
Welcome to the
GUINEA
JUBILEE
Friday, September 25 3-10 p.m.
Saturday, September 26 9 a.m.-9:15 p.m.
Abingdon Ruritan Centre
Festival Grounds, Bena

WELCOME TO THE GUINEA JUBILEE

September 25 & 26, 2026

THE FESTIVAL OPERATES RAIN OR SHINE!

8784 Guinea Road, Hayes, VA 23072

Event Schedule

Friday, September 25

3 p.m. Arts & Crafts and Food Booths Open

4:30 p.m. Watermen's Contests: Oyster Shuck & Suck

6 p.m. Official Jubilee Kickoff featuring the National Anthem by Brett Cahoon.

7 p.m. Live Entertainment by Good Shot Judy

10 p.m. Event closes for the night

Saturday, September 26

7:-8:30 a.m. Kids Run & GJ 5K registration/packet pickup and races beginning from the Fire Station

9 a.m. Booths Open

11 a.m. Guinea Jubilee Parade starts at Union Baptist Church

Noon onwards Afternoon features Watermen's contests (including Crab Pot Pulling, Anchor Toss, and Oyster Shucking) alongside live performances by Hunter Owens, Harley Barker, and Amelia Hogge.

6: p.m. Evening performance by Anthony Rosano & the Conqueroos

9:15 p.m. Fireworks finale.

Guinea is a special place with a special language

The Englishman recognized the dialect; sayings of Guinea

BY PASTOR BILL WEST
FROM "THIS REALLY HAPPENED IN GUINEA"
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I remember taking a man from England to George Ashe's general store in Guinea to introduce him to some of my friends. As we went in the store, some of the Guineamen were talking to each other about their catch of seafood that day and what the weather tomorrow would be like. The men were sitting on boxes around the only heat in the store, and that was a coal stove almost cherry-red from the fire.

As I introduced the men from Guinea to the Englishman, he acted surprised about something. I asked him what was wrong and he said, "These men are speaking [Cockney English]." Wikipedia defines Cockney as "an accent and dialect of English, mainly spoken in London and its environs, particularly by working-class and lower middle-class Londoners. The term 'Cockney' has traditionally been used to describe a person from the East End or born within earshot of Bow Bells, although it most commonly refers to speakers of the accent/dialect from across London."

The Englishman felt right at home. The only difference in the language in Guinea from the language of the Englishman was that the people from Guinea speak Cockney quickly whereas the English speak it slower and more refined.

I am fortunate enough to be able to speak both Guinea and English, but if I get excited or angry about something, the Guinea overrides the English every time. It also depends who I am talking to whether I speak Guinea or regular English. If I am on the phone with my longtime friend Mike King, who is a true Guinea man, Guinea is the language of choice for us.

My wife Barbara said she can tell who I am talking to right away whether I am speaking normal or in Guinea. You see, Guinea is spoken very fast, often with a slurring of the words. An outsider would not be able to understand true Guineamen when they talk.

There are sayings that the Guineamen have used for hundreds of years. I wrote some of them down just as I heard them. I lanny hell (land of hell)—this term is used to get a point across strongly. I lanny glory (I land of glory)—this term is also used to get a point across without using the word hell. Lord I pray (just as it sounds). This term is used in excitement. For example, Lord I pray that boat almost run over us.

My 'pinion (my opinion)—this is used as a term agreeing with a statement someone else has said. For example, that boat was flying down the river. You would say, "My 'pinion." He'd steal lightning and grab at thunder—this term is used to describe someone who was a thief. God luv your heart—this is actually a term of endearment. Go ahead on the comeback—this is used to tell someone to keep moving forward. On a hot goose (going fast); Rotten as Cush (the person is no count); Drier than Pete Hall's cork leg (describing how dry something is; Jesus mostus (Jesus Master); Hit him a horse crack (when someone has been hit hard); I hope I may die (you are telling someone that what you just said is true); and there is more:

Slick cam (slick calm) when the river is very calm with no waves. He can handle her (a person has everything under control). Fast as a glimmer (fast as a glimmer of your eye). She's the finest kind (best around); she cut a caper (a person acted wild); Jag a money he got (a person has a lot of money). Mammy one that is (something that is huge); Got her ain't ya bubs (you have things under control right?);

Put her to the floorboard (step on the gas and go fast); I'd rather be in the Saluda jail with a broke-back (telling others how bad a situation is); He's bigger than Humpty Hall (Humpty was a big man who owned a gas station in Gloucester); I'll hit you with a merkle chunk (Myrtle bush root); The Devils is sitting cross legged for him (He will get what's coming to him one day); Motley's bulldozer will push dirt over you tonight (a threat to kill and bury you. Motley owned big equipment in Gloucester); Foolisher than a loon (a foolish person compared to a bird similar to a duck); Faster than greased lightning (something that is exceptionally fast); Go home to your mammy if you got er one (you better leave me alone); She put something on him that Ajax won't take off (someone was cussed out really good); She hit him a horse crack (she hit someone really hard).

These are just a few sayings that I have heard in my lifetime. I know there are so many more, but the point is that when people from Guinea talk, they always compare something to what they know as a frame of reference.

I love the dialect and the sayings, but I fear that as the years go on, they will eventually stop being used.

One thing I can say, the folks from Guinea are descriptive when they speak and often speak very loudly.



Pastor Bill West: He can speak Guinea...and write about it, too! with love in his heart for the place and his people.

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Jubilee Flashback



FILE PHOTO
Brianna Hall, crab pot pull, 2013.

1931: An outstanding teacher won praise from her superintendent; Achilles graduate had a distinguished teaching career

The Gloucester Gazette of Feb. 26, 1931 contained a profile of a teacher at Achilles High School, Miss Geraldine Rowe.

The profile stated that she was an honor student of the class of 1922 at Achilles and continued:

"Following her graduation from high school, Miss Rowe entered the College of William and Mary from which institution she received her B.A. Her high scholarship and fine collegiate record won for Miss Rowe the honor of being elected to the Phi Beta Kappa fraternity.

"Miss Rowe specialized in Latin and is now in charge of the Latin department of Achilles, which position she has filled with signal ability and success for five years.

"As a member of the Baptist Church, Miss Rowe is a leader among the young people of the church and an excellent community worker."

Miss Rowe is shown in a group photograph with other Achilles faculty members in The Dual, a 1927 yearbook for both Achilles and Botetourt high schools.

While the faculty members are not identified under the photo, her granddaughter Shannon Fedors Shumate has confirmed that Miss Rowe is located in the center of the second row.

The 1926 Dual yearbook contained an enthusiastic essay, "Why Study Latin," about Latin studies from Miss Rowe, saying in part: "Latin has long been spoken of as a dead language. While it is true that Latin as it was spoken by the Romans and by the learned people of the Middle Ages is not heard today, so it is equally true that the English of Alfred the Great and of Chaucer does not live in the speech of the twentieth century. However, Latin is not a dead language. It still lives today in slightly changed forms … The Latin language and literature are living roots out of which our own language and literature grow. The old and the new are inseparable; each is a part of the other … The study of Latin is a help to the understanding of English grammar. The importance of the correct use of one's native tongue should not be underestimated. It is the mark which distinguishes culture from lack of it."



Geraldine Rowe Fedors, Latin teacher at Achilles High School, is circled in this photo of the school's faculty in 1927.

Miss Rowe eventually married John Fedors, and she taught, in total, over the course of five decades, from the 1920s through the 1960s. She died July 20, 1993, and her obituary in the Gazette-Journal noted that she was a teacher at Achilles for six years, followed by 22 years at Matthew Whaley and James Blair high schools in Williamsburg. In 1970 she was chosen by the State Board of Education as first runner-up for the title of state teacher of the year.

And she kept busy. After her retirement from teaching in 1970, she spent five more years as a staff assistant at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science.

