



Beware of the bill-collector

# THE CLAIBORNE CLARION

A Newsletter for the Claiborne Community

October 2025

Volume 18, Number 10

John Scott, October Editor

Barbara Reisert  
Clarion Founder/Editor Emerita

Rob Todd  
President, Claiborne Association



## OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Sarah Sayre	2
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Susanne Scott	12
Karen Thomas	13
Ed Schaefer	16
Mike McCaughey	19
Mary Gregorio	23
Marty Bollinger	29
Dawn Lednum	31

If you'd like to add your name to the birthday list, please contact Pat Flory [atpatflory@gmail.com](mailto:atpatflory@gmail.com)

## WELCOMING FALL AND LOOKING AHEAD TOGETHER

A note from the Claiborne Association President

Don't you love these cooler days we've been having? Hopefully, they're here to stay—though you know how unpredictable Maryland weather can be. Like they say... if you don't like it, just wait five minutes, and it will probably change.

Before the summer got completely away from us, Suzanne and I recently slipped away for a long weekend at the beach in Cape May, New Jersey. The beach town is beautiful and our time there was relaxing, but we couldn't help but reflect on how grateful we are to call Claiborne and the Eastern Shore home.

At its September meeting, the new Board took a moment to reflect as well. The Board reviewed the past year's accomplishments and laid the foundation for the new fiscal year. Kicking off the agenda, Treasurer Phil Sayre reported that the association remains on solid financial footing. Martha Hamlyn shared highlights of the Program Committee, which has done a terrific job keeping us connected over the past year, most recently with an end-of-the-summer movie—thanks to the new movie czar, Paul Cooper—and a potluck featuring breakfast for dinner. Several ongoing projects from last year are still in motion, including: A video capturing Claiborne's history, as told by longtime residents A welcome and informational brochure for new neighbors Refreshing the Hall gardens and grounds, as well as the Hall interior A review of the acoustics and stage lighting in the Hall The Board will continue to meet on the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome—we'd love to hear from you.

With warm regards,  
Rob Todd, Claiborne Association President

## ROYALTY IN OUR MIDST

(and not just the two princesses but the guy in the middle too)



Claiborne's Own, Captain Jake Flory, took a prestigious third in the 66<sup>th</sup> Annual Deal Island Labor Day Skipjack Race (No. not out of three... but out of 12 boats!).



Photo credit: Lee Hobson, Nathan of Dorchester volunteer and crew

About the race, Jake said, "I have to say it's been an honor to captain the Nathan of Dorchester, especially in the Deale Island annual Labor Day race. To be side by side with truly historic and legendary vessels is something to be proud of. The Nathan is the youngest (only 22 years old) in the fleet. To sail to and race at Deale Island makes me feel truly in the soul of a rare and historic gathering of people and boats. Just remember that the skipjacks are the last commercial sailing fleet in North America!"

Jake went on to report, "This year the weather was perfect, and we had three beautiful days of sailing. We came in third place which is the third time we've finished third in the last 10 years. It's time to move up to first!"

"This year, our passengers included Miss Maryland Volunteer and Miss Maryland Teen Volunteer.

But sincerely, being a captain of the Skip Jack Nathan of Dorchester since 2014 is a privilege."

## WHEN CLAIBORNE BRIDGED THE CHESAPEAKE

Marty Bolinger

For four decades, our village of Claiborne served as the vital hub for cross-Chesapeake travel. The forthcoming book, *When Claiborne Bridged the Chesapeake*, seeks to capture that history, and use it to describe the broader evolution of transport operations across the Chesapeake from the Civil War to the Cold War.

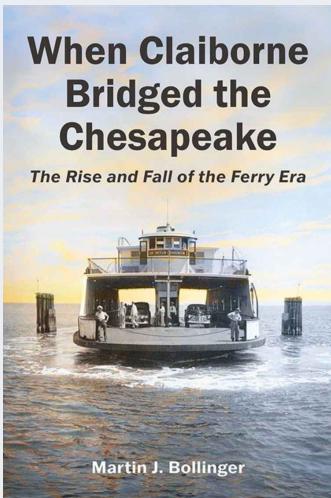
### Quick History

In 1890, a rail-transfer ferry operated by the Baltimore & Eastern Shore Railroad (B&ES) brought railcars from Bay Ridge (near Annapolis) to Claiborne, from which passengers could then continue their rail journey as far as Ocean City. However, this was soon abandoned.

