

Just as volunteers assisted in 1873, there are today many environmental, recreational and service organizations in King George which newer residents may not know of, but which they may want to join. Those organizations may have fundraisers, sell food and drinks, hand out flyers about their organization and sign up new members. After the event is over the owner of Tim's II Restaurant offered to have his 42 passenger pontoon boat pick up those who wish to cruise upriver into the sunset for dinner at the pier restaurant.



The replica paddleboat, *Vivian Hannah*, owned by Stan Palivoda of King George County will be on site for the event.



The Potomac River near where the *Wawaset* sank at Chatterton's Landing. View from Sisson's beach.

The Potomac was used in the 1870's primarily for transportation and fishing, today the river is used for recreation. Thus the end of the summer on Sunday afternoon will provide families, neighbors, and visitors an opportunity to picnic, learn about past and current uses of the Potomac, witness an historic event and enjoy the river and all its beauty.



(L to R) Warren Veazey, Ed Veazey, and author Al Oickle discussing the location of the sinking.

Wawaset Memorial and County Volunteer Picnic

Sunday, August 8, 2010

1:00 to 5:00 pm at

Sisson Home, 7702 Fitzhugh Lane

Eagle Bay, King George County, VA



Painting of the sinking of the steamboat *Wawaset* on August 8, 1873 by Anne R. Dolan. Painting donated to the King George County Historical Society.
Painting C 2009 Anne R. Dolan

FOR UPDATES AND DIRECTIONS:
www.kghistory.org or
www.eaglebayonthepotomac.com



The 2009 book *Disaster on the Potomac - The Last Run of the Steamboat Wawaset* by Alvin F. Oickle chronicles the tragic loss of life on August 8, 1873 off the shores of King George County where the steamboat caught fire and sank – claiming over 70 lives, mostly women and children. Some of those lost were from King George or were coming here to visit relatives.



On the spot drawing made by an artist from the New York Daily Graphic showing the remains of the *Wawaset*, and dredging for the dead.. August 1873.

Courtesy of the National Archives.

DIRECTIONS:

Go East from Fairview Beach on Rt 218 - or west from Rt 301 and Caledon Natural Area, - turn North from Rt 218 onto Rt 642 (Eagles Nest Ln). Go 0.7 miles to top of hill. Bear left onto Fitzhugh Ln (still Rt 642). Continue past water tank on left and turn left at intersection. Follow road down to the river to Sisson's house with the red roof - 7702 Fitzhugh Lane, King George, VA 22485.

To commemorate this event there will be...

- A wreath laying over the site in memory to those who lost their lives.
- The Historical Society will have a booth at which the books and other items will be available for sale. Author Al Oickle will be available to sign his book and talk about the disaster.
- The replica paddleboat *Vivian Hannah* owned by Stan Palivoda will arrive on the site with Boy Scouts to set a monument to memorialize the event.
- U. S. Navy divers from Indian Head MD have been invited to conduct training dives to locate any remains of the *Wawaset*. A display is planned along with a demonstration by some of the Navy divers with their equipment. Dr. Susan Langley, Nautical Archeologist for the State of Maryland plans to participate in the event.
- The Steamboat Era Museum of the Northern Neck will attend and provide a display of some of the history of paddleboats on the Potomac.
- The Chamber of Commerce and other organizations and exhibitors will help and entertain the whole family.
- Live firing of a Civil War cannon.

EVENT LOCATION: The Sisson family has offered their lovely riverside property and pier in Eagle Bay Development for this event. This is the closest easily accessible location nearest the *Wawaset* site. There is adequate parking.



X = Approximate location of the *Wawaset* Sinking

We hope many will come by boat or car to learn of the Potomac's history, enjoy it on a Sunday summer afternoon and help memorialize the sinking of the *Wawaset* – the worst steamboat disaster on the Potomac River. Food onsite or bring your picnic.

CONTACTS

King George Historical Society - *Wawaset* Committee

Chair: Ed Veazey, 540-775-2651; Cell 540-840-6659

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