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Jubilee Flashback



FILE PHOTO
Captain Henion Brown, 1988.

What a terrible storm it was: The Great August Storm of '33

The morning of Aug. 24, 1933 found residents of Gloucester and Mathews, especially those of low-lying, flood-prone neighborhoods, gazing at the ruin strewn across yards, tidal marshes, and waterways.

The legendary Great August Storm, which blew in the evening of Tuesday, Aug. 22, 1933, and inundated whole communities, left huge destruction in its wake.

Guinea was probably the worst-hit area.

We reprint below some of the facts related by the Gloucester Gazette. These are from three consecutive issues: Aug. 24, 1933, when no one really knew how bad things were; Aug. 31, 1933, when every remote area had been visited and the true toll was apparent, and Sept. 7, when recovery was underway.

Strong, destructive hurricanes come every generation or so, most recently Hurricane Isabel in 2003. That one was so bad that it provoked instant comparisons to the Great August Storm which had happened 80 years earlier. In most places, that storm still held its title as the worst in living memory.



This photograph shows pound poles filling the yard of a home at Bena just after the storm of August 23, 1933. It was loaned to the Gazette-Journal in 1983 for a 50-year retrospective by Betty Lawson Rucker.

Gloucester Gazette, Aug. 24, 1933

Gloucester County was devastated Tuesday night and yesterday by winds of hurricane velocity and tides which reached heights far above all previous records.

... Communication in the lower part of the county, below Bena, was still cut off.

Property damage was tremendous but impossible to estimate with accuracy. The largest monetary sufferers in the county were probably W. T. Ashe, whose ferry boat terminals were wrecked and one of his ferryboats seriously damaged, and the East Coast Telephones and East Coast Utilities, whose pole and wire systems were a tangled mass of wreckage.

Net fishermen were also heavy losers, and many farmers suffered the complete loss of their crops.

The road circling Gloucester Point Hotel and well up on the hill towards the bank was covered yesterday with water around six feet deep ... An oyster house, the post office, the restaurant and other small houses on the point were swept away by the heavy seas and tide, leaving only the pilings standing.

The Gloucester Point-Yorktown ferry docks on both sides of the river were swept away, leaving the pilings standing ... The ferry "York" which was tied up at the auxiliary dock on the Gloucester Point side was battered badly on the pilings and when the tide subsided part of the ferry became caught on the pilings, causing it to list.

... A traveling man putting up at the hotel at the Point must have become alarmed because he "checked out" with water around his waist and with a suit case under each arm.

A live pig was washed up stairs of one of the houses on the Point, it was said, and other porkers that could not find a high and dry place were drowned.

... Communication was cut off by telephone, telegraph and mail and the extent of the storm only in a small radius could be learned yesterday. Mail was brought into the village Wednesday by horseback, the first time in many a day. This mail came from Naxera. According to S. S. Milby, the mail carrier, he started from Naxera in his automobile, but did not go far before he had to leave that and search for other means of transportation. He finally succeeded in securing a horse and saddle. He and the horse started out through the deep water in the road and the horse finally had to swim to get through.

Farmers are bewailing the fact that their wonderful fields of corn (the first good crop in years) lay flat to the ground.

... Jack Williams, a merchant in the lower part of Gloucester, known as Jenkins Neck, was rescued off part of the wreckage of his store just in time to save his life.

Gloucester Gazette, Aug. 31, 1933

A careful checkup in lower Gloucester, which bore the brunt of the hurricane and tidal wave Tuesday night and Wednesday morning of last week, satisfied the authorities that all the population was accounted for and no human lives had been sacrificed to the fury of the elements. Nobody has ventured an estimate of the monetary loss ...

The Sadler's Neck, Ware Neck, Robins Neck and Wicomico sections were only slightly behind Guinea in the extent of losses ... In the inundated sections houses and other buildings, boats, wharves and all manner of property were at the mercy of the elements; livestock and poultry perished in large numbers, household goods were badly damaged, or ruined beyond all value, and farm crops and gardens were wiped out completely.

Many merchants in the lower part of the county suffered severe loss when water flooded their stores or warehouses. S. J. Rowe of Glass, estimated his loss between $8,000 and $10,000. The Cow Creek Mill lost about $2,500 worth of merchandise stored at Brown's Wharf on the Ware River.

Work of rehabilitation and relief started almost before the storm was over. Miss Mary C. White, county nurse and welfare worker, loaded her car with flour and groceries and distributed them to the most needy cases on Friday. Before that, merchants of lower Gloucester were seeing that nobody went hungry.

Miss White found one small house harboring 18 people Friday, one of them with a well-developed case of typhoid fever. The sick man was immediately taken to a Richmond hospital.

The Gloucester Rotary Club took cognizance of the situation at its regular meeting Friday night and appointed an emergency relief committee ... Within a few hours this committee had raised $500 in cash ... for the purchase of

SEE THE STORM OF 1933, PAGE 5C

Welcome to the
Guinea Jubilee
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Jubilee Flashback



FILE PHOTO

Guinea Pride float, 1994.

THE GREAT AUGUST STORM

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4C)

food, clothing and medical supplies.

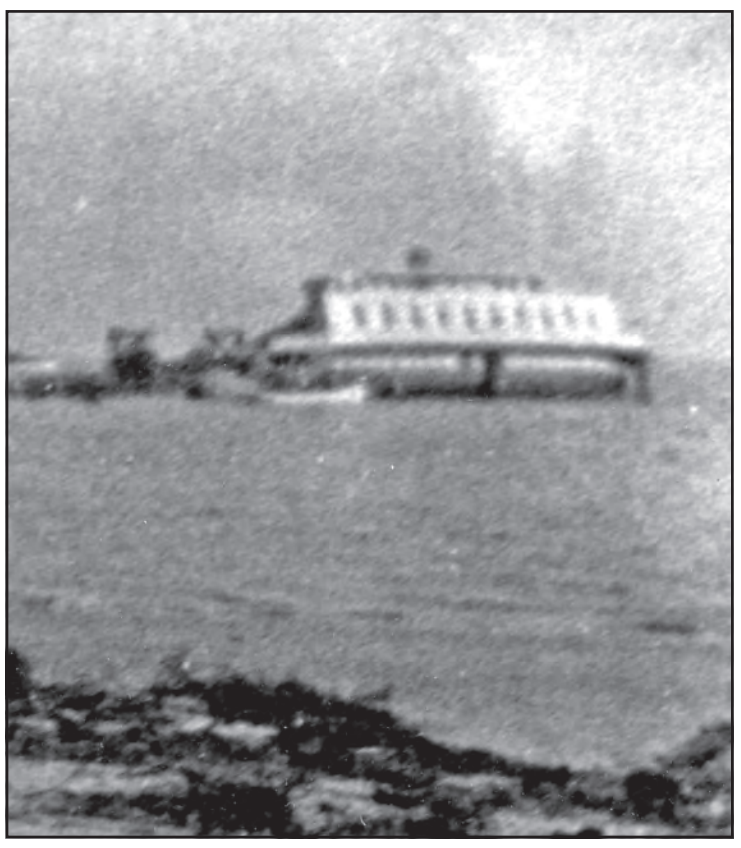
… The doctors of the county, under the direction of the county health board, have conduced clinics for typhoid vaccine inoculation at various points and more than 1,000 persons have been inoculated as a preventive measure against a typhoid epidemic.

… Monday trucks and men from the Citizens Conservation Camp at West Point arrived to assist in the work of salvaging scores of fishing boats and other craft carried far inland by the raging waters, and to restore homes which had been washed away from their foundations … Citizens within the area of tidal overflow are strongly urged by Virginia Public Health and Red Cross officials to boil all water before drinking it.

