

① WATERFRONT  
PIP

Mary Ellen Rooney  
Deal Island captions

Some remains of the once-prosperous waterfront of Deal Island Village which was destroyed in the firece storm of 1933. According to Myra Thomas Long, "gále winds blew, the rains came, the tides rose and they called it a hurricane but it had no name...reports received by those on the mainland were meager at first for telephones were out for three days and only by boat could messages be received. The story finally came in that the bridge to the mainland was washed out -- every oyster and crab house either swept away or so badly damaged that salvage was doubtful -- the \$300,000 seafood industry was wiped out -- the steamboat wharf destroyed -- dozens of boats including the huge oyster dredges, crab boats and motor boats wrecked, sunk or driven into the marshes. High waves threatened the Anderson Hotel, the lower floors were flooded and guests were removed by boat. The direct damage was listed as \$50,000 but there was much heavier indirect loss..."

In 1945, Mr. Anderson moved a building from the wreckage inland to the point where it stands today. He began a general hardware business which served the Island's building and marine needs. In 1972, he retired and the business was sold to H. Hass, a retired police officer from Baltimore County. Five years later Vernon Cooper became proprietor. In August 1982, Don Cawood, a fiberglass boat builder and repairer from Annapolis, purchased the business.



Mary Ellen Rooney  
Deal Island captions

Original Anderson Store as an existing part of the waterfront complex. It stocked everyting from soup to nuts. Groceries and ship supplies were sold on the first floor and on the second floor Mrs. Anderson had a millinery shop and sold dry goods. A milliner was employed from Baltimore so that elegant visiting ladies could have plumed hats designed according to their personalities for the price of \$35.00.



Mary Ellen Rooney  
Deal Island captions

Baltimore Chesapeake & Atlantic Steamship wharf circa 1898. Captain Levin Anderson, principal merchant of Deal Island Village, contributed the land for building the pier which reached 1,425 feet out into Tangier Sound to allow the large ships carrying visitors, commercial travellers, and goods sufficient depth to dock in. The Steamships' Tangier and The Virginia ran from Salisbury to Baltimore with stops at Deal Island at 6 p. m. daily except Saturday. On the return trip from Baltimore the boat would arrive at the Island pier at 3:00 a.m. During this era, Deal Island women began to travel to Salisbury and Baltimore to do their shopping and the homes of watermen showed the effects of wider selections for their furnishings. Many fine homes were built during this era.



I Remember . . .

## The Deal Island Wharf, Steamboats and Drummers



Mr. Evans, above, recalls the Deal Island Wharf, which had a wide passing area, visible in early Twenties photo, below. Below right, the steamboat Virginia is docked at the wharf.

UNTIL the mid-1930's, Deal Island, in Somerset county on Maryland's Eastern Shore, had the longest and one of the busiest commercial steamboat wharves on the Chesapeake Bay.

Shorewaters around Deal Island are shallow. So when the Maryland Steamboat Company built the wharf in 1881, it had to extend the wharf more than a quarter-mile—1,420 feet, to be exact—into Tangier Sound to accommodate the steamers.

The wharf was serviced by the Baltimore, Chesapeake and Atlantic Railway's steamboats. The Virginia, Tangier, Joppa, Avalon and Three Rivers come readily to mind, although there were many more. Through them, the wharf was the economic lifeline for all the seafood and farming communities on and around Deal Island.

The oyster season began in October and ran through March. In those months there was a heavy and constant flow of oysters from Tangier Sound and all the nearby rivers passing through the Deal Island wharf to the Baltimore market.

In April the shipments changed to soft crabs from Wenona, at the bottom of the island, from Rock Creek (now called Chance), Dames Quarters and other Somerset county communities. Cans of picked crab meat, boxes of soft crabs iced down in sea grass, and baskets of steamed and live hard crabs piled up on the wharf every day.

Albert Anderson 3d, who now lives in Chance—his father was the wharf's fix agent for the B.C.&A.—told me he has seen as many as 500 boxes of soft crabs shipped from the wharf in one day. Sometimes it took a steamboat's six-man loading crew two hours to load.

Somerset county was once called the strawberry center of the world, and crates of berries were shipped out by the thousands. Tomatoes and beans were also big local cash crops, and so were potatoes from the lower Virginia eastern shore.

Incoming cargoes were also heavy, for

the Bay steamers brought in canned goods, fresh meats, fruits, clothing, tools, hardware and almost all the other necessities handled by our local stores.

All the supplies were ordered from traveling salesmen—we called them drummers—who came and went by steamboat. They stayed at the Anderson Hotel, on shore near the wharf entrance. If the drummer needed a horse and rig to visit the island stores, "Miss May," who ran the hotel, would arrange it for him. Mrs. Anna Northam, my aunt, ran one of the island stores, and I loved to be there when any of the drummers who handled candy came to call. I would go into a sad face act. I must have been a fairly good actor, because usually I got a free candy or two from his big sample case.

The steamboats handled quite a bit of passenger traffic. One-way passage between Deal Island and Baltimore, as I recall, was \$3.50. If you wanted a stateroom (they were small but comfortable) you paid an extra \$1.50. Any meal you ate on the boat—meals as fine as I ever have eaten in any hotel at any price—cost well under a dollar.

The steamboats had an aura about them that is hard to describe. Maybe it was the stairways with big mirrors at the bottom, the plush chairs, the red carpets or all those shiny brass rails. Whatever, it gave you a feeling of being in an elegant world of travel and excitement.

There were two steamboat stops a day at Deal Island. The 4 P.M. boat came down from the Salisbury area, with stops at the Wicomico River wharves of White Haven, Nanticoke and Mount Vernon. The 9 P.M. boat came up from Crisfield after stops at such Virginia communities as Onancock, Willis Wharf and Saxs Island. Our family lived at Wenona, at the south end of the island, and one of my early boyhood memories is of that 9 o'clock boat heading for the Deal Island wharf in the dark. With all its lights twinkling, it always reminded me of a big, lit-up beetle.

Buildings at the end of the wharf included a warehouse, waiting room, office and, at one time, an oyster packing house. In the early 1900's the Soundside post of-

fice was located there. As the night boat approached the wharf, Ralph Brown, the wharf agent, would open the warehouse door and place a lighted lantern on each side to give the boat pilot a point to steer for. The warehouse was wired for electric lighting, but had no power of its own. When the steamboat docked, crewmen would throw over a cable which connected the warehouse lighting system to the steamboat's electrical generator, and then there would be plenty of light for cargo handling.

What passed for taxi service on Deal Island was Capt. Johnnie Bennett's horse-drawn Dayton wagon. He hauled most of the steamboat's passengers to the end of the wharf. Before casting off, the steamboat skipper would always play his searchlight up and down the wharf and its approach road to make sure he wasn't leaving anybody behind.

Moving cargo along the length of the wharf was sometimes a tricky business, for the wharf was so narrow. Two buggies could pass, but only by lifting hub over hub. Near the midway point of the wharf there was one wide section. A truck or freight wagon could pull off onto this by-pass and allow another to pass. Otherwise, one of the vehicles would have to back up.

The Deal Island wharf was still thriving as it entered the 1930's, although business had begun to slow down a bit. A hard-top road replaced the shell road between Princess Anne and the island, which allowed trucks to take over more and more of what had been steamboat cargo.

And then, in 1933, came the big hurricane which destroyed so many things around Deal Island. The storm weakened the wharf so much that trucks and wagons were no longer allowed on it. Steamboat freight had to be moved across the wharf only on hand trucks. The wharf was used in this way for a couple of years, and then abandoned.

There is hardly a trace left of the wharf now, or of the old Anderson Hotel. The look of the island has changed, but the wonderful memories of those old steamboating days will always remain with those of us who were a part of them. □



## ISLAND

she played. She went upstairs, apparently in the best of health and died in her sleep."

So passed a woman who should have had a poet or painter describe her as she dashed, Mazeppa - like, standing barefoot on that galloping horse; a Julia Childs to write of her great meals at the island hotel; and the Wall Street Journal tell how she organized a new tourist business of sport fishermen and duck hunters when all else seemed to fail in the island economy.

Today the era of the 400 dredge boats on Tangier Sound is only a dim memory with the older captains, for the dreaded oyster parasite disease, MSX, has almost decimated the Sound. Not a single skipjack will put its "dredge" over the side this month in local waters. Deal Island and Wenona are quiet little country villages. Where 500 crates of strawberries were once loaded from a single farm for the steamers, no farming of importance is done at all.

The bank has long been gone, the ice house closed, the two movies, the skating rink, the boxing rink, the merry-go round are closed. Who remembers the steamers "Virginia," "Enoch Pratt", "Tangier", the "Three Rivers"? — the excitement of 'steamboat coming down the length of that quarter - of - a-mile long BC and A pier?

**BUT THE** men remain. Some of the older captains may remember a few of the faces in the photographs. And not all of the old days were that good, and times are better. Soft crabs are up from 15 cents to \$6 and \$7 a dozen; oysters up to \$5 a bushel from a quarter. Some small oysters are now growing on the rocks in Tangier Sound, and may develop an immunity to MSX.

Crabs and fish are reasonably plentiful, and ducks and geese can still be hunted. And sunsets are just as beautiful as on that eventful day in 1892 when May Goslee came as the bride of Levin Albert Anderson, 21 years her senior.



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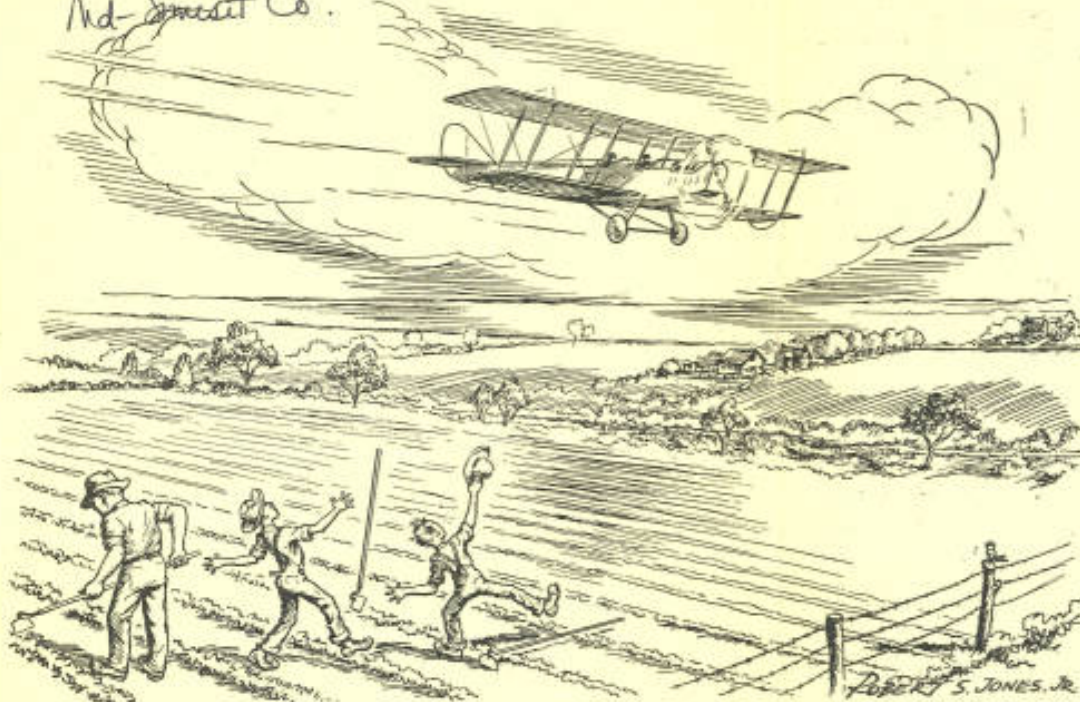
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## DOWN MEMORY'S LANE---The First Airplane To Land In Princess Anne

by Robert S. Jones

During and after World War I my family and I lived on what had been known as the Fisher Farm, about a mile west of town on the Deal Island road, and just opposite Mr. Anour White's place. A few years later my father sold the farm to Mr. Massie.