From 1891 to 1924, B&ES passengers would instead take a steamer from Baltimore to Claiborne and then board the train to points east. B&ES's assets were acquired in 1894 by the Baltimore, Chesapeake & Atlantic Railway (BC&A).

Competition emerged in 1912 Annapolis-Claiborne service was established by the Eastern Shore Development Steamship Company (ESDSC). This is the origin of what later evolved into Claiborne Landing. It offered cheaper and faster service to Claiborne, but BC&A's "dirty tricks" destroyed this upstart after only four years.

In 1919 the Claiborne-Annapolis Ferry started operations. While most think of the car ferry as the most important part of Claiborne history, the reality is that Claiborne served as the car-ferry hub for only 11 years. In 1930, the primary link was shifted to Matapeake and by 1938 all cross-Bay service to Claiborne had ended, leaving only the short shuttle to Romancoke.



## Program Committee Has Plans for You!

### So. Save these Dates:

In tribute to the late Robert Redford, our new movie czar, Paul Cooper, will be showing *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* on **Wednesday, October 1, at 7:00**. Bring a beverage if you'd like, and be prepared to make the jump off that cliff!

The 2025-'26 Claiborne Concert Series (thanks to Carpe Diem Arts and Talbot Arts) begins on **Sunday, October 12**, with *Trio Caliente*. We will hear sounds we haven't heard at the Village Hall before: flamenco, Latin pop and Brazilian jazz! Details in your inbox soon.

On **Sunday afternoon, Oct. 24**, Chris Noyes and her musical family will anchor a Halloween Singaround. You may have come to last Spring's singaround, where everyone shared music, songs, poems, stories, knock-knock jokes, or just enjoyed listening to others share. This time you might want to bring along a Fall or Halloween-themed offering. It's truly a community event, and fun for all ages!

**Finally, November 1 -**  
Ampersand concert - 4:00

### Things I Learned

- Baltimore was paranoid about being supplanted by Philadelphia in its connection to the Eastern Shore. Five times (1886, 1916, 1930, 1938 and 1946) this fear drove major decisions about the transit infrastructure across the Bay.
- The selection of Claiborne was a flawed decision based on a foolish business plan, one that predictably failed after only nine months. But even bad decisions "have legs." It took 40 years for geography to strike back.
- The Claiborne-Annapolis Ferry, despite its friendly and laid-back image, was an extremely aggressive monopolist, foiling about half-a-dozen potential competitors between 1920 and 1938. It had its own repertoire of "dirty tricks."
- Claiborne's "golden era" was in the early 1920s, when both the car ferry and rail-steamer operation connected to the village. Claiborne had two general stores, two churches, several B&Bs, and a hotel, restaurant, bakery, café, and gas station.
- About two-dozen steamers and ferries served Claiborne over the years. By far the most important was the steamer *Cambridge*, which served Claiborne for 30 years, far longer than any of the car ferries. (Note: the *Gov. Herbert R. O'Conor, B.F. Sherman*, and *Gov. Harry W. Nice* never actually served the Claiborne route.)
- Claiborne has a "hidden history." Its hotel was operated by a woman arrested four times in Delaware for running a brothel. The Al-Mar Inn, on the ferry pier, appears to have been the center of local bootlegging. The Holy Innocents Chapel was moved from Old Claiborne to Claiborne in 1921, in part because Old Claiborne was becoming a "colored" neighborhood.
- The history of the steamer and ferry operations is a "window" into the broader social and economic trends of the time. Labor strife, "Jim Crow" segregation, and corporate anti-trust policies all played a major role in the transport operations.
- Claiborne's legacy is still around us, though fading. The last ferry operating in Claiborne was scrapped only in 2022. Two terminal buildings in Claiborne are now homes here. The restaurant at the ferry wharf is now a cottage in Bozman. The original train terminal is the small boat shed at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum.