Capt. Bonniville, of Guinea, tells of his horse being tied in a stable which washed from its moorings and floated out in the seemingly spaceless sea, and how, later on, it was buffeted back near shore, when Bonniville rowed out, expecting to find his horse drowned, but found him keeping afloat in spite of his tether. The captain says he cut the rope and the horse swam to shore none the worse for the experience

….A family living in the lower part of the county awoke Wednesday morning to find the water rising in their yard. Chickens and live stock were gathered up and put up on high and dry places. The man of the house had just returned from the sanitorium, was physically unfit to do any manual labor and was confined to his bed. The water began to rise up over the floor of the little one-story home. The bed in which the head of the house was confined was put up on four chairs to keep it dry. The water kept rising and was even with the window sills and was coming up higher and higher to the bed. As a last resort a saw was used to cut a four-foot square out of the ceiling and the whole family sought refuge in the attic.

… Only the steamboat wharf and the hotel of the buildings owned by the county at Gloucester Point, will be repaired, it was determined by the board of supervisors after an examination of the wreckage at the Point following the hurricane and tidal wave last week.



This photo by David Burke shows the ferry York stranded on pilings at Gloucester Point after the Great August Storm.

The remains of the county-owned store building will be sold at public auction at the October term of court, County Clerk B. B. Roane said, the purchaser to remove the property.

Gloucester Gazette, Sept. 7, 1933

Down in lower Gloucester, hardest hit by high winds and waters, Irving Stewart, World War veteran, chairman of the Red Cross chapter building committee, has started volunteer laborers placing houses on foundations and making repairs. Where homes were totally destroyed or so badly damaged as to make repairs impracticable, new houses will be built. Priority of this work is rated according to need.

… Red Cross headquarters here have registered 161 families in need, containing 393 adults and 275 children. … The shelter committee, Irving Stewart, chairman with George Cary and J. H. Ash as assistants, has reported the number of houses damaged in Jenkins Neck as 38, Robins Neck, 4; Wicomico, 4; Severn, 3; and Glass, 30—a total of 79.

… At the local headquarters it is reported that hip boots, coats and sweaters are much needed.

'One of the worst hurricane disasters': Isabel in 2003

BY PASTOR BILL WEST
FROM "THIS REALLY HAPPENED IN GUINEA"
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Area residents remember Sept. 18, 2003, as the day of one of the worst hurricane disasters to have occurred in Guinea since the August 1933 hurricane. Both events created flood levels over eight feet, with Hurricane Isabel creating a tidal surge of 6.4 feet at Gloucester Point and wind gusts up to 85 miles per hour throughout the county.

Guinea is a low-lying area just above sea level, so when over 6-foot tides and over 85 mph winds hit, it destroyed the area of Guinea. Mandatory evacuations were given, but many people from Guinea decided to ride it out, not really fully understanding the danger of doing that.

The wind destroyed homes and trailers, and took out the electricity for over two weeks. The people of Guinea had wells run by electrical pumps, so instantly there was no water to drink. The grocery stores didn't have electricity either, so all their food spoiled. The local general stores sold out of canned food very quickly to those fortunate enough to get out from their homes. The gas pumps didn't work, so everyone had to be careful about driving.

The church I attended at the time began preparing hot meals using generators to help the folks in Guinea. One of my friends, Allen, and his family didn't evacuate, and they lived deep in Guinea. He told me that when the tides began rising, he knew they were trapped. He made a phone call for help, but nobody could get there and help them.

Allen said when the tide came up to the living room windows, he opened them up and the tide came inside, allowing his kids to swim inside his house. He said they had

SEE **HURRICANE ISABEL,** PAGE **6C**



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Jubilee Flashback



FILE PHOTO

Marching Dukes in the parade, 2012.

HURRICANE ISABEL: *One of the worst storms; it left a trail of destruction and sorrowful memories*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5C)

a good time, but his home was being destroyed. When the tide got so high that they needed to evacuate the house, they all boarded a skiff and tied it to the chimney, and rode out the hurricane.

Nobody lost their life, and Allen was blessed to be still here among us. But the storm destroyed so much in Guinea. When some of us could get down there to help, people would come out of their homes just crying and so distraught. It would break your heart.

Eventually the Red Cross trucks showed up and drove into Guinea trying to pass out meals. The problem was the truck drivers had never been in that area before, and the folks from Guinea were suspicious of strangers and they wouldn't come out to meet the trucks. Another barrier was the Red Cross people couldn't understand the folks from Guinea when they spoke because of their dialect.

I volunteered to ride with one of the trucks because I was friends with a lot of the folks in Guinea and I could also speak their language. At the first house we came to, my softball buddies were out in the yard trying to get their flooded pickup to work. I rolled the window down and shouted in Guinea "You boys hungry? You want a hot meal?" One of them hollered, "Who are you?" I stuck my head out the window and said, "Billy West."

They both got a big smile and came over to the truck and graciously accepted food. We chatted for a while and then it was time for me and the Red Cross man from Oklahoma to go to another house.

When I got back in the truck, the Red Cross man looked at me and said, "I couldn't understand anything you were saying, but I am glad you are with me."

The next house we came to was a good friend of mine named Charlie. His trailer was flooded, and everything he owned was in a pile outside in front of his trailer. I told the Red Cross man to stop. I got out of the truck and approached Charlie. He was sitting in a chair on what was left of his porch and he was in shock. I was about half way to his trailer when Charlie stood up, picked up his 12-gauge shotgun aimed it at me, and cocked it. Charlie was about to shoot me.

I screamed, "Don't shoot, Charlie! It's me, Billy West." He lowered his gun and apologized to me. He said, "People have been riding by all day just looking at the destruction, and I was fed up. I was going to shoot the next person who did that."

I assured him that we were not there to gawk at his destroyed trailer but to offer him a hot meal instead.

The people from Guinea are a proud people who don't like taking handouts. Thank the good Lord that the Red Cross and churches from all over the country responded to help this little community. There were teams of church people ripping out floors and drywall, and building it back for the folks at no cost. Church people who had never roofed a house before climbed up on top of these homes and began putting their roof back together. It was hard but rewarding work as we all pitched in to help our brothers and sisters.

Unfortunately, many of the families whose relatives have lived in Guinea for hundreds of years decided enough was enough. They packed up what was left of their belongings and moved further up the county to higher ground. The hurricane not only destroyed property but also destroyed a culture of hundreds of years. A buddy of mine, just a few weeks ago, said, "There aren't many true Guineamen left anymore."

Sad but true.



FILE PHOTO

A boat on dry land in Guinea after the passage of Hurricane Isabel.

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from family & friends

In Honor of
Shirley West Hogge
Grand Marshal 2024

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In honor of
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Grand Marshal
2023

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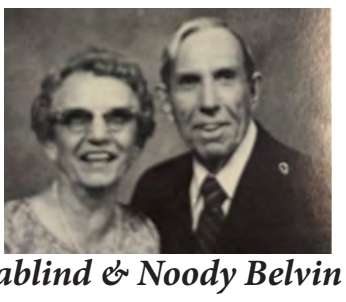
all of our
Grand Marshals



from family & friends

Mablind & Noody Belvin
Grand Marshal William E. Belvin
1982

Welcome to the Guinea Jubilee!
Our pleasure to honor and celebrate
all of our
Grand Marshals



from family & friends

Ronnie Thomas
Grand Marshal
2018

Welcome to the Guinea Jubilee!

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Jubilee Flashback



Charles Rush of White Marsh shows the Guinea Jubilee anniversary t-shirt he purchased in 2010.

From 1954: Cook Oyster Co. grows with hope of local labor

(EDITOR'S NOTE: A local man who became a leading oyster producer in Gloucester and later a leading benefactor of good causes got his start in the early 1950s. Eldridge N. Cook was profiled in the Gazette-Journal in the Nov. 18, 1954 issue. We have corrected the original spelling of Cooke-with-an-e throughout this reproduction.)

From the Nov. 18, 1954 Gazette-Journal

From an oyster tonger's job, paying $2.00 per day, to owner and manager of Cook's Oyster Co., Bena, the business venture to Eldridge Cook has not been free of troubles and plenty of hard work.

