

RiverTalk MD

**A Daytripper's Guide
to Perryville, Port Deposit,
and the
Lower Susquehanna Greenway**



- easy-to-read map
- calendar of events
- local stories
 - Towering Landscape
 - Port Deposit Walking Tour
 - Kayak Launch
 - Great Dining
 - PowerBoat Race
 - Cruises

Spring/Summer 2004

FREE

2ND ANNUAL "DIAMOND IN THE ROUGH" TRIATHALON
July 10, 2004 ~ Perryville Community Park
Swim 1 mi. In the Upper Chesapeake Bay • Bike 27 mi. in Beautiful
NW Cecil Co. • Run 5 mi. Along the Susquehanna River
see Calendar of Events

The River Talks

We survived Hurricane Isabel last September, a very cold winter, and a spring that is already touting July temperatures! But for all of us who love to be in the outdoors, to stroll through the towns and small cities that still have a sense of community, all of this is mere adventure!

There is a great deal of excitement throughout the area this year. Waterfronts are changing as condos pop up. But that doesn't mean it's all dour news. The marinas, both private and public, continue to be more 'people-friendly.' Perryville has completed their kayak launch at the Community Park while Port Deposit begins plans for their jetty and marina improvements.

Ragin' on the River APBA power boat races will take place for the first time in Port Deposit; while Perryville brings back the 2nd Annual "Diamond in the Rough" Triathlon. Portside Grille in Port Deposit has partnered with Capt.'s David B. Gulick and Marty A. Smith to offer tours and custom charters aboard "Chessie," a 52' catamaran.

There are wonderful new eateries that should keep you coming back. I have a policy to never offer a favorite restaurant, instead I explain that I have a favorite food at each of them. My need to be a member of Curves© attests to that! Main Street Station has opened a wonderful little coffee shop in Port Deposit. It's a great place to enjoy your morning coffee or tea, a munchie, possibly the newspaper, and definitely a chat with some of the 'locals.'

Nancy Kinder has opened Moretti's Café & Gallery. Some of you may remember when she had Abbe's Gallery Café in Havre de Grace. Her eclectic menu offers homemade salsas made fresh daily, Southwestern entrées, and a full bar with

a fine selection of wines and beer. Add to that a waterview deck and side porch seating and you have a recipe for a great time. Being a custom frame shop, Nancy always has a delightful arrangement of art hanging on the walls for your enjoyment and for sale.

Right next door to Moretti's, Michele Short has taken ownership of the Winchester Hotel. This restaurant has been refreshed and is much more inviting. They, too, offer waterview dining on the deck. Their new fruit smoothies served with or without alcohol is the latest rage here. All of the restaurants in Port Deposit offer a variety of entertainment. Stroll through town and check them out. Before you leave, be sure to take a pleasant drive up river to the Union Hotel Restaurant and Tavern.

Returning to Perryville, RoundBelly Café offers a unique drive-through/carry-out that's better than mom-used-to-make! Fresh foods to fit every taste is the motivation behind Kim Rakes desire to open the café. And check out Duck Inn! New owner Cathy Williams has done an outstanding job inside and outside this restaurant. She mentions that those of you who remember it as the "Island Inn" will definitely want to return and see for yourselves the improvements she's made. Besides great food like the Clint Burger and the best crabcakes in town, Duck Inn also offers entertainment. Be sure to reserve a table for their July 17th Murder Mystery.

These are only the latest additions to our advertisers. Don't miss a thing. Visit all of our advertisers and decide on your own 'favorites.' Return again and again to an ever-improving choice of eateries, parks and waterfront events. Then take a few moments to just sit and listen to the river talk. Happy Summer!

Warmly,

Ellie

Ellie



RiverTalk MD

Editor/Publisher: Ellie Mencer
Contributing Editor: Erika Quesenbery
Ad Sales: Ellie Mencer
Typesetting/Layout: SR&B Advertising
Printer: Homestead Publishing

Distribution: 20,000 copies distributed throughout the area and at the I-95 Welcome Centers
Thanks to: Scott Hager, George Wagner, Havre de Grace Tourism Harford County Tourism, and Cecil County Tourism

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Perryville's Changing Landscape

Quite often we rarely notice a change in our community unless it directly affects us. So I thought I might mention two items that I personally believe are great additions to Perryville's unique growth.

