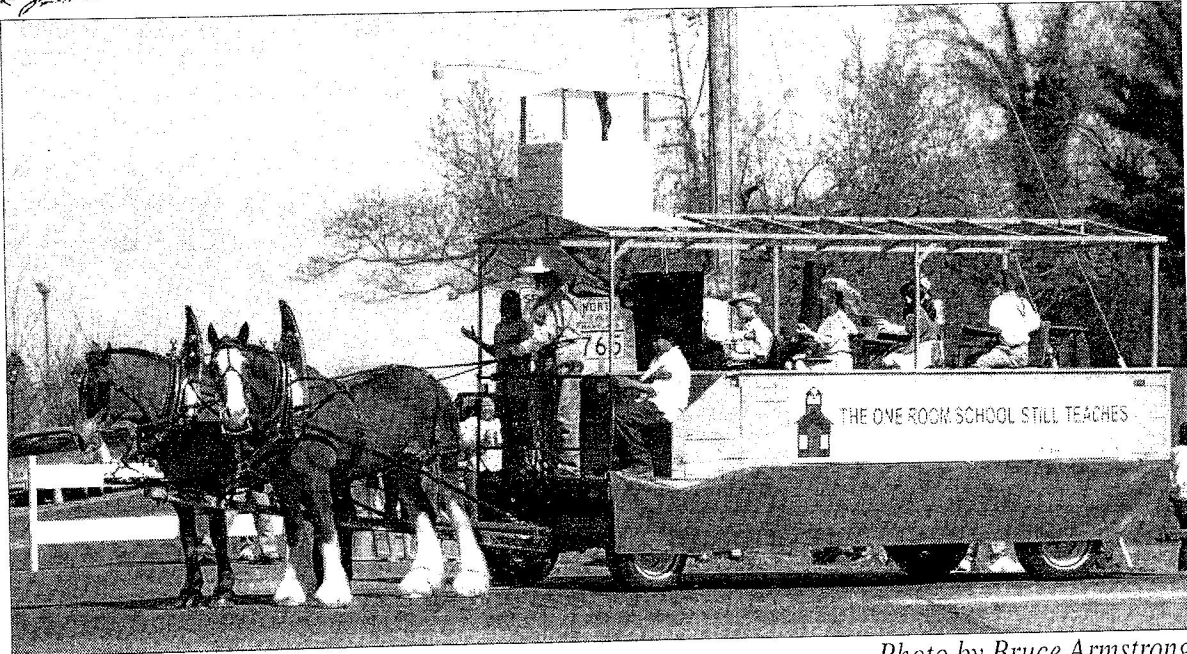


# The Slate

Friends of the One Room School House, Inc.,  
Post Office Box 431, Port Republic, MD 20676-0431 • January 2005



*Photo by Bruce Armstrong*

## Our Float in the Parade Celebrating Calvert County's 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

The year 2004 marked the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of Calvert County by the King of England. To plan for the year's events, the Calvert County Office of Tourism and Economic Development organized a committee in late 2003 that developed activities for the entire year, starting with the first county commissioner's meeting in January of 2004. During that meeting, the Commissioners, dressed in period costumes, read a proclamation declaring the year 2004 the Year of the 350<sup>th</sup> Celebration of the founding of Calvert County. Activities were held throughout the county—ranging from monthly lectures hosted by the County Library to specific celebratory events.

During this 350<sup>th</sup> year, one of the two major events hosted by the event planning committee was the 350<sup>th</sup> Parade in April. The Friends put together a float that represented the activities in a one room school house. Adopting the slogan, *The One Room*

*School Still Teaches*, the float was conceived and designed by a committee under the direction of our Vice President, Chloe Ewalt. Chloe was able to secure the services of Everard Johnson and his team of horses from Island Creek and arranged for an in-kind donation of a wagon from Gail and Bill Hatfield of HF Pony Parties in Huntingtown.

Working with the wagon as the foundation, Chloe and her committee outfitted the wagon with the trappings of a one room school house. In the accompanying photo you will see a group of students seated at desks that were removed from the building for the Parade. The students are facing their teacher, who looks a lot like Chloe, and reciting from lessons on a blackboard. Also in the space was a replica of the potbellied stove that is so prominent when you walk into our building. To add the finishing touches, there

*(See Parade, cont. on page 2)*



## From the Podium

*Robert Pfeiffer, President*

By the time that you receive this newsletter, the Holiday season will be behind you and we will be in the midst of planning for a new year. Throughout the past year, we have had good intentions to sit down and put together a newsletter for all our friends, but as a small organization without staff, our time was taken up by specific activities. As you read further, you will see what activities required our attention throughout what was a very busy 2004.

I will make it my New Year's resolution to do a better job of keeping in touch with you, our supporters and friends. To all of you, Happy New Year!