Born in Gloucester County thirty-nine years ago, Mr. Cook, upon completing his studies at Gloucester Training School, got his first job in 1935 with Capt. Jack Blake, a large oyster planter in the York River, paying only $2.00 per day. This was the meager beginning in the seafood industry for the Negro, who now has the unofficial distinction of being the only colored oyster planter and packer on the Eastern Seaboard. "The work was hard, the hours long," Mr. Cook describes it.

The following year he purchased a truck and started in the hauling business. During the summer months, he transported vegetables, daffodils and other produce, and in winters, he hauled oysters and various types of seafood. These long-distance trips took the young businessman to such places as Florida, Boston and Chicago.

This business was discontinued three years ago when Mr. Cook decided, with his early tonging experience and knowledge of seafood hauling, he would enter oyster planting, solely. In 1950 he purchased his third boat, "Velma Belle," which he still maintains for dredging his ground in Chesapeake Bay and hauling oysters from various rivers in Tidewater. It was the eight months on the water and four months of truck driving which persuaded Cook that he had to give up the trucking.

"At sea," so to speak, Mr. Cook or rather Captain Cook, who has served as skipper of the large vessel since it was built by the Smith Brothers near Bena, was busy not only in oystering operations, but during seasons, was actively engaged in crabbing. The rolling and tumbling in Chesapeake Bay did much to change the mind of Cook when he decided to purchase a building, owned by O. M. Blake, formerly known as the Atlantic Crab Company. Following renovation and enlargement, the structure was officially opened as Cook Oyster Company on July 19 of this year.

The greater majority of shucked oysters from the Company are sold to the Gloucester Seafood Packing Company which is also located on Sarah's Creek.

In addition to purchasing oysters from local non-connected watermen, Cook has been able to get a nice supply from his own rocks and from buyers in Rappahannock River. With reference to Rappahannock oysters, Mr. Cook explained, "We pay the oystermen there from $3 to $3.25 per bushel. With shucking,

SEE COOK OYSTER CO. PAGE 8C





FILE PHOTOS

Eldridge Cook at the desk of Cook Oyster Company, 1954 and 1990.



Moving oyster shells at Cook Oyster Company, 1954.

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Jubilee Flashback



Grand marshal Hugh Rowe, 1989.

Who was Eldridge Cook?



Cook's Seafood Company, Inc.
P.O. Box 99
Bena, Virginia 23018
804-642-4600
March 11, 2010

TO OUR RETAIL AND WHOLESALE CUSTOMERS:
Since 1940 I have served many of you some kind of seafood - whether it was harvested oysters from the Potomac, York and James rivers, steamed or freshly picked and packed crab meat, breaded oysters, shrimp, scallops or freshly culled and packed fish. Over the years it has been a very time-consuming, challenging and demanding experience of trying to keep the facility and equipment in good repair to meet the needs of you my customers. For everything there is a season. The season for Cook's Oyster/Seafood Company has arrived so I have decided to close the business effective March 15, 2010.
I have met and made some wonderful acquaintances that I shall never forget. Please accept this big "THANK YOU" for your loyalty and patronage.
I wish for each of you continued success and best wishes.

Sincerely yours,
E.N. COOK, President
COOK'S SEAFOOD CO., INC.

Eldridge Cook placed this advertisement in the Gazette-Journal as he ended his long career as a seafood producer.

The successful oyster producer of Bena lived to be 98 and in addition to his long legacy in the seafood business, carried on an active presence in his home county and left behind legacy contributions to many causes close to his heart.

He died on Feb. 8, 2014. His obituary in the Feb. 13, 2014 Gazette-Journal began: "Eldridge N. Cook worked hard because he knew no other way, he gave back to his community contributing his time, sound business knowledge, and personal resources, because he believed this was the right thing to do. He loved and supported both family and friends because of his strong Christian faith. Mr. Cook, an extremely modest man despite his tremendous lifelong accomplishments and who was noted for his soft-spoken manner, quietly left us for eternal life Saturday, Feb. 8, 2014, at the age of 98."

His wife and son had preceded him in death.

Cook retired from his oyster company in 2010, when he was 94, completing a career of hard work that spanned more than seven decades—longer than many people live.

He was long active in county affairs, on the planning commission and social services board, among others. During and after his life he received many honors.

He was grand marshal of the Guinea Jubilee in 1990. The Virginia General Assembly, through a resolution in 2011, commended his lifelong contributions to Virginia's seafood industry, the economic development of Gloucester and his community, noting him as "an inspiration to every Virginian, irrespective of race or color."

First Morning Star Baptist Church in Bena, a beneficiary of his generosity, named him a church hero in 2012.

The Gloucester County board of supervisors declared Thursday, Feb. 14, 2019 to be Eldridge Cook Day. A tribute program that year noted that he left more than a million dollars to the Rappahannock Community College's Educational Foundation, as part of the Dorothy Cosby Cooke Scholarship Fund.

He also established the Eldridge N. Cook Charitable Fund within the Gloucester Community Foundation with an endowment of over $1 million. Cook's desire was to give a "hand up" to young people in Gloucester County, according to an article in the Gazette-Journal.

And finally, back where it all began, the Guinea Heritage Association honored his memory in a program in 2020.

COOK OYSTER CO.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8C)

canning, icing and other overhead, there's not much left for us, considering the present price of shucked oysters."

At the present time, Cook Oyster Company employs persons from Northern Neck and other areas of Tidewater Virginia. Mindful of his neighbors, Mr. Cook is most interested in hiring local persons from Gloucester and Mathews. This idea would also help eliminate the high cost of transporting employees from distant localities. As Mr. Cook looks at it, "Why not pay folks from your own community!" The many advantages of employment with the Cook Company, as he explained, are steam-heated rooms, well lighted, sanitary conditions, inspected by the Department of Health; high wages; social security, modern equipment, convenience of location.

Since he first entered business, as a youth, Mr. Cook has proven successful in every venture. Even though he compares the present oyster business with dredging crabs, "It promises you a lot but you don't seem to get much from it," no doubt, the figure for Eldridge Cook will be fruitful.

1942: An amazing story of survival on open seas

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The Summer of 1942 brought wave upon wave of tragic news to the people of Gloucester and Mathews in the early months of World War II. A number of residents, captains and crews on merchant ships, fell victim to German submarines and mines. This story is of one remarkable seaman who lived to tell the tale.)

From the Gazette-Journal, Thursday, July 2, 1942

There are no better seamen in the world than those who come from Gloucester and Mathews. Any ship's officer will tell you that. He knows he can count on them be the weather fair or foul.

These hardy fellows are born sailors. Before they are "knee-high to a duck" they are chasing soft crabs around the shores and with a sugar-bag sail on a plan, driving their mothers frantic racing each other up and down the creeks and rivers. Board a ship in any port and the chances are you will find on the bridge or in the crew one or more men from Gloucester or Mathews.

Many of them go to sea upon finishing high school. They seldom serve a day more than their required time for promotion when they start up the line and before they are hardly missed from home they wind up as master or chief engineer of some ship.

They are tough, too, and do not scare easily. One of the toughest and least easily scared is Joe (Pat) Shackelford of Severn, who just now is resting at home after having survived the ordeal of drifting nearly a week in the Gulf of Mexico, not in a life boat, or on a raft, but with the help of his life-preserver and one plank. He is the only man alive to tell of the sinking of the tanker on which he was second assistant engineer. Our reporter found him amid the familiar scenes of his boyhood, knee-deep in the mud of Brown's Bay, catching bait to go fishing. With not the slightest touch of melodrama and in the most matter-of-fact way, he told how he escaped when the second ship since Pearl Harbor was blown out from under him. Here is his story:



Joseph "Pat" Shackelford, survivor.