The book will be released on October 27 from Johns Hopkins University Press. All author proceeds go to the Talbot Historical Society and the Maryland Center for History and Culture.

On November 6, 2025, Marty will give a lecture on his book at the Maryland Center for History and Culture, 610 Park Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21201. The lecture begins promptly at 6:30 pm. A light reception will follow.

## **JIMMY MICHAELANGELO AND CLARENCE RIVERA: The Little-Known Story of Claiborne's Mural Artists**

Jim Richardson

(John Scott, editor of this month's Clarion, asked me to write about my collaboration with fellow Claibornite, Renny Johnson, in creating several murals over the years.)

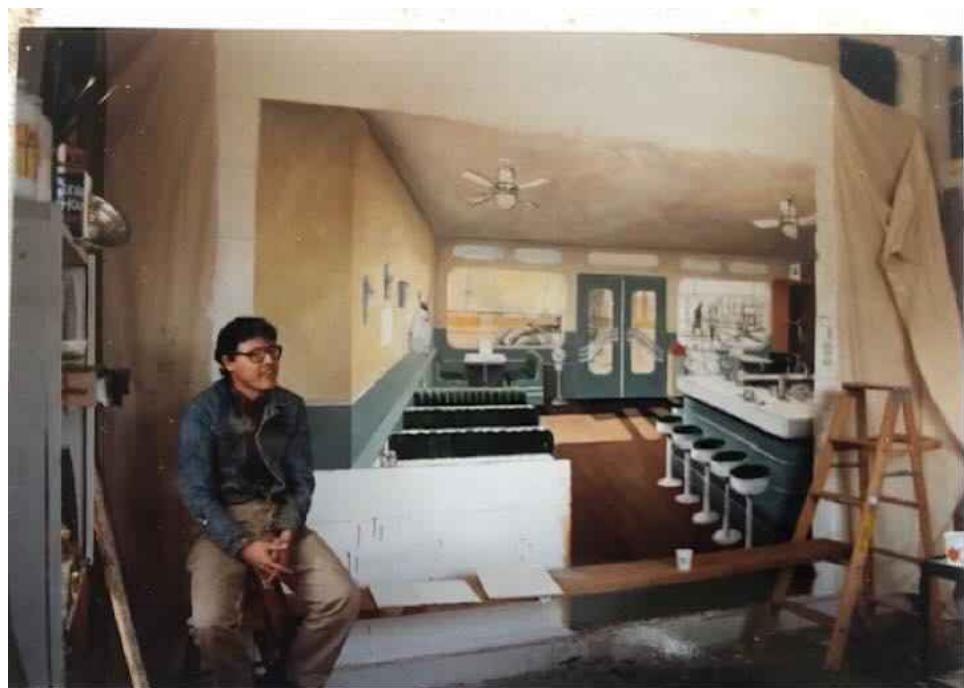


One doesn't often hear about murals being made by more than one person, but it is common and also necessary. Just think about all the public murals created on the sides of buildings; they are most often painted by small teams of artists so that they can be completed in a reasonable time-frame. Michelangelo had many apprentices helping him paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, and Diego Rivera must have had help painting the massive History of Mexico at the National Palace in Mexico City.

My first mural was done without Renny, but it marked the time that I realized how much fun I could have with a six-inch brush and five-gallon cans of paint. In 1979, I was commissioned by the Prince George's County Arts Council to create a mural in celebration of the county's 200th anniversary. It was huge, 46 feet tall by 65 feet wide, and painted on 52 plywood panels. It took me six months to paint in an empty schoolroom located in Baltimore's Little Italy. The finished mural was installed for a short period of time on the exterior of the New Carrollton Inn, a tall ten-story building located just off the beltway. When it came down shortly after we moved to Claiborne and began making our one-story building into a three-story house, I was delighted to be able to claim all of those plywood panels, most of which became material for cabinets and floor underlayment. Today, if you look inside any of our kitchen cabinets or look up at the ceiling of our second story porch after our screens are removed for the winter, you can see portions of the original mural.



