Steamboating on the Chesapeake began when a Captain Edward Trippe of Dorchester County, intrigued by Robert Fulton's successful launching of the Clermont on the Hudson River, persuaded two friends to join him in financing the construction of a steamboat. Built at a cost of $40,000, in Baltimore, the vessel was launched in 1813 and appropriately named Chesapeake. Her first trip was a one-day excursion run to Annapolis June 13, 1813 for $1 "here and the same back." Included was a cold dinner.

The following Monday the Chesapeake began her regular run from Bowley's Wharf, Baltimore, to Frenchtown on the Elk River near the head of the Bay. Passengers disembarked, were carried by stagecoach to New Castle, Delaware, and transferred there to a steamboat for Philadelphia. Shortly, other lines were competing for this north-bound trade and the Upper Bay became the New Jersey turnpike of that era.

Down Bay the invention of the steamboat brought about changes also. While not as many people wanted to travel from the tidewaters of Southern Maryland to Baltimore as apparently did from Baltimore to Philadelphia, there had been for many years a lively commerce between the Tidewater and Baltimore. Baltimore's growth as an industrial city offered markets to the farm and plantation owners along the southern waters. Energetic watermen had long engaged in the business of transporting all manner of farm produce, livestock and seafood to these markets.

Foremost among these watermen was Captain George Weems whose packets had been plying the waters of the Patuxent River and Western Shore of the Bay for some years. Recognizing the opportunities of steamboating, in 1817 Captain Weems chartered the steamboat Surprise and began a service lasting 88 years to landings along the Western Shore of the Chesapeake Bay and to the Patuxent, Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers and short-lived services to the Chester and Wicomico Rivers on the Eastern Shore.

After four years of service the Surprise was disposed of and Captain Weems purchased the Eagle built in Philadelphia in 1813. With the boat Captain Weem's career as a steamboat man almost ended before it really began. A terrific boiler explosion wrecked the steamer on April 19, 1824. Captain Weems was severely scalded. Doctors wanted to amputate his legs but he refused their advice and was safely nursed back to good health by his wife and daughters. One passenger was killed, reputedly to have been the state attorney of Maryland. (It is worth noting that this death is the only one resulting from accident on the Weems Line during its long history).

By 1827 Captain Weems had successfully prospered to the point that he was able to organize a company, the Weems Line, later to be known as the Weems Steamboat Company. The Patuxent, completed in 1828, was the first of thirteen steamers expressly built for the new organization. Put into service, Patuxent's route began in Baltimore at Maryland Wharf thence to Herring Bay (southern Anne Arundel County), landings on the lower Patuxent River, and on to the Rappahannock River to Fredericksburg, Virginia. The Rappahannock run was discontinued.

(Continued on Page 2)
but trips were added to the Wicomico River on the Eastern Shore which were discontinued after ten years.

Another steamer Planter was built by the company in 1845; Martha Washington was bought in 1854. These, with Patuxent, provided captaincies for Captain George Weems' three sons: Patuxent with Captain George Weems, Jr.; Martha Washington, Captain Mason L. Weems; Planter, Captain Theodore Weems. Later each of the sons was to have a steamer as his namesake. The George Weems built in 1858 replaced the Patuxent; Theodore Weems, 1872, replaced the George Weems which burned in 1871; and the Mason L. Weems, 1881, drew too much water for most Rappahannock River landings and was sold off to New York in 1890.

The Weems Line was not without competition as it endeavored to monopolize steamboating along the Bay's Western Shore and its three large rivers: Patuxent, Rappahannock and Potomac. Going back to the days of the Eagle there had been competition from the Maryland of the Maryland Steamboat Company for the Annapolis, West and South River route. Following the wreck of the Eagle, Captain Weems did not return to the Annapolis area but did have a landing at Fairhaven on Herring Bay.

In 1860 rivalry developed on the Patuxent itself - the Weems' family's own territory. The Patuxent Steam Express Company started a run with its boat, the Express. Apparently it was no match for the well-established Weems Line and soon withdrew from the route.

Buying out one's rivals is a strategy to end competition and the Weems Line made use of it. The Baltimore and Rappahannock Company, organized in 1830, had successfully pushed the Patuxent out of the Rappahannock route. For thirty years the company maintained its supremacy along that river but the effects of disastrous steamer fires could not be overcome.

In 1865 the company known simply as the Fredericksburg Line was owned and operated by Jacob Tome and Mason L. Weems, son of the Weems Line founder. These partners also owned the Baltimore and Susquehanna Steamboat Company. When Mason L. Weems died in 1874, his heirs bought out all the other Weems' heirs along with Jacob Tome's share of the Fredericksburg Line including the steamers Matilda and Wenonah.

