

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES  
**Maryland Historical Trust  
State Historic Sites Inventory Form**

Survey No. ST-1201

Magi No.

DOE  yes  no

**1. Name** (indicate preferred name)

historic Solomons Island Wharf

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number located at end of Farren Avenue  not for publication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 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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input 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 State of Maryland waters; landaccess via Chesapeake Biological

street & number Laboratory, 1 Williams St. telephone no.:

city, town Solomons state and zip code MD 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

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

# 7. Description

Survey No. CP-1201

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE COUNT: 1

Standing Wharf Structures: None.

Associated Standing Wharf Structures: None.

Description: Solomons Island Wharf is a historic wharf site with no visible features on land or above mean low water.

Previously Existing Wharf Structures: A wharf, several warehouses, livestock pen, and parking lot were located at this site. "Map of Calvert County Showing Topography and Election Districts" 1902 depicts an "L" wharf slightly to the west near the northeast end of the island. "St. Mary's Folio" 1906 depicts no wharf. "Lower Part of the Patuxent River, Maryland" 1907-08 depicts a square wharf at about the same location as the 1902 map. "Chart no. 20 Natural Oyster Bars, Calvert and St. Mary's Counties, Maryland" 1908 depicts a structure over the water at approximately the location of the 1902 map as well as a wharf directly on the northeast end of the island. "Soil Map, Calvert County, Maryland" 1928 depicts a "T" wharf approximately at the location of the 1902 map and nothing at the extreme end of the island.

The following CMM photographs depict Solomons Wharf, P-095, 0472, 1021, 1567, 1568, 1575, 1746, 1829, 1963, 2213, 2214, 2217, 2263, 2337, 2699, 3667, 4232, 5430, 5431, 5511, 5864, 6480, 6490, 6491, 6492, 6493, 6494, and 6495. The livestock pen is clearly shown in P-095 and P-5430. P-1021 shows numerous cars in the wharf parking lot and what is probably a shore side warehouse covered with vertical wood siding and sheet metal roof. Two warehouses stood on the wharf; at one time they appear to be side by side (P-1575), and at another time one perpendicular to the other (P-2214). Both warehouses are gable ended and covered with vertical wood boards. At one time at least one of the warehouse structures was board and batten sided (see P-5431). There were no railings on the wharf. Large fender pile clusters were located at each outer end of the wharf. Three undated photographs of the Solomons Wharf in the Calvert County Historical Society collections show three wharf related structures; one on either side of the wharf ramp and one which appears to be on the shore. All three are vertical wood sided with gable ends and wood shingle roof. Percy E. Budlong took a photograph in 1911, now in the collections of the Mariners' Museum, which depicts four apparent wharf structures; two smaller structures directly on the wharf and two larger structures, one each, on either side of the wharf along the shore. All four structures appear to have vertical wooden siding. The larger structure on the south side of the wharf has a chimney on the southeast corner; the larger structure on the north side of the wharf has what appears to be a ventilation monitor along a short portion of the

# 8. Significance

Survey No. CP-1201

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/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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** 1866–1950s **Builder/Architect**

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.

Solomons Island Wharf is one of twenty historic steamboat wharf/landing sites identified in “Calvert County Steamboat Wharves and Landings: Architectural Level Survey and Inventory.” This survey and inventory was completed in 1996 by Eshelman & Associates for the Calvert County Historic District Commission with funding from the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners. The final report includes a context study which places the historic significance of these steamboat wharf and landing sites within the broad pattern of local county history and regional history of the Chesapeake Bay. The study falls within the theme of “Transportation” within the time periods of “Agricultural-Industrial Transition (1815-1870)” and “Industrial/Urban Dominance (1870-1930).” Refer to this study for a general historical review and historical significance of the resources as a whole.

The 1890 wharf was located on the southeastern tip of the island, at the north end of Farren Avenue where the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory now keeps its research fleet. Submerged piling stubs are present approximately 10 feet off the end of the present seawall at the end of the island.<sup>135</sup> The Weems Line first serviced Solomons Island in 1866. Landing arrangements were made for the company by Mason L. Weems with Isaac Solomon, who owned the property in 1865. Until the first wharf was built in 1890, steamboats were able to lay alongside the point in deep water and use a gangplank to move passengers and freight on and off. A letter dated 1871 in reference to the potential building of a railroad to the area states “Now there are not proper facilities [to ship oysters] as the steamboats are not sufficient and do not run at all in the winter.”<sup>136</sup>

<sup>135</sup> Personal communication to Ralph Eshelman from Bill Keefe, former employee of the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory. The Calvert Marine Museum was given two piling stubs for its collections.