On one beautiful early-morning evening, my brother Frank and I, after having come back from delivering milk to town, were out in a field helping Dad with a farm chore. While busy there we gradually became conscious of a low humming sound in the distance which soon grew louder and louder and was coming from the sky. We began to suspect the sound might be the roar of an airplane.

Being two boys in our early teens, we became so excited we could hardly keep our minds on the work at hand, but kept glancing at the sky above. Then as we gazed, the object came into view from beneath a silvery white cloud, heading lower and lower in our general direction. It was really an airplane! What a thrilling sight for our young eyes to behold!

Dear Reader, you of the younger generation may find it a bit difficult to understand our excitement at seeing a state airplane, but folks of my generation (I'm sure you appreciate it, for way back in those years it was a rare sight indeed to see a plane flying over the Princess Anne community.

But wonder of wonders, this 26-horsepower flying machine was not "flying over" but was *here*—strolling round and round over our and neighboring farms, very low about two hundred feet above tree tops. So low now we could see snatches of the craft's details; it was a light olive green in color, a biplane with cockpit and a man sitting in each wearing leather helmet and goggles. Both men were busy gazing down right to left as if looking for a safe place to "put her down." They climbed again and now gliding in a straight course, with engine speed and rudders out down, the airplane swooped down one of our sight behind the big maple tree that stood the base of Mr. Will Dashiell's neighboring farm.

We now knew definitely the plane had landed, and Frank and I, by this time, were so excited we were jumping up and down between the trees; I even suspect we trampled down some of the young plants.

But Daddy kept right on with his work, showing little if any interest in this flying occupation. However, a few moments later he turned to us

and, with a slightly pained expression said "You boys might as well go on over there and see, if I know you're not going to be anxious to see to look!"

That's all we needed to hear Dad say; we dropped our tools and like two jacks-in-the-box started leaping and running in the direction the plane had landed.

I am 75 years old now and I know I can do very little running but back then with our young healthy bodies that long spindly didn't phase us. After running across our big field we had to cross a swamp and small stream between our farm and Mr. Dashiell's place; but nothing could offer any obstacle to us that day!

When Frank and I got to Dashiell's Lane we saw it, like a big beautiful bird, sitting in a field on the farm owned by Dad's brother, Uncle Omar Jones. When we arrived at the scene the two mechanics were standing by the plane talking with Uncle Omar, who had quickly gotten out there to see what this was all about. Uncle Omar appeared to be not very pleased that the men had landed the craft in his field. He probably said "Why don't you go across town to my brother Bob's farm? He has a big field right next to his house." The two flyers nodded and after the pilot reported back in the plane, the mechanics repaired the wooden propeller a couple of times and the V-8 motor started with a roar. Then after the mechanics got in, the plane took off and flew over and landed on our farm.

By that time we boys had already started on the sprint back home, but were extremely excited by the turn of events.

After landing the two men talked with our father and got his permission to use our field to take passengers up on flights for a few days. As I recall, I think they stayed about ten days with many folks coming out to look at the airplane on the ground and in flight, and also to take a ride. I can't recall the mechanic's name, but the pilot was U.S. Air Force Lieutenant Collyer. They had flown through the town together, and after the excitement, coming home they had bought this airplane from the Government, brand new and a "B" in the grade for \$11,000. Then he too planned to make some money by flying their plane around the countryside taking up passengers. Lt. Collyer did the flying while his mechanic kept the plane in gas and oil and the engine in tune.

The airplane was commonly referred to as a Curtiss "Jenny". Since it was an one liner they

took us up without charge. One day our mother went out and took a flight and loved it; Mom was probably the first woman in Somerset County to fly in an airplane. Our little three-year-old sister Emma cried to go but they considered her a mile too young.

Of course Frank and I could hardly wait to climb in the cockpit; we sat together strove

d in the front seat with the pilot in the rear one. What a thrill for two boys when the "Jenny" roared down the field, rose in the air, and soared over our beautiful town of Princess

Anne and the lovely countryside. Dad was the last one of us to take a flight. During the first week he hadn't been up yet, and when he would go into town to get his mail and perhaps drop into Lagfield's for a cake, some of his close friends would bid him saying "We thought you had a lot of nerve; we hear that your wife and even your two boys went up in the airplane, but that you don't have the nerve to go." Well, after a few days of this ribbing, he came home, and walking over to the plane, said to Lt. Collyer "Put that helmet on me, I'm going up!" This terrifying moment with a big shower of Royal's Mule tobacco, Dad crawled into the forward cockpit and away they soared into "the great blue yonder."

Lt. Collyer gave Dad a good long flight but when the "Jenny" came down and landed back to a stop, we could hardly see Daddy as he was sort of slumped way down in the seat. I can't remember his remarks as he climbed out but it was plain to see he didn't care for flying. He thought he had swallowed that show of tobacco, and as a result I don't believe he ever took another one.

After ten days, when the interest in the airplane began to wane, Lt. Collyer and his little mechanic said goodbye and took off for desirable situations.

This experience with the Curtiss "Jenny" and the flyers named Frank and I to be bitten by the airplane bug, for a time at least. When Frank became of age he enlisted in the U. S. Air Force and was sent to Hawaii for three years making many flights as an aerial photographer for Uncle Sam.

And it, for many days in my spare time, began building a fair-clone model of the "Jenny" which when completed Mom allowed me to bring up on a wily in a far corner of my parlor. There it hung for awhile until I gave it up to the urge to see if it would rise in the air. At the present had no success. I

took it with a strong cord to the back fence of my lot and started towing it at a fast clip down the concrete road. As I pulled back I saw it take off, but with no pilot to fly it, in a few moments it crashed on the hard road and that was the end of my little plane. After growing up, instead of flying, I turned to get on a profession.

Years later, I read of Lt. Collyer's destiny. I felt sorry when I read in the paper that Collyer, having been employed as a special pilot for a millionaire sportsman, was flying a new and very fast plane for the owner in an attempt to break the world's speed record. After starting up, instead of flying, I turned to get on a profession.

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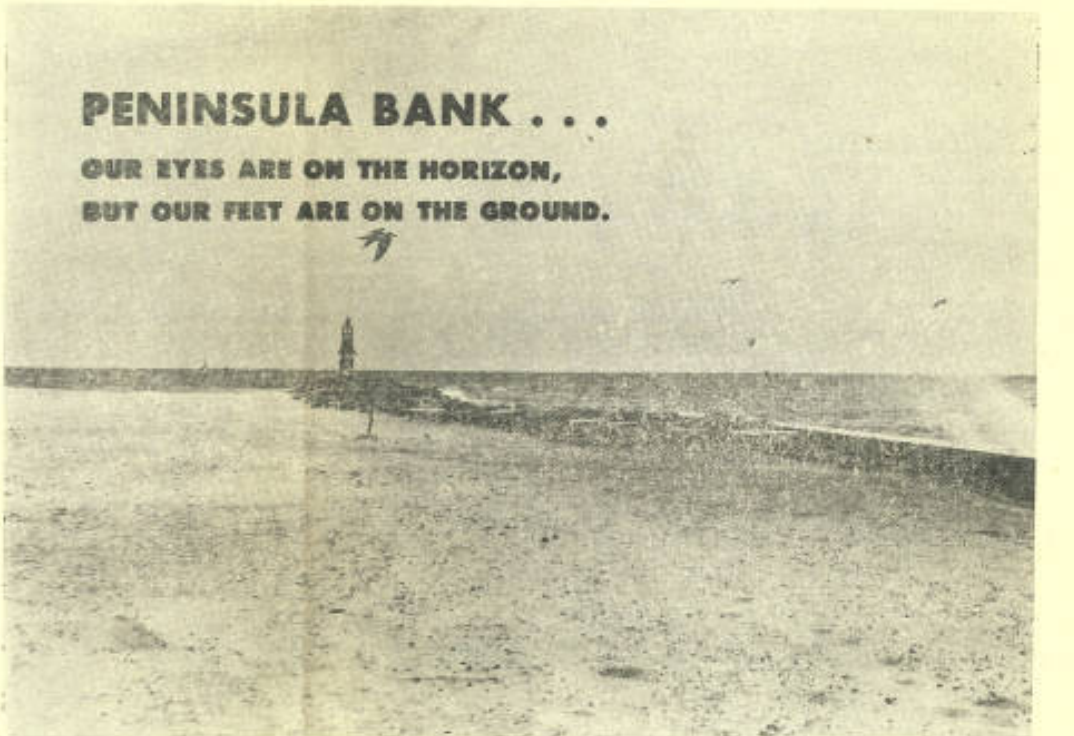
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Dear Reader, as a Christian, I believe a speed-flight will take place some day that will make all man's efforts and inventions look puny, whether they be jet planes or space-ships to the moon and even Mars. For that flight the believer wasn't even need a vehicle nor a pressurized space suit, for it clearly tells us 1 Thimotheians 4: 10 and 17—

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall be first.

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds: so shall we ever be with the Lord.

I sincerely hope Lt. Collyer was a Christian—and that you are, also, Dear Reader.



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# ISLANDS OF THE CHESAPEAKE

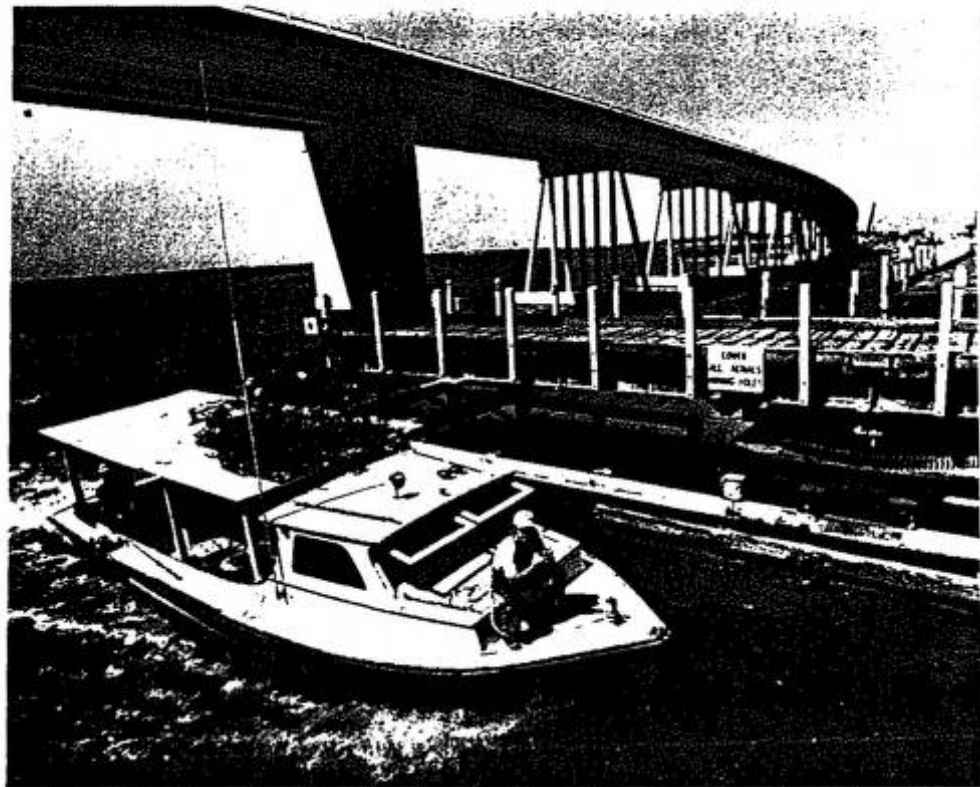
## Hoopers Island

Hoopers Island is in Dorchester County, south of Taylors Island, and is about 20 miles in length. It is composed of three islands: Upper, Middle and Lower Islands. The Upper Island is connected to Meekins Neck by a swing bridge and the Middle is connected to the Upper Island by a high bridge with a vertical clearance of 35 feet. No connection is made between Middle and Lower Hoopers Island as the Lower Island is mostly marsh. The three islands divide Honga River from the Chesapeake Bay and Tar Bay. There are three villages on the islands: Honga, Fishing Creek, and Hoopersville. Hoopersville is a village on Middle Hoopers Island, with general stores and packing plants. The dredged channel to Muddy Hook Cove leads to a fish company-owned wharf at the village. The westerly two of three charted wrecks near the channel are covered at high water and are hazards to navigation.

