

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

WM. B. TENNISON

Page 1

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Easement

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

CT-799

Historic Name: *WM. B. TENNISON*

Other Name/Site Number: *Chesapeake Bay Bugeye Buy-boat Wm. B. Tennison*

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: *Back Creek, Solomons Harbor*

Not for publication: *N/A*

City/Town: *Solomons*

Vicinity: *N/A*

State: *MD*

County: *Calvert*

Code: *009*

Zip Code: *20688*

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property

Private:
 Public-Local: **X**
 Public-State:
 Public-Federal:

Category of Property

Building(s):
 District:
 Site:
 Structure: **X**
 Object:

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

1

1

Noncontributing

 buildings
 sites
 structures
 objects
0 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: **1**

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: *N/A*

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FUNCTION OR USE

Historic: Transportation

Sub: Water-related

Current: Transportation

Sub: Water-related

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: N/A

MATERIALS:

Foundation: Wood, logs (hull)

Walls: Wood (superstructure)

Roof: Wood (deck)

Other: N/A

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Decking is laid fore and aft, of 2-inch by 2½-inch heart pitch pine, seated in bedding compound and fastened with galvanized boat nails. The hold is fitted with hatch coamings and hatch coverings amidship.

A construction detail common to most bugeyes is the very sharp canoe stern, nearly as narrow as the bow. The deck at the stern is given more work space by a "patent stern" which extends out beyond the hull. The patent stern is framed of oak and drifted to the stern post, sheer strake, and covering boards. This technological improvement over earlier bugeyes, was by 1910 a standard feature. The deck is painted white with light tan trim.

RIG

Originally *Tennison* was a sailing vessel with two masts. During the conversion to power, the mainmast and the running rigging of the foremast was removed. The foremast was retained to hold the hoisting rig used by a buyboat to move cargo. The present foremast, installed in 1976, is at least the second foremast on *Tennison*.¹ Reflecting its new function, it is nearly perpendicular to the deck rather than raked as in the traditional Chesapeake sailing mast. Two wooden gaff-rigged booms on the foremast helped lift cargo over each side of the buy-boat. From each boom hung a bushel-size oyster measuring bucket which was used to empty the vessels of oysters after the catch was sold. The booms and hoisting rig were removed in the early 1970s and replaced with a fixed pipe boom which was subsequently removed in the late 1970s when *Tennison* stopped buying oysters. Standing rigging consists of three galvanized wire stays, one from the bow and one from each side.

PILOT HOUSE

The pilot house is rectangular with a rounded forward side as is typical of Chesapeake buy-boats. Along the front are 3 drop windows. Both port and starboard sides of the pilot house are pierced by an access door and drop window. A third door is located at the aft end of the pilot house. The house is covered with vertical tongue-and-groove cypress siding. A traditional wooden spoke wheel steers the boat through a rope system to the rudder. On the port interior side forward are an upper and lower berth, with an enclosed head aft. Access to the engine compartment is through a floor hatch. The pilot house is painted white inside and out.

CHANGES IN PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Originally a two-masted, three-sail-rigged bugeye, *Tennison* was converted to a power oyster buy-boat in 1908-9. The mainmast, centerboard trunk, and the original deck cabin were removed, an engine compartment was built aft and outfitted with engine, shaft and propeller. The rudder was cut out for the propeller, and a pilot house was built on deck.

¹ Alton Kersey, phone interview with Ralph Eshelman, 24 August 1993. Notes in author's files. Kersey began working for the J.C. Lore Company in 1956 and in 1962 became manager of the company. During these years he often worked and later captained the *Tennison*.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

Nationally: X Statewide: ___ Locally: ___Applicable National
Register Criteria:A X B ___ C X D ___Criteria Considerations
(Exceptions):

A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F ___ G ___

NHL Criteria: 1, 4

NHL Theme(s): XIV Transportation
B. Ships, Boats, Lighthouses, and Other StructuresXII. Business
A. Extractive or Mining Industries
5. Fishing and LivestockAreas of Significance: Maritime History
Transportation
Commerce
Architecture (Naval)

Period(s) of Significance: 1899-1943

Significant Dates: 1899, 1908-09

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Frank Laird

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operation of such an ostracized oysterman, thus making such occurrences rare.¹ Not all oystermen used the buy-boats preferring to take their catch to market themselves where the dock price was higher. But most oystermen sold their catch to buy-boat operators realizing the extra time and cost in a trip to the dock usually did not make up for the difference in price.

In the off season, Chesapeake buy-boats were used to haul produce, lumber, and even livestock to markets in Baltimore, Norfolk, Richmond, and Washington, D.C. Since the 1960s, with the advent of trucks and better roads, however, most oystermen unload their oyster catch directly onto their own pick-up trucks backed up to the pier where they dock. They then drive their catch to their favorite processing plant or where the best prices are being paid. This made for a longer day but also allowed higher profits. Today, trucking of produce and lumber is faster, more convenient, and more cost effective. This change in transportation medium marked the end for the buy-boat.

Buy-boats are generally large, well built and capable of long service. Chris Judy compiled a list of 120 known buy-boats used on the Chesapeake Bay. They ranged from *Betty I. Conway*, built in Stoney Point, New York, in 1866 to *Thomas W.*, built in Deltaville, Virginia, in 1961.² Only a few survive today.

CONSTRUCTION AND CAREER OF WM. B. TENNISON

Tennison was built in 1899 by master carpenter Frank Laird of Monie, Maryland, at Crabb Island (now abandoned) near Oriole, Somerset County, Maryland, on a tributary of the Manokin River off Tangier Sound. The date of 1899 was a late one for the construction of a "chunk" or log hull bugeye. By this time logs were becoming scarce and the bugeye was beginning to be replaced by the smaller, easier to operate, and cheaper to build skipjack. This late construction date in part explains *Tennison's* survival.

Laird also has the distinction of having built the largest chunk bugeye, *A. Von Nyvenheim* in 1906. *Tennison* was built for Benjamin P. and Rufus L. Miles of Monie, Maryland, who used her as a bugeye oyster dredge boat until 1908-9 when she was converted to power. At this time the net tonnage changed from 18 to 11 tons reflecting the loss of hold space now occupied by the engine. *Tennison* essentially maintains her physical appearance from this time period.

Tennison's conversion was an early example. Of the hundreds of sailing bugeyes dredging in the 1880s, less than 50 survived to 1938.³ Records from the *List of Merchant Vessels of the United States* indicate *Tennison's* registered homeport varied from Crisfield, Maryland, to

¹ Larry S. Chowning, *Harvesting The Chesapeake: Tools & Traditions*, Centreville, Maryland: Tidewater Publishers, 1990, pp. 120-126.

² Chris Judy, "Chesapeake Buy-boat List" (vertical history file, buy-boats, Calvert Marine Museum, Solomons, Maryland).

³ Robert H. Burgess, *Chesapeake Bay Sailing Craft*, Cambridge, Maryland: Cornell Maritime Press, 1975, p. 16-17; and Marion Brewington, *Chesapeake Bay Bugeyes*, Newport News, Virginia: The Mariner's Museum, 1941.

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the last to operate *Tennison* as a buy-boat never heard of such a change.⁹ During the Hazelwood ownership it is stated there were two hatch openings in the deck, possibly dating from the configuration when hand winders were still used onboard. With the deck replaced during the Krentz rebuild it may be possible that this is when the configuration from two hatches to one hatch took place.

Ironically, after her rebuild, *Tennison* was left "high and dry" on the shore of the Poquoson River, Virginia, after suffering through hurricane Hazel in October 1952. When she was pulled back into the river, a long scar in the hull resulted from being dragged over an obstruction. This damage is supposedly visible when *Tennison* is hauled out of the water. In 1955 the present 165 horsepower Grey Marine 6-71 diesel engine was installed. It is believed to have been taken from a surplus naval landing craft.¹⁰ The present hold and hatch coaming configuration was made at the Rice Marine Railway, Reedville, Virginia in the late 1960s or early 1970s. The result was a larger main hatch hold opening over the previous smaller single opening. The larger hatch made it more convenient to store oysters below for more stability while working on the often choppy and stormy, Potomac River.¹¹

Tennison was used by the Lore Company till 1978 when the company closed. Under Lore ownership she was registered as homeported in Baltimore 1946-1954, Annapolis 1955-1973, and Washington, D.C., 1974-1980. The Calvert Marine Museum, Solomons, Maryland was able to purchase *Tennison* and the J.C. Lore & Sons oyster house in 1979 through a Heritage, Conservation, and Recreation Service grant of the U.S. Department of Interior. Under the museum's ownership, *Tennison* is still associated with the very processing house for which she bought oysters for 37 years.

