

History of the Mayo Peninsula

Shellfish

For centuries the Chesapeake Bay and its many estuaries have been this area's livelihood, though she is showing signs of damage from the constant withdrawal of her treasures. Local watermen still use the Bay for their livelihood, but many watermen must supplement their income with part-time trades to make up for the smaller harvests and dramatic fluctuations in the health and production of sealife in the Bay. Our Chesapeake Bay's seafood has long been recognized as some of the finest in the US.

Tobacco

Besides the harvests of the Chesapeake Bay, our area is well known for a product that was given to us by the native Indian tribes of North America - Tobacco. Maryland has long been famous for the quality and fertility of her soil to produce the finest tobacco around and it has been shipped around the globe. Tobacco, known as the "Golden Leaf" was used as money for trade and purchases for over 150 years in Anne Arundel County, Maryland. With the diminishing profit in tobacco growth, many new crops have become popular to the area such as corn, soy and various fruits. Most of the farms on the Peninsula are long gone today.

Real Estate

With the number of legal professionals and government leaders in our area, Annapolis and the surrounding waterfront areas have

become the residential oasis for some of the most influential business people and politicians in our country. This growth has put premiums on the waterfront property and isolated vistas in our area and has put AnneArundelCounty on the Real Estate sales fast-track. Property values in our area have been historically more stable than any other county around us.

With the advent of the automobile and fast, new interstate highways, our area became a full-time suburbia for our two closet major cities: Washington, DC and Baltimore, Maryland starting in the 1960's.

Much of the real estate sales in this area began to take off after the rebuilding of the US economy after the stock market crash of 1929. With rejuvenated economic-growth in the US in the 1930's, successful businessmen and families from Washington and Baltimore began to look for summer vacation cottages to invest in while enjoying their new-found wealth. Many city-folk ventured out to the countryside (areas like the MayoPeninsula) and found real estate building lots for very fair prices.

The salesman had many gimmicks and incentives to sell, what at the time was mostly swampland, to prospective buyers. I have heard from several elderly friends in HeraldHarbor that they received their building lots in HeraldHarbor (near Crownsville) free, in exchange for purchasing subscriptions to the Washington Herald Newspaper in the 30's.

Most of the old beach communities had makeshift beaches for bathing and a very laid-back social climate that attracted the busy city buyers who wanted a little peace and quiet, as well as the peace of mind for investing in "vacation" homes.

Most of Selby on the Bay's lots were bought up by individuals seeking a cottage by the beach in a communal setting that was rural, but not too secluded and loaded with the simple pleasures of peninsula life. Approximately a 60 minute drive (way back when) down Central Avenue from DC, and a little less to Baltimore, families could visit on the weekends and possibly a few

weeks at a time over the summer months and forget about the smog and the hustle of the city.

Because the original homes built here were not four season homes, many of the original cottages in the area had little to no insulation or heating systems. Many had very little closet space and most had screened-in porches because they were not designed for "all-season" living.

When you brought family and friends down to stay at your cottage, you would open the windows and air-out your cottage and if you had indoor plumbing you would turn on the water pump and fill the "winterized" water system. If you had power to your cottage you would install the fuses, test them and then survey your cottage for any winter damage.

Boating

Here on the Mayo Peninsula, where the watermen have made such an impact on the stable economic growth of our area - it is sad to see the watermen unable to make a consistent decent living. The cost of equipment and the radical swings in production are sending the independent waterman looking for other means of making a living. The working boats of yesterday are now far outnumbered by the pleasure and luxury boats we now see traversing Selby Bay.

Decades ago, pleasure boating was a rich man's sport that the average family simply could not afford. In the past few decades, with the advent of cheaper, more cost-effective means of manufacturing pleasure craft - boating popularity has grown tremendously. Along with this increase in boating popularity has come an increase in boating-related businesses that have been very helpful for the economic growth of our area. The pleasure boating industry (sail or power) has made its economic mark on Annapolis and the many marinas that are scattered throughout the rivers converging on the Chesapeake.

Big Business

A luxury boat has always been the ideal place for big business to get a favor done or corner a deal, boating - predominantly sailboating has become the mainstay of the deal-makers in our area. The sailboat and powerboat sales shows clog the streets of Annapolis in a yearly ritual that would have one wondering if the President was in town.

In the "Sailing Capital of the World", boats of many types are sold, traded, bartered and leased to some of the most powerful people in the world. Many people in our area love boating so much that they live on their crafts all year long - it makes sense when you think that many of these boats cost more than some of our residences in our area.

Reference: Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland & reference text "History of Mayo, Maryland", see below

History of Mayo, MD

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Much of the historical data/ information used in the history section of our website comes from "The History of Mayo, Maryland" a book written by a local resident, Caroline L. Britt Mullins.

The author has recently written another book, named "Coming Into Her Own", 1998.

Caroline L. Britt Mullins has lived in AnneArundelCounty for fifty years. Her roots on her grandfather's side date back to the 1600's (the beginning of AA Co., Annapolis, St. Mary's City and KentIsland's First Settlement. Her great-grandfather came from Germany and settled in Mayo in the late 1800's in the section that

is now called Germantown on Whitemarsh Creek. Her grandfather and relatives built the home that her mother still lives in today. She is proud to be from that area of Mayo and of her roots.

Ms. Mullins also specializes in Genealogy Research for families.

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