

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED JAN 9 1980  
DATE ENTERED MAR 27 1980

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC  
Chesapeake Bay Bugeye (Wm. B. Tennison)  
AND/OR COMMON

**LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER  
Calvert Marine Museum  
CITY, TOWN  
Solomons  
STATE  
Maryland  
VICINITY OF  
Third  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
CODE  
24  
COUNTY  
Calvert  
CODE  
009

**CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION

**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME  
Calvert Marine Museum, Ralph Eshelman, Director  
STREET & NUMBER  
P. O. Box 97  
CITY, TOWN  
Solomons  
STATE  
Maryland  
VICINITY OF  
20688

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
Vessel Documentation Office  
STREET & NUMBER  
Department of Transportation  
CITY, TOWN  
Washington  
STATE  
D. C.

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE  
DATE  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
CITY, TOWN  
STATE  
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Bugeye is a craft which exhibits the transition from log to frame construction in Chesapeake Bay sailing vessels. Bugeyes were first built of all log construction, then of logs with a partial frame, and finally of all frame and plank construction. The Wm. B. Tennison, of the intermediate log and frame type, displays this transition in addition to the later conversion of a sailing craft to a power craft.

The Wm. B. Tennison has a length of 60.5 feet, breadth of 17.5 feet, and depth of 4.5 feet. Her official number is 081674. Her construction is typical log, of hewn heart pitch pine. Approximate thickness is 9" at the main log tapered to 6", 6" at turn of bilge tapered to approximately 3" at bend raising; well formed sheer; raked stem and stern posts; sawn oak transverse frames 3½" x 4" spaced at approximately 30-inch centers; 2½" x 8" sawn oak clamps; 6" sawn oak floor frames spaced approximately 5 feet intermediate of bulkhead; main members, floor frames and clamps galvanized drift bolted with chinch rings adequately fastened; refastened floor frames in 1976. Main members are sawn oak galvanized iron drift bolted. Transverse bulkheads are tongue and groove compartmental partially water tight, formed to athwartship stiffening.

Decks - ship laid heart pitch pine, 2" x 2½" caulked, painted, fastened with galvanized iron boat nails. The deck is fitted with hatch, hatch coamings amidship, deemed adequate for storage of oysters while being transported. The vessel was originally constructed as Sharp stern (patent) with stern installed to provide additional space of deck quarters.

Pilot house - tongue and groove cypress, rounded forward fitted with 3-drop windows, access door port and starboard with drop windows installed in pilot house sides; center helm with wheel and necessary instrumentation and controls, upper and lower berths to port forward to enclosed head, with access to engine room through hatch installed in pilot house sole.

Jointer work and trim - cypress tongue and groove painted.

Her original rig included two masts, three sails, four pairs of oyster dredges, dredge cables, four dredge rollers, two hand winders, a large hatch on either side of the centerboard, and a small cabin aft. The rig was removed in 1911 when the boat was converted to power. ( See #8 for details.)

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Maritime
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1899; 1911

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### SIGNIFICANCE

The Tennison is a Chesapeake Bay bugeye built in 1899 and converted to a buy boat in 1911. She is one of the few log-hulled bugeyes left on the Bay. She is exemplary of the transition between log and frame and plank bugeyes, having basically a log hull with some frame and plank construction. She was also one of the first bugeyes to be converted to power for use as a buy boat, and the only such converted vessel known to survive on the Bay.

By the late 1890s, suitable logs had grown scarce and most bugeyes were of frame and plank construction. Her construction in 1899 puts the Tennison in the middle of the construction transition. Through the 1920s and 30s many sail-powered bugeyes continued to oyster with the skipjacks (the latter had largely taken over because they were cheaper to build and maintain), but by the late 30s and early 40s most bugeyes had left actual oystering, converting to power and serving as oyster buy boats or retaining sails but serving as yachts. The Tennison came under power very early in the history of the bugeye on the Bay. (Ref: Burgess, Chesapeake Bay Sailing Craft, pp. 16-17.)

### HISTORY

The Tennison is a Chesapeake Bay bugeye built in 1899 at Crabb Island, Maryland by B.P. and R.L. Miles. Her hull is constructed of nine logs, called "chunk" as opposed to the frame and plank type of construction which developed later. (See #7.) The Tennison is one of the oldest surviving chunk bugeyes on the Bay.