"I was standing the 12-to-4 night watch in the engine room on a night in May. I had with me on watch, an oiler by the name of Gordon and a fireman by the name of Noonan. At 12:40 I was standing at the log desk. Gordon was with me; Noonan was in the fire room. The Chief Engineer came down to tell me not to blow the tubes because it might attract submarines. The chief had not reached the deck when there was a terrific shuddering of the ship and a terrific explosion. The force knocked me off balance and cause me to throw the throttle into full speed astern. I knew from the explosion that the first torpedo had hit about amidship and the second aft of the engine room.

"I picked myself up off the deck. Noonan came running and we all ran up the ladder to the poop. A terrible fire was raging along the starboard side. We tried the port door and it was free and we went out on deck. The Chief Engineer was standing there and he told us to get off the ship at once. He did not make any attempt to get off. Fire was raging amidship and the bridge was in flames. Oil was burning in the water on the starboard side and some on the port side. The men amidship did not have a chance.

"I saw 20 or 25 men on the poop deck. The majority of us jumped over the port side. We all had life-preservers on, except one man named Smith. The last time I saw the Chief he was standing in the door of his room not making any effort to get away. I believe he went down with the ship. He is a big man and I think he figured he would not have a chance jumping over the side and decided to accept his fate.

"We had hardly hit the water when the ship went down. I would say in about three minutes after the first torpedo hit. We all stayed together as best we could in the water until morning and then counted the men. There were 23 not including myself. They were: Hope, third mate; Sharp, ordinary seaman; Winslow, third assistant; Gordon, oiler; French, oiler; Noonan, fireman; Gietec, first assistant; Juhnik, fireman; Forbes, wiper; Rodriguez, steward; Hogge, also of Gloucester, chief cook; Smith and Radzik, maintenance man. There were eight others whose names I do not know. Two others were in the water with us the night before, but failed to swim away with us when the flames started to come toward us over the water.

SEE **AMAZING SURVIVAL,** PAGE **9C**

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from family & friends
Leonard Leiffer
Grand Marshal
1998

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from family & friends
Raymond "Kenny Man" Kellum
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1997

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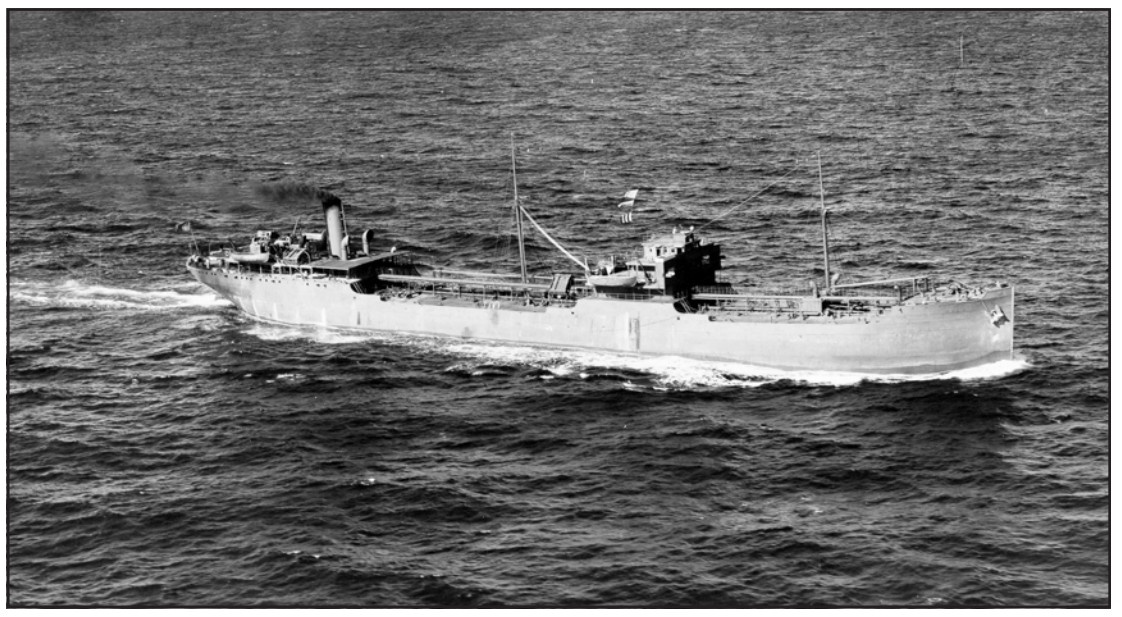
Jubilee Flashback



The greased pole contest, 1988.



THE MARINERS' MUSEUM

The S.S. Halo, a Cities Service Oil Co. tanker, was struck and sunk by two torpedoes in the Gulf of Mexico in May 1942. Joseph "Pat" Shackelford of Severn survived six days on a plank from the ship's debris.

Shackelford served aboard tanker sunk by U-boat

Joseph "Pat" Shackelford served aboard the S.S. Halo, a Cities Service Oil Co. tanker which was laden with crude oil on her unescorted route in the Gulf of Mexico. She sank May 20, 1942 about three minutes after being struck by two torpedoes from the German U-Boat 506 (Wurdemann).

The information is contained in a book "A Careless Word, A Needless Sinking" by Captain Arthur C. Moore (1998), which compiles data about hundreds of merchant ship losses during World War II.

According to Moore, the crude-oil laden Halo, owned by Cities Service since 1923, was struck shortly after midnight 50 miles from the entrance to the Mississippi River. Shackelford was the only survivor from his group found by the Mexican freighter Oaxaca. Moore relates that two other survivors were picked up by the British tank Orina and taken to New Orleans.

Moore's book is subtitled: "A History of the Staggering Losses Suffered by the U.S. Merchant Marine, Both in Ships and Personnel, during World War II."

AMAZING SURVIVAL: *During 1942 in the Gulf of Mexico*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9C)

I think they were burned to death.

"We swam around until late that afternoon, when the third mate, Hope, who was terribly burned on both legs, died. His legs were burned to the bones. When we were sure he was dead we took his life-preserver and gave it to Smith, who did not have any. Hope went down.

"The rest of that day and the second night we stayed together. When daylight of the second day came, Winslow, who had been assisting Hope most of the night and day before, began to drink salt water. This caused him to vomit and he appeared to be out of his mind. About noon he said to me that he was going to dive down to the ship and get a can of pears. He took off his life-preserver and dove out of sight. He came up once or twice and then stayed down for good. Two other men whom I did not know by name also drank salt water and went out of their minds and took off their life-preservers and said they were going to dive down to the ship and get some orange juice. That left 19 of us.

"During the third night we tried to stay together, but the next morning, the third day, there were only seven of us when day broke. These were myself, French, Hogge, Rodriguez, Juhnik, Gietec and Forbes. The others drowned during the night.

"The men were getting weaker all the time. They would say they were just going to wash their mouths out with the salt water and when they did that they were done for. Their tongues would swell so that they couldn't get them back into their mouths.

"As the third day went on we drifted into a great oil slick left by the ship. This was very heavy crude oil. It was on the water about three inches thick. We could not move in it and none of the drift wood

SEE **AMAZING SURVIVAL,** PAGE **10C**

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A banquet table full of good old Guinea recipes

Recently a friend brought by three cookbooks published in the past by churches and organizations in the Guinea area of Gloucester. They are full of many delicious recipes. We decided to bring you a selection of dishes that reflect the local products of land and sea, recipes that have probably been made in Guinea for generations. Dig in!

First Morning Star Baptist

The first group of recipes comes from a cookbook put out some years ago; we could not find a date. Its title is "Family Favorites: Homecoming Committee of First Morning Star Baptist Church."

Jubilee Flashback



Cooks in the First Morning Star booth, 2012.

CLAM CHOWDER
CALVIN RANDALL

1 quart chopped clams
6 diced potatoes
1 small onion, chopped
Water
1 stalk celery, chopped
6-8 slices bacon
Salt and pepper

Brown bacon. Add bacon and drippings to a large saucepan. Add celery, potatoes, onion, water (desired amount), salt, pepper and clams. Cook until potatoes are done. Serves 6 to 8.