## John Wahl Jr.'s Eagle Scout Project to Benefit School

Following the damage caused by Hurricane Isabel to lots of the trees in Southern Maryland, the grounds of the schoolhouse suffered damage comparable to that of our neighbors. This included downed trees and several washed out stretches of our trail network. Ken Romney, Paul Blayney, and other volunteers from the American Chestnut Land Trust were instrumental in getting us back to where we could utilize the trails for our program, but we needed to address several rotted bridges as well as steep slopes along the route.

Working with Walter Gott and the appropriate Scout leadership, John Wahl, Jr. submitted a plan for an Eagle Scout project that would rebuild the bridges and work to correct many of the other trail problems. Thanks to the generous donation of building materials and supplies from *84 Lumber* and *Dunkirk Supply*, we wish John the best of luck with his project and look forward to an overdue upgrade to our trail network.

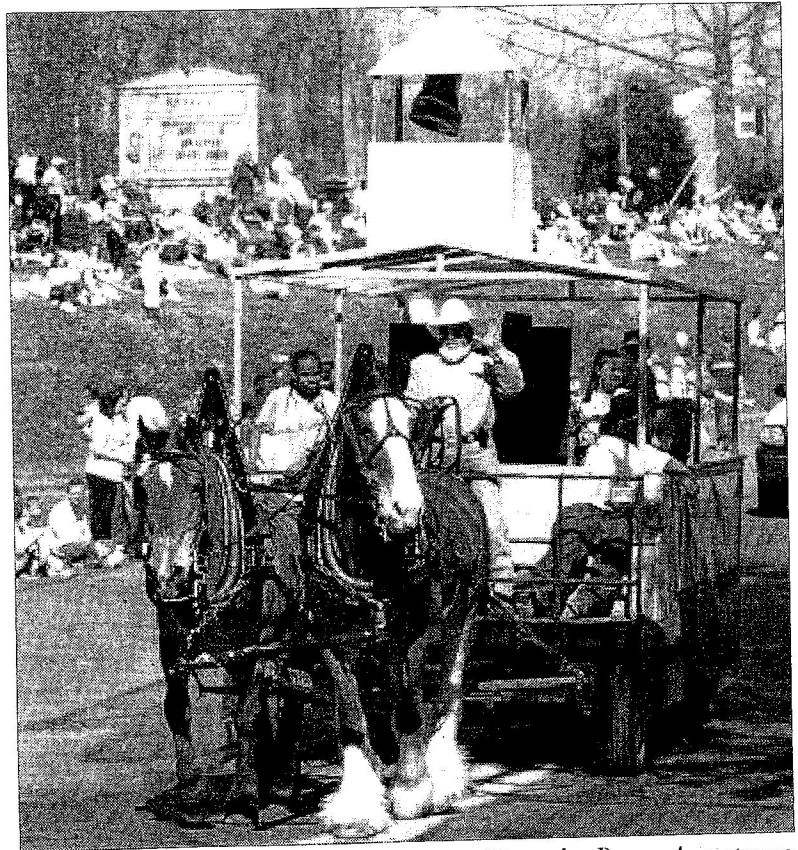
### *Parade, cont. from page 1*

is a belfry attached to the top of the front of the "roof" which is clearly visible behind wagon-driver Everard Johnson (*see, photo at right*).

On the morning of April 17, 2004, the Parade participants assembled at the old Fair Grounds off Armory Road and marched to Main Street in Prince Frederick. Bob Pfeiffer and Fran Armstrong accompanied the float on foot and handed out pencils to the many bystanders who had gathered along the route.

It was truly a wonderful day with wonderful weather adding the finishing touch!

*The float travelling down Main Street toward the middle of Prince Frederick.*



*Photo by Bruce Armstrong*

# Repairs Made to Northeast Entry Wall

During the fall 2004 education program, Walter and Joan Gott reported that the wall above the door was showing signs of peeling. Upon further investigation, Walter determined that the siding on the wall was actually rotting. While portions of the wall were replaced during the restoration in 1976, much of the siding, as well as the trim, were from the original construction in the late 1800s. It was decided that repair work would have to be postponed until the completion of the education program in early October.

During its October meeting, the Board of Directors decided to seek the services of a mill to produce pine siding to match the original and requested that the mill produce enough of the siding for the planned vestibule. Smoot Lumber Company of Alexandria Virginia produced the siding from samples provided from the wall and the materials were delivered the week before Thanksgiving.

On Monday, December 13, several volunteers met at the school house and started the demolition process in an effort to determine the extent of the damage from the rot. In spite of a passing cold front that brought rain for about an hour, all of the rotted lumber was removed and the building closed back in from the weather by the end of the day. Work resumed on the following, Saturday—one week before Christmas. By the end of that day, the building was secured—with the siding ready to paint in the spring and only the soffit and fascia to replace before the start of the spring education program.