Indians were the first residents, either a local branch of the Choptanks, called the "Hongas or Hungars," or Yaocomicos from the western shore. The Honga River is supposed to have been named for them.

The first settlers came from Calvert County about 1667. William Chaplin patented 300 acres, called "Chaplin's Holme." Henry Hooper soon followed with his wife Sarah and his son Henry II. On December 20, 1667, 100 acres of land were surveyed for him, but he never lived on the island. He is supposed to have paid the Indians with blankets. Richard Bentley patented 300 acres on what is still known as Bentley Point, and Philip Shapeley patented 117 acres. Hooper gradually increased his holdings by several hundred acres.

In 1760 several indentured servants were rewarded with their freedom, 50 acres of farmland, clothing and farming supplies. Thomas Hooten of "Swan Isle" in 1760, and Daniel Puddiford of "Puddiford's Chance" in 1762, were the earliest. (An *indenture* was an agreement for servitude as recompense for transportation to America. It was called an indenture because two copies were placed over each other and the right hand edge was torn so that the "indentures" matched and the servant's copy



could be proved to be valid when compared to the owner's copy.)

Henry Hooper II was a Justice and a member of the 1694 House of Burgesses. His two marriages produced 14 children. Henry III kept up the family trait of acquiring more land. Henry IV was appointed Brigadier General of the Militia in the Lower District of the Eastern Shore. His holdings totaled 2,340 acres on the island. The Hooper clan was once one of the largest on the Eastern Shore; now no one named Hooper lives on the island.

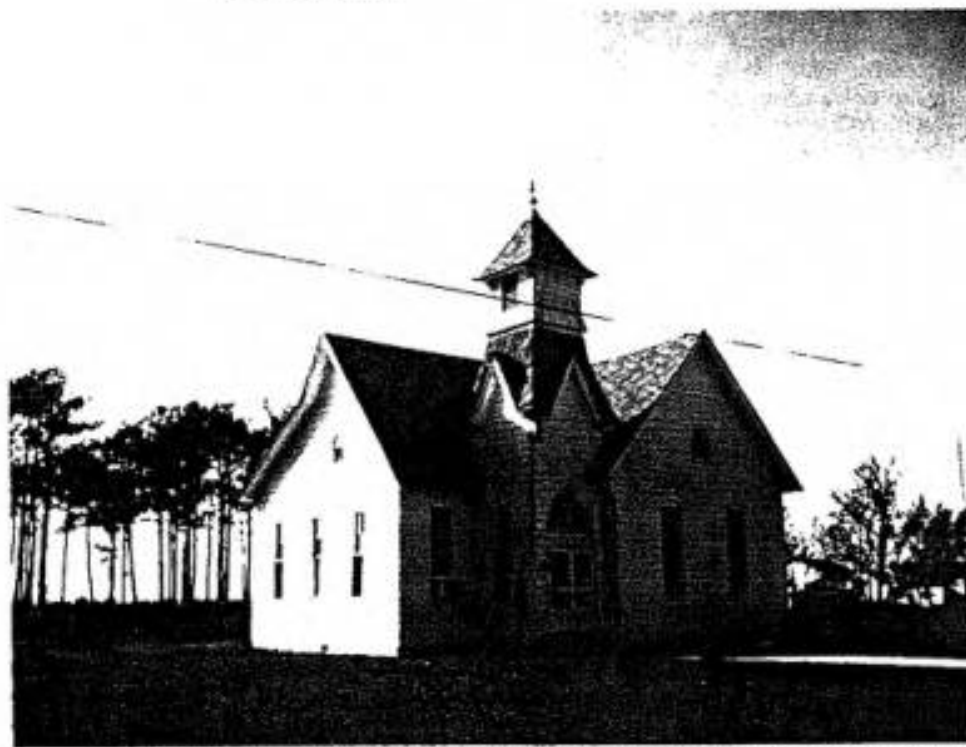
In 1683 and again in 1706, where the bridge crosses Fishing Creek, a town was established by the Maryland Assembly. It was "Plymouth," a town laid out for the "advancement of trade." Only eight of the one hundred lots were taken up. In 1748 a tobacco warehouse was built there and operated until 1773. The name was last used by the local militia company formed in 1776, the Plymouth Greens. The site is now a county park.

During the Revolution the British raided for supplies. Plans for the defense of the island were instituted at Anna-





Map by from Mchlen, Md.



Top left: This 1979 photo shows the hand-cranked swing bridge in the process of being dismantled after completion of the new Narrows Bridge. Photo by Bob Grieser. Opposite: Top, the Parr House in Hoopersville; bottom, the Hoopersville Community Hall. Above: the Hoopers Island Memorial Church.

polis. A Captain Travers, with 15 privates, was assigned to protect Hoopers Island. Henry IV had to appeal to Annapolis for money to purchase rations for them.

Ferry service was established in 1786 from Fishing Bay through Hoopers Strait to Hoopers Island. For a long

time there was a hand-cranked Fishing Creek Ferry and a Narrows Ferry between the Upper and Lower Islands.

After the Revolution, tobacco gave way to vegetables and grain as the cash crops. In the War of 1812 the presence of the British and the "Picaroons," renegade Tory pirates, were a constant

threat although no actual engagements were fought on the islands.

Steamboat service began in the middle 1880's. A steamboat wharf at Hickory Cove was a regular stop until 1929. The trip to and from Baltimore cost \$5 plus \$2 for a private stateroom. The boat left Hoopersville on Monday, Wednesday and Friday in late afternoon, arrived in Baltimore about 3:30 A.M., and returned Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

During 1886 The German Society of Baltimore, after many immigrant Germans had been shanghaied from Baltimore for work on the oyster fleet, hired a tugboat and turned it over to a U.S. marshal who destroyed several "Paddy shacks" on Hoopers Island. These were prison compounds for shanghaied crewmen who served as a source of free labor for any dredge boat captain who needed an extra hand, willing or unwilling.

There was once a thriving community named Applegarth on Lower Island, but it was lost to the constant erosion and no longer exists. Less than one-half dozen people lived on Lower Island until the oyster industry developed. By the turn of the century they had grown to almost 50 families. In 1893 a post office was established, and several stores and an elementary school served over a hundred people. The post office was closed in 1924 and the last people left the island following the 1933 hurricane which washed out the bridge. Cattle and sheep were raised there for a few more years. Now the only way to get there is by boat.

A scow served as a ferry with a cable crossing between the Upper and Middle Islands until 1901, when the first bridge was built. It was lost in the storm of 1933 and a new bridge was finished in 1935. The present high bridge was finished in 1979. According to the newspaper account, the dedication described the bridge as a monument to waste, stupidity, governmental interference and inefficiency. Because of governmental regulations the cost rose from the original estimate of \$500,000 to \$3,200,000.

Old buildings on the island include the Swan Island Hunting Club built in the early 1800's. The club was originally on Middle Island and Swan Island. (Just to the east of Middle Island, Swan Island has since disappeared.) The Parr House in Hoopersville is an illustration of adaptation to the needs of the owners. It is a five-part frame dwelling, each with a ground floor room. The Hoopersville Community Hall/Meeting

House, built about 1885 as a chapel, is still used for social and political meetings. The Island Memorial Church, started in 1780, in Hoopersville, is a large church, a focal point for the community. It is an L-plan structure with a tower entrance in the angle of the L. During the Civil War the church was divided by politics and a Methodist Episcopal Church South chapel was built.

With the largest marshland acreage in Maryland, Dorchester County is a wonderful place for seeing a large variety of waterfowl. Clouds of waterfowl used to fly over the island and many of the older houses had iron bars over the windows to protect them from breakage when lights were on inside. Hoopers Island lies on the main migration corridor of many species of birds and is a good place to see diving ducks either in Honga River, Tar Bay, or the Chesapeake Bay, all of which border the islands. Other birds of note to be seen are the little blue heron, American oystercatcher, least tern, great blue heron, double crested cormorant, willet, herring gull, Forster's and common tern, royal tern, black duck, gadwall and boat-tailed grackle. There was once a thriving business penning and raising

diamond-back terrapin, but the demand has declined. At one time, a favorite sport was killing hawks. Dorchester County once paid out \$4,000 in bounty payments at 50¢ per pair of hawk legs. The hunters shot them during their annual migration.

In spite of their long profile to the Bay, the islands have survived. Sometimes the back yards of houses on opposite sides of the road are waterfronts, one on the Bay and one on the Honga River, especially in Fishing Creek. When surveyed in 1848 the total island acreage was 4,197. The NOAA Chart 12261, November 1984, shows 3,353 acres. This is an average loss of six and one-half acres each year!

Most of the present residents, like those near Wingate, across the Honga River, are descended from settlers of pure British stock, and their speech has a soft back-of-the-throat tone. Many have a great sense of humor. When I interviewed Mr. "Chan" Rippons, Sr., he stated that he remembered a lot of the history of the island. I asked, "The first settlers arrived in 1667, do you remember that?" He looked me straight in the eye and said, "Just like it was yesterday!" When we finished laughing we talked as if we had been friends for

fifty years.

Originally, the islanders were farmers, but now almost all of them make their living from the water as crabbers, oystermen, or seafood packers. Good roads, radio and television, and their marketing contacts have brought the 20th century to the islands but they still are unique in their orientation to the water rather than the land. The Honga River area, in 1983, produced 104,930 bushels of oysters, valued at over \$700,000 and 1,515,795 pounds of crabs, valued at over \$400,000.

Sportfishing is also an important business. The main annual event is the William T. Ruark Fishing Tournament, sponsored by the Hoopers Island Volunteer Fire Department. It has been held about the first week in June every year since 1972. Prizes are offered for the biggest bluefish, trout, hardhead, flounder and drumfish. For more information call (301) 228-2141 or 397-3131. In October there is an Arts & Crafts Auction & Bazaar, and in November the Ronald McGlaughlin Artisans Fair. □

*William B. Cronin is a retired staff oceanographer with the Chesapeake Bay Institute, The Johns Hopkins University. He now lives in Annapolis where he's writing a book on cruising.*

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BALTIMORE, Tuesday, May 22, 1973

## Guess what will replace last 1-room school

By MIKE BOWLER

Tylerton, Md. — Maryland's only one-room, one-teacher public school, the tiny Tylerton Elementary School on Smith Island, will be replaced this year — by another one-room school.

And Smith Islanders, people of intense community pride who send their high school children to the mainland by boat, couldn't be happier.

Their 21-pupil school sits near a marsh, and when tides are high, the playground becomes a mudhole. The \$110,000 new school, designed by Booth, Somers and Farlow, of Salisbury, will include a \$15,000, 3-foot-high deck that will allow the children to run and play above the water.

The school was approved last fall by state school construction officials not long after a Smith Island delegation visited the agency. The seafood the group provided — the product of Smith Island's only industry — may not have played a part in the decision, but as one Tylerton resident put it, "Notbin' wrong with a little friendly persuasion."

The new school will be built on the site of the old — a white, freshly painted wooden structure, complete with outhouses (now unused because of inside plumbing) and those ancient desks with inkwells and elaborate ironwork at the sides. It was built in 1911.

That the old one-room school (adapta-

moving groups of children to the "resource alcove," a sort of library) is regarded with amusement by the architects and James A. Sensenbaugh, the state school superintendent. "I guess we've come around a complete circle," he said, referring to education's recent "discovery" of the open-space school, which is nothing but a fancy version of the old one-roomer.

The Tylerton pupils' parents — and their parents — attended the old school, and like nearly everything else on Smith Island, it seems frozen in a time gone by.

"They're all Methodists, and eight of them are the children of my husband's first cousins," said Sybil Bruce, the teacher — "Miss Syb" to the islanders.

Mrs. Bruce is one of the few "outsiders" on Smith Island, a tiny, flat water of land in the Chesapeake Bay, 12 miles from Crisfield in Somerset county. She had lived in Annapolis but had grown to love Smith Island through duck hunting trips here with her husband.

