



# The Slate

Friends of the One-Room Schoolhouse, Inc.,  
 Post Office Box 431, Port Republic, MD 20676-0431 • Winter 2011-2012

## A Tribute to Joan Gott at Celebration Luncheon

The One-Room School Committee of the Calvert Retired School Personnel Association and the Friends of the One-Room Schoolhouse held their annual Celebration Luncheon on June 8, 2011.

This year those present paid special recognition to Joan Gott, outstanding volunteer and creator of the Youth Outreach Program. The program that she created is still used with students today. Surrounded by family and friends Joan received tributes for her many years of work.

Elaine Dunkle vividly retold the story of how Joan used initiative, creativity, and determination to develop the program that brought the Port Republic One-Room Schoolhouse to life.



*Jack Fringer, President of the Friends of the One-Room School, presented an engraved plaque to Joan, expressing love and appreciation for all that Joan did in creating the Youth Outreach Program.*



Carol Khalili compiled a slide show of pictures and text that created a visual history of the many activities conducted by Joan with her husband, Walter, always at her side. Their fun-filled experiences for children were always rich with activities that taught about life in rural Calvert County. The pictures brought back many wonderful memories and a tear to Joan's eye.

*Left: Joan Gott with her family—Becky Smith, Judy Mabry, Joan Gott, Walter Gott, and Allison Mabry*

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# Celebration Luncheon Was Held June 8



*One-Room School Committee members: Fritzie Zidow, Dotty Greene, Fran Armstrong, Casey Duehrssen, Committee Chair Carol Khalili, Russell Costley, Nancy Thompson, Pam Enrico, Oreal Morsell, and Barbara Fringer.*

On June 8, 2011 the One-Room School Committee of the Calvert Retired School Personnel Association and the Friends of the One-Room Schoolhouse

held their annual Celebration Luncheon. This is a time for honoring the teachers, trail guides and volunteers who give generously of their time and

talents, ensuring that the 4th grade students of Calvert County will have a memorable visit to the One-Room Schoolhouse.

*Heartfelt thanks go to Elaine Dunkle, Sandy Roberts, and Joan Gott who have faithfully supported the One-Room Schoolhouse project and program for a total of more than 64 years.*



*Jack Fringer, FORS President with Trail guides: Barbara Fringer, Bob Platt, Fritzie Zidow, Kathy Ellwood, Ginny Murphy, Jane Manning, Rita Amtmann, and Carol Khalili.*

## Luncheon Celebration, cont. from page 2



*FORS President, Jack Fringer, and our teachers: Pam Enrico, Carole Wagner, Fran Armstrong, Carol Dargan, Casey Duehrssen, and Committee Chair Carol Khalili.*



**Can you identify this "Mystery Painter" working on the school's mid-70s restoration? His identity will be announced at the Annual Meeting on Sunday, Jan, 29, 2012.**

## Annual Meeting Set for Sunday, January 29, 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, January 29, 1-3 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 receiving a notice after the first of the year, but please mark your calendar and plan to join us.



## 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 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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 City \_\_\_\_\_  
 State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone # \_\_\_\_\_  
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# Port Republic School #7



June 1926 – Port Republic School picnic at Governor's Run. Looks like ice cream cones all around!

# Down Memory Lane



August 1976 – Retired Teachers Attend Silver Tea – Many of the area's retired teachers were present for the silver tea held Sunday at Christ Church as a fund raiser for the restoration of the one-room schoolhouse at Port Republic. Seated, from left, Virginia Dare Sollars, Betty Briscoe, Elvin Howard, Pauline Bennett. Standing, from left, Annie Witheridge, Mrs. Myers, Bessie Moore, Eva Gibson, Elizabeth Brown, Elaine Cochran, Helen Jarvis, Margaret Clark, Inez Jennings, Clara Dixon, Regina Brown, Dorothy Ordwein, Mildred Finlon, Dr. Gordon Bennett, Frances Stevens, Daisy Cox, and Alverta Williams (From August 19, 1976, Calvert Independent; Staff Photo by Verla Neslund, PF-7-A.)

From an article published 100 years ago in the Calvert Gazette

## DESTRUCTIVE TORNADO

*Sweeps a Section, From the River to the Bay*

The tornado which swept across the county Tuesday night about 8 o'clock from the north side of Battle Creek, near the Patuxent River, to Governor's Run, on the Chesapeake Bay, left havoc and destruction in its wake, and left evidences of a windforce such as perhaps has never been exceeded since the settlement of this section of Maryland. Fortunately it took a narrow course and traversed a section sparsely inhabited, or else loss of life would surely have resulted. As it was, it is a mystery that all human beings along the track of the storm escaped...

