Isle of Kent - 1631

NEWSLETTER OF THE KENT ISLAND HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC.

SUMMER, 1991

TO DISCOVER, IDENTIFY, RESTORE, AND PRESERVE THE HERITAGE OF KENT ISLAND

SUMMERTIME AT THE OLD LOVE POINT HOTEL

When temperatures sizzled in downtown Baltimore almost a century ago, B.A.C. (Before Air Conditioning) Baltimoreans escaped the sweltering city via the ferry boats from the Inner Harbor to Kent Island's famous resort Hotel at Love Point. Islanders awaited them at the steamboat landing, on the "Dreamland", the "B.S. Ford". the "Emma Ford", and the famous old "Smoky Joe." Kent Island's summer social season had begun.

Some folks took the train to Queenstown, others caught the surrey with the fringe on top to the hotel now known as the Kent Manor Inn, but most passengers were bound for the Love Point Hotel and its wide, breezy verandas overlooking the Chester River. The popular dining room served meals for $1.25!

Dances were held on Saturday nights. Native Islanders fondly remember looking forward to those Saturday dances in th edining room and chatting at tables on the veranda, especially the girls in their flowing summer dresses, eyeing the boys in their Sunday Best, as the music drifted down the lawn to the waters of the Chester River. The living was easy in the Land of Pleasant Living.

LOVE POINT

Much has been written about the origins of the name of the famous resort which made Kent Island famous in the early days of this century. Romantic natives contributed to the legend of colonial days which was reprinted in a 1937 Labor Day program from the Love Point Hotel: "A clergyman lived near the site, serving the scattered residents of the Island. Travel by land was arduous, and by land the clergymen was a couple days journey from people living on the Eastern Neck in Kent County. But by water he was accessible...Consequently, young lovers from the other side of the Chester River would find him the most convenient minister when they were thinking of marriage and over the waves they went to Kent Island.

But tragedy entered for a couple named Urie. As they were homeward bound from a wedding ceremony, their craft was overwhelmed in a sudden storm...and the two were drowned. Their bodies, clasped in each others' arms, were found off the bar near the Point, and this, 'tis said, is the origin of the name Love Point."

More recently, other stories have appeared in local publications regarding the origin of the name. Pat Emory, in a 1972 Bay Times story, wrote:

"It was the late 1800's and Captain John Luff was bringing a British ship up the Chesapeake Bay to the north end of Kent Island where there was a little settlement. The boat was loaded with bricks for a house that was to built and had on board a few British soldiers.

As the legend continues, there was a young Indian maiden in the settlement, and during the ship's stay, she fell in love with one of the British soldiers. When the ship set sail for England, the soldier was on board.

At the loss of her lover, the young woman pined away and died."

A romantic legend was written by Gloria George in the '70's:

"They say it was dark the night the young Indian warrior met his black haired maiden at the water's edge. The heavy clouds hugged the moon and stars so no light shown through on the young lovers as they stepped into their hidden canoe.

As they paddled to the middle of the swift river, they professed their love for one another, a love denied them by their separate tribes which refused to permit their marriage.

The lovers took no notice of the silence that hung on the anticipation of rain and no one noticed them as they slid into the welcoming waves to join each other eternally in the bond they were denied in life.

From that time the northernmost end of Kent Island was known as Love Point in remembrance of the lover's suicide."

Ms. George goes on to quote George Benton, then 80 years old.

"Don't believe a word of it." Mr. Benton said he was told the Chester River was once full of sailing vessels which had to round Love Point Lighthouse to reach ports at Queenstown and Chestertown.

A mean northwesteerly wind greeted sailors at the point causing them to luff their sails to sail tighter to the breeze. Veteran sailors called the land Luff Point and lazy tongues changed it to its present spelling.

Careful reading of all these tales emphasizes the loopholes in some of them. The Captain Luff story may be the least plausible unless the date precedes the departure of the Indians from the Island.

Luffing sails in a northwest wind is the most probable for the earliest derivation of the name, according to experienced sailors.

But the records are there in the Maryland Archives, Vol. 54, p.11:

"Feb.2, 1652. I Robert Clarke, Gent. and Surveyor of this Province, do hereby attest that in the year 1640 I did survey and lay out unto William Brantwell, Gent. and Thomas Bradnox, planter, 2,000 acres of the Isle of Kent commonly called LOVE POINT, in the year 1650. The said Bradnox to invite inhabitants to seat the said island..."

