



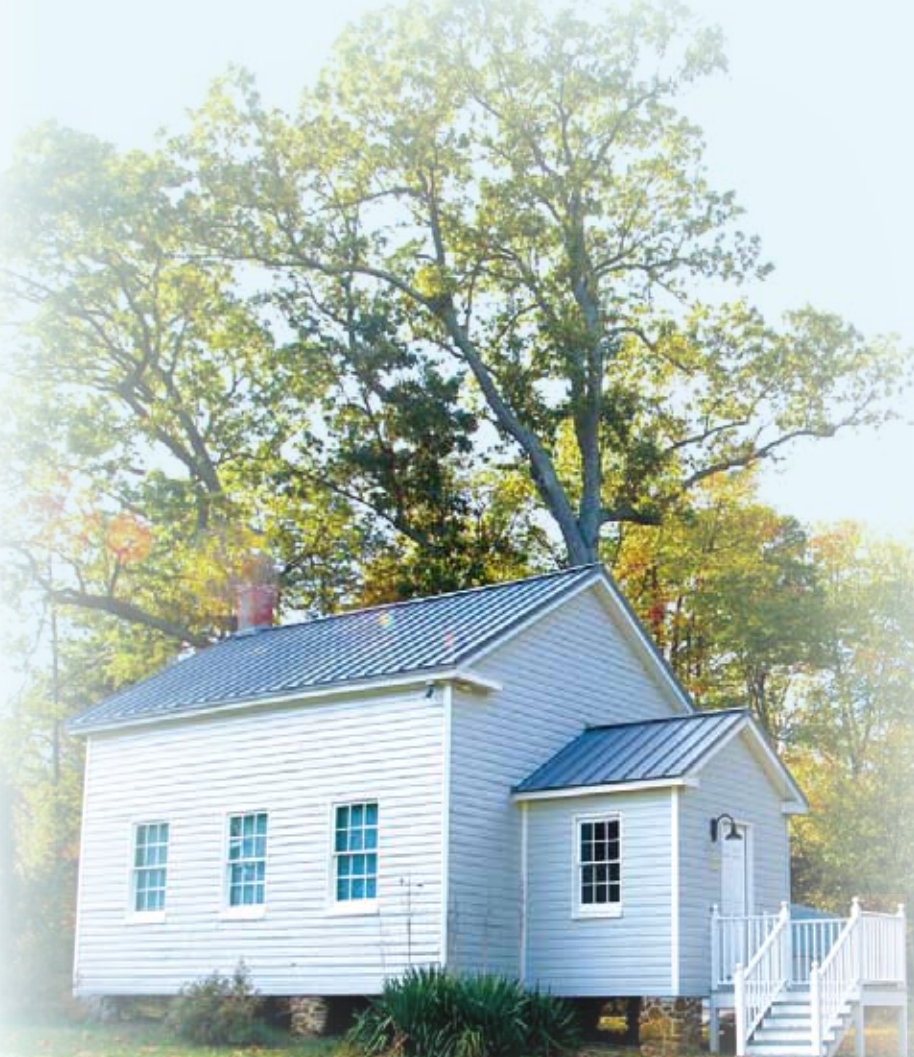
The Slate

Spring 2016 Edition

Friends of the One-Room Schoolhouse, Inc.

P. O. Box 431, Port Republic, MD 20676-0431 • www.calvertoneroomschool.org

Drawing by Sandy Roberts, 2006



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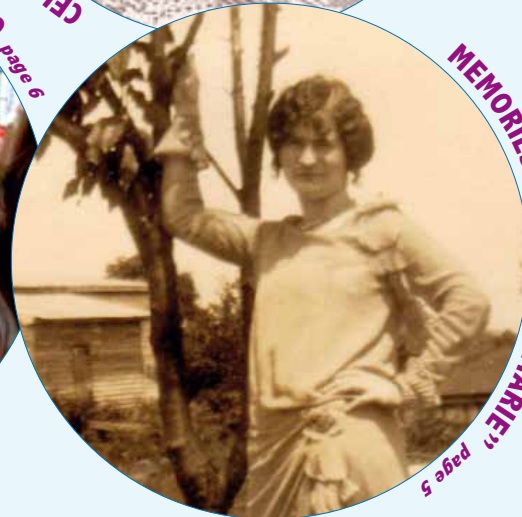
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Ice Cream Social Was August 11

by Barbara Fringer

As annual traditions go, the 2015 summer Ice Cream Social at Port Republic School #7 scored a 10... under less than ideal conditions on Tuesday evening, August 11, 2015.