Control of the Patuxent, Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers was further consolidated with the purchase of the Maryland and Virginia Steamboat Company in 1895. This line had been organized in 1888 by the Lewis Brothers in St. Mary's County. The Potomac and Sue were acquired along with all the wharves and other property of the short-lived company.

The importance of shipping in the Western Shore's Patuxent, Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers is manifested by the Maryland, Delaware and Virginia Railway Company's action when it named one of its
steamers *Three Rivers* in recognition of them. Ironically, the *Three Rivers* burned off Cove Point at the mouth of the Patuxent River July 5, 1924 with the loss of ten lives.

Although *Three Rivers* was not a Weems Line boat, the Weems Line did suffer some disastrous events in its long history. As mentioned earlier, the *Eagle*'s boiler explosion in 1824 killed one passenger and injured seven including Captain Weems who was nearly scalded to death. The *Planter* ran into Fort Carroll, an unfinished fortress in middle of Patapsco River, and sank in 1955 but was raised, put back into service and used by the Government during the Civil War. *George Weems* burned at her dock (1871). Her engine was salvaged and used in her new sister ship, *Theodore Weems* which in turn burned at her Light Street pier. Much of this boat was salvaged and rebuilt as the *St. Mary's*. The *St. Mary's* also burned in 1907, but this was after its sale from the Weems Line. The *Essex* burned in 1887 at the Light Street pier but was rebuilt. She burned a second time after purchase by Maryland, Delaware and Virginia Railway Line. Surviving that she foundered as a fisheries steamer off the New Jersey coast in 1923. The final fire in 1901

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steamer</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Route</th>
<th>Disposed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Eagle</em></td>
<td>Side WHEEL</td>
<td>42 x 26.5</td>
<td>Baltimore &amp; Patuxent</td>
<td>Boiler exploded, burned April 28, 1889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Towboat</em></td>
<td>Side WHEEL</td>
<td>42 x 26.5</td>
<td>Baltimore &amp; Patuxent</td>
<td>Sold to New Jersey, 1889, Abandoned 1888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Planter</em></td>
<td>Side WHEEL</td>
<td>35 x 26.5</td>
<td>Baltimore &amp; Patuxent</td>
<td>Abandoned 1891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Mary Washington</em></td>
<td>Side WHEEL</td>
<td>43 x 27.0</td>
<td>Baltimore &amp; Patuxent</td>
<td>Burning of 1891, used as cargo boat 1892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>George Weems</em></td>
<td>Side WHEEL</td>
<td>38 x 26.5</td>
<td>Baltimore &amp; Patuxent</td>
<td>Abandoned 1898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Welsh</em></td>
<td>Side WHEEL</td>
<td>38 x 26.5</td>
<td>Baltimore &amp; Patuxent</td>
<td>Scrapped 1943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Vernonah</em></td>
<td>Side WHEEL</td>
<td>44 x 27.0</td>
<td>Baltimore &amp; Patuxent</td>
<td>Sold to unknown, converted to freight 1901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>St. Mary's</em></td>
<td>Side WHEEL</td>
<td>44 x 26.0</td>
<td>Baltimore &amp; Patuxent</td>
<td>Abandoned 1901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Richmond</em></td>
<td>Side WHEEL</td>
<td>44 x 26.0</td>
<td>Baltimore &amp; Patuxent</td>
<td>Converted to excursion boat, burned 1899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Lancaster</em></td>
<td>Side WHEEL</td>
<td>44 x 26.0</td>
<td>Baltimore &amp; Patuxent</td>
<td>Converted to excursion boat, burned 1899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Patuxent</em></td>
<td>Side WHEEL</td>
<td>44 x 26.0</td>
<td>Baltimore &amp; Patuxent</td>
<td>Converted to excursion boat, burned 1899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Northumberland</em></td>
<td>Side WHEEL</td>
<td>44 x 26.0</td>
<td>Baltimore &amp; Patuxent</td>
<td>Converted to excursion boat, burned 1899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Calvert</em></td>
<td>Side WHEEL</td>
<td>44 x 26.0</td>
<td>Baltimore &amp; Patuxent</td>
<td>Converted to excursion boat, burned 1899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Middlesex</em></td>
<td>Side WHEEL</td>
<td>44 x 26.0</td>
<td>Baltimore &amp; Patuxent</td>
<td>Converted to excursion boat, burned 1899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Anne Arundel</em></td>
<td>Side WHEEL</td>
<td>44 x 26.0</td>
<td>Baltimore &amp; Patuxent</td>
<td>Converted to excursion boat, burned 1899</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
burned the Richmond to the water’s edge in Fredericksburg.