We would like to thank the following volunteers for their efforts throughout the two days of construction. Some of these folks actually appear in the accompanying photographs, but we need to



recognize Arnie Petty, Skip Ford, Bart Ewalt, Bob Bibb, Dave Thomas, Mike Khalili, Bob Pfeiffer, and Ken Romney. These guys in turn would like to thank Carol Khalili for the hot lunch on Monday the 13<sup>th</sup> and Chloe Ewalt for the awesome cookies that same day. Port Republic School Number 7 would not be in existence were it not for all of the volunteer hours that make things happen.

# Our Education Outreach Program

## Recollections of Former Students Point the Way

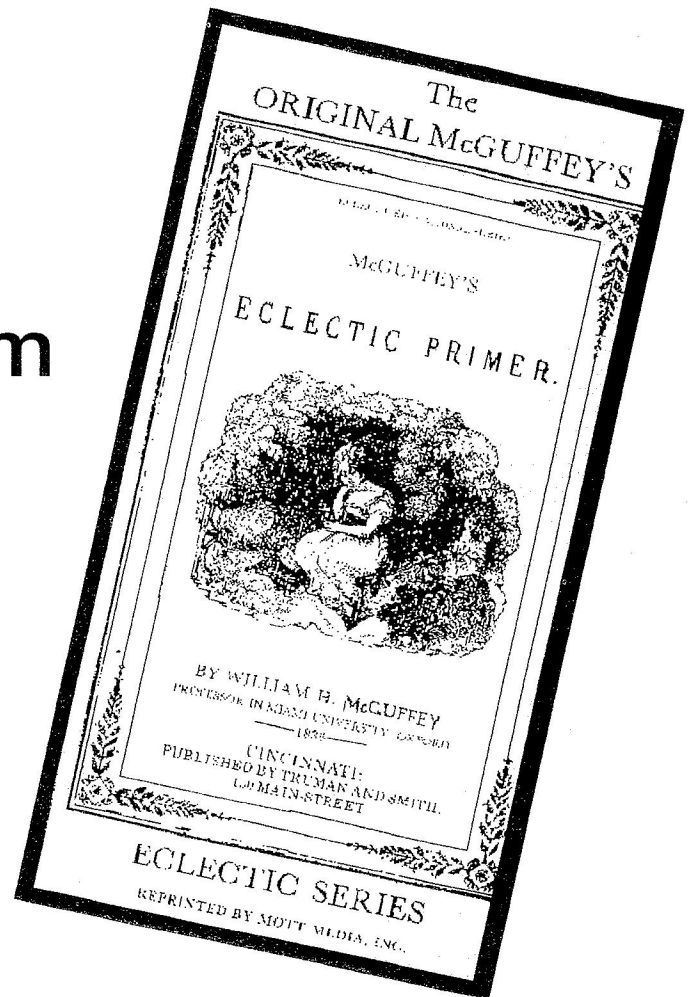
The late Ann Whisman was the editor of *Chesapeake Country Life*, a local magazine that was published in Port Republic in the early 1980s. In an interview with Ollie Bowen, published in December 1981, she was able to get Mr. Bowen to reminisce about life growing up in Port Republic at the turn of the century. Ollie remembered attending the One Room School House in Port Republic and even remembered that his first teacher was a Miss Marian Ross. What is also fascinating is his recounting of some of the games that students played during recess. Although Calvert County was very rural at the time, Mr. Bowen explains the rules for "Bug in the Gully." Bear in mind that we are talking about what is now Broomes Island Road.

"...one group lines up on one side of the road, while another stayed opposite them on the other side. The idea was to catch players as they ran across the road in an attempt to steer clear of their opponents." For today's traveler, the thought of students running across Broomes Island Road without supervision is frightening. For today's student in our program this is one activity that we don't try to re-create.

## County Fourth Graders Receive a "One Room School" Experience

We have entered into an agreement with the Calvert County Board of Education Elementary Education program and now provide a Living History experience for every 4<sup>th</sup> grade student in the public schools. With the building lacking heat, our volunteer-driven program utilizes the warm days of spring and the waning warm days of fall to conduct the program.

While the students today don't play "Bug in the Gully" in Broomes Island Road, they "walk to



school" on our Seven Bridges Trail, have a series of lessons in the building and then enjoy a picnic lunch outside. To replace the games of the past, students learn how to conduct a gravestone rubbing in the Christ Church cemetery and also learn some examples of the early folk dances of the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

## CRTA Leads Education Program

The education program is an activity conducted by the Calvert County Retired Teachers Association (CRTA) under the direction of Joan Gott with help from Regina Supanik and a lot of unheralded volunteers. Over time, they have arrived at a set of educational activities that lend themselves to a classroom without computers, lots of natural light, but no heat or electric lighting. Students work at the period desks and read from McGuffey readers just like those before them. At the end of the day, they have a greater appreciation of early education and lots of stories to tell their parents over dinner.