Mother Nature teased with sun all day. Then, around 5-ish, the skies threatened, became dark and gray, pulsing lightning. There was a thought to send out a “cancelled” memo—so uncertain was the next moment.

Even in the midst of unsettled weather conditions, the Calvert Dance Band appeared to set up IN the Parish Hall at Christ Church, preparing to

fill the air with tunes familiar to those who would soon be arriving to listen. Setting up indoors allowed for the possibility of rain.

And listeners there were! Folks came not only for generous servings of Mrs. Moo’s ice cream and delicious home-baked cookies but also for the opportunity to chat with friends and neighbors while tapping their toes to the music that seemed to chase away a pending rainfall.

The ice cream van pulled up to the edge of the portico where chairs were assembled for attendees to relax in the outdoors. Others chose

to enjoy their dessert inside the Parish Hall.

Well beyond the appointed timeframe, the dance band tunes filled the air as those in attendance took full advantage of a few more cookies and a chance to be together with rhythms in the background.

Shortly after the last instrument was packed up and put away, the rain did follow some of the participants on their way home. But, it had in no way interrupted our annual ice cream occasion.



“Calvert You Are Beautiful”

by Fran Armstrong; photo by Heather Skyrn



Russell Costley, Pam Mackall, Fran Armstrong, Casey Duehrssen, and Dotty Greene

The One-Room Schoolhouse Committee was nominated for “Calvert You Are Beautiful” Award.

On September 22, 2015, five committee members attended the program where we were presented with a framed ‘Award of Gratitude’ from our County Commissioners. This is the profile that was submitted with the application.

Port Republic School #7 restoration project was the brain child of a group of retired teachers in the 1970s. Through their stalwart actions, the once abandoned one-room schoolhouse located on Broomes Island Road in Port Republic was brought back to life. Their outreach program has evolved over the years. Today, all fourth graders in the public and

private schools of Calvert County come for a day to step back in time and actually experience how our one-room schools operated over one hundred years ago.

But we all know that in order for a visionary’s dreams to flourish, another generation of volunteers have to commit to preserving the program and all that it entails. This is where my committee members’ dedication comes into play.

We are a committee that comes under the umbrella of CRSPA, Calvert Retired School Personnel Association, and through our work, it has been possible to continue this highly regarded program. This program also includes a 1.3-

mile hike to school. It takes four volunteers per day to keep the program running smoothly and many of our committee members take on these responsibilities as well.

The volunteers that serve on this committee develop and implement the many aspects of the program. They are: Fran Armstrong, chair, Russell Costley, Casey Duehrssen, Barbara Fringer, Dotty Greene, Carol Khalili, Pamela Mackall, and Fritzie Zidow. We wear many hats and our responsibilities are numerous. The program couldn’t operate without this dedicated committee.

Come Join Us

PLEASE CONTINUE YOUR SUPPORT WITH YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN THE FRIENDS OF THE ONE ROOM SCHOOL HOUSE, INC.

The Friends of the One Room School House, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization formed to establish a partnership between the Calvert Retired School Personnel Association and others who are interested in preserving Port Republic School #7.

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

Make your *tax deductible* check payable to “Friends of the One Room School House, Inc.” and mail to Post Office Box 431, Port Republic MD 20676-0431

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|---|----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual or Family \$20.00 | Name(s) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor \$50.00 | Address _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining \$100.00 | City _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Contribution \$ _____ | State _____ Zip Code _____ |

2015 Celebration Luncheon Was May 28

by Carol Khalilli and Fran Armstrong

May 27, 2015 the Christ Church Parish Hall was alive with sparkling eyes and the hum of good conversation. Volunteers and supporters of the Education Program of the One-Room Schoolhouse gathered together to mark another successful school year of hosting all of the fourth grade students in the Calvert County schools.

The annual Celebration Luncheon has come to be a spring tradition, co-sponsored by the Friends of the One-Room School and the One-Room School Committee of the Calvert Retired School Personnel Association, takes this time to acknowledge and thank each of the wonderful volunteers who donate generously of their time and talents. A luncheon prepared by Loujeania Johnson featured light fare, three varieties of salads and a wonderful dessert.