As destructive as were the fires and occasional wrecks steamboating survived and prospered. There was no livelier commerce in and out of Baltimore than that provided by the constant stream of steamboats in and out of the harbor joining it with tidewater Maryland and Virginia. Beginning in the 1870's short rail lines had brought Eastern Shore’s produce from the interior to steamboat landings high up on its many rivers and also directed much of its flow toward Philadelphia and other northern cities.

In early 1904 scuttlebutt around the Baltimore harbor had it that the Pennsylvania Railroad was backing a consolidation of three steamboat lines. Rumor became reality when in late 1904 the Maryland, Delaware and Virginia Railroad Company was formed with the Pennsylvania Railroad as its parent. The Weems Line was one of the three. On January 28, 1905, the Weems Steamboat Company was sold to M. D. & V. for $1,030,966.13. Included were all wharves, scows, property and the steamers Northumberland, Lancaster, Middlesex, Potomac, Ann Arundel, Calvert, Westmoreland, St. Mary’s, Essex and Caroline.

Steamboating on the Western Shore did not cease with the sale of the Weems Line. Though its distinctive stack marking of a red ball with the letter W upon it was gone, steamers still plied between Baltimore and the three rivers into the early 30’s. No rail line had really ever challenged the steamers between South River and the York; but the trucking industry with the construction of bridges and concrete roads penetrated the long peninsulas and brought steamboating to its end.

For those Marylanders old enough to have traveled the slow way, steamboating holds memories of honeymoons on the longer trips to the Rappahannock and Potomac; relaxing overnights up the Patuxent; a day’s excursion to Bay Ridge, Seaside (Chesapeake Beach) or Solomons. For the over-nighter the recollection of the sumptuous meals and elegant state-rooms, provided at a ridiculously low price by today’s standards, makes one yearn for the former days of steamboating on the Bay and rivers.

Information used in this article was obtained from the following sources:

Burgess, Robert H and Graham Wood. Steamboats on the Patuxent.
Calverly County Land Records, 1905.

Developmental Director Hired

In 1979, the Calvert Marine Museum began working with the firm of Cambridge Seven Associates, Inc., a Boston-based consulting firm which designed the National Aquarium in Baltimore, on a master plan for CMM. Based on careful study of our present programs, collections and facilities, as well as evaluation of current and future visitation projections, a comprehensive plan evolved. Central to the plan is creation of a boat basin and construction of a new exhibits building. The boat basin will greatly enhance the interpretive aspects of our program, for example providing on-the-water display areas for the Museum’s new over-crowded water craft and offering an estuarine “walk-through” for visitors. The new building will include substantially enlarged exhibit space – including an aquarium — and a 250-seat auditorium. Total cost of the development is now estimated at over $3 million. Needless to say, in order to undertake a plan of this magnitude, increased resources, especially financial ones, are essential.

For that reason, the Museum has contracted a Development Officer to expand our membership base and to raise funds from foundations, corporations and organizations – both locally and nationally. Thanks to an Institute of Museum Services grant, Judy Allen, who has been most recently with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, began as the Development Officer in mid-November. She has set out a one-year strategy, the key to which she feels is endorsement and support of the master plan from current Museum constituencies: “We need to be realistic both about the economy and about our needs at the Museum and in Calvert County generally. That doesn’t mean being pessimistic. I’ve found the interest and enthusiasm for the Calvert Marine Museum, from its conception back in 1964 to the formulation of the development plan now, to be impressive. That record, combined with the Museum’s excellent staff and the continued commitment and interest from our membership and leadership — both at the County level and on our own Board of Governors — will enable us to carry out what is an ambitious, but certainly an attainable plan.”

A three-dimensional model of the site plan is now on display at the Museum. You are encouraged to come in and view it. If you have questions or would like more information, please give Judy Allen a call at the Museum.
Fossil Facts

TIGER SHARK TEETH

G. cuvieri

G. contortus

G. aduncus

Frequently found in the sandy matrix and beach-wash of Calvert Cliffs are the fossilized teeth of *Galeocerdo cuvieri*, the modern tiger shark. First appearing during the mid-Pliocene epoch, it is perhaps the best known member of the Carcharhinidae or requiem shark family. Belonging to the genus Galeocerdo, a combination of Greek words meaning “cunning or weasel-like,” it derives the name “tiger” from the striped markings worn by its young.