Rent Rolls for the Isle of Kent County, the Northeast Hundred, p.9:

"Poynt Love, a freehold contayning 600 acres due to Elizabeth Comins, surveyed for her the said Elizabth, 5 Aug.,1650. Patented December, 1650."

In 1652 Elizabeth sold 400 acres to Joseph Wickes.

So as early as 1650 and perhaps 1640, the land was already called Poynt Love or Love Point. Whether it was a "luffing" point for very early sailors prior to these dates (and certainly prior to Chester River seaports), or the scene of two lovers' death, we will never know for certain.

And that's the stuff legends are made of!

IN MEMORIAM

Dr. Reginald Truitt
Died Thursday, April 11,1991

Clinton E.B. White
Died Saturday, May 11, 1991

Dr. Truitt and Mr. White were on the first Board of Directors of the Kent Island Heritage Society, Aug. 1, 1975

Rest in Peace

KENT ISLAND DAYS CELEBRATES K.I.'S 360TH ANNIVERSARY

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Audrey Hawkins

On August 17, 1991 Kent Island will celebrate the 360th year of its existence as the FIRST PERMANENT SETTLEMENT OF ENGLISH SPEAKING PEOPLE IN MARYLAND. Kent Island was granted this recognition by the 1981 session of the General Assembly. This year the Kent Island Heritage Society will celebrate "Kent Island Days"' and the 360th anniversary together on August 17, from 10 a.m. til 5 p.m.

During this celebration we will host a Heritage Museum of Island-originated artifacts in the American Legion Hall, Stevensville, We would be interested in displaying your memorabilia for the pleasure of all

Native born and newly come
To Kent Island's shore,
We gather now to celebrate
Those distant days of yore.

Share with us your memories
Your treasures, we implore
Your father's tools, your mother's bowls,
A dress grandmother wore.

So search your attics from the rafters to the floor,
Fill our hearts to overflowing with forgotten Island lore
Help us to remember all the days that went before
And Kent Island will relive in our hearts just as before.
(Courtesy Eva Thompson)

Richard and Eileen Dadds are chairmen for the Heritage Museum. Please contact them at 643-5288 if you have items to contribute for display on this memorable day.

Also in the Legion Hall we will feature "Arts and Crafts" and good food to eat. At 11:00 a.m. we will have a special ceremony and speaker. Outside there will be a petting zoo, a watermen's display, antique cars, candle making, butter churning and other crafts.

Plan now to join us for a day of heritage, fun, food, and music. Please wear your colonial dresses, and of course we would love to see the men in their costumes as well!!!

Look for the Kent Island Heritage table where you may purchase a very memorableT-shirt and hat with the KIHS seal on it, a collector's item!

YA'LL COME!!!!

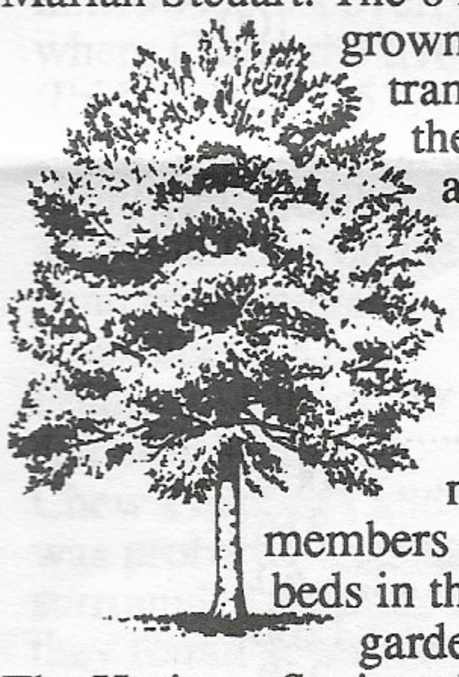
ROTARY CLUB DONATES $300

Gil Dunn gave a presentation to the Kent Island Rotary Club recently on the progress of the restoration of the old Stevensville train depot. The Rotarians honored the Heritage Society with their generous donation of $300. Many, many thanks for their support of KIHS.

****

GARDEN CLUB DONATES TREE TO CRAY HOUSE

The Kent Island Garden Club has planted a tree at the historic Cray House as a memorial to Mrs. Marian Steuart. The 8 foot white dogwood was grown by Tony Schettler and transported and planted with the help of Tom Helfenbein and Ellen Klages. Bobbye Helfenbein and Beth Schettler are Island Garden Club officers.