Alton Kersey, owner and operator of the vessel at the time of the purchase, knew the end of *Tennison*'s career as a buy-boat was near. To help maintain the vessel he began taking onboard passengers for hire. The museum has continued this use to the present allowing *Tennison* to help maintain her keep as a working vessel.

As the oldest licensed passenger vessel in the Fifth Coast Guard District and reputedly the second oldest in the United States, *Tennison* receives annual inspection and survey by the U. S. Coast Guard. This has required regular mandatory maintenance and repair work which has resulted in a vessel in good to excellent condition. At present the vessel has just completed the first phase of a two phase, three year renovation program conducted in close cooperation with the Coast Guard. During this renovation, the bow stem and false stem were replaced, as well as the bullwarks from the gangway on each side around the stern.

Wm. B. Tennison exhibits the classic physical characteristics of a buy-boat converted from a log-hull-constructed bugeye and as such represents the last of her type. Despite considerable research, the identity of Wm. B. Tennison, for whom the vessel was named, is unknown.

⁹ Kersey interview.

¹⁰ Kersey interview.

¹¹ Kersey interview.

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Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State Agency
 Federal Agency
 Local Government
 University
 Other (Specify Repository): Calvert Marine Museum, Solomons, Maryland.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: Less than one (1) acre

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing
A 18 372300 4242680**Verbal Boundary Description:**

All that area encompassed within the extreme length and breath of the vessel.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary incorporates the entire area of the vessel as she lays at her berth.

11. FORM PREPARED BYName/Title: Ralph Eshelman, Maritime Historian
Academy of Natural Sciences
Benedict Estuarine Research Laboratory
Benedict, Maryland 20612

Telephone: (301) 274-3134 or (410) 326-4877

Date: August 23, 1993.

Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. CT-799

EASEMENT

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Sailing Vessel *William B. Tennison*

other _____

2. Location

street and number Calvert Marine Museum, 14150 S. Solomons Island Road not for publication

city, town Solomons vicinity

county Calvert

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Calvert Marine Museum (Board of Commissioners of Calvert County)

street and number P.O. Box 97 telephone (410) 326-2042

city, town Solomons state Maryland zip code 20688

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. _____ liber _____ folio _____

city, town _____ tax map _____ tax parcel _____ tax ID number _____

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

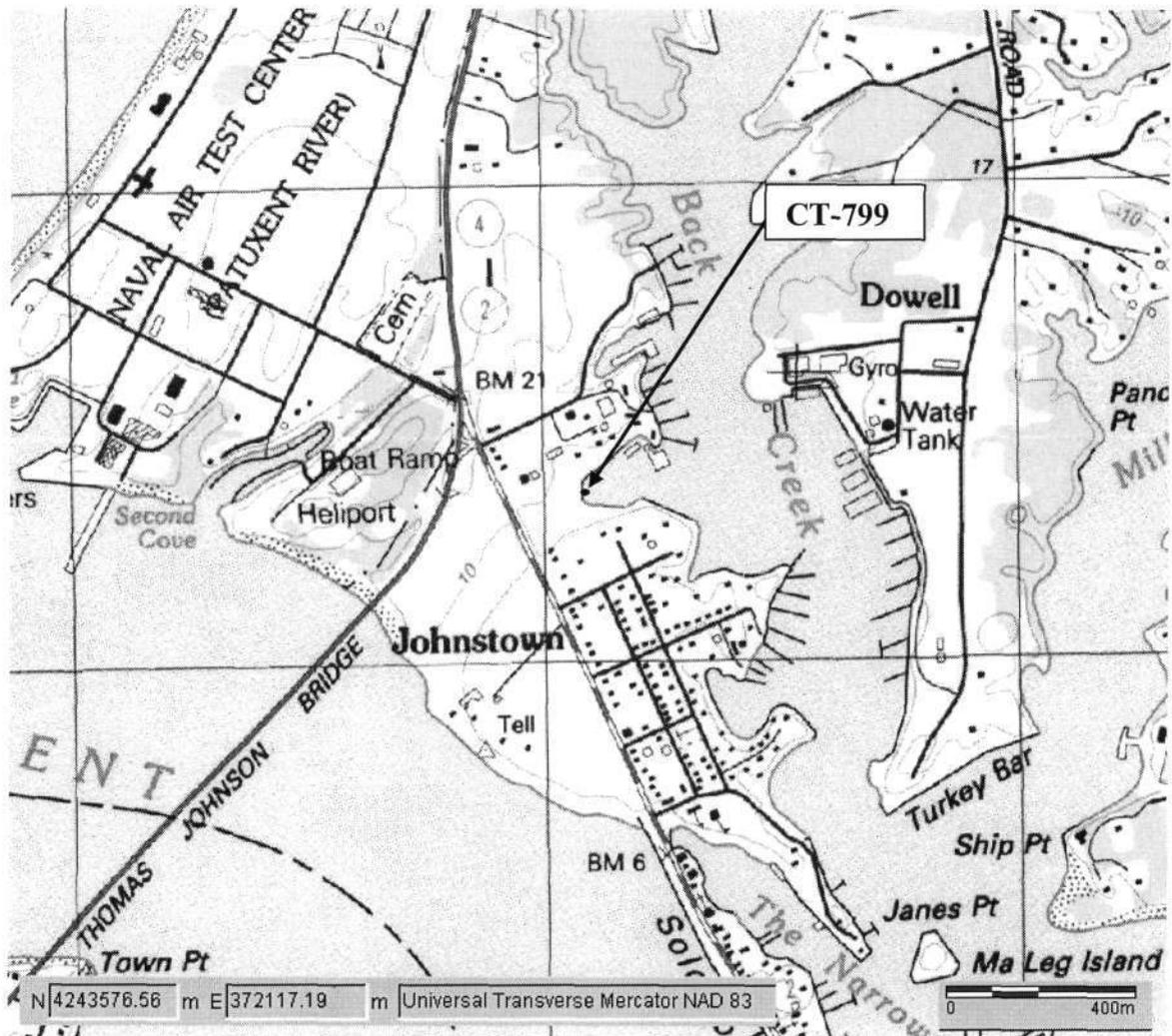
- Contributing Resource in National Register District
 Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
 Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
 Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
 Recorded by HABS/HAER
 Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
 Other: MHT Preservation Easement Property

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	
		<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
		<input type="checkbox"/> social	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

Number of Contributing Resources
previously listed in the Inventory

CT-799
Sailing Vessel William B. Tennison
Calvert Marine Museum, Solomons
Solomons Island Quadrangle



1998 Aerial Photo

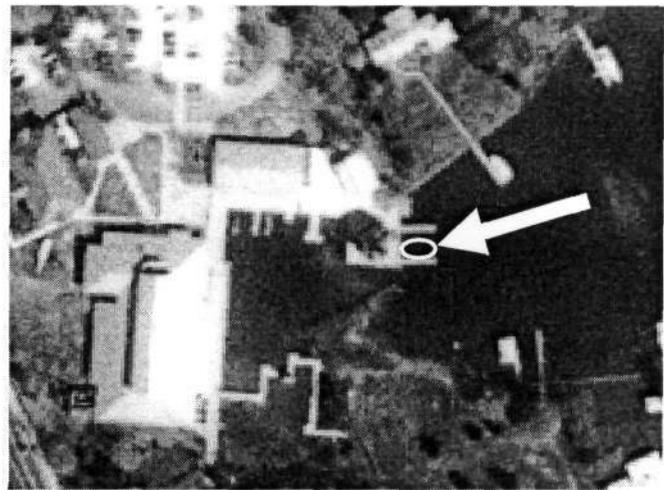


EXHIBIT A

Schedule

Sailing Vessel
William B. Tennison

- Page 1 of 7 Schedule (this recorded page)
- Page 2 of 7 View of front starboard side of vessel
- Page 3 of 7 View of front port side of vessel
- Page 4 of 7 Starboard side of vessel
- Page 5 of 7 Starboard side of vessel
- Page 6 of 7 Interior view
- Page 7 of 7 Amidships facing bow of vessel

WILLIAM B. TENNSION

Calvert County

EASEMENT EXHIBIT NO. Page 1 of 7

SIGNED ORIGINAL ON FILE WITH THE M.H.T.