My friend Renny Johnson and I began painting murals together soon after Martha and I moved here. He obtained a commission for a private mural to be installed in an entertainment room of a wealthy businessman living in Annapolis. Our client was enamored with the popular movie, Back to the Future, and requested that we paint the interior of the diner where young Marty McFly, meets his high-school aged father. The plan included a real booth and jukebox so that the room could function as a place to sit and enjoy an ice cream float. The mural was painted in a small unheated building located near the water on Mrs. Burling's estate. Near the end of our project, I remember our client landing his private helicopter one day next to our painting studio in order to inspect our progress.



Our second mural was commissioned by a mutual friend who had grown up in Claiborne and who had renovated the house she grew up in. She asked us to paint a mural that would begin on a wall on the first floor and continue up the stairs and along a hallway on the second floor. We first anchored the mural by painting the huge ash tree that stood on the lawn, and added her young daughter being pushed on a swing by her mother. In the foreground is a portrait of their favorite cat. Beginning at the bottom of the stairs and under the spreading branches of the tree, a herd of dairy cows grazes, and further up the stairs is an image of her father and his grandson sitting together on a tractor. Up on the second floor, we continued the mural by including the upper branches of the tree and a scene looking out on Tilghman Creek with a workboat or two. On one of the branches, a large osprey nest spills down over the frame of a bedroom doorway.

Our third and final mural was commissioned by the Old Wye Mill Museum about twenty-five years ago in honor of the mill's 300th anniversary. It is our smallest mural. Like the other murals, it was painted on treated canvas that could be rolled up and delivered to the site. This collaborative

mural was painted in Renny's studio one winter behind his house. It is a bird's-eye view of Wye Mills including many of the buildings, farms and waterways that were there around the time of the Revolutionary War. I still remember how easily Renny and I worked together. Many times one of us would say, "I'm tired of painting trees," or "I'm having difficulty painting this cart and horse," and the other would gladly come to help. It was a wonderful time to be an artist!



### **BEWARE OF ALPHA-GAL AND THE LONE STAR TIC** (Hheretofore known locally as "Renny's Tic").



The bite of a lone star tick can trigger an allergy to a carbohydrate called alpha-gal, which is found in red meat (beef, pork, lamb, venison) and, for some people, in dairy products as well. This condition is known as alpha-gal syndrome (AGS), an allergy to a sugar molecule which is present in most mammals (so in red meat like beef, pork, lamb, in some dairy, gelatin, etc.). A person develops the allergy when a tick bite, most notably from the lone star tick, introduces that sugar.

Symptoms of AGS are often delayed: they may occur 2–6 hours after eating red mammal meat or other mammal-derived products, not immediately like many other allergies. They range from hives, swelling of



One Maryland One Book -St. Michaels Branch Library will hold its OMOB discussion of Kin: Rooted in Hope by Carole Boston Weatherford. Copies are available for checkout at both TCFL branches and on Libby. Discussion will be held offsite at the St. Michaels Community Center from 1 PM - 2 PM. This event will be on October 2, 2025. There will also be a book talk with the author at Chesapeake College on Tuesday October 7 at 6:00p.m. These events are free and open to the public.

The Talbot County Free Library is having a Centennial Celebration, on October 16th at 6:00p.m. at the Easton Branch. We have been connecting our community for 100 years. Join us for a night of roaring revelry and jazz age charm. Tickets \$100 per person may be purchased from our website [www.tcfl.org](http://www.tcfl.org)

lips/tongue/throat, gastrointestinal symptoms, to more severe outcomes like anaphylaxis. There is currently no cure; managing AGS usually involves avoiding foods and products that contain alpha-gal.

#### About the Lone Star

The lone star tick is the species most strongly associated with AGS in the U.S. It is named for a distinctive white spot ("lone star") on the back of (especially adult female) ticks. When a lone star tick feeds on mammals, its saliva contains or triggers alpha-gal which can sensitize humans.

