house, barns, or other outbuildings after dark."

Pat assumed all of the repsonsibilities required of him in a calm, dignified manner. He assisted Alfred in getting the cows in from the pasture. He would chase a squawking hen out of the yard and even deigned to keep an eye on the little curly haired female person who was allowed to play in the yard if Pat was there to guard her.

She would walk along beside him with her fingers clasping his curly coat of hair and he would keep his body between her and anything he might consider hazardous. Pat was tolerant of the other farm animals, even accepting the barn cats as friends.

There were times when Alfred would finish his chores at home, then hook up a team to the farm wagon, load whatever equipment was necessary and drove to "White's Heritage", some 4 or 5 miles away, to help his father with seeding wheat, cutting corn, or whatever the season required.

Pat considered it his obligation as protector and companion to escort the wagon to its destination.

As I have indicated, he was a very easy going animal, dedicated to minding his own business. He would ignore the dogs that came out of their yards to see what was going on as Alfred and Pat went by. He paid no attention to their barking, but if they became too threatening, he would whip them thoroughly and send them yelping back to their own yards, having learned their lesson not to bother him on his return or on subsequent journeys.

There was one dog in Chester, who, on one occasion, ran back and forth inside his yard fence barking furiously as much as to say, "If I was not fastened in this yard, I would come out and beat you up." That dog was so busy barking and running back and forth, he didn't even notice that the gate was wide open!

Alfred always said that he knew better than to come out and confront Pat anyway.

One evening late in the fall, Alfred had invited Fill Kemp to go duck hunting with him. When Pat saw Alfred get his double-barreled shotgun, shells, and other paraphenalia and head for the Bay shore, his day was complete. This was what Pat lived for and was born to do- this was his whole purpose in life.

As the men walked down the back lane to the shore, Pat was so excited he scampered ahead, snuffling in the bushes, flushing out birds and rabbits; running back to the men, then dashing madly ahead again, overjoyed that he was finally going to participate in the activity he loved best.

There was a tidal pond surrounded by cattails and myrtle bushes close to the shore which was a favorite of the black ducks the men were looking for.

The little party finally reached the blind Alfred had built on the bank and prepared to wait for the arrival of the ducks. While it was calm and cold with the threat of bad weather in the air, the men were comfortable in their, heavy flannel shirts, gunning pants, boots, and heavy jackets. Pat was as happy as could be and trembling all over with excitement.

Fill, never having hunted with Pat before, remarked to Alfred, "White," he said, "That dog is cold." "No, Fill", Alfred replioed, "He's not cold. Look at that heavy coat of hair. He's just shivering with excitement."

This discussion continued for several minutes with Fill finally declaring, "D---it, White, you can see the dog is shivering from the cold. I'm going to put my coat on him."

In spite of Alfred's strong suggestion he not do such a foolish thing, Fill removed his coat, and not only put it around Pat's neck, but actually buttoned it up to keep it secure!

Shortly thereafter, some ducks flew in. Both men fired, hitting their targets, and Pat, without any prompting, knew what he was supposed to do, jumped overboard, coat and all, retrieved the ducks, then settled down, panting and shivering with excitement to wait for the next round of shots.

We won't divulge the content of Fill's colorful remarks as he removed his sopping wet coat from around Pat's neck. Afterwards he became very quiet because, as so often happens on Kent Island, a strong biting wind blew in from the northwest and the temperatures plummeted. While Alfred was cozy in his nice dry coat and Pat didn't need one, Fill almost froze before they got back upto the farm house.

Fill learned a valubale lesson from Pat. "Never lend your coat to a shaggy dog!"

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Note: The Chesapeake Bay Retriever originated in Maryland in the early 1800's. It was designated the official state dog in 1904.

OLD STEVENSVILLE HIGH

The Last Classes

Bettye Speed

It was a time of family, of community, respect for authority, whether it was parents, grandparents or teachers, and it was a time for high jinks in the perennial rivalry with teams

from Sudlersville High. Centreville High was too large for Stevensville in those days. "They'd slaughter us," says **Buddy Sparks**.

For a generation of parents raised on Glenn Miller and Benny Goodman, the beginnings of Rock and Roll from Bill Haley, Buddy Holly, The Platters, Fabian, Duane Eddy, Fats Domino, Little Richard, Roy Orbison, Elvis Presley, to Frankie Avalon, Paul Anka, Connie Francis, Petula Clark, and later the Beatles was pure cacophony, as parents chaperoned the well-attended Friday Night Dances, Square Dances, and Junior-Senior Proms at Stevensville High. As always, these affairs were record hops- no "live music" was available.