SCHEDULE

SCALE:

PREPARED: RJB 10/2001

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

GRANTOR

GRANTEE



WILLIAM B. TENNISON
CALVERT COUNTY

EASEMENT EXHIBIT NO. A, Page 2 of 7

SIGNED ORIGINAL ON FILE WITH THE M.H.T.
GRANTOR

View of front starboard side of vessel

PREPARED BY:RJB OCTOBER 2001
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

GRANTEE



WILLIAM B. TENNISON
CALVERT COUNTY

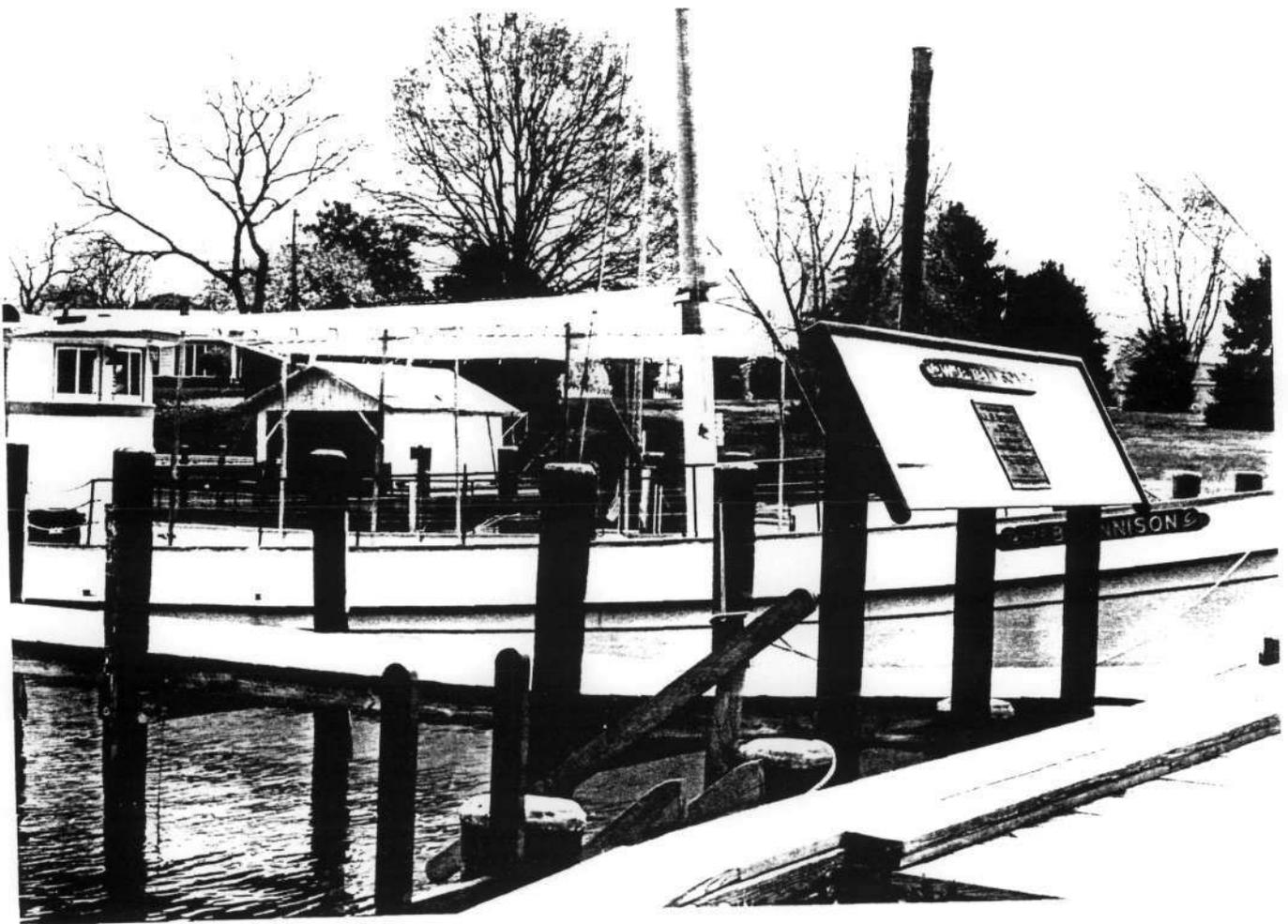
View of front port side of vessel

EASEMENT EXHIBIT NO. A, Page 3 of 7
SIGNED ORIGINAL ON FILE WITH THE M.H.T.
GRANTOR

PREPARED BY:RJB
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

OCTOBER 2001

GRANTEE



WILLIAM B. TENNISON
 CALVERT COUNTY

Starboard side of vessel

EASEMENT EXHIBIT NO. A, Page 4 of 7

PREPARED BY:RJB

OCTOBER 2001

SIGNED ORIGINAL ON FILE WITH THE M.H.T.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

