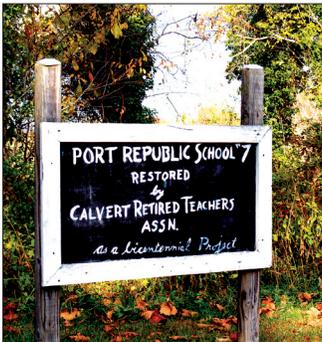




The Slate

Winter 2013-2014 Edition

Friends of the One-Room Schoolhouse, Inc.
P. O. Box 431, Port Republic, MD 20676-0431 • www.calvertoneroomschool.org



Fourth graders enjoy our restored schoolhouse and the experiences our docents and trail guides provide.

Experiencing a One-Room School Today...

Calvert County's public school curriculum includes a day at Port Republic School #7 for all 4th graders. Children come to experience a typical day in a school such as one attended by their great-great-grandparents and to learn about life in rural Calvert County before electricity, indoor plumbing, cars, and buses. Groups from parochial, independent, and home schools, as well as Scout troops, also take part in this living history program.

Inside This Issue

Ice Cream Social Was July 31page 2
Surprise Visitor to Our Schoolpage 3
2013 Celebration Luncheon.....page 4
Remembering Elaine Cochran Dunklepage 4
"Notice Something Different?"page 5

Port Republic School #7 on the Web.....page 6
Highlights from the Trail.....page 7
President's CornerBack Cover
Board of DirectorsBack Cover

One-Room Schoolhouse Ice Cream Social July 31

by Chloe Ewalt

It was a perfect summer evening – cool weather, friends gathering, delicious ice cream sundaes, dozens of yummy homemade cookies, and music that begged you to get up and dance!

Wednesday, July 31, was indeed a delightful evening at the 12th annual Ice Cream Social hosted by the Friends of the One-Room

Schoolhouse Board. Guests ranged in age from 3 weeks old (*pictured below*) to two ladies who are 92 years of age. One had attended a one-room schoolhouse about six miles away.

Everyone had a great time catching up with friends while listening to the Big-Band sounds of the Calvert Dance Band. Even

the weather cooperated and the rain drops held off until the very end!

We greatly appreciate the Calvert Dance Band providing the live music. And, with the support of Christ Church, we were able to provide “cover” for the band on the Parish Hall’s covered porch, while guests lounged and visited in the yard on lawn chairs.



Debbie Roberts scooping ice cream.



Catching up with old friends; making new ones.



Volunteer Barbara Fringer with 3-week-old Colby Stern, son of Lauren (Coffren) and Jordan Stern, 2003 graduates of Patuxent High School where they were Barbara's students.



Music from the Calvert Dance Band made for a lively event!

A Surprise Visitor to Our School

by Carol Khalili



Robbie Evans, left, and his Dad made this scale model of the One-Room Schoolhouse as a 5th grade school project. Here Robbie is showing the model to his daughter for the first time and to another young visitor.

January 20, 2013, my phone rang and a young man's voice asked if the One-Room Schoolhouse would be open for visitors. I was hesitant, saying something could be arranged for a group, but otherwise we are open on Summer Sundays and Tournament Day.

He said he was hoping to show the model he had made to his daughter, and that he was standing right at the schoolhouse door. Quite surprised, I said, "Are you Robbie Evans?" and he answered, "Yes, I am, my Dad and I made that model."

Of course I said, "In that case, I live nearby and it will be a pleasure to meet you today." Fifteen minutes later I was unlocking the schoolhouse on a warm January day; the building was cold though flooded with sunlight. Nothing was brighter than the smile on the face of

Robbie Evans; he lit up the whole room. He explained that he had wanted to see the model for a long time, had tried calling the Retired Teachers, but never found anyone with knowledge of or information about it.

Luckily, Elaine Dunkle had stored the model for several years and had passed it on to me with other schoolhouse memorabilia. When the vestibule reconstruction was completed it had a corner shelf – a perfect place to display the model.