...The further course of the storm was through forest and field with rising and lowering inflection until it reached the vicinity of Port Republic where it played havoc with the great oaks at Christ Church. These oaks of majestic appearance, two and three feet across the stump, that had stood the storms of a century or more, received their first shaking force they could not withstand, and were broken, shattered or uprooted entirely from their seemingly secure hold upon the earth, and scores of them will never again furnish shade for the worshipers who attend service at the historic church that was erected in the oak grove as far back as 1772. Some of the gravestones were over turned and damaged by the falling trees. The trees about the rectory near the church were also greatly damaged.

The public school, near the church, taught by Miss Etta Clover, was blown from its foundation and will require a force of workmen to put it again in position and prepare it for occupancy.



Circa 1976

ONE ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE -- Elaine Cochran and Keith Witheridge, of the Calvert Retired Teachers Association sit in the old school desks that have been donated in the restoration of a one-room schoolhouse at Port Republic. The retired teachers are heading the restoration project. The school was open for tours briefly Sunday, to show the progress, with many former students and teachers on hand. (Staff Photo by Verla Neslund)



Summer 1976 – Gathering of Former Students and Teacher of Port Republic School #7

Front row: Bob Hance, Bea Hance, Ollie Bowen, Roberta Rawlings, Gladys Arnold, Ethel Marshall, Marie Dietrich (former teacher), Leila Hardesty, and Jane Hance.

Back row: Lloyd Hance, Elvin Howard, Leroy Hardesty, Mabel Hall, Earl Fowler, Alvin Yoe, and Evelyn Hardesty.



# Clearing the Trail

Barbara Fringer

For the past several years, the task of preparing the 7 Bridges Trail at the ORS for the daily arrival of fourth graders has been a relatively basic endeavor. On Saturday, August 27, Mother Nature dealt the county a heavy hand that created a new dimension in trail clean-up.

So the September 10 work day was going to be more than dust/sweep the classroom and trim the overgrowth and pick up branches on the trail. Without the Paul Bunyan efforts of a double troop of chain-saw-wielding Calvert County “loggers,” the trail would, in some sections, remain obstructed.

BUT on Saturday morning, the 10<sup>th</sup>, Jeff Klapper, Keith Graham, Richard Dodd, and Jack Fringer made initial headway. They repaired walkways that had been visited by Hurricane Irene and they moved forward clearing, sawing, pitching—making the trail safe and accessible. Clearing stopped, however, three hours into their work, when the crew met two mammoth sycamore trunks that could not be diminished by their muscle and their equipment.

And so, it was on a second occasion, September 27, that a fresh crew—Ken Romney, Paul Blayney, Arnold Petty, Bill Gray along with Jack Fringer—returned to bring the sycamores to their knees.

Here is a “shout out” to each of the Bunyan trail blazers for their unselfish willingness to clear the 7 Bridges Trail even as their own neighborhoods, in some respects, were still in need of their expertise and services.

The fall season of class visits is over for 2011, but not without the fourth graders recognizing the fact that their mile and a quarter walk to Port Republic School #7 would not have been possible except for adult volunteers who promote the value of the full ORS opportunity. The students saw chasms created by tree roots having been ripped from the ground. And they were astonished at the size and magnitude of all that had been moved to the trail’s edges. At one bridge, the children observed a tree as projectile that came very close to embedding itself INTO the bridge!

Hurricane Irene’s fury became a “teachable” moment as each trail guide added specific comments regarding the storm’s damage even as the historical aspects of the walk were highlighted. When the surveys come in each season, the trail walk is generally noted as a favorite part of the experience. This fall 2011 will stand out as a period of determination and physical commitment to maintain that “walk to school.” KUDOS to each of the men who joined in making CLEAR the 7 Bridges Trail.



# Schoolhouse News

Fran Armstrong, New Chairperson of One-Room Schoolhouse Committee



Fran Armstrong

## Fall Visitations by 4<sup>th</sup> Graders

In October, Port Republic School #7 came to life again as 25 classes of 4<sup>th</sup> graders experienced the charms of a “quieter and gentler” time. This authentic setting equipped with McGuffey readers as well as artifacts such as the wood stove, slate boards, and quill pens all contributed to this living history experience.