The teeth of *G. cuvieri* are easily identified by their unique sickle shape. In a span of ten years an average size (lengths of eighteen feet are not uncommon) tiger shark may produce as many as 24,000 teeth. Recent studies indicate that young tigers may lose and replace their teeth every seven or eight days. Dentition is alike in both upper and lower jaws. The teeth are broad and flat. They are recurved and are sharply notched posteriorly. The edges are coarsely serrated with the serrations becoming finer on the triangularly pointed tip that thrusts obliquely outward. The teeth decrease in size toward the corner of the mouth. Most fossilized teeth of this species run less than an inch in length and vary in color depending on the matrix in which they were buried.

The teeth of *Galeocerdo aduncus* and *Galeocerdo contortus*, among other Miocene relatives of *G. cuvieri*, are found at Calvert Cliffs. Those of *G. aduncus*, a shark that had disappeared by the mid-Pliocene, are similar in conformation to the modern tiger, although smaller in size. The margin of the anterior crown is generally straighter and more finely serrated and the apex above the rear notch is short and broad and sharply pointed backward. The margin below the posterior notch is relatively short and marked with large serrations. The dentition of another extinct shark, *Galeocerdo contortus*, is similar to that of *G. aduncus*. The teeth are however, slimmer bladed and noticeably twisted toward the front.

Stanley Stepura, CMS member, sent us his picture taken at Adak, Alaska. You never know where you might meet up with a fellow friend of CMM.

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Selected Acquisitions

Through the generosity of the Marlborough Hunt Club, the museum was able to copy a guest book (1910-1925) from the Patuxent Hunt Club, once located on the river near Upper Marlboro. Items of special note include visits by Paul Wilstock (author of *Maryland Tidewater*) and Franklin Roosevelt. Accounts of duck and railbird hunting are also scattered throughout.

Mrs. Pat Lavato donated a store ledger from Lower Marlboro (1906-1923) which records docking of various steamers at the town wharf and freight charges for various items. For example, the steamer *Enoch Pratt* brought four cases of rubber boots and one bale of whips in August of 1909; total charge $2.78. One bag of corn from the steamer *Potomac* during this same month charged $0.15. A barrel of coffee cost $0.45 in freight, brought by the steamer *Calvert* in May 1906.

Through the efforts of John Sands, a canning machine was acquired from the Smithfield Ham and Products Co., Inc., Smithfield, Va. This canner will be exhibited in the processing room of the Lore Oysterhouse, now under restoration.

Finally, Mrs. Elizabeth G. Schmidt donated the desk from the steamer *Governor Thomas*, used by the Maryland Fisheries Service as part of the Oyster Navy. Once belonging to Capt. Frank L. Griffith, the desk contained official correspondence dating from 1884. One example is a memo stating no state ammunition may be used for hunting purposes. A telegram from Annapolis dated January 17, 1893, tells the steamer *Governor Thomas* to take on twenty ton of coal and “get here today,” signed T.C.B. Howard, Cmdr. In another letter dated July 7, 1983, the steamer *Thomas* is asked to investigate reported oyster law violations on the Western Shore from Plum Point up (north). This collection is a timely acquisition as we prepare for the commercial fisheries exhibit at the Lore Oysterhouse.
WANTED

The following items are needed at CMM. Your donation or suggestions are welcomed:

- Mannequins - for oysterhouse exhibit.
- 50-cup coffee pot.
- Small freezer for aquarium laboratory.

Special Thanks

Thank to efforts of the following friends the museum was again beautifully decorated for the Christmas Holidays.
Anna Weems Ewalt and Mr. and Mrs. Phil Lines decorated the Drum Point Lighthouse, Mrs. Linda McGilvery decorated the lobby of the museum and Mrs. Ellen Zahniser decorated the front doors of the museum.

CALVERT MARINE MUSEUM

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

MEMBERSHIP PRIVILEGES INCLUDE:

1. Subscription to the quarterly "Bugeye Times" newsletter.
2. Quarterly calendar of events.
3. Free admission to Museum programs (films, lectures, slide-shows).
4. Invitations to previews and receptions for new exhibits.
5. Reduced rates for trips, tours, cruises and classes.

NOTE: One month prior to the expiration of your membership a RENEWAL notice will be sent to you.

PLEASE ENTER MY ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FOR:

( ) $ 12.00 Individual
( ) $ 15.00 Family
( ) $ 50.00 Supporting
( ) $ 100.00 Sustaining
( ) $ 500.00 Patron
( ) $1,000.00 Benefactor

Name

Address

City State Zip

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:

Calvert Marine Museum
P. O. Box 97
Solomons, Maryland 20688

CONTRIBUTIONS OF $1,000.00 OR MORE QUALIFY FOR LIFE MEMBERSHIP
ALL CONTRIBUTIONS ARE INCOME TAX DEDUCTIBLE