### Until she married

After her husband's death, Mrs. Bruce applied for and won the job as the Tylerton teacher. But by all reports, she was not totally accepted in Tylerton until she married a Smith Island waterman.

"People ask me if I don't get bored," she said. "Actually, it's endlessly interesting. I come home at night exhausted. It's hard with six grades at once. The kids in the middle get squeezed from both ends."

Somerset school officials don't make a point of it, but they are pleased that

was run for them. I'm trying to bring modern approaches to the island, and so far I'm succeeding. I'd really like to get an aide next year. Sometimes, you really feel alone here."

The Tylerton School is the epitome of community control of schools. Many decisions are made in the Methodist Church, just a few doors away. Parents cannot help but be involved in the daily school operation, and they consider the winning of the new facility to be a community triumph.

"You can really do anything if you put your mind to it," said Beulah Tyler, whose husband is a tugboat captain.

Last week, as a kind of thanks, the islanders were hosts to state and county school officials, the architects and two officials of the state school construction agency at a crab feast and tour.

The party traveled on the Island Star, the same boat that carries high schoolers from Smith Island to Crisfield on Monday mornings and picks them up again Friday afternoons. (The state pays Smith Island families \$60 a month for billeting the students in Crisfield.)

While part of the group toured the Tylerton School, Jack B. Kussmaul, the Somerset superintendent, broke away with a smaller party to visit Ewell, the other school on Smith Island. His mission was to convince the construction officials of the need for a new playground. (The 80-student Ewell School contains eight grades, and Tylerton students go to junior high in Ewell, riding on Maryland's other "school boat.")

A delegation of Ewell parents met the party at the dock and accompanied it to the school. Standing in the school yard and trying to be diplomatic, Dr. Kuss-

and not give these kids the same opportunity."

"We're willing to help all we can. We don't expect everything," said one of the mothers in an accent that mixes British and Tidewater Southern.

Another pointed to the basketball backboard and hoop, hopelessly out of kilter, and noted that not one Ewell student has ever made the basketball team in Crisfield.

Henry Guy, a waterman, community leader and the man one of his neighbors said "takes care of the telephones," said the school yard had been inundated 25 times this year by high tides. The construction officials were sympathetic but, of course, could make no commitments.

Back in Tylerton, the crab lunch was served in the Methodist Church basement by Tylerton School parents. The children sang grace—Somerset school officials were quick to point out that they had learned the music in church, not school—and then there were introductions. The room fairly burst with pride.

One of the mothers read a poem by Adelaide Marshall, the "poet laureate" of Smith Island. It is really in two parts, the first written before the school construction approval and the second, after. It refers to Watergate and says, "We can still believe in some form of government in our nation."

But the first part contains two lines that sum up the philosophy of what is, perhaps by the accident of geography, truly a community school.

"So the home, the school and the

MARYLANDER + HERALD



Clarence Phillips points to the location of the forgotten steamboat.

## Two Old Timers Remember the Steamboat "Florence"

By Brice N. Stump

(Periodically the Marylander and Herald will have stories concerning the historical past of Somerset County. To bring the past alive and present it with interest we consult people who were there, who saw history being made in the late 1800's and the turn of the century. Clarence Phillips and E. Walton Pusey reach back into years long gone to tell of the only steamboat that worked the Manokin River.)

"She was a regular steamboat, only smaller," reflected E. Walton Pusey. "My grandfather Frank Pusey took me to the old wharf on the Woolford farm and that was one of the few times I remember seeing Florence on the river. I was just a boy then.

Pusey was born in 1885 and figures he may have been 10 years old then, remembering too that the steamboat Florence "had a whistle, I remember that."

Pusey is one of the few people living that remembered seeing this steamer at work. Because within a few short years after that trip to the wharf, Florence was never to run another trip.

"I can't recall ever seeing her anywhere but where she was tied up to die," said Clarence Phillips, soon to be 89. Phillips got out of his car at the old steamboat wharf near the site of the sewage treatment plant for Princess Anne. A dirt road extends to the river and curves along the bank. Phillips couldn't recall watching the steamboat work at the wharf, but he was sure he could remember where she was tied up, and eventually sank.

Phillips walked a short distance along the bank, his way hampered by thorns and overturned trees. He couldn't get through. "She is over there near that point," Phillips stated with excitement, pointing toward a cluster of reeds on the south bend of the Manokin River.

"I guess they docked here in there because she'd gone bad or they had no more use for her." Phillips brushed tangling vines from his face, hoping to catch some sign of the steamer that had almost sunk out of view years ago. "I know she is there, and I remember seeing another boat, a one masted sunk right by her."

This wooden boat that Phillips recalls, is one believe to have been built by the builder of Teackle Mansion. Phillips nor Pusey have any knowledge as to when the wooden vessel sank, but both men agree that it would have to be pretty old for neither to have heard of her background.

"I know she was the Florence," Pusey interjected. "And that she was a side wheeler." Pusey gave a nod of confidence in his own statement as he continued his story. "She was nothing compared to the other steamboats that worked the bay."

Florence went from Deal Island to Princess Anne, she freighted from steamers that came to Deal Island. And Florence took freight from other wharfs in between. She worked every day but Saturday, Pusey said. Phillips and Pusey have pieced together their knowledge of Florence from older people telling of the steamer. "I think her main job was freight. Maybe she

carried a few passengers...if you wanted to go to Deal Island to Princess Anne she took you. Now you can even row a rowboat up that river now," Pusey stated.

Perhaps the most unique feature of Florence was that she was the only steamer to spend enough time on this part of the Manokin that she became a familiar site, bellowing gray smoke and piercing the hot summer air with her shrill whistle.

"In the 1800's" Pusey explained, "big bugeyes and schooners could make their way up that river, but Florence was well known. Her captain was Bill Price."

Pusey remembers Captain Bill as being "fairly stout, weighing a couple of hundred pounds. He was getting up there in the years, but he was a good old fellow." Also serving on the steamer were William Dashiell, the Purser and Dan Bailey, the first mate. It was the pursers job to keep record of freight and keep account if she had passengers."

Phillips and Pusey believe Florence was built before the Civil War. Pusey added, "I've heard that she was privately owned when she started running up and down this river, but I don't know where she came from."

Florence had a side paddle, and when she got to the wharf near Princess Anne, she churned the waters and turned around at a point near the wharf. The site she was later to be forgotten.

Toward the end of the 1800's Florence was tied up and abandoned. Over the years she started sinking in the mud, and boys would use the end of her diving into the Manokin, until finally rust and reeds as but hid Florence in the mud. During the late summer only her smoke stack remained to mark her presence. Today a few parts can still be seen, all that is left of the miniature side wheel steamer whose brass shone in the sun and the whistle that greeted folks at the wharf. The Manokin's only steamer of the late 1800's all but forgotten.

## Volleyball Leagues Are Forming

On Tuesday night, September 28 there will be an organizational meeting for both men's and women's volleyball leagues in Princess Anne. This meeting will be held at the Washington High School Library at 7:30 P.M. All persons 16 years of age or over, who are interested in organizing or playing on a team are invited to attend.

The volleyball leagues, which were a tremendous success last year, are once again being sponsored by the Somerset County Recreation & Parks Commission. For this league to be successful once again, public response and participation is urgently needed.

For any additional information, call Mike Miller at the Recreation & parks office at 651-0749.

WASHINGTON, D. C., FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1967



Wire crab pots stand at the ready as the "Ruth," the last skipjack on Hooper Island, sits at anchor—for sale.



Mrs. Robert Meekins opens the drawbridge over the Hooga River, gateway to the crabbing grounds.

## On Hooper Island, It's Time Again to Talk Crabs

By JOHN SIDRWOOD  
*Star Staff Writer*

HOOPER ISLAND, Md.—The oil space heater has coaxed the last of the winter-soaked chill from the planked floors, and the Meekins and the Shockley boys have moved outside to the front porch of Myrtle Phillips' General Store in Fishing Creek.

"On the land side of Hooper Island the Canada geese have all but left the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge for the nesting grounds up north.

The "Two Bepchery" workboat out of Elmer Ruszk in Smith Island, is up on rails at J. B. Aaron's Fishing Creek railway. In Hoopersville, at the tip of the island on the Chesapeake Bay, Elmer Ruszk Jr.

is watching (Calvert C. Cannon, a master carpenter, build the new Ruszk workboat, the "Nancy Jane."

Wire crab pots are piled up in yards all over the island waiting for a streak of warm weather to activate the famed Chesapeake blue crab. Marine supply companies are selling galvanized wire from which the traps are made and calking compound and copper paint and marine hardware.

Crabbing season in Maryland opened officially the first of this month, but the crabbers will not be dropping their baited traps aboard until the hard-shelled delicacies begin swimming around in search of food.

This is what William, Clar-

ence, George and Tex Meekins and Leon, Carl, Rogers and Dorsey Shockley are talking about these days in the early evenings on the porch of Myrtle Phillips' store.

It is what is on the mind of William "Rubber" Aaron, 40, of Hoopersville, as he readies his boat, the "Liner." The commercial crab-packing houses on the Dorchester County island, south of Cambridge, also are being painted and made ready for the crab pickers.

But all is not coming to life along Hooper Island.

Up in a cove of the Hooga River the last sailing workboat on the island is dying as Capt. Joe Rippon's 15-year-old skipjack, the "Ruth," waits

for someone with \$2,500 who wants to buy her and get her out in the Bay again where the good southwest wind waits.

The Chesapeake, and the rivers Choptank and Nanticoke and Wicomico and Tred Avon and Annetmessex and Patuxent and Rappahannock will soon be full of the white, open boats with the wide beams and the ruddy-faced men who work them.

When it comes to the disappearing oyster, watermen grow grim about the month and long for summer and the hard crabs they know will be there waiting for them.

Everything seems to work better when spring has finally arrived. Boats start. Bones stop creaking. The grass is

warm as a green blanket. Crabs get caught in traps, and city people can't get enough of them steamed to eat.

Even hand-cranked wooden draw bridges open easier, especially one of the few remaining one-way bridges of its kind in Maryland, crossing the Hooga River here on the island.

A lady, Mrs. Robert Meekins, has been doing the opening and closing chores here for the past 7 years.

When you cross the bridge to leave the upper island, Mrs. Meekins is one of the many strangers who will wave to you as you go by.

That's the kind of thing you leave behind on Hooper Island.

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## 1872—Crisfield Centennial—1972

### HISTORY OF CRISFIELD

By Woodrow T. Wilson



Islanders on the ice in Tangier Harbor waiting to unload food and medical supplies from the plane during the great freeze of 1936.

#### CHAPTER XXIII

### The Great Blizzard Of 1936

The great blizzard of 1936 will long be remembered as what the old timers said was the worst experienced in these parts since 1880. During the latter part of January of that year a severe freeze-up occurred. It continued without let-up for several days with temperatures ranging from above zero to twenty below. Finally, most of the local waters were solid fields of ice. Both Tangier and Smith Islands were completely isolated with a barrier of ice which no available vessel could penetrate. All communication was cut off to the mainland. A makeshift airstrip was made on the mainland of Smith Island. The ice was used for that purpose at Tangier.

On February 1st a Goodyear Blimp was dispatched to Tangier Island, Virginia, to ascertain the condition of the people from the standpoint of sickness, food, and fuel. It was found that some medicines were needed but otherwise all was well. Nevertheless, a box of food was delivered there the following day, February 2, 1936, on which day an airplane representing a Washington newspaper made several trips to both islands. This plane carried mail and medical supplies.

The following two days, February 3rd and 4th, airplanes were steadily shuttling from Crisfield to the islands, some of which carried Red Cross officials, nurses, and supplies. A Millard Tupper, Chairman of the local Red Cross, made several trips to assure the Islanders did not suffer. Private planes transported passengers on a fee basis.

From Monday, February 3rd to Thursday, February 6th, about 125 residents of the two islands reached Crisfield overland from points on the Chesapeake Bay where the boats were frozen in. They slept in the local armory and wanted to get home to their families. Small groups ventured walking over the ice and arrived at their island homes, tired but happy. The real exodus took place Thursday morning, February 5th, when over 100 persons started walking on the ice from Crisfield toward the islands. They had long ropes to hold to; if the ice broke, they could rescue whoever went through. They walked about three miles from Crisfield to a Coast Guard cutter which was trying to break ice in the Tangier Sound channel. The cutter transported them across the channel to the ice on the other side from where they were able to make their way to their island homes.