Elaine had recalled that model was in demand, everyone wanted to have it, and Elvin Howard had it in her home for a number of years. Robbie thinks that he and his Dad once had it back at their home, too, but as his father has passed away, he cannot confirm the dates. It was made to scale for a 5th grade school

project. Next to it a folder contains the report that Robbie wrote to accompany the project.

Robbie and his daughter toured the schoolhouse, pleased to see it as he remembered. He held the model with pride, showing off the intricate work, as I took a picture of him and his daughter.

The model shows authentic details: a shingled roof, windows with panes, student and teacher desks, wood burning stove, and blackboards. It remains in excellent condition, ready for visitors to view and appreciate. Please take a close look at it on your next visit to Port Republic School #7.

A side note, when sharing this story with Fran Armstrong, she recalled, "I taught Robbie Evans in 4th grade, a nice young man!"

2013 Celebration Luncheon

by Fran Armstrong

On May 22, 2013, 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 in the Parish Hall of Christ Church.

Jack Fringer, President of the Friends of the One-Room Schoolhouse, welcomed special guests and attendees, followed by opening exercises: a Bible verse was shared by Barbara Fringer, and Russell Costley led us in the singing of the first verse of “My Country ‘Tis of Thee.” Father John Howanstine offered Grace followed by a wonderful meal prepared by Loujeania Johnson and Florence Howard.

Recalling History and Creating History

Fran Armstrong spoke of the history of our schoolhouse as being three-fold. First, the 60 years that the schoolhouse had been in use; second, when the schoolhouse was resurrected by the Retired Teachers’ Association as their Bicentennial Project, and third, the program in place today through Calvert County Public Schools. This comprises the whole story. We are creating history right now and we don’t even realize it!

Fran introduced a blank book entitled, *Voices*, where we can record our own ‘history’ of the day. This book is available for you to share your stories so our history can live on!

Volunteers Make It All Happen – Thank You!

It is amazing when you stop to consider the number of people involved in making this 4th grade field trip a success.

This year’s teachers were Fran Armstrong, Carol Dargan, Casey Duerhrrsen, Pam Enrico, Chloe Ewalt, Jody Longhill, and Carole Wagner. Our Farm Life piece was taught by Barbara Carey, Jack Fringer, Carol Khalili, and Sharon Whalen.

Our trail guides were Rita Amtmann, Bruce Armstrong, Kathy Ellwood, Ray Enrico, Barbara Fringer, Jack Fringer, Marcy Graham, Jane Head, Ginny Murphy, Bob Platt, Debbie Roberts, and Fritzie Zidow.

These dedicated people are truly the backbone that makes our program so strong and vibrant. We honor you, and thank you for your service to our 4th graders!



With Love and Admiration, We Remember...

Elaine Cochran Dunkle

May 14, 1915 – March 4, 2012

Since the last issue of *The Slate* in the winter of 2011-2012, sadly, we have suffered the loss of our visionary leader, Elaine Cochran Dunkle.

A life-long “educator,” Elaine helped to spearhead the 1976 Bicentennial project of the Calvert Retired Teachers

Association to restore Port Republic’s One-Room Schoolhouse.

Elaine remained active with the One-Room Schoolhouse from 1976 until just shortly before her passing in March 2012 at age 96.

Her words continue to reverberate in our minds and the result of her



Pre-restoration schoolhouse

passion is visible in the authentically restored historic Port Republic School #7 that continues to provide learning opportunities for adults and children alike.

Elaine’s work lives on. We are so grateful for her legacy.

Notice Something Different?

by Richard Dodds

Why Doesn't the School Face the Road?

Visitors to the One-Room Schoolhouse may sometimes wonder why the entrance to the building faces away from Broomes Island Road. Logic would dictate that the entrance face the road for ease of access. And indeed it once did. The early narrow road from Prince Frederick to Mutual and Broomes Island ran close to the front of the school where, just to the south, the road joined the equally narrow road leading from Port Republic. The combined road then continued south, passing in front of Christ Church and on towards Mutual.