GRANTOR

GRANTEE



WILLIAM B. TENNISON
CALVERT COUNTY

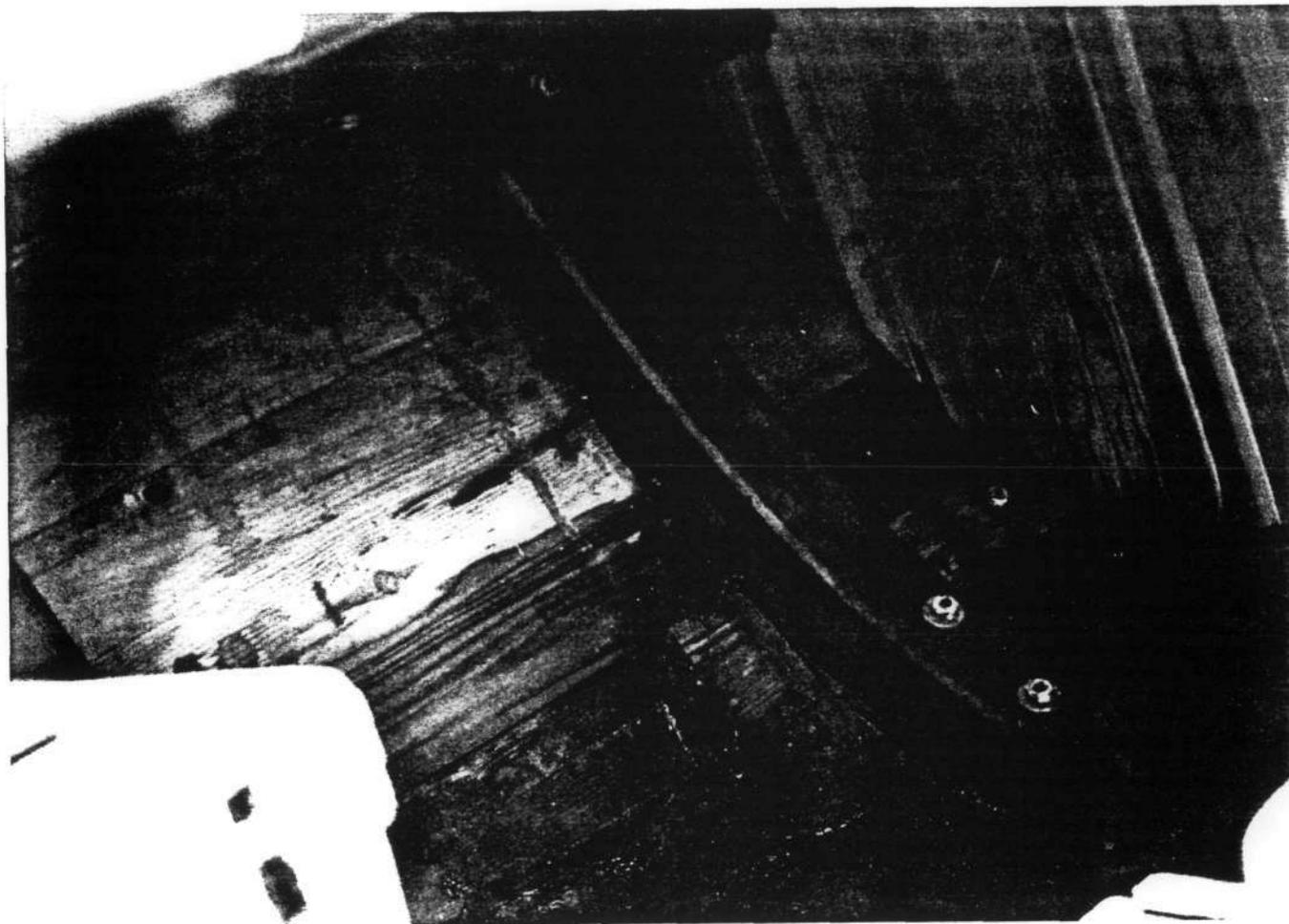
Starboard side of vessel

EASEMENT EXHIBIT NO. A, Page 5 of 7

PREPARED BY:RJB OCTOBER 2001
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

SIGNED ORIGINAL ON FILE WITH THE M.H.T.
GRANTOR

GRANTEE



WILLIAM B. TENNISON
CALVERT COUNTY

Interior view

EASEMENT EXHIBIT NO. A, Page 6 of 7

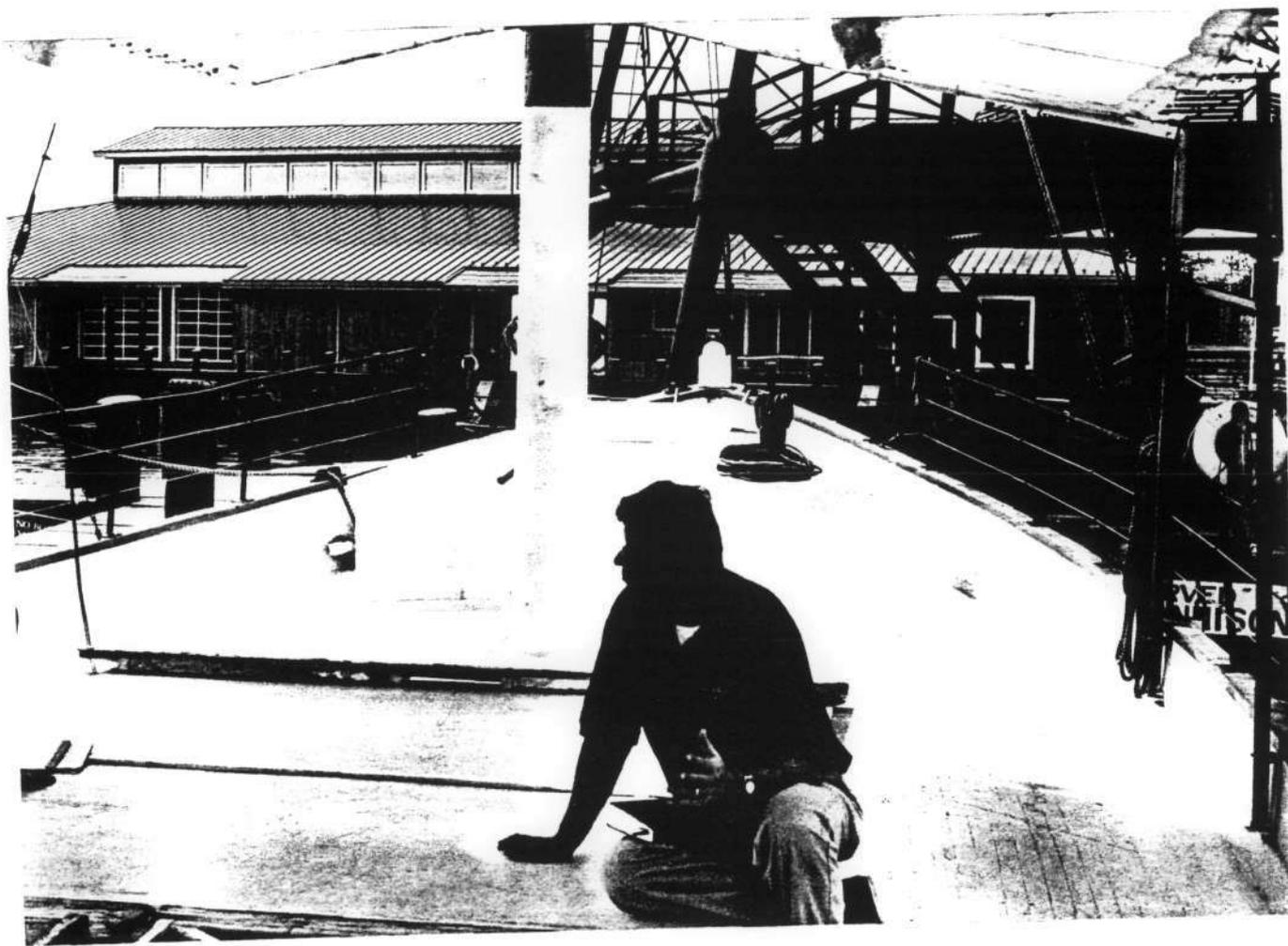
PREPARED BY:RJB

OCTOBER 2001

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

SIGNED ORIGINAL ON FILE WITH THE M.H.T.
GRANTOR

GRANTEE



WILLIAM B. TENNISON
CALVERT COUNTY

EASEMENT EXHIBIT NO. A, Page 7 of 7

SIGNED ORIGINAL ON FILE WITH THE M.H.T.
GRANTOR

Amidships facing bow of vessel

PREPARED BY:RJB
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

OCTOBER 2001

GRANTEE

Easement - Term Expired

CT-799

WILLIAM B. TENNISON (buy-boat, converted from bugeye)
Solomons, Maryland

WILLIAM B. TENNISON is a 60-1/2' long 9-log bugeye, originally a sailing vessel built in 1899 by B.P. and R.L. Miles of Crabb Island, but converted to power c. 1907-1911 for use as a buy-boat in the oyster trade. She is double-ended with a patent stern and a sharp stem, with a beam of 17-1/2' and a depth of 4-1/2'. She is in working condition and is operated as a passenger cruise and educational vessel on the Patuxent River by the Calvert Marine Museum. WILLIAM B. TENNISON is significant for being the sole surviving example of a converted bugeye/buy-boat now afloat on the Bay, and for representing, through her conversion and work history, the adaptation of Bay vessels in response to the changing economic conditions of the oystering industry. She gains added significance for being operated by the Calvert Marine Museum as an educational and recreational passenger vessel.

Easement
Term Expired

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	
DATE ENTERED	

**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

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Calvert Marine Museum

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Solomons

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Third

STATE

Maryland

CODE

24

COUNTY

Calvert

CODE

009

3 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"/> FILE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Calvert Marine Museum, Ralph Eshelman, Director

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 97

CITY, TOWN

Solomons

VICINITY OF

STATE

Maryland

20688

5 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

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CF-799

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 compartment 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.)

SIGNIFICANCE

CF-799

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 Logging 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.

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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

FOR HCRS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

Wm. B. Tennison

Calvert County

CONTINUATION SHEET

Maryland

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.

**Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form**

*Easement
Term Expired*

Survey No. CT-799

Magi No. 0507995633

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic WILLIAM B. TENNISON

and/or common Buy-boat, converted from bugeye CMM 79-21

2. Location

street & number _____ not for publication _____

city, town Solomons _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district _____

state Maryland _____ county Calvert _____

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Calvert Marine Museum

street & number _____ telephone no.: 326-3719

city, town Solomons _____ state and zip code Maryland 20688

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. _____ liber _____

street & number _____ folio _____

city, town _____ state _____

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Maryland Historical Trust, Inventory Form for State Historic Sites Survey

date March 5, 1979 _____ federal state _____ county _____ local _____

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust

city, town _____ state _____

7. Description

Survey No. CT-799

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This 60 1/2' long vessel is the oldest licensed passenger vessel on the Chesapeake. Built in 1899 by B.P. and R.L. Miles on Crabb Island, she is a 9-log bug-eye, originally a sailing vessel, but converted to power c. 1907-1911 for use as a buy-boat in the oyster trade. She is double-ended with a patent stern and a sharp stem. Her beam is 17 1/2' and her depth 4 1/2'. She is in working condition and is operated as a passenger cruise and educational vessel on the Patuxent River by the Calvert Marine Museum, Solomons. In her current condition, the boat shows the conversion of a bug-eye to a powered buy-boat, reflecting the adaptation of vessels in response to changing economic conditions in the oystering industry.

The vessel is log-built of nine hewn heart-pitch pine logs, fastened with galvanized iron drift bolts. There are sawn oak transverse frames, about 30" apart, and sawn oak clamps, in addition to 6" sawn oak floor frames. The decks are ship-laid heart pitch pine, caulked and painted. The boat has a sharp raking stem and a sharp stern, with an added patent stern providing additional deck space. The rudder is hung outboard on a wide rudder post, cut out for the propeller.

The decks are flush, with several structures including a mid-ships hatch, used for transporting oysters, and a large cabin aft, fitted with doors and windows and dating from her conversion to power. The pilothouse is built of tongue-and-groove cypress and contains the wheel, instruments, and controls.

Under her original sail rig the boat had two masts raked well aft and carried three sharp-headed sails. When converted to a power buy-boat the spars were removed, as was the centerboard, and a larger cabin was built. Subsequent changes included an overhaul in 1952 at which time some members were replaced. This took place at the H.M. Krentz Marine Railway in Harryhogan, VA. The boat was finished, then as now, with white paint. Original fittings, including oyster-dredging equipment, winder engine, and nameboards dating from the time of conversion, are in the Museum collection. The vessel today carries nameboards carved by Leroy "Pepper" Langley in 1963.

8. Significance

Survey No. CT-799

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1899 **Builder/Architect** B.P. and R.L. Miles

check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
and/or

Applicable Exception: A B C D E F G

Level of Significance: national state local

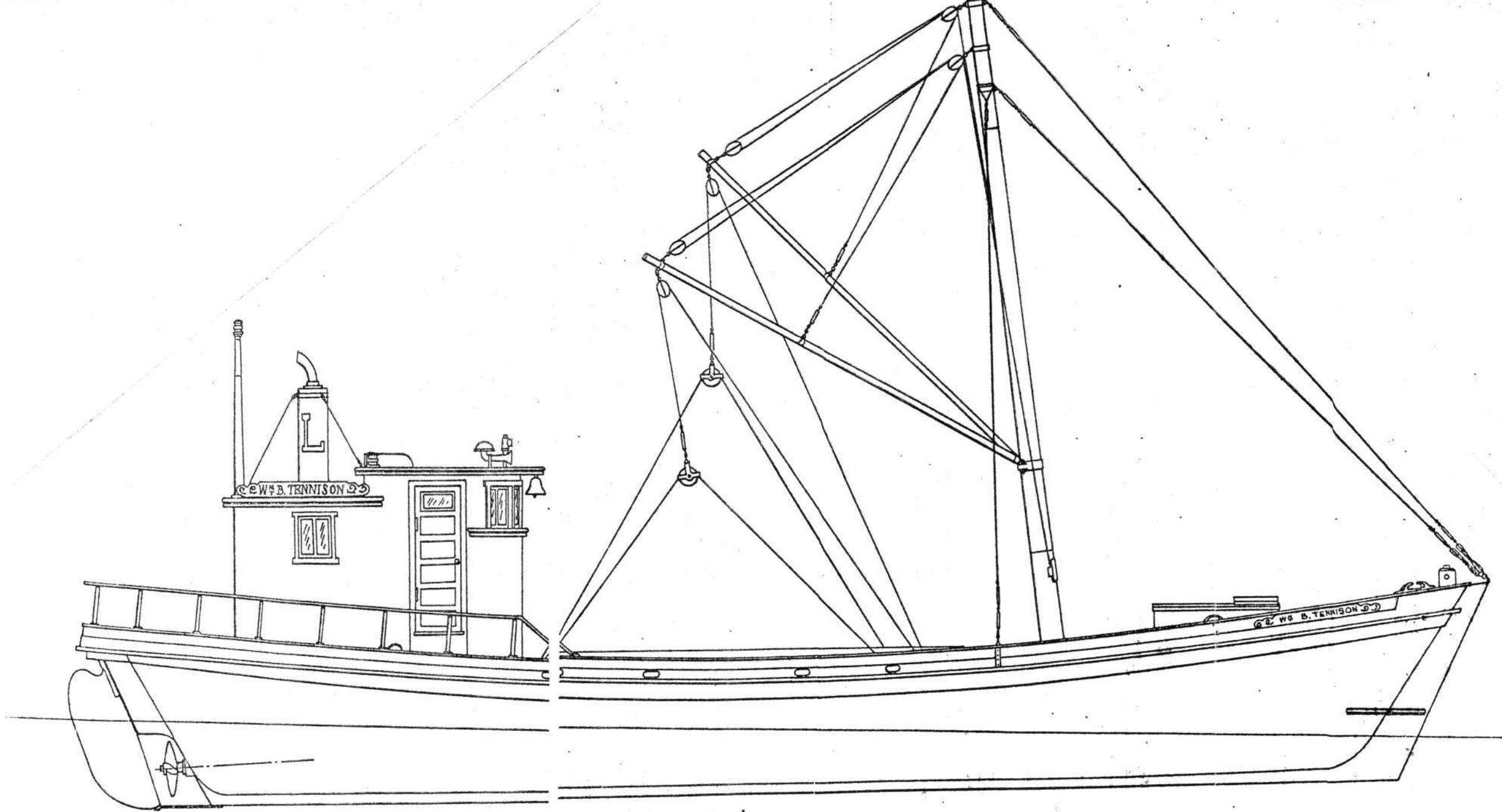
Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

This vessel gains its significance for being the sole surviving example of a converted bugeye/buy-boat now afloat on the Bay. Built in 1899 as a 9-log bugeye and converted to a power buy-boat between 1907 and 1911, the WILLIAM B. TENNISON is a unique example of her type. She gains added significance for being operated by the Calvert Marine Museum as an educational and recreational passenger vessel.

WILLIAM B. TENNISON was built in 1899, probably one of the last of the log-bottom bugeyes to be built, as suitable, large logs were becoming scarce by that time and many builders had switched to frame-built bugeyes. The bugeye type originated in Somerset County, Md., after the oyster dredge was legalized following the Civil War, necessitating larger, more powerful vessels to meet the physical demands of the heavy dredges as well as the increasing market demand for oysters. The history of the bugeye closely followed that of the oyster fishery. Essentially the type was a development of the log canoe and the larger brogan, with the addition of more wing logs (up to 9 or 11 logs might be used for a bugeye) and a deck. Bugeyes began to be built in the 1860s and over the years several variations were made on the type, particularly at the stern where the challenge was to create more deck space at the sharp stern. The overhanging patent stern, such as that on the TENNISON, was by far the most popular solution and the TENNISON retained this stern when she was converted to power. The patent stern, essentially a squared-off platform atop the afterdeck, came into being through the invention of Joseph E. Robbins of Cambridge, Maryland, c. 1908. It quickly became the universal solution to adding deck space to the double-ended bugeye.