The wildest kind of distress reports were broadcast about conditions on the islands until public opinion was considerable aroused over the plight of the people there. Investigation actually revealed that there were shortages of a few items, but at no time were the residents of either island in danger of starvation or freezing; and they could have very well held out for at least another ten days or two weeks. The Islanders

were hardy people and down through the years had customarily prepared in advance for periods of isolation during winter months. It seemed that the outside world was more concerned for the Islanders than the Islanders were for themselves. Radio communication was established and the situation was well under control; however, the news media kept reporting water of distress, suffering, and hardship on the islands.

On February 4, 1936, Albert Rich (1906-1971) and Lewis "Pete" Gray started out over the ice on a motorcycle. They progressed well while traveling fast, but when they slowed to turn around they broke through the ice and their motorcycle sank. They clambered out of the water and walked back to Crisfield. The motorcycle is still there. Sgt. Katz of the Maryland State Police, had a similar experience while testing the ice for the apparent purpose of riding to the islands.

The great freeze continued beyond the second week with no sign of letting up. Thursday, February 6th was the day which people refer to as when "all hell broke loose." A blizzard stormed down out of the north and hit Crisfield with the full force of gale winds over fifty miles per hour and bringing with it the worst snow storm ever experienced by the local people. It continued all day and throughout the night and the following day. Snow was piled in drifts eight and ten feet high. Business was practically at a standstill. Automobiles and trucks were hopelessly stalled all over the city. Snow plowing was impossible. Coal for heating purposes was carried to homes in sacks. The snow isolated the islands more than ever before.

On February 6th, Governor Harry Nice sent Major Garey, Superintendent of the Maryland State Police, to Crisfield to render aid to the islands. Major Garey and his assistant, Sgt. Wilbert Hunter, went to Tangier Island and upon their return to Crisfield reported that it was necessary to get food supplies there promptly. Major Garey then organized an expedition of 15 volunteers. On the following day, February 7th, at the tail end of the howling blizzard they departed from Crisfield's L'Anse-au-Loup Point about dusk pulling two sleighs loaded with food. They hoped to get it aboard the Coast Guard cutter "Travis" which was in the Tangier channel about three miles from Crisfield. The Travis was to transport the food across the channel and as near as possible to Tangier. From there it would be pulled over the ice for the remainder of the journey. Thus, in spite of the severe weather conditions and the lateness of the hour, the expedition started.

For several hours in zero weather, these men battled one of the worst snow storms that had ever visited the Chesapeake Bay area. They got lost in the storm and at times traveled in circles. Before they had traveled over a mile and a half, several fell into the icy waters through air holes covered with snow.

A Board of Inquiry, headed by Adjutant General William A. Heerod, was conducted into the fate of the Crisfield Army during February 18-20, 1936. Testimony which tended to prove conclusively that Major Garey was warned by competent people against the trip was offset by testimony that it was justified. The bulk of the testimony from witnesses and those who were with the party was that the Islanders were not suffering and could have waited for relief as long as two weeks. There were those who maintained that the need was imminent. There was much conflicting testimony such as Horace Ford, who was said to have stated that he informed Major Garey that anyone who started out on that ice in that blizzard was a fool, yet within a half an hour after making that statement, he was on the ice himself, helping pull one of the sleighs loaded with food. Some members of the party considered Major Garey's critics contemptible and the expedition as foolhardy in the extreme.

It is questionable as to what a Board of Inquiry could accomplish or what verdict it could reach on an episode such as this which involved a party of volunteers trying to aid what they thought to be distressed people. The only verdict possible appears to have been to condemn the incident or declare that poor judgment was used. Because of public opinion and loss of life on the mission, as well as adverse testimony and evidence, the Board could hardly have voiced approval; therefore, it determined that Major Garey erred in judgment in his choice of method of aiding Tangier Island. It is believed that no action was taken against him because he continued to serve as Superintendent of the

Other members of the party had turned back previously after determining that it was impossible to get the sleigh to the Travis. They were: Cdr. E. R. Tillet, USCG; Charles Lane, USCG; Loran Midgett, USCG; Edward L. Thompson, and Crisfielders William Byrd (1901-1941), Horace Ford (1886-1954), Elmer Wharton (1905-1971) and Benjamin S. Mills, Jr. (1901-1945). Mr. Thompson, an amateur radio operator, broke through the ice and was rescued by Mr. Lane, who also broke through the ice. Mr. Thompson had to be carried over the ice on the shoulders of Charles Lane for over a mile. Another member, too heavy to carry, had to be dragged a considerable distance. All reached Crisfield completely exhausted.

Sgt. Hunter's body remained on the ice bound Travis two days after which it was removed by a government tug boat and taken to Norfolk. He was buried in his home town of Parkville, Maryland on February 12, 1936. The expedition failed. The element of fate which sometimes makes heroes was absent and tragedy resulted.

As soon as the death of Sgt. Hunter became known, public opinion, right or wrong, began to clamor for Major Garey's official "load" for what was termed Sgt. Hunter's needless death. It was much easier to condemn Major Garey for contributing toward the death, than to credit him for humanitarianism. It was a simple matter to achieve overwhelming sympathy by picturing the widow and three fatherless children, but hard to justify Major Garey's undertaking which resulted in failure. After the catastrophe it was easy to assert that Major Garey and his State Policemen were seeking publicity instead of actually desiring to aid the Islanders who evidently were not desperately in need of help.

Whatever the true cause, it should be remembered that every member of the party volunteered for the trip and Major Garey led the way — all the way. The mission failed and Major Garey was condemned. If it had succeeded the entire party would have been acclaimed.

Maryland State Police. Within a few days after the tragedy, the weather began to clear. The Coast Guard broke the ice for channels to the islands and normal life was resumed. According to The Crisfield Times article of February 14, 1936, so extreme hardship or suffering had been experienced by the Islanders, and if there was any suffering at the islands, it could not be compared to the suffering and anguish experienced by the party which tried to aid them.

In order to visualize the mammoth task of pulling a sleigh over the ice to Tangier Island, Virginia, one must be aware of just what such a mission involved. Tangier is about 15 miles S. W. of Crisfield and for most of that distance there is no land between Chesapeake Bay and Tangier Sound, both of which are deep bodies of salt water subject to varying currents and tides. Except on a clear day, part of the journey is completely out of sight of land. In such a situation it is almost beyond imagination to consider walking across the ice at night for that distance in a howling blizzard through snow drifts and around holes

in the ice. Nevertheless, this expedition attempted to do just that. One of the chief criticisms of that day was that the catastrophe was created by "fuss and ballyhoo" rather than the needs of the Tangier people. It has never been clarified as to why the Maryland State Police took it upon themselves to take aid to Virginia's Tangier Island without joint participation by Virginia authorities, or by the Virginia State Police. The local papers did not indicate that aid was given to the Island by the State of Virginia. This is, however, no positive indication that no such aid was given. In the event that little or no aid was given by Virginia, it could have been because the Virginia authorities concluded that it was not necessary under the conditions that existed at that time.

So goes the story of the great freeze of 1936. During most of the years since that time there has not been enough ice in this area for children to skate on for more than two or three days at a time.

(History of Crisfield will continue next week)

## Upper County Residents Should Voice Opinions

By BILL MARTIN

The Somerset County Commissioners, hard-pressed for many months to secure property desirable for the building of a new upper county high school as well as a new middle school, have now obtained an option on a 69-acre farm belonging to Sidney Miller. It is understood the purchase price is \$115,000.

The Commissioners had previously obtained an option to buy the Willis Adams' property for \$60,000. This is a 100-acre tract of land, but because an adjacent 5-acre parcel could not be acquired, it apparently has been declared undesirable for the schools' site.

It seems as though there are many advantages and disadvantages to be weighed in comparing the feasibility of the two properties in question, as far as school sites are concerned.

Take the Adams' property. Costs figure to \$900 an acre to purchase. Its geographic location is such that, should the new schools be built there, they would not lose their identity with the County Seat. Water and sewage installations should certainly be less expensive. The schools would be in walking distance for many of their students.

The Miller property, on the other hand, figures up to over \$1700 an acre, and there's 34 less acres in the tract. It would call for a water and sewage disposal system of its own, and since it is located a mile from the Princess Anne limits, the schools would not have the same identity with the County Seat as if they were within the city limits. It would mean the bussing of all its students.

The two sites definitely have their pros and cons. Princess Anne has always had its schools located within its city limits. We believe it would be advantageous for the new North County High School and the new Middle School to be built on the same property. We also believe that upper county residents should voice their opinions as to where the schools are located.

## City Councilman To Be Commended

By BILL MARTIN

City Councilman E. Layton Rigglin is to be commended for a public service that definitely is above and beyond the call of duty.

Mr. Rigglin has begun what he calls "Council Comments," in which he touches on various matters pertaining to the City of Crisfield. The subjects covered are of interest to residents and taxpayers of the city, and concerns itself to the goings-on in City Hall.

"Council Comments," we hope, will be a weekly feature of the Times, and we urge our readers to look for it.



A tip from The Hartford Insurance Group's Junior Fire Marshal: The best way to fight fire is to eliminate any chance that it may occur.

### KOZY KORNER

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The birds, animals & flowers are dying to tell us...  
 "Give a hoot, don't pollute."



## TANGIER, VA.

About the year 1666 a Mr. West came from the mainland and bought the Island for two overcoats, used it for raising stock until 1686, when he sold part of it to Mr. John Crockett, who built a house there. Mostly Crockett, Dize, Parks, Pruitts, Thomas, are the ruling family names there now.

For years they had no Bible, but did read from the Prayer Book and Psalter. They were honest, hard-working people, getting their living mostly from the waters surrounding the Island, just as they do now today.

In the early 1800's Joshua Thomas, best known as "Parson of the Islands," was the religious leader on Tangier. During the war of 1812 he preached to 12,000 British troops on Tangier before the attack on Fort McHenry where Francis Scott Key wrote the Star Spangled Banner in Baltimore.

In 1865 there was an epidemic of cholera, which caused the residents to leave the Island, but most of them returned later.

Tangier Island is located in the Chesapeake Bay near the boundaries of Maryland and Virginia. On one side is the Bay, on the other side Tangier Sound, and it is 14 miles from the nearest port, Crisfield, from where the mail service to the Island goes every day, on the large power boat "Doralena."

The people of Tangier depend upon the nearby waters for a livelihood, soft and hard shell crabs in summer, oysters and clams in winter, and fish for most of the year. The town has a mayor and council, and police. The streets are narrow, and paved. Very few automobiles are allowed on the Island. The Island has electric light and power.

Tangier Island has become a mecca for tourists, who come each year in ever increasing numbers to Crisfield and board boats for the trip of 14 miles across and down Tangier Sound for a visit to what is generally regarded as one of the last frontiers of the Nation. Its fame is widespread, and while much of it is modernized, in many parts graves are visible in the yards of homes, the homes are well kept, the people courteous, a hardy race it is true, mostly of English ancestry, staunch Methodists, and they make visitors feel they are wanted and appreciated. It is a spot on the east coast which tourists cannot afford to miss.

This verse, by a former pastor, the Rev. C.P. Swain, for whom the Island Church is named, exemplifies the philosophy and standards of the Island People: *Our eyes are looking backward to the days of long ago, When our fathers, long translated, came the Word of God to know, And in their life and conduct did the Savior's image show. The truths they taught are no less glorious, The church they loved is still victorious, The God they served is reigning o'er us.*

The present Mayor of Tangier Island is and members of the Council are: Alva W. Crockett, Mayor Alonzo T. Moore, Vance Parks, William Parks.



### "Smith Island School Bus Boat"

The diesel-powered "Island Star" transports Smith Island Senior High Pupils across the Tangier Sound in order they may attend the Crisfield High School. This is the only School Bus Boat along the Atlantic Coast. This Boat is fully equipped and passed by the U. S. Coast Guard and School Board.