In the editorial I mentioned the kayak launch at the Community Park. This photo shows you the perfect spot that it is - picturesque, perfect for putting your kayak into the water, and easy due to the flat area around it. Add the wonderful trees that offer shade and the Town of Perryville has created the absolutely perfect solution for the kayaker and a wonderfully visual spot for everyone to enjoy.

This unique building is not quite finished but is already outstanding! NBRFS Financial of Rising Sun MD is located in the first floor of the 3-story building. As mentioned in the Fall/Winter 2003 edition, there are 2 more floors of space available for rent. Amenities even include an elevator. There is no doubt in my mind that Debbie and David George have created a wonderful landmark with this clock tower.

The other addition is the new "Tower" at Riverside Deli. I have noticed that this is visible as you cross the Harem Bridge on Route 40 going into Perryville. In the fall when the leaves are off the trees, I would imaginethat you'll be able to see it from the water as well. Most certainly it will definitely catch the eye of anyone who heads down Aiken Avenue toward the river.



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2004

It is *highly recommended* that you check with the contacts listed when making specific plans to visit for a particular event, or e-mail info@RiverTalkMD.com

"CHESSIE" Cruises – offering historic cruises of the Lower Susquehanna River and Upper Chesapeake Bay leaving from her home berth at PortSide Grille in downtown Port Deposit and Tidewater Grille in Havre de Grace (watch for Perryville location coming soon.)

Wed* & Fri. departs:

Portside Grille	Tidewater Grille
6:30p	7:00p
7:30p	8:00p
8:30p	9:00p

Saturday departs:

Portside Grille	Tidewater Grille
2:30p	3:00p
3:30p	4:00p
4:30p	5:00p
6:30p	7:00p
7:30p	8:00p
8:30p	9:00p

Sunday departs:

Portside Grille	Tidewater Grille
2:30p	3:00p
3:30p	4:00p
4:30p	5:00p

*Diners at Portside Grille ride free on Wednesdays. For more info call or a private charter call: 443-466-3237 or visit www.elkrivertours.com



JUNE

Thursdays – Rising Sun

CONCERT in the PARK at 7p – bring a lawn chair or blanket and enjoy local bands. Wilson Avenue – Rising Sun Town Park. Info: 410-658-5353

June 1-27 – Cecil Community College PHOTOGRAPHY RETROSPECTIVE OF COVERED BRIDGE THEATRE – Part II. 9:30a-5p Monday-Friday. Gallery Exhibition featuring photographs of shows done by the Covered Bridge Theatre over the past 23 years. CCC Cultural Center, Seahawk Drive, North East. Call 410-287-1023

June 5 – Rising Sun

SUNFEST 10a-5p. Crafters, food, car show, entertainment. Various locations in downtown Rising Sun. Info: 410-658-5353

June 18-19, 20, 25-26-27 – Cecil Community College "A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC" – 8p on 18, 19, 25, 26 and 3p on 20 & 27. CCC Cultural Center, Seahawk Drive, North East. Info: 410-287-5433

JULY

Thursdays – Rising Sun

CONCERT in the PARK at 7p – bring a lawn chair or blanket and enjoy local bands. Wilson Avenue – Rising Sun Town Park. Info: 410-658-5353

July 4 – Port Deposit

INDEPENDENCE DAY "CHESSIE" CRUISE – departs Portside Grille in Port Deposit at 6:30p. Take a leisurely cruise on the Susquehanna, anchor near the "blats" for a perfect view of the Havre de Grace fireworks display and return to Port Deposit at 10p. Light snacks and Cash Bar! Only \$30/person. Reserve now: 443-466-3237 or e-mail: info@elkrivertours.com

July 10 – Perryville

"DIAMOND in the ROUGH" TRIATHLON to begin and end in the Perryville Community Park, 8A – 2P. Swim – 1 mile in the Chesapeake Bay; Bike – 27 miles through beautiful northwestern Cecil County; Run – 5 miles along the spectacular Susquehanna River. Regional Club Championship – 2nd year in a row; USA Clydesdale & Filly Racing Federation and a World Championship Qualifier. Unlimited parking and many vantage points. Spectators who watch from the Community Park MUST arrive before 8A and cannot leave until the race concludes, usually shortly after noon. More info or to enter e-mail: nsemmel@piranha-sports.com or call 302-836-4981 or 410-642-6066

July 23-25 – Port Deposit

CROWNLINER OWNERS EVENT – Check with the Tomes Landing Marina at 410-378-3343 for the time activities connected with this event.