The gardens at the Cray House are planted and maintained by garden club members who have planted flower beds in the front yard and an herb garden at the rear of the house. The Heritage Society thanks the members for doing such an excellent job and for their constant interest.

CRAY HOUSE CLOSED FOR REPAIRS

The collapse of a ceiling on the second floor of the old Cray House necessitated canceling the regularly scheduled Saturday openings of the Cray House Museum.

Thanks to the combined efforts of the Heritage Society's two "johnnie-on-the-spots", Gil Dunn and Melvin Clark, the Cray House Committee hopes to have all repairs finished soon and will announce a schedule. Stay tuned!

BUDGET PRESENTED TO BOARD

For the first time in the history of the Kent Island Heritage Society, an annual budget has been drawn up to cover expenses of the various committees.

Supplies are needed the Library Committe's outstanding efforts at re-creating numerous files of Kent Island History and Genealogy, this newsletter has heavy printing and mailing costs, not to mention supplies, insurance on the Cray House furnishings, and the restoration of the depot

all come with a price tag.

The idea of new Vice-president Charlie Koegel, an annual budget lays out where the Society stands and where it is going. The following is the proposedbudget for 1991:

Balance Jan. 1991
$8945.30

INCOME

Dues	$4000
Donations	2500
Interest	250
Dinner	100
Kent Island Days	1500
Book Sales	1000
Miscellaneous	100
Total	$9450

$18,395.30

EXPENSES

Cray House	
Maintenance	670
Furnishings	600
Depot- lumber	2000
Insurance	316
Electric	60
Printing	1200
Postage	230
Misc. postage	200
Library	175
Deposit Box	55
Speakers	200
Meeting expenses	100
Archaeological Survey	5000
Total	$10,806

BALANCE 12/31/91 $7589.30

****

TREASURER'S REPORT

Our treasurer, Violet "Sis" Harris, is recuperating from surgery, so Audrey put on her accountant's hat for this month's treasurer's report. GET WELL, SIS!

Checking Balance, Feb. 22, 1991	$10,823.18
Receipts, 2/22--5/29,1991	1,489.17
TOTAL	12,312.35
Disbursements 2/22--5/29/91	1,275.63
Balance in checking	11,026.72
Balance in C.D.	7,291.73
TOTAL ASSETS	$21,451.57

MINUTES

The Board of Directors met May 29, 1991. Attending were Audrey Hawkins, Charlie Koegel, Eileen Dadds, Bill Denny, Roland Bruscup, Dick Dadds, Bill Goodhand, and Paul Wilderson.

After the minutes of April 30 concerning Kent Island Days and the treasurer's report were accepted, the Cray House Report was read:

Steel plates have been installed by Gil Dunn and Melvin Clark to reinforce cracked beams supporting the second floor.

A section of the ceiling in the seond floor back bedroom fell. It was thought to be old plaster, but turned out to be plaster board. Gil Dunn replaced it with a new dry wall panel.

The gardens outside have been planted with spring flowers and an herb garden by the Island Garden Club, as well as a new dogwood tree donated by Tony Schettler.

Paul Wilderson gave no Archaeological Report because the status of the matching state funds is still unknown.

A copy of the Kent Island Heritage Society incorporation papers was given by Mrs. Mary White. A certified copy will be obtained and placed in the safe deposit box.

Notice of August 17th, 1991 Kent Island Days/360th Anniversary of Claiborne's landing submitted by Publicity Chair Roland Bruscup has been printed in the Eastern Shore's Summer Calendar of Events.

A committee to nominate next year's officers must be appointed. Nominations must be published in September's newsletter.

CEMETERY COMMEMORATIVE

There are a number of old grave stones from Islander's homesite farm graves placed on a special site at the Stevensville Cemetery. They are merely the headstones of early Kent Island graves, not the actual resting places. Most of the remaining gravesites on various properties on Kent Island were surveyed and listed by KIHS founder Marian Steuart and Mildred Schoch. (See the Genealogical Files at the Library for the listings.)

Marian's neice, Ann Reifsneider has offered to donate one gravesite consisting of eight graves, and Tom Helfenbein will add a second site. Additonally Tom will donate a large stone to mark this special place. The old stones, currently without a home, would be placed on these two sites to protect them from destruction. Ann asked