Having two classes at a time may not always be easy to juggle, but with the beautiful trail walk made available to us through Christ Church, even more learning takes place. Our experienced trail guides lead the group on a 1.4 mile walk on the 7 Bridges Trail where the students cross over the jousting field, follow the old railroad bed, and walk up the rolling road. It is an integral part of our site-based learning program and a showstopper for our inquisitive students.

There are many more opportunities, too numerous to mention, for students to learn from the schooling experiences of a time gone by. A heartfelt thank you goes out to all the people who give so generously of their time and talents to make this program the success it truly is.

## Volunteering Opportunities

When I was catching up on my reading, I came across an article addressing “life stages of adults.” I found it interesting and wanted to address some aspects of that article here. As a person’s career is coming to a close, mid-50s or so, many adults find themselves choosing an “encore career” path. You guessed it, people who don’t want to totally leave the work force but adjust their work load to suit their needs.

And then later, another stage emerges, and this is the one I want to reflect on now. When a person reaches his/her 60s, the perspective changes yet again. Pensions have kicked in, social security has paid out, and many people have the feeling they need to give back to the community they have lived in and profited from for all those years. This is when “community service” plays an important role.

Our One-Room School program, one that provides a learning experience for all 4<sup>th</sup> graders in the county, requires the help of many adult learners to make it work. The success of our program depends on our volunteers! This spring we will be serving 30 classes. There are slots available for trail guides, as well as “farm life” teachers. If you have the desire to “give back,” I encourage you to volunteer. Personally, I have found that volunteering has kept me connected and has made me a better person. I enjoy knowing that I can make a difference in children’s lives.

Volunteer training opportunities will begin in the spring! Call Fran Armstrong, 410-586-1418 if you would like to be included.

## Observations of a Trail Guide

As a trail guide you encounter such a diverse group of children, it is always fun to see how they react to the walk. On one of my trail walks, I had a rather rambunctious boy who, when seeing the lower field past the jousting area, said he just had so much energy he had to “run, run, run.”

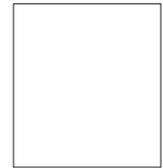
Having been a 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, I just knew I could handle him. So, I gathered my group around me and told them this story. “My son has a beautiful large dog who needs plenty of exercise. I had scolded my son for not taking his dog out to run, run, run. My son explained that it is better to take a dog on a ‘controlled walk.’ The dog enjoys himself and then gets tired out using his energy in this controlled fashion.” All the time I was hoping the students would take that giant leap and grasp what I was trying to teach them!

Having listened obediently to my story, my rambunctious boy quickly retorted, “That’s great, but I’m not a dog and I have to run, run, run.” To which I responded, “You can come and walk with me; we will be partners.”

A bit later, a quieter boy, while walking along the railroad bed with me, commented, “I haven’t felt this good in years!” When I asked what he meant by that statement, he told me that he had never walked a mile before! What fun I have sharing a few hours with these diverse young minds!

# Friends of the One-Room Schoolhouse, Inc.

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*Newsletter layout and design  
by Frances Dunkle Poling*

## President's Corner

*Jack Fringer, President*

As another busy year for the One-Room Schoolhouse is drawing to a close, I want to thank all of the Board members and school volunteers for a very successful year.

The Chair of the One-Room Schoolhouse Committee and the Secretary of the Board exchanged positions during the year. I want to personally thank Carol Khalili for her years of devoted service as the Chair of the One-Room Schoolhouse Committee. During her tenure, the program has continued to grow. I also want to thank Fran Armstrong for her many years of service to the Board

as our Secretary. And, I want to thank both of them for continuing to serve the Schoolhouse in their new responsibilities.

Hurricane Irene left our trail in need of some major tree removal efforts. I want to thank all who volunteered their time and talents to clear the trail in time for the Fall class schedule. *(See the article on page 6.)*

This year we were successful in obtaining a grant from the Southern Maryland Heritage Area Consortium. This grant will provide the resources to revise our



*Jack Fringer*

publicity brochure *"The One-Room School Still Teaches."*

In closing, let me remind you of our annual meeting to be held on Sunday, January 29, 2012, at Adam's, The Place for Ribs, beginning at 1 P.M.. I hope to see you all there. *(See page 3.)*