Island has been a blessing to all of us," she says.

She has been very active in St. Christopher's Catholic Church since 1955 and has worked in its religious education program for children for more than 20 years.

Florence became a charter member of The Kent Island Heritage Society in 1975 and has been involved in its many activities throughout the years. "I have enjoyed the activities, the pursuits, the interest and the learning of The Society," she says.

She is secretary of The Kent Island Heritage Society and serves as docent at the Old Stevensville Train Station.

CAROLE PRICE FREDERICK

Carole was born in her maternal grandparents' farmhouse on Kent Island during World War II. She is the daughter of Charles Clayland Price Jr. And Louisa Mitchell Davidson Price. Dr. Sattlemeyer was the attending physician, Mrs. Anna Auldrich the midwife, and—since her father was away in the war—Grandfather Price—who, at 103, still lives there—gave birthing instructions.

She grew up on her paternal grandparents' farm about a mile north of town, where her mother still lives. She was the oldest of seven children; she has one son and two grandsons.

She lives in Stevensville in an arts and crafts style bungalow designed by her cousin, Clinton White, for his uncle, Clint Jones, as a requirement for graduation from high school.

Carol graduated from Stevensville High School, class of 1961, and from Western Maryland College in 1963 as a music education major.

She retired in 1998 from Anne Arundel schools, where she taught for 31 years. They hired her back to teach music and typing.

She loves playing bridge, bike riding, music and socializing with family and friends.
Alex Johnson Wins Poetry Prize
Kent Island Heritage Society member Alex Johnson has recently won a first prize in the 6th Annual Eastern Shore Regional Poetry Contest, sponsored by the Queen Anne's Arts Council. Here's his poem:

**Ashes**

For years he dumped the fireplace ashes Out on the bulkhead rocks, "To hold the grass and ground," His father said.

Here he filled a grocery bag, There a cardboard box, Then made his journey out, Advice and direction in the air.

"Hold that bottom two-handed. Have you your boots? It's muddy there. Stand upwind when you dump or You will be back, Looking grim and gray Long before your time."

Didn't a bottom give way once. All afternoon wind puffs gave The yard a dreary, dismal look.

"Make me a heart-wood box this big, "His father said, "For carrying, and Carve a bird or flower on the lid."

He carved a bird, Phoenix-like For the ashes Or the answer to some prayer,

And then the old man was gone His ashes carried out in the box Carried out barefooted. Heart-wood box under one arm He stood deliberately downwind And dumped; As if to let the old an get in his face One last time.

**Crossing the Bay**

**On the “Smokey Joe”**

**J. Edward Yealdhall**

I remember “Smokey Joe,” the Baltimore to Love Point ferry. Hard to say when it started running. Surely it would have been in operation before 1910 because that is the year the Love Point Hotel was constructed.

The longest running ferryboat, to our knowledge, was the Philadelphia, which began the run in 1932. My first trip was in 1935 and regularly after that until the last run in 1947.

The “Smokey Joe” was operated by the Pennsylvania Railroad. Throughout the year [it] made 20 round-trips a week, three a day with one layover on Sunday night for maintenance. Passengers traveled on the top deck, indoors or out. Beer, soda and food could be purchased.

Slot machines were there—penny operated! Cars and trucks occupied the four lanes on the lower deck. I remember the truck drivers shooting craps during the trip. For the 1930s, seeing all those $10 bills moving around was quite a sight.

My mother liked to pick up bargains from the produce truck drivers, especially those incomparable Eastern Shore cantaloupe.

I remember seeing photos in the pilot house of rescues made on the ice of the bay by the Philadelphia. One time, it is recorded, it even broke loose an icebreaker ship which was stuck fast. The heavy flat-bottomed boat could ride up on the ice and break through any in its path.

One sidelight to put our economy in perspective: I remember a Sunday trip in either 1937 or 1938 when we had Sunday dinner at Miss May's, a small hotel, not a private home on Pier Road above the ferry slip. The meal consisted of fried chicken, a soft crab, peas, potatoes, corn on the cob, iced tea and ice cream for dessert. The cost was one dollar!

In 1947 after “Smokey Joe” barked its coal furnaces, I began to drive to Sandy Point to take the ferry to Matapeake on Kent Island. It was a nice 20 minute ride...but not really the same! (As good old “Smokey Joe.”)