It is always such a delight to come together and honor all those who volunteer their time and special talents to make our schoolhouse come alive again.

This year's teachers were Casey Duehrssen, Chloe Ewalt, Jody Longhill, Carole Wagner. Our 'Farm Life' or 'Taste of the Times' piece was taught by Fran Armstrong, Bruce Armstrong, Jack Fringer, Faye Graff, Carol Khalili, Jody Longhill, and Pamela Mackall. Trail guides were Fran and Bruce Armstrong, Kathy Ellwood, Barbara Fringer—Trail guide coordinator, Jack Fringer, Susan Hammond, Pamela Mackall, Ruth Mora, Ginny Murphy, Ruth Ott, Bob Platt, and Fritzie Zidow.



*Carol Khalili reading "Memories."
See article on facing page.*

The saying, "It takes a village" is proven true by the large number of volunteers it takes to continue providing the excellent experience-based program that our visiting students enjoy. Thank you all for making this a memorable field trip for Calvert County's fourth graders!



Farm Life Teachers pictured: Bruce and Fran Armstrong, Jody Longhill, Pamela Mackall, and Jack Fringer.



Trail Guides pictured: Bruce Armstrong, Bob Platt, Fritzie Zidow, Ruth Mora, Debbie Roberts, Pam Mackall, Barbara Fringer, Kathy Ellwood, Fran Armstrong, Jack Fringer, and Sue Hammond.

“Memories” by Marie Hardesty Dietrich

“Miss Marie” (1903-1991) wrote this on the occasion of the dedication of our One-Room Schoolhouse in 1977

Marie Hardesty Dietrich, former teacher at Port Republic School #7, was read by Carol Khalili at 2015’s Celebration Luncheon. “Miss Marie” wrote this on the occasion of the dedication of the One-Room Schoolhouse in 1977. Her look back to the days she taught brought smiles and knowing laughter when she recounted antics of the children she taught. She noted many of the families of the area, those who created the fabric of life in Port Republic. Her own words held everyone present in a magical moment. Her Memories are included for you too, to enjoy.



“Miss Marie” Hardesty, age 25, in 1928

Thanks for the privilege and pleasure of sharing a bit of nostalgia with you regarding my years as a pupil and later as a teacher at the Port Republic Elementary School. Well do I remember my former teachers, who were highly trained for the task of teaching the three R’s as well as character building. I speak of Mrs. Etta Glover Grimes, grades 1-3, Mrs. Pauline Williams Bennett, grades 4-6, Miss Anna Lee Baldwin, grade 7, and Mrs. Madeline Bond Parran, who in the eighth grade taught Algebra, Latin, and Ancient History. We were very fortunate to have had such dedicated teachers.

Many recollections of my grade years come to mind, such as the baseball games at lunchtime. Once when I was catching, I rushed up too close to the batter. He whammed me beside my ear and I can truthfully say I saw stars. Then I remember the underground playhouse where we played games in the winter and the huge pile of leaves in which we loved to romp and jump in the fall. Another activity which gave us much pleasure was jumping from a ten-foot bank nearby into a huge mound of soft sand. Who can ever forget the mud we tracked into the

schoolroom, which had to be swept twice a day by the pupils.

I remember when one end of the school burst out during a bad winter storm and had to be repaired. Those were the horse and buggy days when the earlier teachers used that means to commute since all four came from the St. Leonards area. There are many other memories, but I must mention the bucket of water and the common dipper. The water was brought over from Mrs. Dorsey’s well by our boys. The dipper finally gave way to individual drinking cups. So much for the earlier years.

I graduated from the old Maryland State Normal School in 1922 and taught at Chaneyville School until 1924, when I was assigned to my home school for the next three years. The platform and the recitation bench were gone and a 1924 Chevy stood outside. The older children had left, most to attend the new high school, and I began teaching the younger generation, which included my three sisters. I have fond memories of those rural families -- the Yoes, Hances, Irelands, Hardestys, Woods, Howards, Fowlers, Weemses, Skinners, Hendersons, Somervells, Ruarks, Johnsons, and others.

I like to think of the hot cocoa which we made on cold days, the May Day outings, the June picnics, and our Christmas entertainments, one of which was held in the old Mutual Hall. We used real live candles to decorate the tree. (Where was the Fire Department then?) We were one big family and we did have lots of fun. Our supervisor, Miss Mattie Hardesty, and the Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Howard T. Ruhl, checked on us occasionally but we didn’t mind.

