



---

# The Slate

---

Friends of the One-Room Schoolhouse, Inc.,  
Post Office Box 431, Port Republic, MD 20676-0431 • Winter 2009-2010

---

## Season's Greetings from The Friends of the One-Room Schoolhouse



*The entrance to the vestibule of our One-Room Schoolhouse is festively decorated for the holiday season.  
Photo by Linda McGaughey, Carol Khalili's sister.*

# The Seven Bridges Trail

*Carol Khalili*



*The trail's humpbacked bridge. Photo by Brian Stroh.*

Running along the perimeter of the Christ Church property is a wonderful trail that includes important historic sites: a section of the never completed railroad bed that would have carried a rail line joining Drum Point to Baltimore and remnants of a rolling road used by farmers moving hogsheads of tobacco to the wharf at Port Republic. There are also woodlands, wetlands, a stream, and a meadow. Children spending the day at the One-Room Schoolhouse traverse this mile and a quarter trail. They leave filled with a sense of wonder and awe, feeling that they have truly gone back in time.

Thad Shepherd, member of Scout Troop 407, was first to take on the project, working with profes-

sional surveyor and parishioner Arthur Cochran to locate the historic boundaries using historic records, and to make the area accessible by building seven bridges. Hence, the trail was named “*The Seven Bridges Trail.*” This project began the long relationship between the Scouts and Christ Church. Thad established this trail as his project in attaining the rank of Eagle Scout. His trail was authentic and rustic, with walkers facing steep uphill climbs on earthen pathways and the need for planks or fallen trees to cross the meandering stream in many places.

The congregants of the Christ Church benefitted from the new trail, appreciating its beauty and solitude. In the mid 1990s, Jaye

Ash undertook her Silver Project for the Girl Scouts, planning to further enhance the trail experience. Father John Howanstine suggested a bench for reflection and meditation. Together they selected a site appropriate for the bench and, additionally, seven sites for the installation of wooden crosses as stations for prayer along the length of the trail. Jaye made and installed the crosses, using polyurethane coated 2’x2’ lumber. Her mother, Ellen Ash, recalls that Jaye did all of the labor herself, digging the holes, filling coffee cans with Sakrete, and securing the crosses. A few of the crosses remain standing, intact and straight, and visiting children keep a watchful eye for them.

*(See Trail, cont. on page 3)*



*Scout Brian Stroh is in the planning stage to replace a bridge for earning his Eagle Scout Badge. He recently visited the site where he took pictures and measurements. Photo by Kate Stroh.*



*Scenes along the trail.  
Photos above and below by Linda McGaughey.*

***(Trail, cont. from page 2)***

In the early 2000s Calvert County and the One-Room School Committee reached an agreement that formalized a field trip for the 4<sup>th</sup> grade school students. Their experience includes a simulation of a walk to school such as an actual student in the 1800s might have experienced. The need to make the trail both safe and accessible for the many children and adult guides now traversing the trail each school year was met by Scouts from Huntingtown Troop 903 earning their Eagle Badge. They took on this project, creating secure walkways over the wetlands and replacing the stairs on the descent from the railway bed's eastern end.

At various times in the years since 2000, maintenance, temporary repairs, and safety modifications have been carried out through conscientious volunteers



including Ken Romney, Arnie Petty, Skip Ford, Paul Blayney, Jack Fringer, Mike Khalili, and Walter Gott.

Troop 903 has sponsored 7 eagle projects since the trail was built, roughly in this order:

- Shawn Wiese built the series of platforms and ramps at the western end of the railroad bed.

- John T. Wahl, built 4 bridges from telephone poles across the creek, one at the western end of the railroad bed, the other three at the back of the trail.

- Ben Wood built a bridge from telephone poles at the eastern end of the railroad bed and stairs to the top of the railroad bed.