To our knowledge at the Calvert Marine Museum, the Wm. B. Tennison is the only log bugeye converted to an oyster buy boat extant on the Chesapeake Bay. Her condition can be attested to by the fact that the U.S. Coast Guard has passed a rigid survey on her, making her the oldest licensed passenger carrying vessel in the 5th Coast Guard District (the Chesapeake Bay). Her survival is a tribute to her builder and the former owners who maintained her in excellent fashion.

It seems appropriate that the Calvert Marine Museum, based at the Solomons "bugeye capital of the world" should have in its possession a vessel of this type. During their prime, the shipbuilders of Solomons produced more bugeyes than any other community on the Bay. As a result, the vessel's development was greatly influenced by this local group of boat builders.

Initially the Tennison was powered by sail, as were all the bugeyes, and was engaged in the coasting trade and the oyster industry. In 1911 she was converted to a power vessel and the sail rig was removed. A new, larger cabin was added aft, and

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #1.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Brewington, M.V. Chesapeake Bay, A Pictorial Maritime History.  
 Brewington, M.V. Chesapeake Bay Log Canoes and Bugeyes.  
 Burgess, Robert. Chesapeake Sailing Craft.  
 Burgess, Robert. This Was Chesapeake Bay.  
 DeGast, Robert. Oystermen of the Chesapeake Bay.  
 Maryland Historical Society, Archives of Maryland.

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY N/A

UTM REFERENCES

A	18	372300	4242680	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Permant berth for the boat is <sup>N/A</sup> - Backcreek Calvert Marine Museum pier - Solomons Md. see phone report of 3.7.80

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Bill Hall, Naval Architect

ORGANIZATION

Calvert Marine Museum

DATE

March 5, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 97

TELEPHONE

(301) 326-3719

CITY OR TOWN

Solomons

STATE

Maryland 20688

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL  STATE  LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*John Hall* 1-2-80

TITLE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*W. Ray Luce*  
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
 ATTEST *Anna Jane Sax*  
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER  
 Regional Coordinator

DATE 3/27/80

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 3-14-80

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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Wm. B. Tennison  
Calvert County  
Maryland

CONTINUATION SHEET      ITEM NUMBER 8      PAGE 1

(SIGNIFICANCE, continued)

she became an oyster buy boat. She continued in this business until her recent acquisition by the Calvert Marine Museum. The sole purpose of a buy boat was to travel between the oyster bars, purchase shellfish from the workboats, return to the oyster house, and subsequently make deliveries to the metropolitan markets of Washington, Baltimore, Norfolk, etc. The use of oyster buy boats greatly reduced the need for oystermen to travel to wholesale markets to sell their catch. However, the benefits gained by this were practically negated because the captains of the buy boats purchased oysters from the oystermen at reduced rates. In effect, buy boats reduced the oystermen's income. During the off season, April to October, the buy boats engaged in hauling fresh produce, lumber, and livestock to markets in Baltimore and Washington, D. C.

In 1952 necessary repair of rotted members in the Tennison was carried out by the H. Krentz Marine Railway in Harryhogan, Virginia. Her original exterior was finished as it is now, with white paint. The quarterboards, which almost certainly date from her conversion in 1911, are in an excellent state of preservation. These are now in the museum collection. New boards carved by LeRoy "Pepper" Langley (Master shipcarver) are now fixed to the vessel. The former owner, Mr. Alton Kersey, maintained her in excellent condition.

Her dredge equipment, including six oyster dredges, a four-cylinder Wisconsin air-cooled engine geared to a double set of winders, and dredge chocks and roller, are also in the museum collection.

It is the interest of the museum to use this vessel as a cruise tour boat on the Patuxent River, as well as a field excursion boat for estuarine educational classes.

While many have suggested the Tennison be restored to its 1899 sailing condition, we at the museum feel the real historic value of this vessel is its conversion to an oyster buy boat from a bugeye. There are three sailing bugeyes on the Bay or being built today, but no log hull oyster buy boat. Part of the interpretation of this vessel will be the documentation of its conversion and the fluctuating trends in the oyster business which caused it.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