*Monday Thru Friday*

*Leaves Dock At Crisfield 11:00 A.M.*

*Returns To Crisfield ?*

*Saturday And Sunday*

*Leaves Dock At Crisfield 11:00 A.M.*

*Returns To Crisfield ?*

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# Settlement was slow to come to Somerset

By JOHN V. DENNIS

In my last column, I reported upon Capt. John Smith's exploration of the Chesapeake Bay and the rivers flowing into it. His main interest was in finding a water route to China. He was also hoping to find gold.

As it turned out, the most valuable resources happened to be the furs from mink, otters, beavers, and other four-footed animals. These could be had very cheaply by trading with the Indians. For the most part, the Indians were friendly. Had it been otherwise, settlement might not have come until many years later.

Except for a few white adventurers, who traded with the Indians, the area which now embraces Worcester and Somerset counties on the Eastern Shore remained largely unoccupied by Europeans. Not until about 1657 did settlement begin in this large wilderness area which included the Pocomoke River with its swampland and marshes.

In the meantime, other portions of the Chesapeake Bay region were slowly being settled. The Jamestown colony founded in 1607 had expanded with settlements becoming established both upstream and downstream along the James River.

A few Virginia colonists, dissatisfied with conditions on the western shore, began crossing the bay to establish settlements on what is now the Eastern Shore of Virginia. One of the first to see better prospects on the eastern side was Sir Samuel Argoll.

In 1613, he crossed the bay to obtain fish for the starving Jamestown settlers. On returning to Jamestown, he reported that the ocean sea waters around Smith Island at the tip of the peninsula were rich in salt.

Since this was a badly needed commodity, a party of about 20 men returned the next year to begin salt reclamation and to catch fish. The salt was obtained by boiling down sea water.

With the arrival of the first women in 1622, settlement began in earnest in what was called "The Plantation of Accomack." This Accomack near the tip of the peninsula, should not be confused with Accomack County on the Eastern Shore of Virginia established at a later date.

An enterprising newcomer appeared on the scene a few years later. Capt. William Claiborne, who had good connections at the court of King Charles I, began his New

## GUEST COLUMN

World career as a land surveyor in Accomack Plantation in 1627. He soon realized that the fur trade offered him better prospects.

Having a royal charter to trade with the Indians, in 1631 he established a trading post on Kent Island well up the eastern side of the bay. Soon this outpost was to come into conflict with the newly established colony of Maryland. In 1632, Lord Baltimore had received a royal charter to form this colony. In March, 1634, the Ark and Dove arrived with the first colonists.

The first settlement was at St. Mary's on a tributary of the Potomac River. Would Kent Island remain a part of Virginia or would it be absorbed by the Marylanders? This question was resolved partly by who was in favor with the powers that be in England and partly by armed conflict.

In April 1635, the first confrontation took place between the Marylanders from St. Mary's and the Virginians from Kent Island. A small party from Kent Island sailed to within 10 miles of the newly formed settlement at St. Mary's for the purpose of trading with the Indians. The settlers rightly regarded this as a serious provocation. They seized the Kent Island vessel but did not take prisoners.

Later that month the two sides met in what has been described as the first naval engagement between English-speaking adversaries in New World waters. The St. Mary's settlers had sent two small vessels across the bay to trade with the Indians who lived near the mouth of the Pocomoke River.

Hearing of this invasion into what he regarded as his territory, Claiborne dispatched an armed vessel called the Cockatrice to the scene. The rival parties in their vessels met on waters of the Pocomoke Sound. In the engagement that followed casualties were suffered on both sides. The Kent Islanders lost three men killed and three wounded; their opponents lost one man killed.

Watching from the shore, the Indians must have been filled with apprehension as they heard the explosions and saw smoke from the guns. They were learning that the white men were not any more united than they were.

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# CRISFIELD - SMITH ISLAND

## CULTURAL ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

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SUMMER, 1999 Editorial Staff: Midge and Dave Patterson

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### THE LEGACY OF JOSHUA THOMAS

"Parson of the Islands"

by Frances W. Dize

Twice in the early pioneer days  
God's message came so true  
Brought by a Methodist preacher  
In his dug-out canoe.

Paul Conley

In 1861, when Adam Wallace began his biography of Joshua Thomas, he did so at the urging of men who had known and worked with the venerable and much esteemed "Parson of the Islands". In the preface of his book, Mr. Wallace quoted these gentlemen who had long been acquainted with the parson. One brother minister said, "The life of such a man ought not to be confined to his neighborhood, or to his brief sojourn on earth". Another claimed that he believed the author had been placed on the field of the parson's fame, and his writings would perpetuate the memory of the dear old Island preacher.

The reverend James A. Massey must have thought so too, for in his introduction to the book, he wrote "The memory of the just is blessed to generations following, and it becomes a useful task to perpetuate the influence of a good life, such a life as that of Joshua Thomas." The Parson of the Islands has been reprinted many times, and the good

Parson's memory and fame have been honored for many generations -- the story of his life has not been confined to his neighborhood or to his sojourn on earth.

Joshua Thomas' life began in August, 1776 at a place called Potato Neck, on Maryland's Lower Eastern Shore. His father was a sea-faring man who died while on a visit to Tangier Island, where his relatives lived. After his death, Mrs. Thomas moved with her children to that island and, while her children were still small, she remarried. This new husband became a drunkard who abused his wife and children, and when he drowned while returning from a trip to Accomack to purchase liquor, he left the family destitute.

To help support his family, Joshua learned, early on, how to hunt and shoot wild fowl, and to fish the waters of the Chesapeake. Then, when still quite young, he was apprenticed to David Tyler, a Smith Island boat captain. In the Parson's own words, Captain Tyler was "one of our neighbors and was known to be a moral, good sort of man that would take proper care of me and bring me up right."

Through his work with Captain Tyler, his skill as a waterman increased, and through the good Captain's teaching, he became

familiar with the Episcopalian religion. At the age of twenty-three, Joshua married Rachel Evans, daughter of a Smith Islander, and embarked on his life as a family man. Eventually, the couple built a home on Tangier. Although not formally trained in any religion, he and Rachel, along with some of their neighbors, occasionally visited the Episcopal Chapel at Annemessex, the mainland town that would later be named Crisfield, Maryland. Although there was no regular system of worship on the islands, ministers of that church sometimes journeyed to both islands to hold services.

Shortly after the Revolutionary War, the new evangelical religion, Methodism, had begun to spread through Accomack-Northampton in Virginia and on to Maryland's Lower Eastern Shore, and by the turn of the century, evangelists were visiting the islands. Because of his skill as a boatman, Joshua was often asked to ferry the churchmen from the mainland to the islands.

Whenever Joshua and his neighbors went to the Episcopal Chapel, they sailed their boats across the Tangier Sound and up the Annemessex River, where they landed in the vicinity of what is now Olde St. Peter's Methodist Church, the place where he preached his first sermon. This historic church, first called

**Miles Meeting House**, was founded in 1782, and is still in use as a place of worship. Three hundred yards south of the church is his spiritual birthplace, the site of his conversion in 1807. His famous log canoe, *the Methodist*, was launched about five hundred yards to the north of the church.

Shortly after his conversion, Joshua began holding services on the island, and made a commitment to visit every heart and home on the islands. He made it his life's work, and within a few years, he became known as the Parson of the Islands.

Joshua and Rachel were still living on Tangier Island during the War of 1812, when the British took possession of the Island and used it as their center of operations as they plundered the Bay shoreline and prepared for their invasion of Baltimore. It was here on Tangier that the Parson gave the British his famous, fiery sermon, "Thou Shalt Not Kill," with its dire prediction that they would be defeated.

Joshua lived on Tangier until he was nearly fifty; then he moved with his family to Deal Island. There, he and his flock built their first church in a place called **Park's Grove**, a small Greek Revival-style chapel, named for the Parson. Soon, the congregation outgrew the small chapel and they built another, larger church. Father Thomas, as he was known to his parishioners, delivered his final sermon on this site; he is buried beneath a large table marker at the south corner of the little chapel. The story of his life and achievements still holds a prominent place in the history of Methodism and the Eastern Shore.

Since 1909, when the Old Home Prize Essay contest was established, high school students have used the story of Joshua Thomas and his log canoe as the subject of their entries, and many times, essays honoring the Parson of the Islands have won the scholarship competition.

And the good Parson's legacy has lived on in other ways. In 1930, a special dispatch to the Baltimore Sun paper announced that "The Memory of Joshua Thomas, Evangelist, Whose Name is Revered, Will be Theme of Celebration to Begin with Services September 7." That fall, Deal Island held a week-long homecoming to honor the parson and the establishment of Joshua Thomas Chapel, founded by the famous fisherman-preacher.

Shortly after the Deal Island celebration, rumblings of war began in Europe, and soon our nation became involved in World War II. At the beginning of the war, German U-boats destroyed transport ships faster than both British and U.S. shipyards could build them. On January 3, 1943, President Roosevelt announced an emergency ship-building program and many island men answered the call for workers and went to local ship yards to do their part in the war effort.

Built simply and cheaply and with little of the sleek beauty of many ocean going vessels, the Liberty ships were dubbed the "American Ugly Ducklings". But ungainly as they were, they performed valiantly as they carried war-vital cargoes and troops to remote ports and invasion beaches.

The majority of the ships were

named after prominent Americans who were no longer living, and were selected from suggestions sent in by various individuals and organizations. Once again, the Parson of the Islands received an honorary tribute. In May of 1943, Mrs. William Trickett Giles received a letter from the United States Maritime Commission in which the Director of Public Relations informed her that the Commission had received, from many sources, the name of her forefather as a possible name for a Liberty ship. On August 5, 1943, Naval Ensign Ellen Frances Giles, a fifth generation descendent of the Parson of the Islands, christened the 178th Liberty Ship, and the *S.S. Joshua Thomas* slid down the launching rails of the Bethlehem-Fairfield Shipyard.

All through the war years, the *Joshua Thomas* performed valiantly, but when the war was over, she became part of the mothball fleet of reserve ships. Today, the hard-working ship is still doing her duty. In 1972, Congress passed a law providing for an artificial reef program, whereby many of the laid-up Liberty ships would be given to coastal states to help form fish reefs along their coasts. The *Joshua Thomas* lies on the floor of the Gulf of Mexico, right off the banks of South Padre Island, Texas. It seems fitting that the vessel, named for the island fisherman-turned preacher, should lie off the coast of another island, forever a useful contribution to the proliferation of marine life.

In 1976, America celebrated its bicentennial birthday, and again, Maryland remembered the legacy of

Joshua Thomas - this time through the work of a well-known composer and musician. Acclaimed by critics as a "great bi-centennial treat," the grand opera *Joshua* was first presented on the Rockville Campus of Montgomery College.

Dr. Gerald Muller, Professor and Chairman of the Department of Music on Montgomery College's Rockville Campus, composed, produced and directed the opera, a combination of music, ballet and drama. With great respect for the man of God, he told the fascinating story of a handsome young fisherman, fond of music and dancing, who was converted by Methodist missionaries and became a preacher. The opera was well received, and was called a rare effort; the Critic's Place on PBS claimed that the public could not find a better way to celebrate the country's 200th birthday.

The life of the Parson of the Islands has not been confined to his neighborhood -- his fame has spread to all parts of our nation and others will continue to learn of the Parson and his mission.

This summer, the Smith Island Center will feature an extension of its History of Methodism exhibit. The addition will focus on the many ways in which the Parson's life has been celebrated down through the ages; it will also feature a collection of Joshua Thomas memorabilia. As Reverend Massey said, the memory of the just is blessed to generations following, and it is hoped that the people who come to visit the Island and the Center will go away with the feeling that they have experienced the legend of Joshua Thomas, the fisherman turned

preacher. And the legacy of the Parson of the Islands will live on.

Ed. Note: This article has been condensed. For a copy of the entire article, please send an SASE to Crisfield and Smith Island Cultural Alliance, P.O. Box 761, Crisfield, Maryland 21817.