– continued on page 5 –

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2004

- continued from page 4 -

AUGUST

Thursdays - Rising Sun
CONCERT in the PARK at 7p - bring a lawn chair or blanket and enjoy local bands. Wilson Avenue - Rising Sun Town Park. Info: 410-658-5353

August 20 - Tailwinds Farm
HORSEPLAY - 6p. A history of man & horse. Tailwinds Farm, Rt. 272, between North East & Rising Sun. Info: 410-658-8187

August 21 - Port Deposit
NORTHERN CHESAPEAKE POKER RUN - Tomes Landing Marina - times to be announced - for more info or to register call Jack & Diane Conrad at 410-378-3343 (Please note that pre-registrations are on the 20th this year!)

CRABFEAST sponsored by the Water Witch Fire Company at the Marina Park in Port Deposit. Times are to be announced. Contact: Brad Dixon at 410-378-4522

SEPTEMBER

Thursdays - Rising Sun
CONCERT in the PARK at 7p - bring a lawn chair or blanket and enjoy local bands. Wilson Avenue - Rising Sun Town Park. Info: 410-658-5353

OCTOBER

Oct 2-3 - Rising Sun
CIVIL WAR RE-ENACTMENT WEEKEND 10a-5p. Living history presentation, Wilson Avenue, Rising Sun Town Park. Info: 410-658-5353

Oct 9 - Perryville
FALL APPRECIATION DAYS PARADE & AUTUMNFEST - parade begins at 10A, festival begins at 9A adjacent to Rodgers Tavern. Crafts, food, entertainment, games, etc. Parade info: 410-642-6066; Autumnfest info: 410-642-3688

Oct 22 - Perryville
CHILDREN'S HALLOWEEN PARTY, 7-9p, parking lot behind town hall, children must be in costume and accompanied by an adult. Features games, prizes, music and "treats." Info: 410-642-6066 or e-mail townhall@perryvillemd.org

DECEMBER

Dec 4 - Port Deposit
ANNUAL CANDLELIGHT TOUR - begins at noon, tour historical homes, churches and businesses, bake sales and refreshments, meet Santa. Musical programs at the churches. Sponsored by the Port Deposit Heritage Corp. Info: 410-378-4480

Dec 4 - Perryville
HOLLY TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY - 4-6p, B&O Railroad's Travelers Christmas Tree, Holly Tree Park off Jackson Station Road. Info: 410-392-4537 or 410-658-3000

Dec 5 - Perryville
LIGHTING of the TOWN CHRISTMAS TREE, 4:30p - 6p, corner of Roundhouse Drive & Broad Streets. Entertainment with caroling, Santa Claus and light refreshments. Info: 410-642-3688, 410-642-6066 or e-mail: townhall@perryvillemd.org

Dec 7 - Rising Sun
COMMUNITY CAROL SING - 7p. Annual carol sing with Santa - refreshments. Center Square. Info: 410-658-5353, free with canned good for needy.

Dec 19 - Tailwinds Farm
LIVE NATIVITY 6-8p, reading of the Christmas Story in the stable with music and animals; Tailwinds Farm, Route 272 between North East and Rising Sun. Donations appreciated. Info: 410-658-8187

Dec 24 - Port Deposit
LIONS CLUB ANNUAL CHRISTMAS SING ALONG - 7p. Sing carols in the town square as you await the arrival of Santa giving gifts to the children in front of the town Christmas tree, Main Street. Info: 410-378-9136

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A Fascinating Stroll Through Port Deposit

As a child, did you ever play in a falling down, old barn? Or maybe you pretended you were the proprietor of a huge estate while sitting among the ruins of an old house. Did you imagine yourself riding horseback through your estate, or possibly waiting for a foreign ship to dock at your shores bearing beautiful gifts?

Walking the Main Street of Port Deposit nudges these musings for me. Possibly, if you take some time to walk among the grand, granite buildings throughout the town, the fantasy-mind of your childhood will once again bring history alive for you.

This article highlights only five of the dozens of locations throughout Port Deposit that can give you a glimpse of a town that went through many incarnations. This information is from a Historic Walking Tour that can be downloaded from the town's website at: www.portdeposit.com

Center Street is a perfect place to begin. Center Street serves as the divide between North and South Main Street. If you walk toward the Susquehanna River, it will take you past the U.S. Post Office, across the railroad tracks to the Portside Grille and the "Riverwalk" at Tome's Landing. This public walkway offers outstanding waterfront vistas.