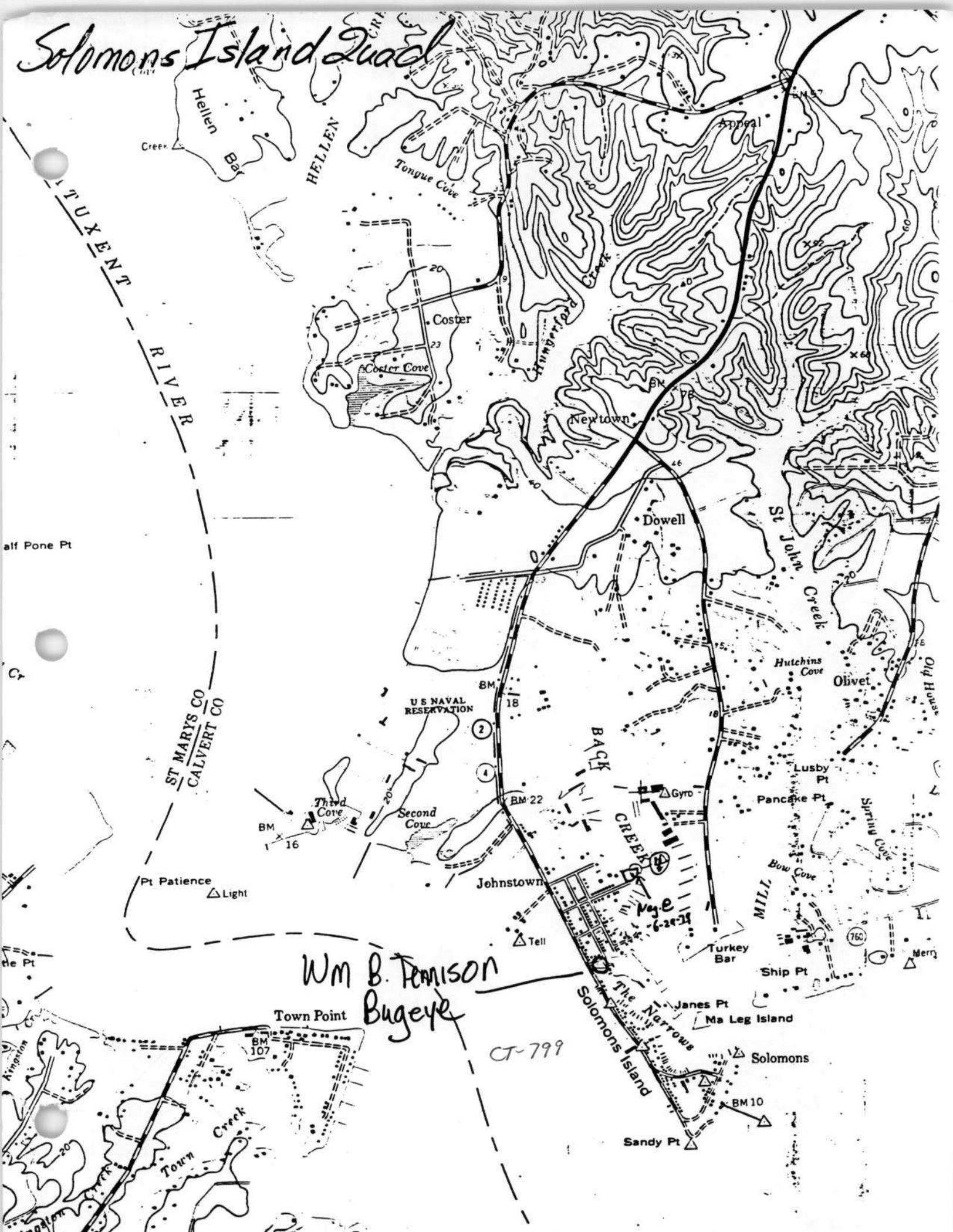
By 1893, in response to the increasing popularity of the skipjack, which was quicker and cheaper to build, and the gasoline engine, the building of bugeyes had begun to decline. The TENNISON thus represents a very late example of the type. Shortly after the turn of the century, bugeye owners turned away from dredging with their large craft and instead worked them as buy-boats, purchasing oysters from skipjacks and tongers, in the winter, and as freighters in the summer. Most converted to power as soon as they could and by 1938, according to M.V. Brewington, there were fewer than 50 still under sail. The TENNISON followed the typical pattern of bugeyes in turning to buy-boating under power. She is important not only for illustrating the conversion of a sailing vessel to power, but also as a late example of a 9-log bugeye, probably one of the last log bugeyes built.

The TENNISON's significance also lies in her long history under various types of service including oyster dredging, hauling produce, lumber and livestock in the off-seasons to Baltimore and Washington markets, and buying oysters from boats on the dredging grounds—a combination of uses typical of many Bay craft that have now disappeared. She is a living document of the fluctuation of trends in the oyster business and in the allied boatbuilding trades of the Chesapeake region.



60' BUYBOAT - "WILLIAM B. TENNISON" (AS CONVERTED IN 1911)

Solomons Island Quad



Hellen Bay
Creeks

TUXENT RIVER

alf Pone Pt

ST MARYS CO
CALVERT CO

Pt Patience
△ Light

Town Point
BM 107
Town Creek

Wm B. Tannison
Bugeye

CT-799

Johnstown
The Narrows
Solomons Island
Sandy Pt
BM 10

HELLEN
Tongue Cove
Coster
Coster Cove

Newtown
Dowell

U.S. NAVAL RESERVATION

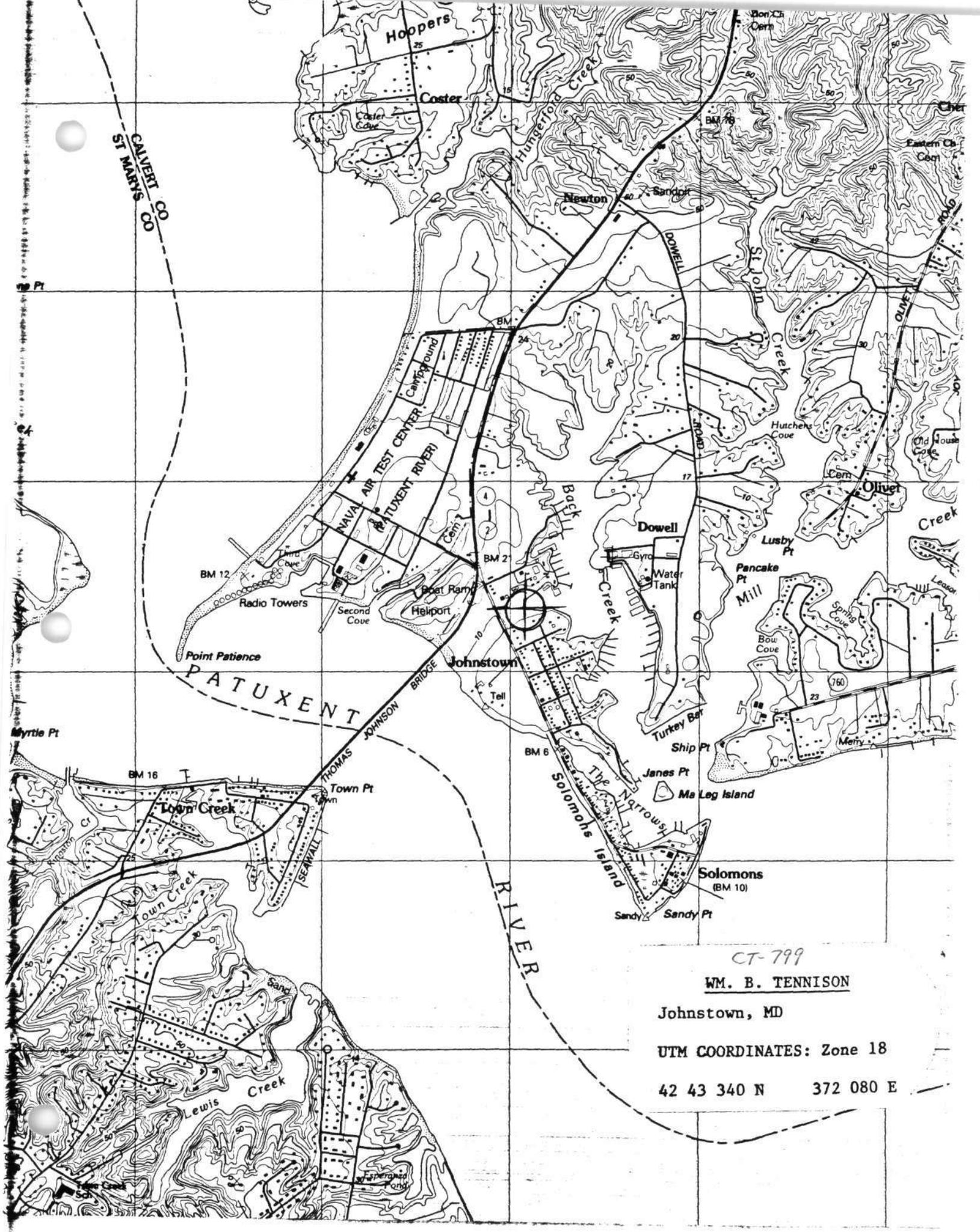
BACK

CREEK

MILL

St John's Creek
Hutchins Cove
Olivet
Lusby Pt
Pancake Pt
Spring Cove
Bow Cove
Ship Pt
Turkey Bar
Janes Pt
Ma Leg Island
Solomons
Merry