### LINGUISTIC STUDY BEGINS ON SMITH ISLAND

One of the most unique aspects of the Smith Island culture is the colorful dialect. Island residents have long been known for their famous "backwards talk" but there are other elements of the dialect as well. For example, there are unique words like "proging" for "collecting arrowheads", unusual pronunciations, like "seind" for "sound" and distinctive sentence structures like "He's to the store" for "He's at the store."

Just as it is important to preserve other elements of Smith Island's cultural heritage, so is it important to understand and preserve its rich dialect heritage. Dr. Natalie Schilling-Estes, a professor of Linguistics at Georgetown University, has just launched a research project with this goal in mind. But she needs the help of islanders and former islanders to succeed.

Her study has two parts. First, she would like to record and study the dialect of islanders and former islanders of all ages, in order to get a full and accurate description of the unique language variety, including the historical origins of the dialect and changes that have taken place over the past couple generations. The tape-recordings will also provide a valuable record of the dialect for future generations. Second, Natalie wants to work with

islanders to develop other materials that will help preserve the island's dialect heritage, including a book on the dialect and materials to complement the existing dialect exhibit in the Smith Island Center.

If you are a current or former resident of Smith Island and would like to help Natalie with her project by participating in an interview or helping her in some other way, please contact her at 703-971-5419 or [nsestes@roughdraft.com](mailto:nsestes@roughdraft.com). You can also write to her at Department of Linguistics, Georgetown University, 480 Intercultural Center, Washington, DC20057-1051. Natalie will be making frequent visits to the Island and to the Eastern Shore throughout the next several months and would be happy to meet with you during one of those trips. The interview takes about an hour and is very informal - more like a casual conversation really - you can feel free to talk about anything you want. The names of all participants are kept strictly confidential.



Dr. Natalie Schilling-Estes (at right) and graduate student Lori Zimmerman listen to tapes in the "What Did You Say?" exhibit at the Center.

Natalie is a native of the Eastern Shore and grew up in Hebron, MD. She has a Ph.D in linguistics from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (1996). For the past six years, she has worked with residents of Ocracoke Island, NC to help document and preserve their dialect. She is the co-author (with **Walt Wolfram**, North Carolina State University) of *"Hoi Toide on the Outer Banks: The Story of the Ocracoke Brogue"* and helped produce the video documentary "The Ocracoke Brogue".

### ----- Donations/Memorials and Comments

From time to time, our members graciously include a donation with their annual dues - from \$5 to \$100 and a few even more. Each is personally acknowledged, truly needed and greatly appreciated!! Some are specified as memorials - in memory/honor of someone loved and/or admired - and we do try to acknowledge these in the newsletter as well.

In the past year, our records show memorial donations from:

**Mr. & Mrs. William N. Daniels** of Milford, DE in memory of **Donald W. Gerald**, **Joan Ashmead Gibbs** of Owego, NY in memory of her father **Lacy F. Ashmead** who was born May 2, 1897 in Crisfield, **Jody Marshall** of Tempe, AZ to honor her father, **Norris T. Marshall**, and **Mrs. Frances L. Middleton** of Annapolis, MD in memory of **Willie Middleton**.

If your memorial donation has not been acknowledged in the newsletter, please accept our

apologies for the oversight and let us know so we can correct it. And, we urge you to consider the possibility of honoring your special captain/waterman with an engraved brass placque on our 86-year old skipjack rudder in the Center - for details, write to us or call **John Somers** (410)651-2742 or **Midge Patterson** (410)651-2292.

And, your constructive comments are always welcome, especially those such as **Louise Gilman** sent along recently - *"...to help you with all the fine work you have been doing. I am very proud to be a member of this organization."*

Thanks a lot, Louise - we hope everyone is.

### ----- Thank You to Our Current Members

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# JOSHUA THOMAS

1776 - 1853



BORN POTATO NECK, SOMERSET COUNTY.  
NAMED "PARSON OF THE ISLANDS" BY  
BRITISH TROOPS AT TANGIER ISLAND.  
AS THEIR PASTOR PREDICTED THEIR  
DEFEAT AT BALTIMORE, 1814. SPREAD  
METHODISM ON TANGIER, DEAL, SAXIS  
AND SPRING ISLANDS. BURIED BESIDE  
THIS CHAPEL WHICH BEARS HIS NAME.

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MARYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

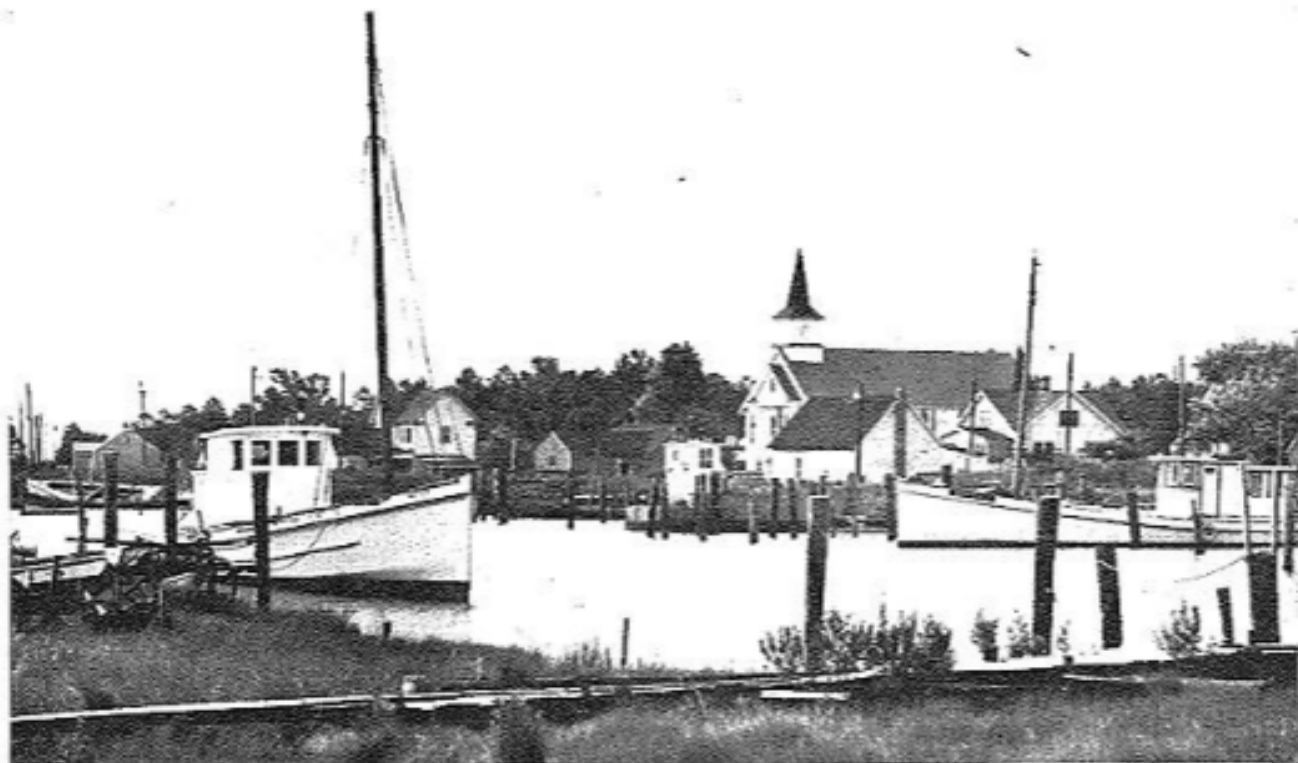
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THE BUTT'S

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## GOOD HOUSEKEEPING TRAVEL GUIDE



Smith Island, in Chesapeake Bay, settled over three hundred years ago, still retains the picturesque charm of its beginnings.

## MARYLAND'S UNSPOILED EASTERN SHORE

by Robert Deardoff

■ The modern bridges and superhighways, including the spectacular Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, that run to the Eastern Shore of Maryland are made for speed, but they lead to a land where speed is not important. Local folks race horses and boats, and once a year they even race crabs, but they see no point in racing themselves. One of the popular pastimes there is "sittin' loose" and relaxing.

In spite of its lack of clamor and commercialization, however, the Eastern Shore is filled with holiday pleasures—medieval jousting contests and modern sailboat regattas, spectacular gardens and untamed wildlife refuges, antique stores and contemporary art shops, up-to-date resorts and sleepy villages. For some three hundred years the area has been almost unnoticed by outsiders, its recreational riches a well-kept secret even from many residents. Only recently has the rest of the country begun to explore it.

Almost nobody on the Eastern Shore or anywhere else, however, has discovered Smith Island. Ten miles out in the bay, west of Crisfield, Smith has the unspoiled charm and picturesque remoteness of an island in the Mediterranean or the South Seas. Its 800 residents live in three tiny villages of neat white houses surrounded by flower

and vegetable gardens. Most of the streets are narrow lanes lined with hedges, rose bushes, hollyhocks and flowering shrubs. There are only a few cars, all recent acquisitions, and local folks view them with mixed feelings. In one of the villages—Tylerton—the main street is a canal, lined on one side with stores and homes, on the other with houses where crabs are raised. Fishing is the chief occupation of the residents.

At one end of Smith there is a good beach but, aside from loafing on it, swimming, and hitching rides on a fishing boat, there is nothing to do. That's enough for discerning visitors who can appreciate the Island's tranquil charm.

Until a few years ago the only way to get to Smith was to take the noon mail boat from Crisfield and stay overnight in a local resident's home. Many tourists still do that, but now every day from May 1 into October there is a cruise to Smith and nearby Tangier Island, another unspoiled holiday haven, which belongs to Virginia. Write for reservations to Captain Homer Windsor, Windsor's Seafood Kitchen, Crisfield, Md. His boat leaves Crisfield at 11:30 a.m., circles Tangier while the captain points out features of historic interest, then goes on to Smith Island,

where passengers go ashore, returning to Crisfield at 6:30 p.m. A round-trip ticket costs \$10, which includes a box lunch, soft drinks and a dinner or "crab feast" that night in Crisfield.

All over the Eastern Shore crabs are regularly featured on menus, but in Crisfield enterprising natives have found something else to do with them besides serve them. There every Labor Day weekend they stage a crab derby during which crabs from other states are raced against genuine, speedy Eastern Shore crabs. The contestants are placed on the pier, everybody in the crowd stomps his feet to create a racket, and the crabs run so fast to the finish line that a spectator who blinks his eyes may miss the entire event. There is a parade of pretty girls, however, which takes longer.

Besides being renowned for racing crabs, Crisfield is noted for its marina. There and in almost all the other resorts you can hire boats at moderate rentals. And everywhere on the Eastern Shore you can indulge in its famed food specialties—clams, oysters, striped bass, Delmarva chicken, and succulent soft-shell or blue crab.

Ocean City, built on a long strip of sand between the Atlantic Ocean and a narrow bay, provides a contrast to Smith Island. There the wide sand

## Chesapeake Islands Smith and Tangier

The islands are today as Capt. John Smith found them to be 350 years ago, "delightful" places to visit.

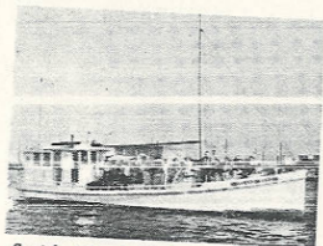
These islands, 11 and 14 miles in the bay from Crisfield are tranquil communities of people who are entirely dependent on the boat for their livelihood and supplies, remote in both location and way of life.

### Smith Island, Maryland

You are always welcome to Smith Island, Maryland. Smith Island, Maryland's "Right tight Little Island," lies almost due west from the port of Crisfield. It is one of the group charted by Bartholomew Gilbert in 1587. The chain was known as the Russell Isles, so named for the surgeon, Dr. Walter Russell, who served many expeditions of exploration to the New World.

The famous Captain John Smith named Smith Island for himself in 1608. His log says, "there was a myle or two of fresh water ponds; fish and fowl, and the kindness of the soil makes it a nice place to live." This is still true today.

Smith Island was first colonized in the year 1657 by dissenters from Lord Baltimore's Colony in St. Mary's County, Maryland's first colony. Smith Island citizens today are the direct descendants of these original settlers, gentlemen and indentured servants from England, Cornwall and the Netherlands.