Fence Installed to Mark Old Road's Route

In 2012 the church suggested the idea of installing a fence to better mark the route of the old road and its relationship to the school. The original road is evident on early maps but at some point in the first half of the 20th century, this portion was abandoned in favor of a wider and straighter route that follows the course of the present Broomes Island Road. The original road might have been suitable for horse and cart but not for the increasing amounts of vehicular traffic and the necessary right of way. It is believed that when the old portion was abandoned, the land was equally divided between the property owners on both sides. The center of the former road was then marked by a single strand wire fence on metal rods. Some of these are still visible.

Interestingly, an older survey of the church property made note of the abandoned portion of the county road and a "wood plank" fence that bordered it. Evidence of this fence is still visible on the west side of the old road in the form of some old cedar posts carrying the remnants of three six-inch horizontal boards.

Based on the physical evidence and survey maps, a 130-foot split rail fence was installed that follows

the path of the western side of the old road. The fence will help visitors to better visualize the school in relationship to other important features in the landscape. The school in its day was a vital part of a wider community that included the church, several general stores, a scattering of farms, and a network of roads that together made up the rural village of Port Republic.

Fence Dedicated to Memory of Jack Briscoe

The fence was paid for through the generosity of the Christ Church Memorial Fund with contributions received in loving memory of Jack Briscoe.



Workmen dug post holes for the new split-rail fence marking the old road.

Port Republic School #7 Is on the Web

Website: www.calvertoneroomschool.org • Email: admin@calvertoneroomschool.org

Port Republic School #7



"The One Room School Still Teaches."

While children who visit the One-Room Schoolhouse can still learn to communicate using quill pens and slate boards, we have joined the information age by launching a website which can be found at www.calvertoneroomschool.org.

While continuing to be updated, our website has had visitors from around the globe.

Those who log-on will find a "Home Page" plus a number of other pages. The "About Us"

page provides a brief history and information about the school's current program for educating Calvert County's 4th grade students about life before electricity.

The "Contact Us" page, the "Slide Show," and the "Newsletters and Documents" pages complete the presentation.

The website allows us to post information about upcoming events and to receive email at admin@calvertoneroomschool.org.

As we seek to increase our exposure to potential visitors and as an historical resource, we will be adding links to other organizations with similar interests.

Please visit us on-line and send us an email with your thoughts.

The Slate is on the Web!
The Slate appears on our website as a pdf file that you may view and/or download.

Several back issues are posted there as well. Check it out! The photos and graphics are in full color even though the printed versions had been in black and white.

Web Site Activity

This Year: 1/1/2013 - 9/30/2013

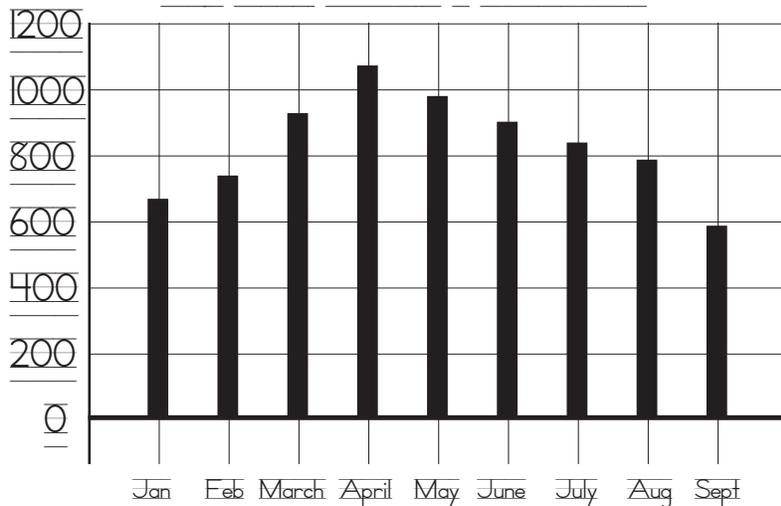


Chart by Jeff Klapper

A few curious statistics from our website activity to consider:
The website launched in April 2010 but more than half of the 12,516 total hits on the site occurred this year. The increased traffic originated mostly from Ireland which became the top referring location, followed by China, Denmark and Ukraine. Maryland was the 7th highest source of traffic. The domains sending the most traffic are dominated by the category "other" with over 80%, followed by google.com and christchurchcalvert.org. The conclusion that the majority of the parties logging on to calvertoneroomschool.org are interested in economic opportunity rather than Port Republic School House #7 seems inescapable. What do you think? Send an email to admin@calvertoneroomschool.org with your thoughts.