<sup>136</sup> J. Webster Jones letter to the editor “Our Readers Write: Old Solomons Wharf” (*Sun*, August 12, 1956); Judge D. R. Magruder letter to Frederick Barreda, 30 June 1871, Calvert Marine Museum Archives, Barreda files; and Clarence E. Davis letter to Mr. Seeley, Baltimore & Virginia Steamboat Co., April 30, 1930, M. M. Davis files, archives, Calvert Marine Museum. This letter later refers to an “old lease that the English Estate made with [”you” on carbon

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. CT-1201

See context study "Calvert County Steamboat Wharves and Landings: Architectural Survey and Inventory."

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name Solomon Island

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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Verbal boundary description and justification

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 Ralph Eshelman

organization Eshelman & Associates date December 22, 1996

street & number 12178 Preston Dr. telephone 410-326-4877

city or town Lusby state MD

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: ~~Maryland Historical Trust~~  
 Shaw House  
 21 State Circle  
 Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
 (301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
 DHCP/DHCD  
 100 COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
 TOWNSVILLE, MD 21032-1  
 514-7100

## Continuation Sheet 7.1 Solomons Island Wharf

roof.<sup>133</sup> An aerial photograph of the area taken in 1938 shows an approximately 80 foot long 60 foot wide wharf with an approximately 30 foot long warehouse structure on the shore side.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Percy E. Budlong, "A Cruise to Lake George, volume 1 from Washington to Magothy River, on Chesapeake Bay" (1912) photograph "General view of Solomon's Island, from a point outside the harbor" between pages 49-50, Mariners' Museum archives.

<sup>134</sup> Aerial photograph AHS 10-45, dated 1938, scale 1 inch equals 660 feet, Calvert Soil Conservation District, photostatic copy deposited at Calvert Marine Museum.

## Continuation Sheet 8.1 Solomons Island Wharf

The wharf was repaired and enlarged in 1906 "which was necessary to hold such enormous crowds as flock to meet the nightly steamer." By at least 1913 and probably since 1905 when it took over the Weems Line operation, the wharf was being used by Maryland, Delaware and Virginia Railway Company. In 1907 the wharf generated \$4,533.79 in local freight, \$335.27 in through freight, and \$4,170.76 for passengers, for a total revenue of \$9,039.82.<sup>137</sup> By 1913 a second wharf, called the "tomato wharf," because of the bushel baskets of tomatoes shipped from it, and located just up the harbor (west) from the main steamboat wharf, was used by the Maryland Steamboat Company. The Baltimore & Virginia Steamboat Company installed electric lights on the Solomons wharf in late 1927 or early 1928. A "transfer warehouse" is mentioned in 1927. New "bush" pilings were installed at the wharf in 1927 by M. M. Davis & Son. From at least 1927 until 1930 the wharf was owned by M. M. Davis & Son and leased to the Baltimore & Virginia Steamboat Co. The steamboat company was charged 5% commission for the transferring of freight at Solomons Wharf. A government report dated 1930 states "The Baltimore & Virginia Steamboat Co. operates a triweekly service between Baltimore and the town of Solomons." Regular scheduled steamboat service ended at Solomons in 1935, although occasional excursion steamers called at Solomons up until the 1950s. A wharf light at Solomons is mentioned in a 1941 government report. The wharf was numbered no. 212 at some point in its history as inferred from CMM photograph P-5431.<sup>138</sup>

John H. Marburger, proprietor, operated a "Summer Resort" at Point Patience, along the

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apparently crossed out] Williams." This suggests Isaac Solomon's lease with Weems was renewed by the "English Estate" with Henry Williams of the Weems Line. Ownership of the wharf then transferred to Clarence E. Davis himself or more probably M. M. Davis & Son.

<sup>137</sup> "Maryland Delaware & Virginia Railway Company Annual Report, Statement of Freight and Passenger Revenue by Wharves for the Fiscal Year Ending December 31st, 1907." Original in private ownership, copy deposited in collections of Calvert Marine Museum.

<sup>138</sup> Richard J. Dodds, *Solomons Island and Vicinity: An Illustrated History and Walking Tour* (Solomons, Maryland, Calvert Marine Museum, 1995), no page numbers; 1869 document from the Forbes Collection and cited by David Holly, *Tidewater by Steamboat: A Saga of the Chesapeake; The Weems Line on the Patuxent, Potomac, and Rappahannock* (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, published in cooperation with the Calvert Marine Museum, 1991), p. 264; *Calvert Journal* (August 11, 1906); "Patuxent River, Maryland, Letter from the Secretary of War Transmitting Report from the Chief Engineers, United States Army, on Patuxent River, Maryland," House Document No. 463, 71st Congress, 2nd Session (U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1930), p. 11; Clarence E. Davis letter to Mr. Seeley, Baltimore & Virginia Steamboat Co. April 30, 1930, M. M. Davis archives, Calvert Marine Museum; and "Department of Commerce and Labor, U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey Descriptive Report of map sheets of Patuxent River 1908-1944." Note Holly states the "wharf property was arranged...1869." This more correctly should state the landing property, as a wharf was not built until 1890.