***(See Trail, cont. on page 4)***



*Bridge with rotted boards.  
Photo by Brian Stroh.*



*Steps on a hill along the trail.  
Photo by Brian Stroh.*



*This set of steps remind walkers of the important character traits that all scouts strive to incorporate into their lives. Photo by Kate Stroh.*

***(Trail, cont. from page 3)***

- Kyle Jarrett built the earth stairs down the hill at the western end of the trail.
- Travis Green built the stairs and platform right before the hump-backed bridge.
- David Wiese (Shawn's younger brother) built the bridge and platforms on the other side of the humpbacked bridge and tied it in to John Wahl's project.
- Sean Samakow built the series of ramps at the Parish Hall end of the trail.
- John Wahl and Shawn Wiese, worked on a set of stairs and

ramps to assist in climbing the steep grade at the western end of the railroad bed. This set of steps remind walkers of the important character traits that all scouts strive to incorporate into their lives. Trail guides point how to students just many people benefit from the work and cooperation of the Scouts and the Church community.

Now the humpbacked bridge needs urgent attention. In the past it suffered damage from heavy spring rains, washing out from high and fast waters carrying large branches. Its decking boards are rotted and have become slippery.

Boy Scout Brian Stroh heard about walkers who had slipped

and suffered bruises when crossing this bridge and contacted the One-Room School Committee to volunteer his help to remedy this situation. He is in the planning stage, making the replacement of this bridge the project for earning his Eagle Scout Badge. Brian visited the site, took pictures and measurements this past fall, and is in the process of working with adults with expertise, learning what is required to plan and construct a new bridge, one that will be safe and harmonious with the previous projects and the trail. Brian has the guidance of Bruce Evartt, Troop 903 Eagle Advisor, and his grandfather, Allen Rawl.

# One-Room Schoolhouse Christmas Ornaments

Members of the One-Room School Committee moved into action to create four Christmas ornaments for the Festival of Trees at Huntingtown High School. The request came from Joyce Baki, Tourism Specialist, Calvert County Department of Economic Development, as a way to highlight tourism sites located throughout the County.

Barbara Fringer took the lead, fashioning old fashioned school slates and finding the apples for the teacher. Fran Armstrong and Carol Khalili put on the final touches and delivered them to the Courthouse Annex.

The front of each ornament has the name Port Republic School #7, while the reverse features the iconic sketch of the Schoolhouse. Sandy Roberts made this sketch in 2005 when vestibule construction was completed, returning the schoolhouse to the configuration so many of its former students remembered and wished for.

Each time this sketch is used we thank Sandy for perfectly capturing the essence of the Schoolhouse.



## We Always Encourage and Welcome New Members as Friends of the One-Room Schoolhouse, Inc.

The Friends of the One-Room Schoolhouse, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit 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 Schoolhouse, Inc." and mail to Post Office Box 431, Port Republic, MD 20676-0431.

- Individual or Family \$20.00
- Benefactor \$50.00
- Sustaining \$100.00
- Additional Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_  
 State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone # \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_



*A teacher's desk, recently donated by Mary Konrad on behalf of her family and in memory of her husband Tom.*

## Konrad Family Donates Furniture to Schoolhouse

Mary Konrad of Port Republic, on behalf of her family and in memory of her husband Tom, has donated a teacher's desk (*photo above*) as well as two school desks to the schoolhouse. While we are rapidly approaching capacity with student desks, the gift of the teacher's desk is a wonderful addition to the building's interior. The present teacher's desk was donated by the Board of Education at the time the building was furnished in 1976 and is a surplus desk circa 1960.

We welcome all gifts to the schoolhouse and hope to have a "wish list" available at the time of our Annual Meeting for your review and consideration. Our educational program utilizes reproductions of the early educational materials as these items suffer from daily use. Original artifacts are kept under lock and key and are available for review with prior request.

## Annual Meeting Set for February 21, 1 P.M.

Mark your calendar for the Annual Meeting of the Friends of the One-Room Schoolhouse. We'll be gathering at Adam's Rib Restaurant on Sunday, February 21, at 1 P.M., to enjoy a light lunch and a brief Annual Meeting during which time we will elect new officers and board members. You'll be getting a notice after the first of the year, but please mark your calendar and plan to join us.

# Bill Gray and Jeff Klapper Nominated to the Board

With the natural evolution of the Board, Jeff Klapper and Bill Gray have agreed to stand for election to the Board of the Friends during the Annual Meeting on February 21<sup>st</sup>. Both gentlemen come to the Board with a strong background in business and will be a welcome addition.