CLAM FRITTERS
AUDREY G. WARD

2 c. flour
2 tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. salt
Dash of pepper
1 c. milk
½ c. clam liquid
2 eggs
24 chopped clams

Sift dry ingredients. Add milk, clam liquid and eggs. Mix well; add clams. Drop by spoonfuls onto well-greased griddle. Fry until golden brown. Makes 6-8 servings.

BASIC FRIED SOFT-SHELL BLUE CRABS
SARITA WARE WILLIAMS

12 soft crabs
¼ c. milk
¾ c. flour
2 eggs, beaten
2 tsp. salt
¾ c. dry breadcrumbs

Dress fresh crabs or thaw frozen crabs. Rinse in cold water; drain. Combine eggs, milk and salt. Prepare as for frying. Place crabs in greased baking pan. Put a little butter on each crab and place the pan in a hot oven at 400°F. for about 8 minutes.

GRANDMOTHER'S CORN PUDDING
KIMBERLY STOKES

3 Tbs. cornstarch
½ c. sugar
Dash of salt
2 eggs
1 can creamed corn
16 oz. canned milk
½ stick butter, cold

Mix cornstarch, sugar and dash of salt; mix well. Beat eggs and add to mixture. Add to mixture creamed corn and milk; mix. Grease 1½ quart dish. Pour mixture into greased dish and cut up butter on top. Bake at 350°F. for 45 minutes or until brown.

SPOON BREAD
MARVIN WASHINGTON

1 c. cornmeal
1 c. milk
1 tsp. salt
3 eggs
2 c. hot water
½ stick butter
1 tsp. baking powder
2 tsp. sugar

Mix cornmeal slowly in hot water. Add salt in meal. Cook until it thickens. Add butter and milk. Beat until mixture is fluffy. Separate eggs. Add sugar to yolks and beat. Add baking powder to the whites. Fold whites into the mixture last. Bake in greased pan at 375°F. for 40 minutes and serve immediately.

SWEET POTATO BISCUITS
CONNIE WILSON

2 or 3 medium sweet potatoes
½ c. sugar
1 tsp. salt
4½ tsp. baking powder
½ c. butter or margarine
2 Tbs. milk
3½-4 c. flour

Boil, peel and mash potatoes. While mashed potatoes are still hot, measure 1½ c. in large bowl. Add butter, sugar, salt and milk; mix well. Sift together flour and baking powder and add to potato mixture. Work with hands to make a soft dough. Chill dough and roll out. Cut into biscuits. Bake on greased cookie sheet on top shelf of 400°F. oven for 15 to 20 minutes or until light brown. Yields 12 biscuits.

JOAN'S COCONUT PIE
JOAN STOKES JONES

½ c. to ¾ c. sugar
2 Tbs. flour
4 eggs, unbeaten
2 c. milk
² c. flaked coconut
1 tsp. vanilla
1 stick margarine
1 dash salt

Mix sugar and flour, add eggs. Mix well. Add milk and coconut; mix well. Add vanilla, salt and butter. Bake in 2 uncooked 9-inch shells in a 350°F. oven until knife comes out clean, 35 to 45 minutes.

Union Baptist

The next group of recipes is from a cookbook, "Bread of Life," put out by Union Baptist Church, Achilles, in 1996.

CRAB PUFFS
BILL KING

1 stick margarine
1 clove garlic, finely minced
1 c. mild cheese, shredded
1 Tbs. margarine
½ tsp. Old Bay Seasoning
1 lb. crabmeat
12 English muffins

Melt stick of margarine with garlic in saucepan. Add cheese and stir until melted. Remove from heat and stir in remaining ingredients. Spread on split English muffins, quartered, and freeze for at least 15 minutes. Broil until bubbly and serve warm.

HOT CRAB DIP
DIANNE R. TAYLOR

1 lb. crabmeat
16 oz. cream cheese, softened
2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
4 Tbs. chives
¼ c. margarine
¼ lb. Velveeta cheese
¼ tsp. onion powder
Dash cayenne pepper
Dash Old Bay Seasoning

Mix ingredients. Cook in microwave on high for 3-4 minutes. Serve hot with butter crackers.

OYSTER SOUP
BETTIE SUE VARNER

1 c. celery, chopped
1 c. onion, chopped
1 stick butter
2 Tbs. flour
Oyster juice and water to make 5 cups
2 bay leaves
Salt and pepper to taste
1 tsp. garlic salt
1 pint oysters
3 c. potatoes, diced

SEE **GOOD OLD GUINEA RECIPES,** PAGE **11C**



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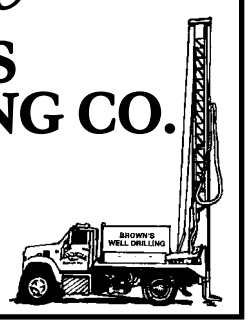



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AMAZING SURVIVAL

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9C)

which was in the slick could be moved out of it.

"Hogge, Juhnik and I got on one piece of the drift wood and Gietec, Rodriguez, Forbes and French got on another piece. That was the first thing we had to hold us up except our life-preservers since we left the ship. All that day we stayed on the drift wood. That night the fourth night, Juhnik, who had been drinking salt water, went crazy and slid off my piece of wreckage and was drowned. I was too weak to help anybody. I had to keep still as possible. I couldn't get from one end of the board to the other.

"When the light of the fourth day came, I saw that Rodriguez, Forbes and French had disappeared from the other board, leaving only Gietec. The others were crazy the afternoon before and their tongues were so swollen that they could not get them in to their mouths, so during the night they just gave up, I suppose.

"That day I noticed that Hogge was getting in very bad shape, but he appeared to be rational that day and through the fifth night. The morning of the fifth day he was pretty bad but still rational. In the afternoon, which was Sunday, he fell limp over the piece of drift wood we were on. I was too weak to help him and I do not think anyone could have done anything for him then. His body stayed on the drift wood and he was buried at sea from the ship that picked us up.

"Nothing happened during the sixth night but I felt myself getting weaker and weaker. After the first day or two I was not conscious of any great thirst or hunger. I was sort of dazed and all I thought of was hanging on, preserving my strength and keeping that salt water out of my mouth. Some little would trickle in at that, when I would doze and my head would fall over into the water.

"At about 2:30 of the sixth day we were picked up by a Mexican ship. I heard the ship but was blind and could not see what was going on. The heavy oil had encrusted my eyes and the sun had burned them. We were plastered thick with oil which the sun had baked. We were too weak to keep it out of our eyes or to brush our hair out of them, which was full of the oil.

"We arrived at Tampico Wednesday at midnight. We were given every attention on the ship. We were put in a hospital Thursday at 3 a.m. Gietec was in the bed next to me. He died that morning at about 8:30. The doctors said he died of toxic poisoning and internal hemorrhaging. After recuperating a few days I went to New York to report and then came home.

"I understand two other men were picked up by another ship, but they died later in a hospital. I seem to be the only survivor."

Shackelford is 41, the son of J. H. Shackelford and Mrs. Lucy Shackelford. A younger brother, Maywood, is also on a tanker.

(Shackelford died in Chicago on Aug. 30, 1966 at the age of 64. His obituary did not mention this tale of survival, but told Gazette-Journal readers that he was a retired merchant marine engineer, survived by two sisters and seven brothers. He is buried at Union Baptist Church.)