1 Center Street was known as Mrs. Murphy's Hotel and dates back to the early 1800s. The stone part of this house is constructed in the Federal style. Documents found in the Paw Paw Museum show that Mr. John Creswell owned this house in the 1820s. John A.J. Creswell, his son, was born here in 1828 and became Postmaster General under President Grant. His father died in 1836 leaving the house, a wharf and property, including most of the land on the upper side of the street as far as Rock Run, to Rebecca E. Webb Creswell, his widow. In 1850 Rebecca married Mr. Murphy and later established Murphy's Tavern. The property was sold to Dr. G.H. Richards, Sr. in 1920. He added a large wing to turn it into a hospital. Following his death the building was converted to an apartment house. Dr. G.H. Richards, Jr. had offices here from the late 1940s until his death in 1971.



1 Center Street

Point of Interest

In addition to Mrs. Murphy's Hotel there are two additional sites of interest on Center Street. On the right, just above the rear of the bank, is a cellar hole of the Howard M.E. Church, an Underground Railroad site. A hundred yards further, on the left, granite ruins mark the place of Armstrong Foundry.



20 N. Main Street

Walking north on Main Street you'll

pass a huge building at 20 North Main Street, The Banking House, c. before 1834. The circa date of 1834 is known only through reference to the building as having housed the "first bank in Port Deposit." In 1856 the property was owned by Edwin Wilmer who "owned wharves from which vessels sailed," and later became a trustee of the Methodist Church and is believed to have been the building in which early services were held. The 1860 census shows the property being owned by Nathaniel Gilmore, a 49-year old Sea Captain and, by 1880, the property owner is noted as J.J. Abrahams. In the 1890s it became part of the Jacob Tome Institute and housed faculty.



36 N. Main Street

The construction of the wings enlarged the building to house the Junior School and was named Jefferson Hall. The completed project was not seen by Jacob Tome for he died in 1898, but the structure remained a school until 1969 at which time it suffered a serious fire and was left in ruins until 1985. The building has been rehabilitated as a



16 S. Main Street

20-unit apartment building. The building is constructed of Port Deposit granite with an impressive Greek Revival portico, supported by stuccoed brick columns that extend across the façade.

In an effort to highlight the many variations of construction and building use, let's walk further north to 36 N. Main Street. Originally the land was part of the estate of John Creswell. A deed of September 4, 1838, recorded a 99-year lease on the lot of ground and premises. As was the practice of the time, the first floor provides space for commercial enterprise while the upper floors serve as living quarters. In the early 1920s, the Flabbi's operated a shoe shop in the store front and lived upstairs. The Graybeals had a bait and tackle shop in the middle of the century and today the storefront serves a commercial endeavor.

If you return to the center of town and head south, I've highlighted two more unique buildings. The Gerry House at 16 S. Main Street is circa 1813. This house is of late Georgian architectural style with Greek Revival porches. Lafayette was entertained here when he was a guest of the nation in 1824. At that time it was the home of Daniel and Mary R. Megrely. Lt. L.A.C. Gerry of Snow's Civil War Battery B inherited it from Cornelius Smith, who added the porches and railings. The columns were from trees razed on his land. The cast iron porch railing, embellished with sheaves of wheat between lyres, denotes Mr. Smith's pride as a farmer. The railings were said to have been cast in Baltimore. Note the granite slabs used to support the second story.

In 1981 the Port Deposit Heritage Corporation received this property from Miss Janette Westerfield, granddaughter of L.A.C. Gerry and descendent of Mrs. Cornelius Smith. The

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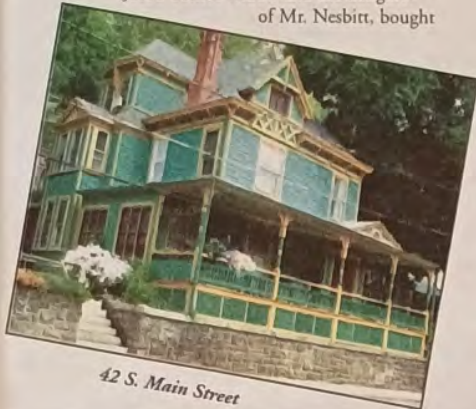
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A Fascinating Stroll Through Port Deposit

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exterior of this beautiful and historic house was restored by the PDHC and is now a private residence.