**Bill Gray**, a life-long resident of Calvert County, is a graduate of the Calverton School and an alumni of Salisbury University with a strong background in business and County service. He was employed in the family car dealership in Prince Frederick and served as the President of the firm until its sale in 2000. He has served on several boards here in the County and often assumed a leadership role during his tenures. He has been the treasurer of the Historical Society, Chair and Vice Chair of the Economic Development Commission, and President of the Scientist Cliffs Board of Directors. He and his wife, Karen, who will be celebrating their 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary next year, have three children: Paige at the Calverton School where she was member of the first undefeated soccer team in school history; Will, a sophomore at Shepherd University; and Danielle, a graduate student at Virginia Tech.

**Jeff Klapper**, originally from Bryn Mawr, PA and an alumnus of Villanova University, is a certified welder who was in the commercial engraving and printing industry for almost four decades. He started working for his grandfather's company, L.J. Cowie Co., Inc. in 1972 and eventually acquired majority ownership of the firm before retiring in 2008.

There is a link to the schoolhouse: Jeff is married to Nancy Harkness whose father attended Port Republic School No. 7. You know Nancy and Jeff if you've been to the *Main Street Gallery* in Prince Frederick where you'll find Jeff tending to customers during many open houses held throughout the year. To continue our links to education, Jeff's middle of three sons, Matthew, teaches science at Windy Hill Middle School here in Calvert County.

Since his retirement, Jeff has been very active as a volunteer with the American Chestnut Land Trust taking the lead in developing sustainable farming applications at the Double Oak Farm. He also keeps chickens behind the family residence on Main Street in "downtown" Prince Frederick.

We certainly hope that you will attend the Annual Meeting in February, take the opportunity to meet both of these gentlemen and vote these two outstanding candidates onto the Board of the Friends.



## "The Slate" Goes On-line

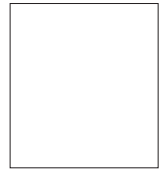
By now you've received your membership renewal notice. We thank you in advance for renewing to support our efforts. At the time of your renewal you were asked if you'd like to receive this newsletter electronically rather than by mail. As all not-for-profits move to reduce operational costs, while at the same time maintaining a strong level of membership service, we are only reflecting the changes in the way we manage and deliver information.

If you would like to receive *The Slate* via your email address, feel free to provide your contacts when you renew your membership or at any other time during the year. We will not make your contact information available to others. We respect your privacy and, as with all other information you share with us, we do not make it available for any other organization's use. The newsletter on-line is in a PDF format which will allow us to utilize color throughout. The color is clearly a bonus over the newsletter that we send via the postal service which is in black and white due to the high cost of printing in color.

Thank you for considering this option for future copies of *The Slate*.

**Friends of the One-Room  
Schoolhouse, Inc.**

Post Office Box 431  
Port Republic, MD 20676-0431



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**President ...** Robert Pfeiffer

**Vice Pres ....** Chloe Ewalt

**Secretary ...** Fran Armstrong

**Treasurer ...** Alexander Graham

**Board of Directors**

Richard Dodds

Jack Fringer

Carol Khalili

Mary Ellen Romney

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

## From the Podium

*Robert Pfeiffer, President*

### Annual Meeting—Feb. 21

The end of the year brings a time of celebration as well as a time of transition. It goes without saying that there are religious celebrations as the year draws to a close but it is also a time when this organization begins to “pass the baton” heading into 2010. Please plan to join us for our Annual Meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> of February (long after the Super Bowl) at Adam’s Rib for food, fellowship and a little business. You’ll be receiving a separate notice after the first of the year.

### Ongoing Work

During the winter months, most of the planning and financing of

the year’s activities take place. In this newsletter you’ll find an outline of plans for major restorations to the “trail” and the bridges that are so critical to our educational program. We’ve recently completed upgrades to the entrance stairs and deck and will be spending the winter months developing a proposal for grant funding to locate two signs on MD Route 4 that will help the traveler/tourist find their way to the schoolhouse as they wander through Calvert County.

In short, your support of our efforts gives us the energy and resources to maintain the facility at the highest level.



### Please Join Us on Feb. 21

Please make plans to join us on February 21. I think you’ll be pleased to meet the nominees to the Board as well as the slate of officers that will carry this organization forward into the New Year. As for me, I want to thank each and every one of you for your continued support of our endeavors. Without your continued support we could not have accomplished so much over such a short time.