It was so good to see many of my former pupils at the dedication on July 24, 1977, and to have them address me in the old way as “Miss Marie.” I was proud to have my two daughters with me that day and to show them how it was in the “good old days.” May I extend my thanks to Mrs. Elvin Howard and to the Retired Teachers’ Association for the excellent work they have done toward the restoration of this historic building. May the visitors continue to appreciate and cherish this proud relic of the past.

Holiday Open House Dec. 20

by Chloe Ewalt; Photos by Bruce and Fran Armstrong and Carol Khalili

Once again voices, laughter, and music echoed from the schoolhouse on Sunday, December 20, as children and adults gathered to enjoy an old-fashioned Christmas. Everyone was treated to hot cider, hot chocolate, and homemade cookies.

Children strung popcorn and cranberries to either hang on the Christmas tree in the schoolhouse or to take home and hang on their tree. They also enjoyed helping to decorate the tree in the schoolhouse with old-fashioned ornaments. It was indeed a magical time, and if you missed this fun glimpse back in time, be sure to mark your calendar for next year's gathering on the Sunday before Christmas.



Our Christmas Tree

At the conclusion of our Holiday Open House, we shared our tree with a church family. Here is what they wrote:

"Thank you so much for giving us the tree. It really lifted our Christmas Spirits. Wishing you and your families a Happy, Healthy and Safe 2016! Patti Ritter"



Detail of school house model, by Roy Lechner, on display.



Why Do We Walk the Seven Bridges Trail?

by Barbara Fringer

Because...

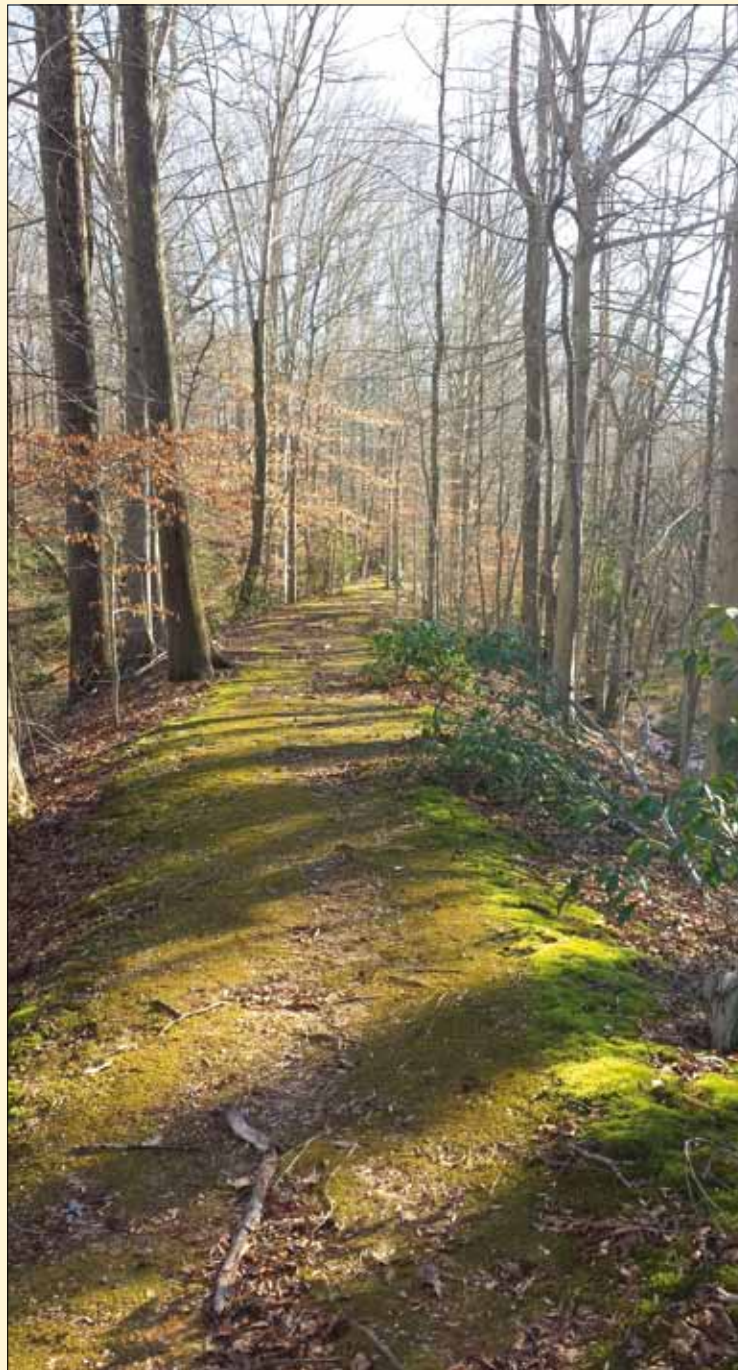
Sometimes we learn something new about our county as we prepare to guide the fourth graders.

