

The Slate

Friends of the One Room School House, Inc.,
Post Office Box 431, Port Republic, MD 20676-0431 • August 2007

Video About School Will Premiere Oct. 25

"The One-Room School House Still Teaches"

With the passage of time, the Board has always been sensitive to the fact that we were losing the institutional memory of early public education in Calvert County. Starting with an oral history project in the 1990s, we expanded the program to include video footage of county residents who either taught or attended a one-room school. This audio/video material has been archived with members of the Board as we've worked through the project.

In October of 2005, with the financial help from the MarPat Foundation, in conjunction with the Vestibule project, we secured the funding required to complete a finished document for public use. By capturing the oral history as well as a reenactment of a day in a one-room school house, the video becomes a vital teaching tool for our 4th grade program as well as an introduction to the facility to the casual visitor. With the placement of a video screen on a shelf in the vestibule, anyone coming into the building will gain a sense of early education in the county. This project has been generously funded by the MarPat Foundation and will be available for public viewing in late October.

With the assistance of Mark Greenlees of Britannia Productions and the work of Chloe Ewalt, Carol Khalili



All of our re-enactors smile for a group photo.

and Mary Ellen Romney, a working script was produced and Mark filmed reenactment footage around the oral histories provided by several participants who attended one-room school houses in the area. Shot in both black and white as well as color, the 15-minute production, titled "*The One-Room School House Still Teaches*," is a wonderful video experience.

Video Premier Will Be Oct. 25 at "Linden"

With the support of the Calvert Historical Society, the unveiling of the completed video will take place on Thursday afternoon, October 25 at "Linden" on Church Street in Prince Frederick. Please mark the date on your calendar. An invitation will be coming in the mail in mid-September.



Sandy Roberts cools off at 2006's ice cream social.

Ice Cream Social Set for September 6

After several years of hosting our annual ice cream social in late August, the Board decided to move the event to early September in an effort to find cooler weather. For those of you who have regularly attended this event, it is without fail that we seem to encounter incredibly hot weather during the third week in August. This past year we also noted a decline in attendance which we felt was due to the excessive heat that evening. We are dependent upon daylight for the event, so we can't move it too far into the fall; so we're going to try this early September date as an alternative.

With the new date, we are almost a "Back to School" evening activity, in spite of the fact that we don't have students during the day. We will start serving the ice cream at 6 P.M., the Calvert Dance Band will start the music at 6:30, and we will continue with the festivities until 8 P.M. It's after Labor Day, so plan on coming out for dessert that evening. We look forward to seeing you!

Remembering Regina Brown

A Tribute by Elaine Dunkle

In her own words, Regina Brown wrote in the Maryland Bicentennial book, "Our Legacy" (1976), about her teaching experience in a one-room school house:

"I was principal, teacher, secretary, custodian and trouble-shooter....Each morning as I took my walk to school, I was joined by children as I passed their homes. We walked along together, the group getting larger as we approached the school house. I knew my students personally and was acquainted with their families and home lives.

"The teaching methods we used were later called 'individualization' and 'team teaching.' My team was made up of three seventh grade girls."

Technology can never take the place of such personal relationships as were established in those "olden days." Regina can be honored for exemplifying the best of those times and we are proud to have known her.

She was a member of the One-Room School Committee that restored Port Republic School #7 in 1976 and seldom missed a meeting afterwards. On hot

summer days she and her sister faithfully took their turn on a Sunday Open House. We shall miss her.

Regina Brown passed away on July 19, 2007, at the age of 97. A native of Philadelphia, Ms. Brown's first appointment to the Calvert County Schools was to the Wallville Elementary School in 1931. Prior to the desegregation of the county's public schools in the mid-60s, the Wallville School was the educational home for black students of the Port Republic area, grades 1-7.

With the end of segregation, Regina became an elementary school principal, finally retiring in 1973. She lived in Owings and remained active with many educational projects including the restoration of Port Republic School #7 and the relocation and restoration of the Wallville School which was completed just before her death.



Regina Brown



Sneade's Ace Home Center Continues Support

A special thanks to David Sneade at Sneade's Ace Home Center of Owings and Lusby for the timely donation of a new dehumidifier to the school house. Long a corporate supporter of our program, Dave was quick to respond to our request to replace our old unit when it quit operating at the beginning of the summer.

As anyone who has spent any time in Southern Maryland knows, we must reduce the moisture levels in the building to a reasonable level in order to protect the collections and furniture. This contribution will continue to give for many years to come. Thanks again, Dave, for your generous gift.

Richard Dodds Joins Friends' Board

Richard Dodds, the Curator of Maritime History at the Calvert Marine Museum, has agreed to join the Board of Directors of the Friends of the One-Room School House, beginning in September. Richard has been with the museum since 1991. He has been instrumental in organizing and managing the extensive collection of maritime artifacts as well as the various

programs and facilities that make the collection available to the public.

Richard and his family live in Port Republic where he is also a member of the Vestry of Christ Church. With his extensive background in museum and collections management, we all look forward to Richard's involvement with our museum and our programs.