Old House



CALVERT CO
ST MARYS CO

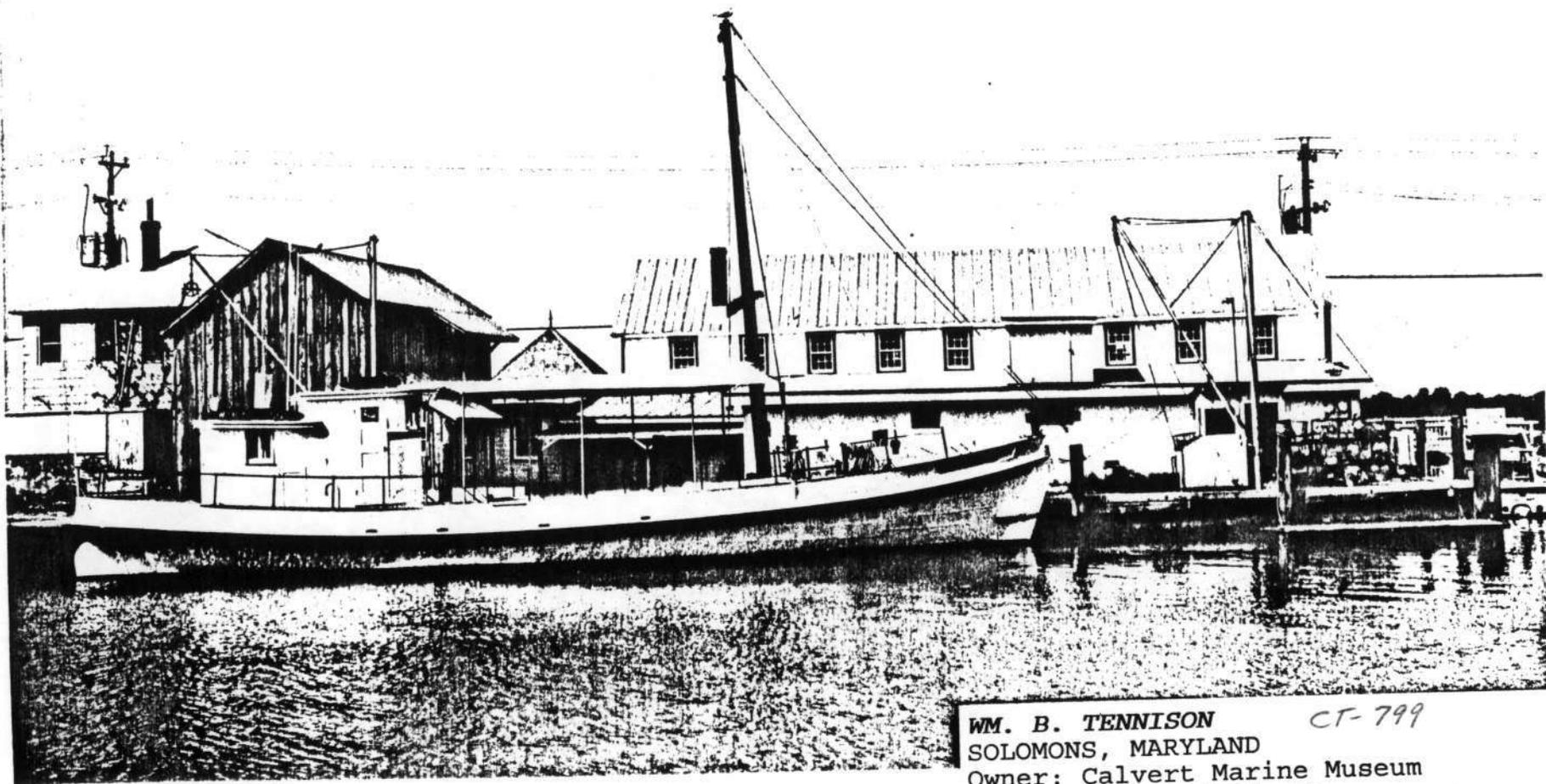
CT-799

WM. B. TENNISON

Johnstown, MD

UTM COORDINATES: Zone 18

42 43 340 N 372 080 E



WM. B. TENNISON CT-799
SOLOMONS, MARYLAND
Owner: Calvert Marine Museum
Starboard Broadside View
Moored alongside dock
Photo #1 by Paula Johnson, circa. 1985
Courtesy of: Calvert Marine Museum