Trish David was pleased to discover the 19th century plan to construct the Drum Point Railroad from south Calvert County to Baltimore as a means to move tobacco to the port. Then, along with her research husband, she introduced “the search for little Susie way down yonder in the paw paw patch” to accompany a sing-along march thru the abundant paw paw plants.

Ruth Mora attributes her willingness to be a trail guide to the students’ reactions on any given day. She enjoys being able to share her appreciation of hiking as it translates into the fresh air on the trail, focusing on the history of the trail while introducing the beauty of the outdoors along the way. Imagine the excitement when walkers see a bald eagle soaring for the first time!?! “WOW” is the undeniable reaction.

A relative newcomer to our trail regimen, Pam Mackall, a fairly new retiree, appreciates the youngsters’ behavior on the trail. She reports that the fourth graders listen attentively, ask thoughtful questions, and express vocabulary that accurately

describes their experience: a meandering stream, a gurgling brook, a tranquil scene. Pam believes that



being a trail guide allows her the opportunity to remain connected to the school system.

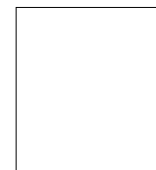
More than some of our guides, Bob Platt stresses the use of three of the five senses as he shares his interests in botany, insects, and mammals. He encourages his followers to look, listen, and smell, but not to touch or taste along the mile and a quarter. Bob adds natural history to the trail walk even as he points out historical connections. Visualize the oxen moving the hogsheads of tobacco down the Rolling Road to the Governor’s Run Steamboat Landing early in the 20th century.

Would that we could walk this trail with the fourth graders any day of the year for a full understanding of conditions “back in the day.” But we cannot. SO, we return to “guide” each season as conditions on the trail vary from spring to autumn at Mother Nature’s whim: chilly, damp, windy, too warm . . . always exhilarating because of the students’ reactions.

If you are in need of a pick-me-up, I recommend grabbing a buddy, choosing a sunny afternoon, and taking a walk on the 7 Bridges Trail. This is “low-level ecstasy” at its best—

thoughtfully described by Bill Bryson in *A Walk in the Woods*, recently a movie.

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President's Corner

by Jack Fringer, President

2015 was another busy year at Port Republic School #7. The visiting fourth grade students thoroughly enjoyed their opportunity to spend a school day as their great-grandparents had when they were fourth graders. This program continues to be a success thanks to the efforts of our dedicated volunteers.

Call for Volunteers!

Speaking of volunteers, we are always in need of new volunteers. If your routine includes frequent walks of a mile, I invite you to become a trail guide and take your walk on the Seven Bridges Trail.

If you prefer sharing memories of your early school years, then

perhaps you can assist with the program in the schoolhouse.

We had our first Holiday Open House the Sunday before Christmas. The schoolhouse was decorated with fresh greens just as it would have been back "in the day" to include a live tree.

Our many visitors were treated to hot chocolate, hot cider, and cookies. We hope that this will become a Christmas tradition at Port Republic School #7.

2016 promises to be another full year of activities; please join us!



Summer Sundays in May

Share your love and admiration for education in the days of one-room schools in the United States.

Volunteers Needed!

Join us by pairing with one of our docents for a Sunday afternoon in May. We open Port Republic School #7 for two hours as visitors stop by to immerse themselves in the atmosphere of the schoolhouse.

They often stay to chat, renewing the practice of old-fashioned Sunday visiting.

To take this opportunity, please leave a note on our website, www.calvertoneroomschool.org. You will be contacted to arrange a Sunday that fits your schedule.

You will enjoy the pleasures of sharing our treasured schoolhouse.