An important factor is the tick's geographic spread. Historically more common in the southeastern U.S., the lone star tick has been expanding its range. Climate change, environmental changes, and host animal population shifts seem to be facilitating that expansion.

#### Maryland Trends:

- Reporting and local tick-testing services show that the lone star tick has become more common in Maryland in recent years. For example, one news article from Baltimore quotes an entomologist (Dr. Michael Raupp, University of Maryland) saying that among ticks submitted for identification in their service, the lone star tick has become "the most common tick" in recent years.
- Maryland falls within the mid-Atlantic region, which is among the U.S. Census regions where suspected AGS cases are heavily clustered in the maps of CDC data.

For more info about alpha-gal, check out:

<https://www.cdc.gov/alpha-gal-syndrome/about/index.html/>  
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39053323/>

#### **TRACKING SAV IN CLAIBORNE**

Maura Bollinger

The 2025 season for submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) is winding down though you'll notice a few stalwarts still rooted, just like those late blooming tomatoes in the garden. In Claiborne waters we generally see two species of SAV. Although at first glance it would be fair to assume they were one species. The first species of SAV to arrive in our area is Horned Pondweed which emerged on the early side in April this year and started fading in July. The second species is Widgeon Grass which usually emerges in late May/June and lasts through August and even into September. My rule of thumb to distinguish Horned Pondweed is to look for tiny horns where the blades meet the stem.

**Notes from Shauna  
Beulah, St. Michaels  
Branch Manager,  
Talbot County Free  
Library**



The builder is on track with his construction. They hope to be finished in November. We are working with that date, to get everything on the library's end ready to move in and be able to open in February 2026. (Unfortunately, I don't have a specific date, yet.) After construction is finished we have to make sure the painting, flooring, carpet and furnishings are all in place. Then there are the library materials to bring in and put in place. Those materials are coming from three locations. We have things in storage, items in our temporary location which will go back and then a wonderful new collection of materials that will be delivered. It is a work in progress.



Over the Summer Claiborne SAV monitors (the Scotts, James Vatne and myself) ventured out in our kayaks to survey the SAV beds in our area. Our data is then submitted to ShoreRivers to analyze. New this year ShoreRivers enlisted volunteer licensed drone pilots to measure the beds in the mid and upper shore, including Broad Cove. This was a huge help as areas can be identified and measured, then kayaking volunteers can identify the species and whether seeds have appeared yet.

I have always enjoyed going out in my kayak to survey the SAV. Quietly gliding over the beds I'll spy schools of fish, a swimming crab or two-it is so peaceful. The Horned Pondweed beds in Tilghman Creek and up toward Point had a healthy showing, in the Cove beds appeared near the landing and around the edges of the wetlands. The Widgeon Grass seemed to do particularly well by the Creek entrance with beautiful meadows of it far into August. So, looking forward to 2026 and hoping to see more areas with robust SAV beds.



## CLAIBORNE EXTENDED FAMILY TO FEATURE IN MACY'S PARADE

Word just in from Renny that his brother-in-law, Bingo Bob, his sister-in-law, Bingo Betty and his Neice, Binglette Abby -- who have performed in our own Claiborne Hall -- have been invited to participate as CLOWNS in this year Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade... how exciting!!!...

Next month, we'll learn what part they'll play in the parade and where they'll be located during the event so we can catch a glimpse of them performing...

## THE CZAR HAS RETIRED! LONG LIVE THE CZAR!

Thanks to Renny Johnson for his many years keeping us entertained during the chill of winter with his creative movie selection and for figuring out how the Rube Goldberg-like setup to get connectivity to the Hall. And thanks to Paul Cooper for taking over the reins/reigns going forward.



## L'ULTIMA CENA (of the month)

Photos by Sarah Sayre



### GET INVOLVED, STAY INFORMED

Lots of things are happening for the Claiborne Association and you are always invited to hear first-hand what is being planned and to express your ideas. All are welcome when the Association Board meets; usually on the second Thursday of the month at 7 p.m.

For more about Claiborne and the Association, check out:

<https://www.claibornemd.org>