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Grand Marshal
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from family & friends
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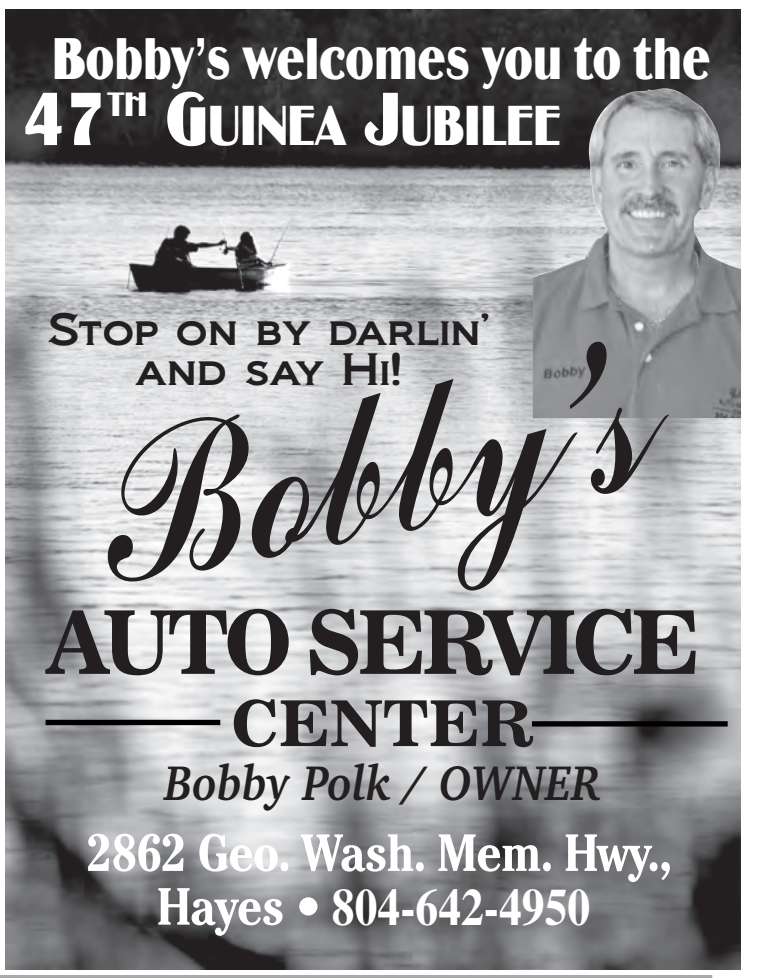


GOOD OLD GUINEA RECIPES: *Treasures from three cookbooks*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10C)

Sauté celery and onion in butter; add flour and cook 5 minutes. Add remaining ingredients; simmer until potatoes are tender. Remove bay leaves and serve.

CRAB SALAD
MARY ALICE KELLUM

1 lb. crabmeat
2 boiled eggs
3 stalks celery
Pepper and salt
Mayonnaise
1 Tbs. Old Bay Seasoning
1 small onion

Boil eggs until hard and let cool. Grate celery and onion then combine with crabmeat and Old Bay Seasoning. Mix well. Put mayonnaise in until desired consistency; add salt and pepper to desired taste.

MRS. BROWN'S CRABCAKES
VICKIE HALL

1 lb. crabmeat (boned)
6 slices bread, in small pieces
2 Tbs. mayonnaise
2 tsp. mustard
2 Tbs. lemon juice
Salt and pepper, dash
1½ tsp. seafood seasoning
1 medium onion, chopped

Mix ingredients and add a little more mayonnaise if the mixture isn't moist enough. Pat out cakes; not too thick. Fry in hot oil until golden brown.

CLAM PIE
BILL KING

4 or 5 medium potatoes, grated
2 or 3 onions, chopped
25 clams, chopped (reserve juice)
¼ c. margarine
Pepper, to taste
2 pastry shells, unbaked

In large saucepan, cover potatoes and onion with water and clam juice. Simmer until tender and liquid has thickened. Add margarine, clams, and season with pepper. Pour into casserole lined with unbaked pastry. Cover with other pastry. Slit for steam vent. Bake at 450°F. for 15 minutes then reduce to 350°F. for 30-45 minutes, until browned.

JOHNNY CAKE
KIM GAUTHIER

1½ c. flour
½ c. cornmeal
1 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. salt
1 Tbs. sugar
¼ c. oil
1½ c. buttermilk or sour milk

Mix all ingredients. Pour into greased 8x8 pan. Bake at 375°F. for 20-30 minutes.

GRANDMA WILSON'S PUMPKIN PIE
BECKY JENKINS

3 c. pumpkin
12-oz. can evaporated milk
1 c. brown sugar
1 c. sugar
3 eggs, beaten
1 tsp. salt
3 Tbs. flour
1 tsp. vanilla
1 tsp. cinnamon
Dash of nutmeg
3 Tbs. butter, melted

Mix all together except butter. Mix butter last. Pour into deep-dish pie shell. Cook 1 hour at 325°F.

Guinea Jubilee

Finally, we present a selection from the 2019 publication of the Guinea Heritage Association marking, in 2019, a special anniversary: the "40th Annual Guinea Jubilee Cookbook."

FRIED FISH
HAZEL JENKINS

Fish: spot, flounder or trout
Salt and pepper
Flour and cornmeal

Small fish are best to fry: spot, flounder or 1 lb. trout. Salt and pepper dressed fish. Dredge in a mixture of flour and meal. Fry in medium high grease until golden brown. Serve with home-fried potatoes, garden salad and fresh cucumbers. Don't forget the cornbread.

FRIED OYSTERS
DELLA BELVIN

1 quart oysters
2 c. cornmeal
Several eggs
¼ tsp. salt
¼ tsp. pepper
Vegetable oil

Heat oil in a deep fryer to 375°F. Vegetable oil is the most common oil for deep frying oysters. While the fryer is preheating, prepare the breading station. Beat several eggs together in a bowl. Add a little water to thin the eggs, if needed. Prepare the breading material. Use cornmeal or breadcrumbs seasoned with salt and pepper. Flour may be used in combination with the breading material or as a separate step. Rinse the oysters. Pat dry with paper towels. Dip the oyster in the egg mixture. Let excess egg drain off, then dredge through the breading material. If using flour as a separate step, dip in flour, then egg, then breading. Be sure that the breading completely coats the oyster. Place the oysters carefully in the deep fryer. Cook until golden brown, approximately 2 minutes. Do not over-cook.

Remove from the deep fryer using a slotted spoon or slotted spatula. Serve with cocktail sauce, French fries, cole slaw, and hush puppies.

FRIED CORN CAKES
DELLA GRINNELL

Cornmeal
Water
Salt, desired amount
Pinch of baking soda

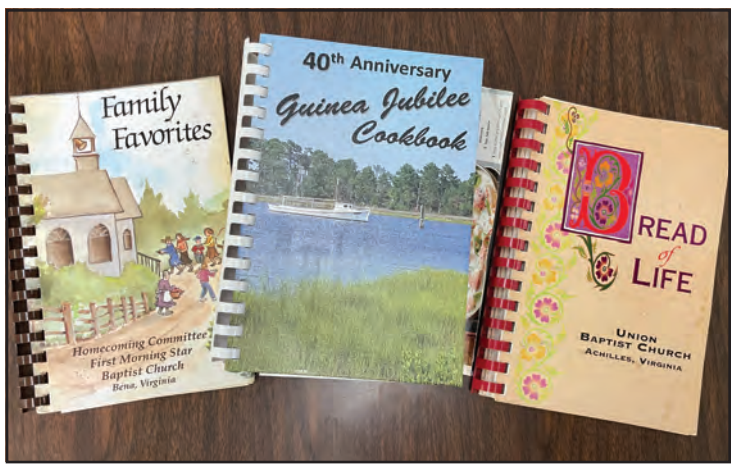
Mix the desired amount of cornmeal, about 2 c., salt and baking soda together. Use enough water for the cornmeal to be not too thick. Brown the cornbread with vegetable oil or shortening in frying pan. Makes 6-7 small cakes.