Wallville School Receives a New Mission

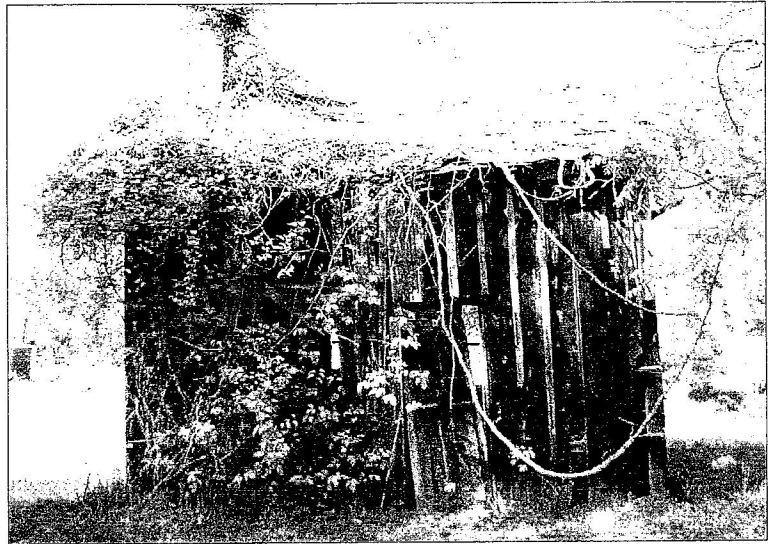
Our congratulations go out to Harry Wedewer and the members of the Wallville School Committee on the successful relocation of the old one room school house that served the African-American community in Wallville.

Located on private property on Lloyd Bowen Road, the building had fallen into disrepair and was offered by the Gray family to the organization under the condition that it be relocated to public property. Working with the Calvert County Board of Education and with the support of a legislative bond bill, the Friends began in earnest in 2004 to establish a learning laboratory on school property that would benefit students and the general public as well.

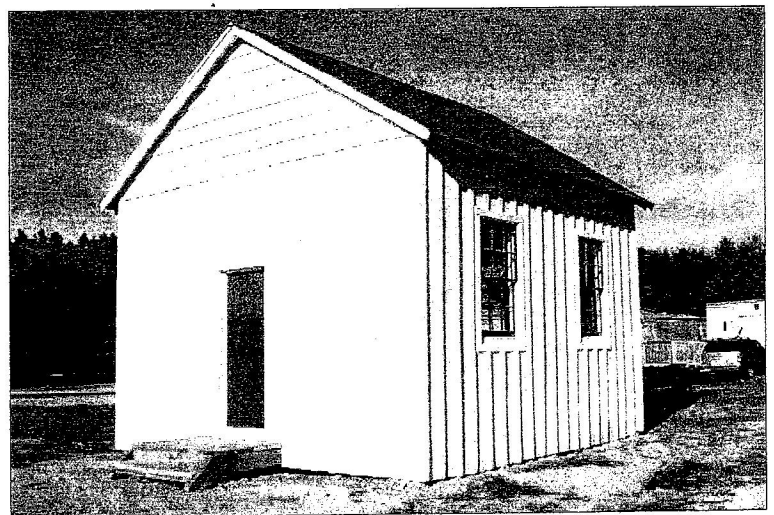
The story is easily told from the two photos that document the condition of the building in the late 1990s and the newly stabilized and reconstructed building that now is relocated to Dares Beach Road.

Future plans call for the completion of the interior, the addition of landscaping and installation of interpretive signage.

This story has added relevance to this edition of our newsletter as this was the school where Regina Brown started her long career in the public schools of Calvert County.



Late 1990s: Wallville one-room school house in disrepair.



2007: The Wallville School—stabilized, reconstructed, relocated—ready for a new mission.

Students' "Penny Drive" Benefits One Room School House in Port Republic



To ensure a meaningful field trip experience as well as learn the importance of protecting local historical sites, 4th grade students participated in planning and implementing a "penny drive" to raise funds for the preservation efforts for the One-Room School House. This was the first year students participated in the service learning opportunity and they were happy to present a donation of \$2,115.80.

LEFT: Leanne Meisinger, Supervisor of Social Studies at the Elementary School level, presented the check for funds raised in the penny drive to Robert Pfeiffer and Carol Khalili. Also pictured are Calvert County Public Schools representatives Laveeta Hutchins and Mark Wilding, and Sunderland Elementary School representatives, Beth Herrin and Patricia Ariemma.

**Friends of the One Room
School House, Inc.**

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*(Newsletter layout and design by
Frances Dunkle Poling)*

Just My Perspective...

Robert Pfeiffer, President, Friends of the One Room School House, Inc.

As this newsletter was being assembled, it didn't take long for me to realize that this issue is not only a synopsis of the activities that have been going on around Port Republic School #7, but it also marks the effects of time and distance on all of us.

Our video entitled "*The One-Room School House Still Teaches*" will be premiered in October. (See front page story.) It is a collaborative effort of both our oral history and a video project that spans several years. As I was watching some of the early edits of this wonderful story of one-room school house education in Calvert County, I couldn't help but notice how many of the featured oral speakers are no longer with us. It is also sad that, within the past month, we lost Regina Brown—one of the last of our members who taught in a one-room school house in Calvert County.

As we distance ourselves from the ring of the hand bell that marked the days for early public education in all of Maryland, we must not forget that many of those early teaching techniques are still with us today. In short, "*the one-room school house still teaches.*"

Not wanting you to believe that this newsletter is about depressing, sad news, I think you'll also be surprised and pleased that we've been doing and planning a lot of fun activities that keep all of us energized. By the end of your reading, I know you'll discover at least two activities where you can join us. Our hope is that you will join us in the coming year.

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