# Southern MD Heritage Area Grant Awarded

In late September, we submitted a grant application to the Southern Maryland Heritage Area to support the development of a new brochure that would not only tell the story of our One Room School House but would also allow us to incorporate some of the historic photographs from our collection.

In mid-October we received confirmation of the grant award and went about the task of setting up a work-group to review our vast collection of photographs and begin the task of writing text to wrap around the photos. Elaine Dunkle has maintained a

photographic file since the restoration efforts in 1976, and she will work with the committee so that we can have a finished product in time for the spring. During the spring, not only will our educational program be back in full swing, but also we hope to be a stop on the Annual Calvert County Garden tour, which would offer an excellent opportunity to tell our story.

We will be working with Marlborough Publishing of Prince Frederick to generate an attractive brochure that we hope will serve us well for many years to come.

## College of Southern Maryland Supports Education Program

### CSM Students Provide Aid

We have just completed our second year of working with the College of Southern Maryland (CSM). Debbie Wyeville of the CSM staff has served as our contact; and, working with Joan Gott, she has helped energize 15 students from the college Future Teachers group to direct their community service hours toward the One Room School House. Throughout the academic year, they work as teachers' assistants and also serve as trail guides while students are on the grounds.

In addition to some of the "fun" teacher activities, these students have also updated and revised the activity packets utilized by the 4<sup>th</sup> grade students during their day in the school. When rain prohibits access to the Seven Bridges Trail, these students have also produced 12 exhibit boards with a collection of pictures that allows the student to walk "vicariously" to school. We certainly thank Debbie Wyeville and the students of CSM for all of their help, and we certainly hope that we will continue to benefit from their energy in the coming year.

## Yes! I Want To Help "The Friends"

**MEMBERSHIP** includes a newsletter plus information on activities with updates on coming events.

Make checks payable to *Friends of the One Room School House, Inc.* and mail to Post Office Box 431, Port Republic, MD 20676-0431.

Individual or Family \$20.00       Benefactor \$50.00       Sustaining \$100.00

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**President .....** Robert Pfeiffer

**Vice President ..** Chloe Ewalt

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Phillip Fleming

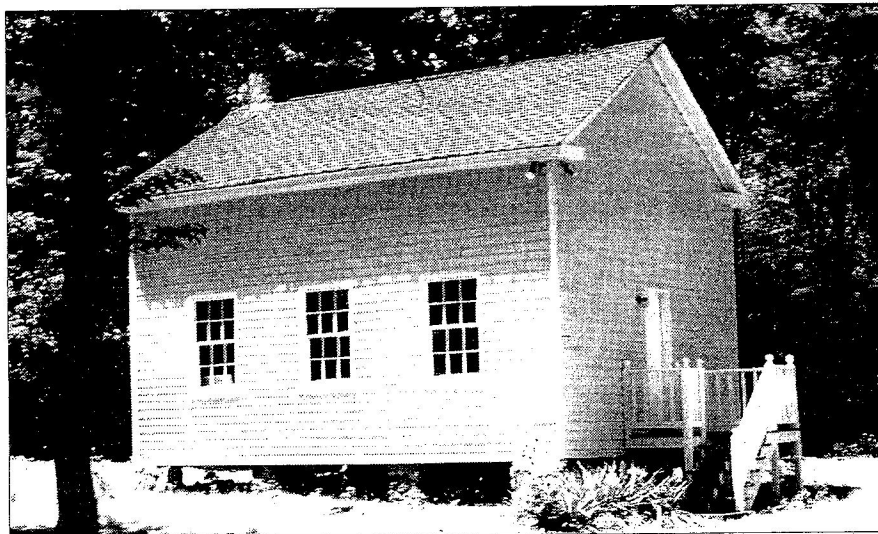
Walter Gott, Jr.

Carol Khalili

Mary Ellen Romney

Joseph Showalter

*(Newsletter printing generously donated  
by International Graphics, Beltsville, MD.  
Layout and design by Frances Dunkle Poling.)*



## The Beginnings...

As a Bicentennial Project in 1976-77, the Calvert Retired Teachers Association restored the Port Republic One Room School House on the grounds of Christ Church. It is often open to the public and is the site of many workshops for students to experience how their ancestors attended school. Elaine Cochran Dunkle shepherded the project from concept to completion and has continued to provide support and guidance for 30 years. She will celebrate her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in May 2005.

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