Last of the walking tours stops highlighted in this article is the Nesbitt House, located at 42 S. Main Street. Built in 1888 by Henry Clay Nesbitt, whose parents lived next door, this house is a very fine example of Victorian Queen Anne architecture. In 1902 Evalyn Tome France, Jacob Tome's widow and the daughter of Mr. Nesbitt, bought



42 S. Main Street

the house and added the south bay window rooms and tower.

In 1928, Mr. Chester T. Kimble bought the home and converted it to three apartments with the 3rd floor having its own entrance on High Street, as well as a separate address (#6 High Street). This house was later owned by Mrs. Ryan, the daughter of C.T. Kimble and her husband, H.F. Ryan (a past Mayor). The home has four very ornate tiled fireplaces, two sets of pocket doors, and beautifully carved arches as well as many other original details. It has its own bomb shelter, a relic of the Russian-U.S. confrontation over Cuba in the 1960s.

For more information regarding the Walking Tour and Port Deposit History, contact: Port Deposit Heritage Corporation
PO Box 101
Port Deposit, MD 21904
Phone: 410-378-4480

I might add that if you enjoy learning about the many historic buildings in Port Deposit, you would definitely want to schedule a visit during the annual Candlelight Tour. Many of the details mentioned can be seen during the open houses of the tour. For more information or tickets, contact the PDHC (above).

COURTESY REMINDER: All structures described in the "Walking Tour Guide" and this article are listed by street address. We ask that as you tour, please remember that

most of the buildings you are observing are private residences. Kindly do not intrude upon the privacy of the owners. Thank you.

*The information provided comes from the Walking Tour Guide created by the Port Deposit Heritage Corporation © 2004.

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Port Deposit Celebrates Labor Day Weekend With Ragin' on the River Event

Grab your camera. Be sure you have plenty of film. And bring binoculars if you have 'em. Grab a seat on the bleachers or the ground and prepare to sit back and enjoy the excitement of hydroplane races!

It's the first of what the Port Deposit Chamber of Commerce hopes will become an Annual Event – the 1st Annual American Power Boat Assoc. Inboard Race, Ragin' on the River! With the event expected to draw 2,000 people to their small community, organizers are busily planning and preparing to make it an exciting weekend. Scheduled for Labor Day weekend, Sept. 4 and 5 at Marina Park on the Susquehanna River, it's sure to be a great event.

Chaired by Tom Knight, representing the Chamber of Commerce, a portion of the proceeds from the weekend will be donated to the Cecil County Boys and Girls Clubs. This APBA-sanctioned race is expected to draw over 60 boats, competing in seven different races. With 2,000 spectators added to the boaters, crew, and vendors, the community has taken on a mighty task to create an event that is both fun and well organized.

With several community organizations and the help of dozens of volunteers, plans are underway to create parking areas with shuttle buses to move you throughout the area. Water taxis will carry boaters viewing the race from the water to the staging area. There will be craft and food vendors to add to the festivities, creating a Labor Day event for everyone to enjoy.

General admission (including a program) is \$5. Children 12 and under are free if accompanied by a paying adult. "Pit passes" will be available

for purchase allowing entry to the area where racers and boats wait between class races. Spectators must wear closed toe shoes to purchase pit passes. Never been to a power boat race? Are you wondering how to enjoy them? Here's an excerpt from Boat Racing 101, Thunder on the Narrows at Kent Island:

... The drivers are patiently waiting for the green flag and the five-minute cannon. When the cannon fires, the drivers will simultaneously start their countdown watches. The race will officially begin five minutes after the cannon fires. For the next four minutes, you will see the drivers running the race course to familiarize themselves with the course. Most importantly, they will be making timing runs to see how many seconds it takes from a landmark to the start line.

At about one minute and thirty seconds before the race, the boats will start jockeying for position. You will notice that at one minute a white flag flies and the cannon fires. Now it is starting to get interesting because in boat racing the start is half of the race!

As the electronic clock ticks away the last sixty seconds, you will see some drivers position themselves at or near the inside and some hanging behind to make what is known as a "hole shot." No matter what technique is used, the object is to cross the starting line when the clock says "0" – running flat out!

Got your attention? Well, mark your calendars and head to Port Deposit for a really fun Labor Day weekend. See ya there!

See ya there!

PORT DEPOSIT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

1st Annual

AMERICAN POWER BOAT ASSOCIATION INBOARD RACE

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Benefiting the
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Photo by Chef Mike Kuester

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