WM. B. TENNISON

CT-799

SOLOMONS, MARYLAND

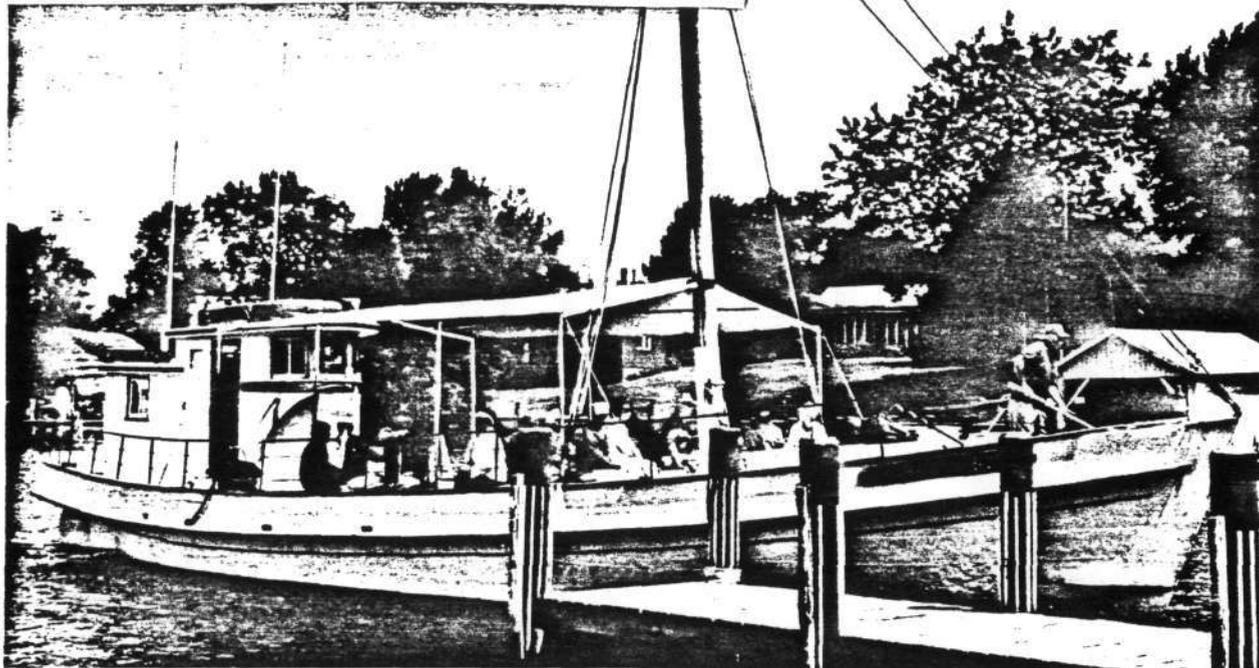
Owner: Calvert Marine Museum

Starboard Bow Quarter View

About to moor at dock

Photo #2 by Paula Johnson, circa. 1985

Courtesy of: Calvert Marine Museum



WM. B. TENNISON

SOLOMONS, MARYLAND

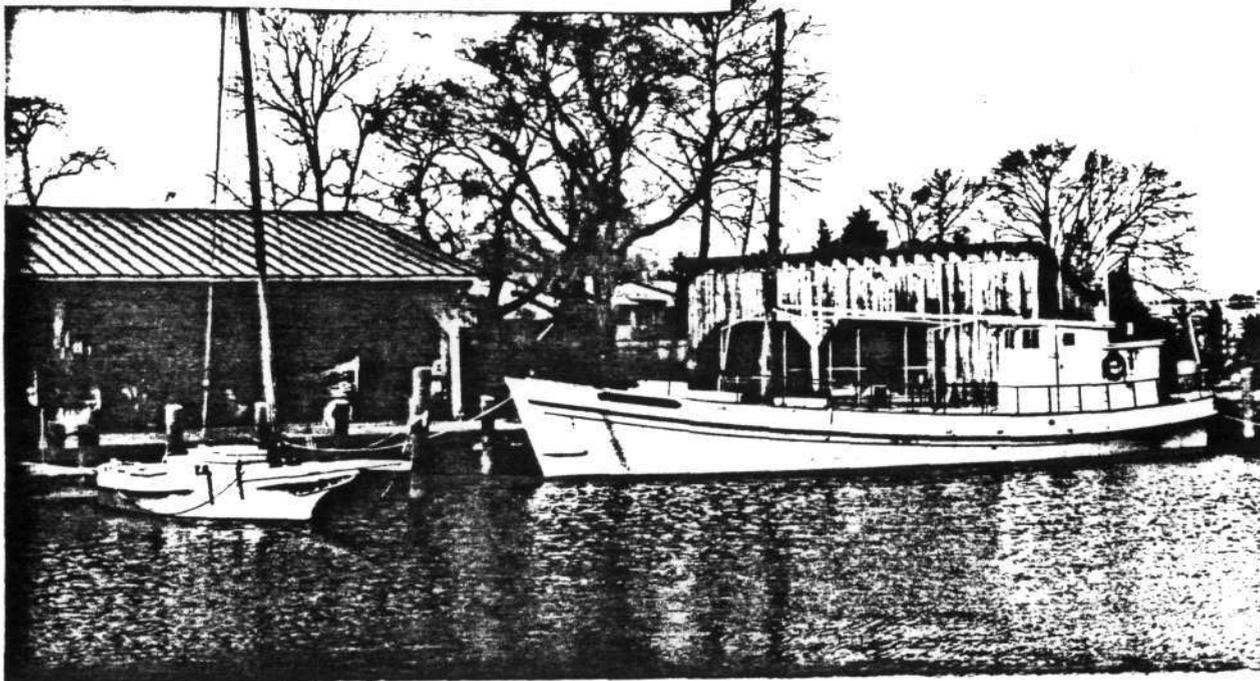
Owner: Calvert Marine Museum

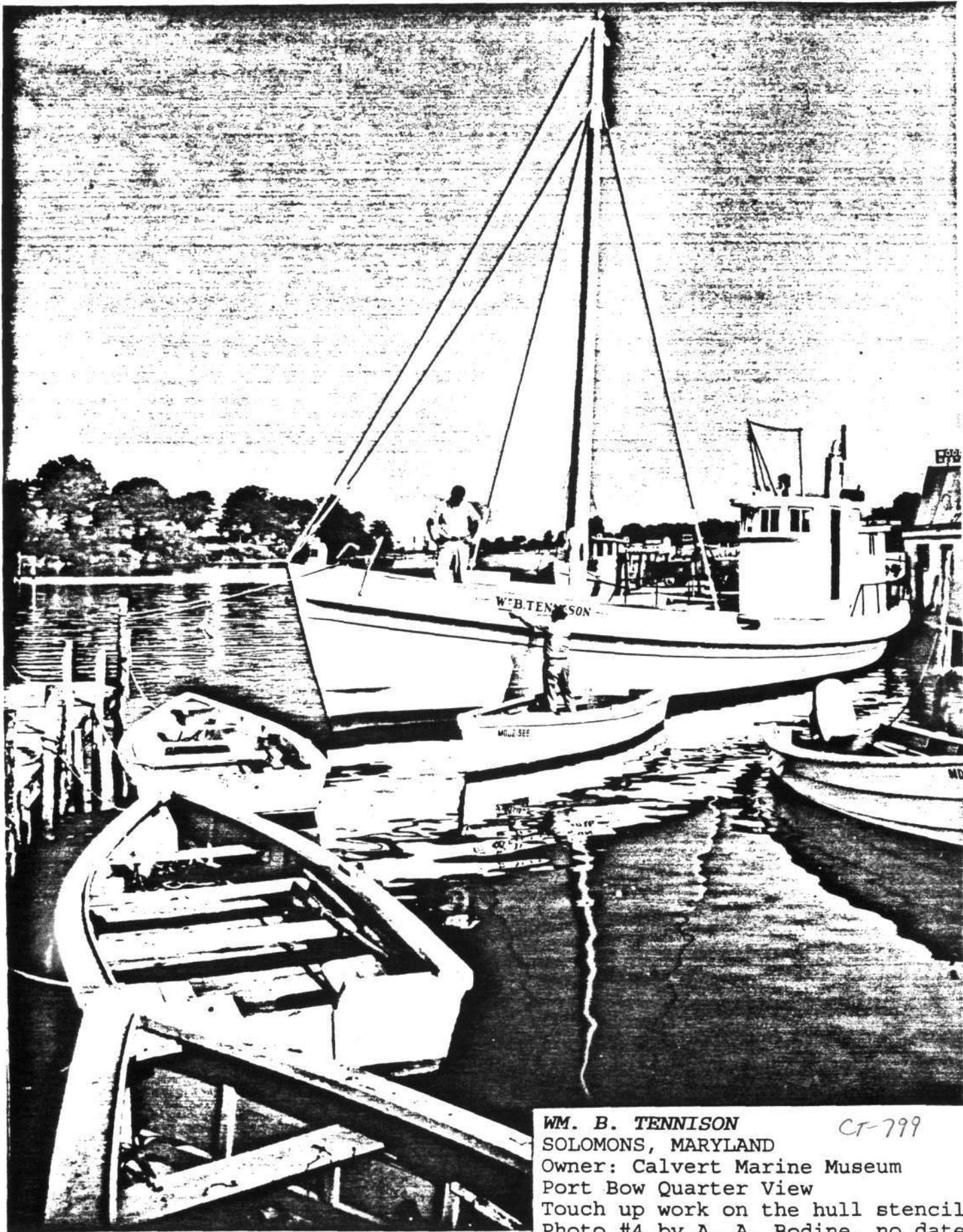
Port Broadside View

Moored at dock

Photo #3 by Paula Johnson, circa 1985

Courtesy of: Calvert Marine Museum





WM. B. TENNISON CT-799
SOLOMONS, MARYLAND
Owner: Calvert Marine Museum
Port Bow Quarter View
Touch up work on the hull stencil
Photo #4 by A. A. Bodine, no date
Courtesy of: Calvert Marine Museum



CT-799

CT-799

WILLIAM B. TENNISON
Solomons, Md

starboard side
M. C. Wootton

RECEIVED
JAN 1950



CALVERT MARINE MUSEUM

W. B. TENNISON

CT-799, WM. B. TENNISON

2

3



571
CT-424-799
was B. Tennison
Solomon's Island
Calvert Co., Md.

Photographed by Tim Mihursky
May, 1979

Maryland Hist. Trust



52E
CT-424 799
W^m B. Tennison
Solomon's Island
Calvert Co., Md.

Photographed by Tim Mikorsky
May, 1979