Highlights From the Trail

by Barbara Fringer



Trail guides in April 2013: Pam Enrico, Barbara Fringer, Ginny Murphy, Ray Enrico, Fritzie Zidow, and Kathy Ellwood.

For those of us who are trail guides, it is easy to submit that the 7 Bridges Trail walk is the favorite segment of the 4th graders' visit to the One-Room Schoolhouse. For the students the mile and a quarter from one end to the other, walking in either direction, presents an experience that is not a part of their everyday activities.

Kathy Ellwood noted an unexpected conclusion offered by a youngster whose rambunctious and inquisitive nature was clearly evident during the walk. As he ended the climb up the rolling road, the young man remarked "nature is awesome." How much more appropriately could a trail guide be rewarded after pointing out the wonders of nature? Awesome indeed!

Bob Platt, our resident entomologist, delights in sharing his expertise – displays of pinned insects and preserved vertebrates – with the boys and girls. On rainy days when the "trail" moves into the fellowship

hall, his specimens capture the attention of the 4th graders. The girls notice the zebra swallowtails and the large, gaudy iridescent blue butterflies while the boys especially enjoy the larger scary insects: the male Hercules beetle and the electric light bug or "toe-biter." But along the trail, Bob is the one who points out the shiny paw paw seeds, as well as the skunk cabbage and the mushrooms.

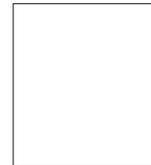
According to Debbie Roberts, the "aha" moment for her walkers came as they climbed down the wooden stairs at the end of the railroad bed and looked back at an Eagle Scout project to read the 12 points of the Boy Scout Law – three of which are trustworthy, helpful, and reverent. Others expressed exhilaration after emerging from the woods to race across the fallow field to the site of the jousting tournament. AHA!

But this spring a rather unique phenomenon "rained" down on the 7 Bridges Trail. And Jane Head,

wearing a white long-sleeved shirt, found herself covered in tiny green inch worms that were falling from the trees as she and her entourage made their way over each of the bridges. The children kept stopping her and exclaiming, "Mrs. Head, there are worms all over your shirt!" Worms were falling, too, on the children and creating a bit of excitement as they touched hands and faces. For sure, there was an excess of inch worms!

Up the hills, down the hills, along the straightaways, and over the bridges, the walk to Port Republic School #7 is a walk in the 21st century that reminds us all of the days when children had no contact with the BIG yellow school bus. As trail guides we have a remarkable opportunity to give our county students a genuine step back into the 19th century.

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Directors

Fran Armstrong Richard Dodds

Jeff Klapper Mary Ellen Romney

Nancy Zinn

*Newsletter layout and design by
Frances Dunkle Poling*

President's Corner

by Jack Fringer, President

This past year witnessed a few changes to the Friends of the One-Room Schoolhouse Board of Directors. Keith Graham, our treasurer for more years than anyone can remember, left the Board due to a number of conflicting demands for his time. We will surely miss Keith's professional attention to maintaining our financial records as well as his active participation in all of the Friends activities. On behalf of the Board, a very sincere "Thank You" to Keith for his many years of dedicated service.

I want to introduce our two new members of the Board:

Judy Bibb joined us as our new treasurer. She is an instructional aide in the Calvert County Public Schools (CCPS) and brings to the Board a number of years of experience as the treasurer of similar organizations.

Nancy Zinn joined the Board filling a vacancy that has existed for some time. Nancy, recently retired from the CCPS, brings a wealth of experience to the Board as a result of her service on the SMECO Board of Directors and Co-Chair of the Calvert County Fair Board. On behalf of the Friends Board, I want to extend a very warm welcome to Judy and Nancy.



Jack Fringer

As you will note in the various articles in this edition of *The Slate*, we have had a busy year. We witnessed an increase in the attendance during our Sunday afternoon openings last Spring and have offered special programs for the Cub Scouts and the Calvert County Department of Tourism.