Reprinted from a 1993 edition of Isle of Kent. Mr. Yealdhall has since passed on.

**In Memoriam**

Mr. Mervyn C. Sparks
Ms. Gail Baxter Rumenap

The Society is very thankful for the interest and support shown over the years by these members of our organization and our community. We will continue to honor their memory by discovering, identifying, restoring and preserving the heritage of Kent Island.
▲ The Gil Dunn Family
▼ Blacksmith Spike Stoner makes nails.

▼ Parade Grand Marshalls
Gil and Florence Dunn

Grand Marshall photo by Jean Leathery
Other photos by Rose Spik, Bay Times
Fran Peters, Emma Thomas, Eileen Dadds, Audrey Hawkins at bake table.

Nancy Cook, Gil Dunn at opening ceremony.

Twyla Hirrlinger, Shirley Stoner, Alice Petree, Spike Stoner, Tom McElroy have colonial meal.
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We gratefully thank the following patrons for their financial support of the twenty-seventh annual Kent Island Day. We also extend our gratitude to any patron whose contribution was received too late to be included in this printing.

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Cakes and Genealogy

Myrtle Busecup
LIBRARY FILES COMMITTEE

We had a great, festive Kent Island Day. The cake table sold out before closing time. We had two tables filled with all sorts of goodies. Many thanks to those who baked and also those who donated cash. A special thanks to Jane Grafton and Mae Hutchison for manning the tables from start to finish.

Saturday’s terrible weather required contacting many people to reschedule the event for Sunday. A great many thanks to my telephone callers, Eileen Dalds, Jane Grafton, Mac Hutchison and Fran Peters.

A new feature of Kent Island Day was a Genealogy Table. Mary White and I spent many hours at the library determining which items would be most interesting to display. We selected old pictures of Stevensville High School, grade schools, hotels, homes, post office and churches. We displayed the family history chart of William Claiborne, who established the first English settlement on Kent Island on 1631. We had binders of the Baxter and Nash families, a book of burial permits, newspaper articles and much more.

Things are proceeding nicely here at historic Kirwan House in Chester. The yard and gardens are really starting to come together. Springtime was just beautiful with flowers and bulbs in bloom. Thanks to The Kent Island Garden Club and the ladies who came down and mulched and planted flowers and rosebushes.

New grass seed has been planted in several bare spots. The overgrown front corner has been cleared of brush, and I am renovating the original drainage ditches. Most of the old concrete pathways that outlined the extensive gardens have been uncovered. It has really brought out a lot of the character of the old gardens.

Inside the house, wallpaper has been stripped and the wood floors are scheduled to be refinished in June. Once the floors are completed, the original furnishings will be moved back into the home from storage.

The second phase of plumbing work will also take place this summer, relocating the washer and dryer out of the original storeroom and hiding the exposed pipes. This will set the stage for restoration of the old store, which will be a museum area open to the public. Our goal is to be able to open the store for public viewing this fall.
President's Message
Continued from p. 1

Historic Stevensville, facilitated by a new brochure prepared by editor John Bonner. Willard Thomas’s woodworking skills produced the numbered signs placed at each site described in the brochure.

We are already planning next year’s event, always held on the third weekend in May, as designated by the General Assembly and signed into law by then-Acting Governor Blair Lee.

The enclosed brochure is for sharing with someone you think might be interested in joining our organization.

Nancy M. Cook

Welcome New Member

Edward G. Smith
Centreville, Md.

The Grave Site
At Terrapin Park

Gil Dunn

Almost everyone who lives on Kent Island or nearby knows where to find Terrapin Park. But only a very few know anything about the grave site there.

Several months ago I was taken to the site. From the parking area at Terrapin Park, we walked along the trail for approximately half a mile, then into the brush, stickers, high grass and wooded area to the burial place of James B. Ringgold, 1806-1866. His wife, Rebecca, is also buried here.

The wrought iron enclosure was half knocked down and partially buried in the soil. The grave site stones were nearly obliterated, except for the headstone of James Ringgold and the footstone that clearly showed J.B.R.

Although thoroughly searched, it was difficult to determine who had owned the farm bearing the Ringgold graves.

Now the area has been cleaned up, the grass and brush have been removed, and the site is not too difficult to visit from the park trail.

Yet another piece of old Kent Island history has been identified, preserved and documented by The Kent Island Heritage Society.

Isle of Kent
John Bonner, Editor

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