Smith Island "School Bus Boat"

There are 650 persons living on three separate isles, each a compact, organized and modern settlement. Some of the best water supply on the Atlantic coast is to be had on Smith.

There are three towns on Smith; Rhodes Point, Tylerton and Ewell.

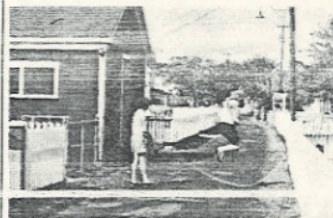
The largest is Ewell. The homes are pre-ranch era...clapboard bungalows or more spacious two and three story structures. But most all, whatever their size, have one thing in common, neatness. Siding is freshly painted, yards are clipped and most have flower gardens. The streets are narrow, barely wide enough to accommodate one car. At the end of its journey it must be parked in the owner's yard as driveways are rare in this almost carless community. From the number of them seen, the bicycle, and the motor bike seem, by far to be the most popular means of transportation.

island school through the eighth grade. Upperclassmen leave by boat early Monday morning for Crisfield, attend school and board there with relatives or friends, returning home for the weekend. (See Feb. 1972 Tidewater Times "Six O'Clock Scholars").

We understand the school houses the vertebrae of a whale, uncovered years ago when a channel was dredged near the island. Scientists could not determine its exact age but referred to it loosely as a "prehistoric whale." The school children have filled this gap and to them it is Uncle Beamis.

### Tangier, Virginia

About the year 1666 a Mr. West came from the mainland and bought the island for two overcoats, used it



Main street of Tangier, Virginia

for raising stock until 1686.

According to the historic marker on the lawn of the church, "The island was visited in 1608 by Capt. John Smith who gave it the name" and was "settled in 1686 by John Crockett and his sons' families." Crockett, Dize, Parks, Pruitt and

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*Sunday Times  
Jan. 13, 1934*

# The Glory Of Yesterday's Deal Island

By ORLANDO WOOTTEN  
Of The Times Staff

DEAL ISLAND — Fishermen along the beach at Deal Is and today sometimes stumble on the remains of a once - great old country hotel and a bustling country general store. Where only seagulls fly today, there was a pier a quarter of a mile long out into Tangier Sound. On one memorable Sunday five steamers and dozens of private boats docked here to unload an estimated 10,000 visitors for the Deal Island Camp Meeting, founded earlier by Joshua Thomas in 1828.

The Anderson Hotel could sleep up to 125 visitors, and in its famous dining room cabinet ministers and industrialists ate dinners that are still the talk of the island. Above the general store, Mrs. Anderson and her two assistants kept a millinery store, and presided at meal times over the dining room — she once fed 5,500 persons in one day of Camp Meeting.

"Fabulous" is the word to describe Mrs. Anderson and some of the great days of the steamboat days on the island. Tangier Sound was a veritable gold mine of seafood, a seemingly endless supply of crabs, fish and oysters that kept 400 boats busy year round.

Many people on the mainland of the Eastern Shore, even in those days, did not realize what a bustling center Deal Island was, for it was cut off from the mainland by a day's rough drive in a horse and wagon over a deep - mired, twisting one - lane road through the marsh from Princess Anne, through clouds of swarming mosquitos.

It became a world in itself, raising its own food on farms many of them now salt marsh — boasting of two tomato canneries at one time. It even had a Chautauqua season.

And of all the strong personalities on the island — and there were many—none would have been more dramatic or arresting than Mrs. Levin Albert Anderson II of the millinery shop and hotel. She first comes into history standing on the back of a galloping horse. Like some Kurdish princess, right out of the steppes of Afghanistan, she stood barefoot, holding the running horse only by its mane. A neighbor who saw her, a young man evidently half-smitten, told her son, "I guess she was just about the most beautiful sight I ever saw. Only 13 or 14, she had a strong, full, rounded figure, a lovely face; and as she came across that meadow, hair streaming behind her, horse galloping, it was something I never forgot."

THE FIRST Levin Anderson, her father - in - law, came over to Deal Island about 1850 from the western shore of Virginia to set up a general store, and soon to build the big Anderson Hotel. He also had a blacksmith shop and a shipyard, all these on the shore of Tangier Sound, just south of the present entrance into Deal Island (village) harbor. When little Levin came along, he went right into the store.

L. Albert Anderson III, now retired and living in Chance, said his family was 130 years in the store business on Deal Island. "Father never had much chance at schooling. He always said he went right into the store just as soon as he was big enough to see over the counter. He made it through the second grade, and that was it - work from then on."

The Andersons prospered. There were over 400 work boats on the sound then, all to be supplied and victualled, most of them big skipjacks or similar sailing work boats. "Father would order 25 50-pound cans of lard at a time, 50 barrels of flour, 35 barrels of paint, 100 coils of rope. He had a standing order from Baltimore every two weeks for 2,000 pounds of fat back, 2,000 pounds of sugar and fish. He bought 500 cords of wood at a time for his wood yard. We also had a livery stable, and one of my jobs was to curry the horses and feed and bed them down."

The store carried such varied articles as groceries, dry goods, hardware, meats, confectionery, boots, shoes, drugs, patent medicines, suits, boat supplies, cutlery, dishes, guns, shells, paint, wood, coal, clothing, raincoats, traps. And above the store was that great millinery shop, where Mrs. Anderson and her two assistants, Fanny Porter and Betty Collins, made 100 big flowered bonnets a week — sold for \$25 and \$30, they did, as fast as the three could make them.

The hotel had been enlarged in 1890, and finally slept 125 guests, three double beds to each of 14 rooms, and two annexes with 30-bed dormitories. Mrs. Anderson, the former May Goslee, married Levin II in 1892. She weighed then 125 pounds but later was to become quite heavy through the unrestrained love of her own cooking.

"Mother was a real driver," Mr. Anderson remembers. "She was ambitious, a real organizer, had a great memory and sharp mind, and loved to boss the whole world. I have seen her carry on four or five things at a time — give orders to the cook, dress me down, write orders for the wholesalers in Baltimore, talk on the telephone, and never miss a word or make a mistake."

"Father stayed pretty much in the store, and carried on a



DEAL ISLAND CAPTAINS. These Deal Island watermen of 50 years ago were identified by L. Albert Anderson III, son of Capt. Anderson. First row, from left to right: Perry Walter, John Wess Webster, Levin Albert Anderson II (Anderson hotel and store proprietor) in his Prince Albert coat, Will Harvey

Webster, John Bennett (beard) Will Tankersley, Elmer Kelley, Eddie Collier, Johnny Ford, Adolphus Brown. Second Row are Jack Tankersley, George Buddy Gibson, Tom Kelley, unidentified, Sammy Allen, unidentified, Tom Pety Webster, and Will Shores (standing with the derby).



Mrs. May Goslee Anderson

seafood business, too. He used to ship 500 boxes of soft crabs a week, 25 and 30 dozen to a box. He gave the land for the pier for the Baltimore, Chesapeake and Atlantic steamboats, in 1878, and was the first agent for the line.

"Things really boomed when the steamships came. Farmers had an outlet for their produce; now businessmen would get supplies regularly; seafood poured out of here like water. There was never a thought on conservation — they thought it would never end, that there would always be just as many crabs and oysters in Tangier Sound that there would be men to catch them."

WITH THIS flooding of the market, and with the coming of the depression of 1929, prices fell next to nothing. Mr. Anderson remembers soft crabs at 15 cents a dozen, and oysters 15 and 25 cents a bushel. "They had to be real fat ones to get 25 cents a bushel," he said.

Before this, and during the depression, Mrs. Anderson turned her never - failing energy into the hotel and into tourist business, to attract sport fishermen in summer, and duck hunters in the winter months. "We really crammed them in," Mr. Anderson said. "There were only about two months in the year when we didn't do well."

Mr. Anderson laughed about that one great day when his mother fed 5,500 people in one day. "It was camp meeting time, and people came from all over the bay. The boys used to build smudge fires on the grounds to keep mosquitoes down—they would throw resin into the fires and we had no trouble. That Sunday five big steamers put in at the dock for excursions, and mother had set up a table about 100 feet long on the camp grounds. There were 10,000 visiting people here that day. Can you imagine 10,000 people in Deal Island?"

Mrs. Anderson's table soon attracted many famous persons and sportsmen. There was Secretary of the Navy Baker, General Rickenbacker, Commodore Link Dryden of the Coast Guard. Sec. Baker used to call up for his favorite meal, diamondback terrapin, soft crabs and baked chicken with baby eggs in it. He'd then go fishing, and take Mr. Anderson and the boy out with him, stay until three in the morning, and they were back up again in the store and hotel at 4 a.m.

"That hotel burned 50 cords of wood and 30 tons of coal a winter. I had the job of feeding all the seven stoves in it. First we had only 'facilities' out in the back — and really needed them for that crowd. Then one visitor gave us a bathroom.

"Yes sir, he gave us a bathroom. It was Mr. John L. Kuser of New Jersey. I guess he couldn't stand the outside, so he bought all the fixtures and pipe, and had a bathroom built up on the second floor. He then just gave it to Ma for the hotel. Of course we still needed the 'outsides.'"



HISTORIC HOTEL. This is the Anderson Hotel and general store, destroyed later in

the 1933 hurricane. Capt. Anderson later built another store to make more room in the hotel, which, with annexes, could sleep 125 guests.



FIRST AUTOMOBILE. This two-cylinder Cadillac was brought to the island by steamer, to be its first automobile. In the front seat are Harry Davis, driver, of the W. A. Davis

tobacco firm, and passenger Will Brown. In the back seat are Will Collier and Capt. Lee Collier. The car was cranked at the side, and carried outside picnic baskets



STEAMBOAT PIER. This quarter-of-a-mile long pier, built on land given by Capt. Anderson, served Deal Island for 55 years in its

bustling age of steamboats, many from the Baltimore, Chesapeake and Atlantic Railroad line.

Meals were ordinarily 50 cents, family style, all you could eat. One Salisbury gourmet, father of the present Quinton Johnson, once ate 28 soft crabs at a sitting.

"Mother had things organized in a way you just won't believe. We never kept fried chicken cut up ahead. When the dining room got an order, we killed that chicken fresh, and had the dinner started for the table in 20 minutes. You've heard of people saying, well, 'they must have gone out to kill the chicken for my dinner'—she did it in 20 minutes. I swear it.

"We kept the chickens in a fattening coop, on wire for cleanliness sake, for them to cleanse themselves, good, plump young fryers. When the order came in, there were about five people in that kitchen that jumped. One wrung the neck of the chicken, another dipped it in the hot scalding water and stripped off the feathers. We cut up the

breast and legs, threw the rest away. The pan had been kept hot on the stove all the time, the vegetables were cooked beforehand — well sir, we had that meal moving to that customer in 20 minutes. I'll swear to it."

Mrs. Anderson was later to close the millinery shop, and devote her great energies to developing the tourist and sportsmen's business for the hotel. She organized fishing parties, and rented extra boats around the island when they did not have enough of their own. "One day we had 30 fishing parties out on the Sound, the best we ever did."

With the depression came the hard times. It was a time of mental depression, as well as financial, when nothing seemed to work. Perhaps a fitting end came to the Anderson Hotel, now an aging structure, with the great hurricane of 1933, the storm that cut the inlet in Ocean City. It swept way the steam-

boat pier — shipping there had stopped before this — and undercut and wrecked the hotel, which was abandoned.

The Andersons lived in a comfortable home in Chance, where fishing parties were still put up. The home became a center for the musical and intellectual life of the area.

Mrs. Anderson was organist in St. John's Methodist Church for 25 years. At her home roomed many of the physicians and dentists that practiced on Deal Island, and many school teachers. Miss Elizabeth Anderson, principal at the school, moved there, and two other teachers, a Miss Sexton and Miss Goslee. Mrs. Anderson was instrumental in bringing Chautauqua lectures to the island for a season or two.

Mrs. Anderson died in 1932, quietly in her sleep. "We had all been having a nice evening, singing around the piano that (See ISLAND, Page C-4)