CRACKLING BREAD
VELMA COOK

¼ c. flour
1½ c. cornmeal
½ tsp. soda
¼ tsp. salt
1 c. sour milk
1 c. diced cracklings

Cracklings are small crisp browned bits that remain when pork fat is rendered for lard.

Mix and sift together all the dry ingredients. Add milk and stir in cracklings. Form into oblong cakes or pour into a greased baking pan. Bake at 400°F. for 30 minutes. Makes 6-8 servings.



Grab these cookbooks if you can find them on sale .

PORK BARBECUE
JOANN WEST

4-6 lb. fresh pork shoulder
1 c. ketchup
2 Tbs. Worcestershire sauce
2 Tbs. vinegar
2 Tbs. sugar
½ tsp. salt
Few grains pepper

Boil shoulder until well done. Remove skin and bone. Chop meat. Simmer other ingredients together for 5 minutes. Mix with chopped meat. Serve on roll with cole slaw or just as a meat dish. Serves 12.

BLACK WALNUT POUND CAKE
TOMMY ROWE

2½ sticks margarine and butter
3 c. sugar
5 eggs
1 c. milk
3 tsp. vanilla
3 c. flour
½ tsp. salt
1 c. walnuts in ½ c. flour

Cream margarine/butter; add sugar and cream again. Add eggs one at a time and beat. Add milk and vanilla alternately with flour and salt. Mix ½ c. flour with nuts. Fold in walnuts and put in a greased and floured tube pan. Bake 1½ hours in a 300°F. oven. Cool in pan until cool.

8-10 LAYER CHOCOLATE CAKE
SUE BLAKE

2 c. sugar
1 lb. butter
1 lb. flour, approx. 3 c. sifted
8 eggs
1 tsp. vanilla
1 tsp. lemon
Pinch salt
¼ to ½ tsp. baking powder

Take out butter and sugar and put in mixing bowl to soften. Lay out eggs and let them come to room temperature. Cream butter and sugar together with mixer. Add 1 cup flour at a time. Add eggs 2 at a time until fully mixed. Mix in vanilla, lemon, salt and baking powder. Line 9-inch cake pans with parchment paper and spray with Pam. Cook each layer around 8-10 minutes at 375°F. Remove carefully and put on Reynolds Wrap covered with waxed paper to cool.

Frosting

6 oz. Baker's unsweetened chocolate
2 sticks butter
2 boxes confectioners' sugar
1 Tbs. vanilla
Evaporated milk

Put the 2 boxes of confectioners' sugar in bowl. In microwaveable bowl, melt chocolate and butter together until smooth. Add to sugar and mix with evaporated milk until of spreadable consistency. Mix in vanilla. Spread frosting on top, sides and between layers.

SWEET POTATO PIE
ANN HOGGE

4 c. cooked sweet potatoes
2 eggs plus 1 yolk lightly beaten
2 c. sugar
¾ tsp. nutmeg
¼ c. flour
1 c. evaporated milk
2 sticks butter, melted
¼ c. light corn syrup
1 tsp. vanilla extract
2 unbaked deep-dish pie shells

Mix all ingredients well and pour into pie shells. Bake at 400°F. until done.

SWEET PICKLES OR RELISH
MELISSA ASHE

8 lbs. cucumbers
7 lbs. sugar
½ gallon cider vinegar
Pickling spices
1½-2 c. pickling lime
2 gallons water (enough to cover cucumbers)

Cut up cucumbers in slices for pickles or dice for relish. Cover with lime and water. Set aside for 24 hours. Drain and wash. Then cover with water for 3 hours. Drain well. Add sugar, vinegar and spices (for relish put spices in a cheesecloth bag). Let set overnight. Bring to a boil and cook until slices are clear looking. (For relish remove spice bag.) Put into hot jars.

Welcome to the Guinea Jubilee!
Our pleasure to honor and celebrate all of our Grand Marshals



from family & friends

Clarence (Buck) Rowe Jr.
1st Grand Marshal 1981

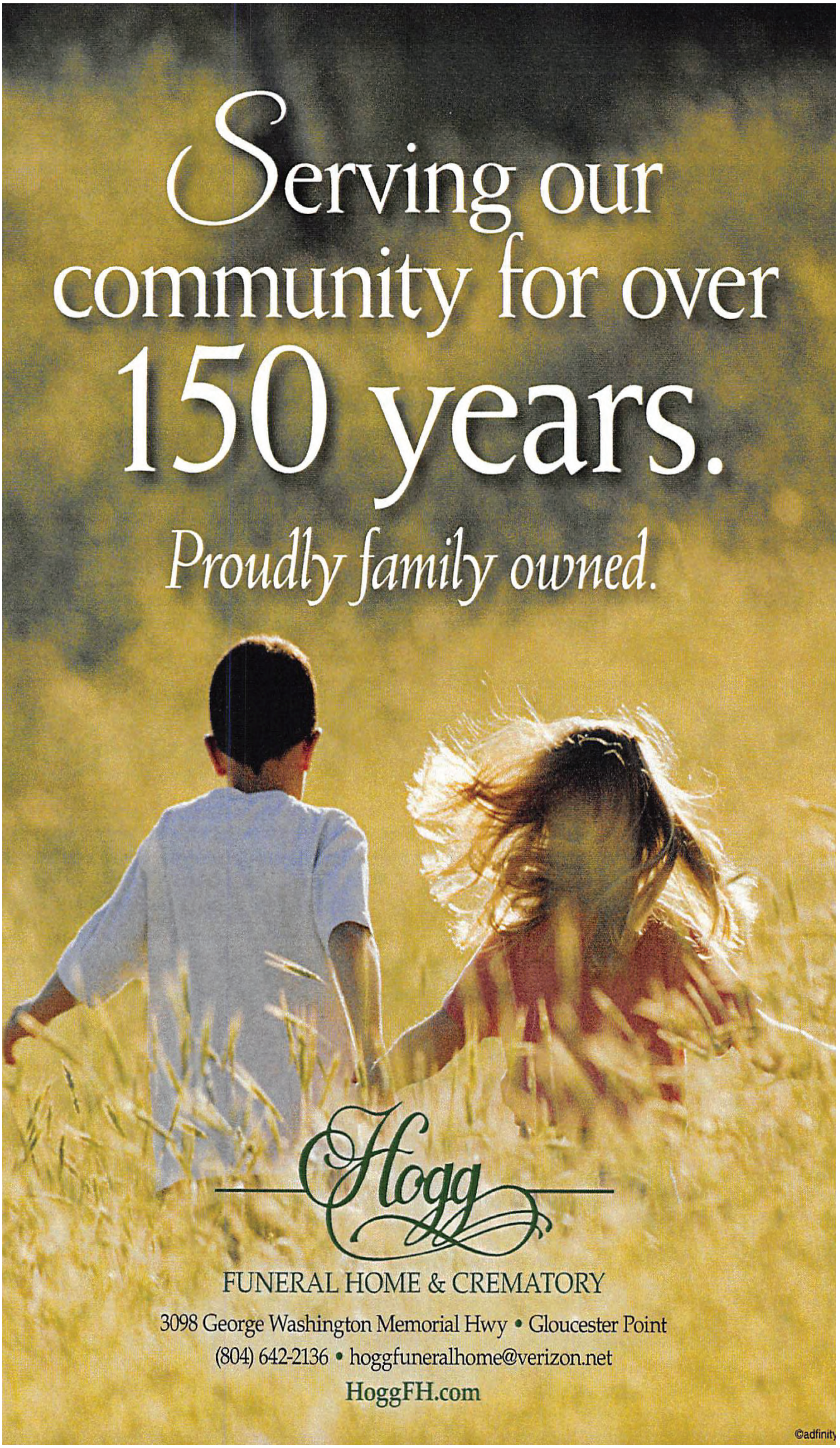
Welcome to the Guinea Jubilee!
Our pleasure to honor and celebrate all of our Grand Marshals



from family & friends

Kenneth Bonniville
Grand Marshal
2002

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