As art imitates life, the play "Grease" captured the flavor of drag racing's appeal to the boys.

The road to Romancoke had been improved for future development, and the boys actually staked off quarter mile markers for drag racing down the practically empty road. According to **Stewart Nash, Willard Jones** of Chester, one of the first to move to Romancoke, complained, "I can't even get up the road for those boys racing!"

Bobby Norris, now of Centreville, remembers getting a nickle and walking to and from Romancoke to Batt's Neck Store for a candy bar without ever seeing a car! He says that, as Rt. 50 was being built to exit the Bay Bridge, two-abreast drag racing on the empty road was part of the rites of passage and testing the mettle of the boys' first cars, acquired from after-school and weekend earnings. State Troopers were hardly noticeable on Kent Island in the 1950's while the Sheriff's Deputies were likely to be someone's big brother.

School plays, May Day, concerts, and athletic events were always well attended by the parents who made up the P.T.A. from 1st grade right through the 12 years of their children's growing-up years.

Mothers, home ec. teachers, and the girls all helped make the costumes for the annual pageants, plays, concerts and operettas, pitched in to cook and serve the food at proms and dances. The kids themselves took up hammers and saws to build the Prom Pavilions or Lighthouses, whatever the theme called for, while the girls collected greens and bunting to drape the walls.

The kids helped work in the school office and the cafeteria. Helping out the favored old school custodian, **"Captain" Marvel, who was** disabled by arthritis and diabetes, the kids did his work.

No one had money to burn. They were the sons and daughters of watermen and farmers, store keepers and mechanics, boatbuilders, restauranteurs, and teachers from Stevensville, Chester, and Grasonville.

Attending local elementary schools together from first grade until they wound up together at Stevensville High School, they were brothers and sisters, cousins, or distant cousins-once-removed; their family and community ties were the kind that bind, honed from early childhood by extended family, church, school, and community activities.

Few parents uttered that ominous television admonition of the late '60's and early '70's: "It's 11:00 p.m. Do you know where your children are?" Nine times out of ten, if they had the leisure time, they were either at **Peggy's Diner**, where motherly **Peggy Perry** oversaw the coke and hamburger crowd, the **Redwood Restaurant, Shields Restaurant** next door, the **White House,** in Queenstown at the movies, or later at **"The Freez"** where the kids got jobs for spending money at the few shops springing up on Kent Island after the Bay Bridge opened in 1952. Sometimes to Easton to buy the latest 45 rpm records or to Dean's Restaurant after the Big Night for every class- The Senior Prom.

These were the boys who combed their hair with Wildroot or Brylcreme, who and practically lived in cords or chinos and open collared plaid shirts with the sleeves carefully rolled just twice; the girls who rolled their jeans up and their bobby socks down, who created the sweater and skirt "uniform" with pushed- up sleeves and round collared blouses, even as hems rose or fell, ending in the bouffant 60's hair styles.

Their main transgressions would be Hallowe'en pranks, such as hauling someone's outhouse out into the center of the road or to a neighbor's yard; boys who were apt to pick up and carry a girl hall monitor upstairs, where another group was just as likely to come along and carry her right back down again.

One rite of passage in the '50's was driving down the Romancoke road, parking along a hedgerow so they could sneak up on the Camp Wright girls after dark, nine times out ot of ten being chased into the water and swimming for their lives fully clad!

Drinking was mostly left to adults, and drugs were unheard of. These youngsters learned to save by collecting U.S. Savings stamps in $25 books.

How very well these Island kids knew each other is illustrated in the class prophecies of 1951:

"**Sonny Schulz** wore an enormous diamond ring

congratulated the Class of 1966: "(for)...your interest in recording the history of Stevensville High School through a special feature of *The Islander*...I hope you will...recall...the twelve years of fulfilling experiences which you have had, that they will be among life's most memorable years.."

Morris Jones added: "There is a special importance attached to the Stevensville High School graduating class this year. Since it is the last Class which will graduate from our school, it must represent all the best that has been developed here over the years."

But for the sense of what SHS is for those who lived it, Morris' 1957 message to the graduates is more pertinent: "Cooperativeness is a trait your class has learned well. Many are the memories you will cherish of the activities which you have undertaken and completed successfully ...As you leave... Stevensville High School behind you, promise yourself that "You'll Never Walk Alone." They won't, Morris, not ever.

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MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!