## Continuation Sheet 8.2 Solomons Island Wharf

Patuxent River near Solomons Island in 1896. He depended on the steamboats landing at Solomons Island to transport most of his guests from Baltimore. From the steamboat landing they either had to go by road or small boat to the resort. It was described as "One of the Garden Spots of Maryland...furnishing an excellent table, with Spring Chicken, Crabs, Oysters and Fish daily, and an abundance of Fresh Milk and Vegetables. Good Bathing, Fishing, Crabbing and Sailing free. Dancing every night. Rates, \$1.00 per day; \$5.00 per week. The "Maples," known as the Marsh House, at Solomons, also advertised itself as a boarding house. It was described in 1896 as "Directly on the Water. Large Airy Rooms. No Mosquitoes. Rates, \$1.00 per day; \$5.00 per week."<sup>139</sup>

About 1922 the Maryland, Delaware & Virginia Railway Companies advertized one way fare from Baltimore to Solomons (as well as other Patuxent River landings) for \$2.70 and \$4.00 for a round trip fare good for 30 days. Staterooms cost \$1.25 to \$2.50 each one way. The following shore accommodations were recommended: Avondale, capable of accommodating 40 quests, W. H. Condiff proprietor; Bowens Inn, capable of accommodating 30 guests, Mrs. M. Bowen proprietor; Riverside Inn, capable of 50 guests, A. Ketcham proprietor; Bridge House, no figure given for number of guests capable of accommodating, James L. Weems, Jr., proprietor; Lusby's Inn, capable of 30 guests, Mrs. E. H. Lusby proprietor; Chesapeake View, capable of 50 guests, Ireland proprietor; Maryland Boarding House, capable of 50 guests, Mrs. O. S. Olsen proprietor; Sun Set View, capable of 20 quests, Mrs. John M. Elliott proprietor; and Locust Inn, capable of 30 guests, A.F. Condiff, Sr., proprietor. A 1926 season brochure from the same company gives the same rate schedule and the following shore accomodations: Avondale, same as 1922; Bowens Inn, accomodations increased to 150 guests; Riverside Inn, same; Bridge House, same; Lusby's Inn, accomodations increased to 40 guests; Chesapeake View, same; Sunset View, same; and Locust Inn, G. N. Condiff proprietor. The following new listings were also included in the 1926 brochure: Olsen Inn (formerly called Maryland Boarding House), same; and Rekar's Hotel, capable of accomodation 40 quests, Wm. M. Rekar proprietor.<sup>140</sup>

In 1932 the Western Shore Steamboat Company advertized "Greatest Bargin Ever Offered for a Week-end Cruise." The steamer left Light Street, Baltimore, Saturday at 4:30 p.m. arrived Solomons Island 10:30 p.m. and leaves Solomons Island about 8 p.m. Sunday arriving back at Baltimore at 6 a.m. Monday. Roundtrip including outside berth and one meal was \$4.50 or inside berth at \$3.75. One way trip with no room was \$2.00 or round trip good for 30 days \$3.00. The following shore accomodations were recommened at Solomons: Bowen's Inn, capable of accomodating 125 guests, G. M. Bowen proprietor; Rekar's Hotel, capable of accomodating 47

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<sup>139</sup> *Summer Homes and Historical Points Along the Routes of the Weems Steamboat Company* (1896), pp. 59 and 61.

<sup>140</sup> "Vacation Trips and Resorts in the Chesapeake Bay Country, BC7A and MD&V Railway Companies," undated season brochure believed to be circa 1922 and one dated 1926, originals in Steamship Historical Society of America Library, copies deposited at Calvert Marine Museum.

## Continuation Sheet 8.3 Solomons Island Wharf

quests, Mary L. Rekar proprietor; Abell's Inn, capable of 25 guests, Olivia M. Abell proprietor; Avondale, 25 guests, Mrs. W. H. Condiff proprietor; and Locust Inn, 60 guests, G. U. Condiff proprietor.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> "Vacations and Outings in the Chesapeake Bay Country, Western Steamboat Co. Inc." 1932 season brochure, original at the Steamship Historical Society of America Library, copy deposited at Calvert Marine Museum. The 1934 season brochure had discontinued the Patuxent River excursion.



SOLOMONS ISLAND WHARF  
*CF-130*

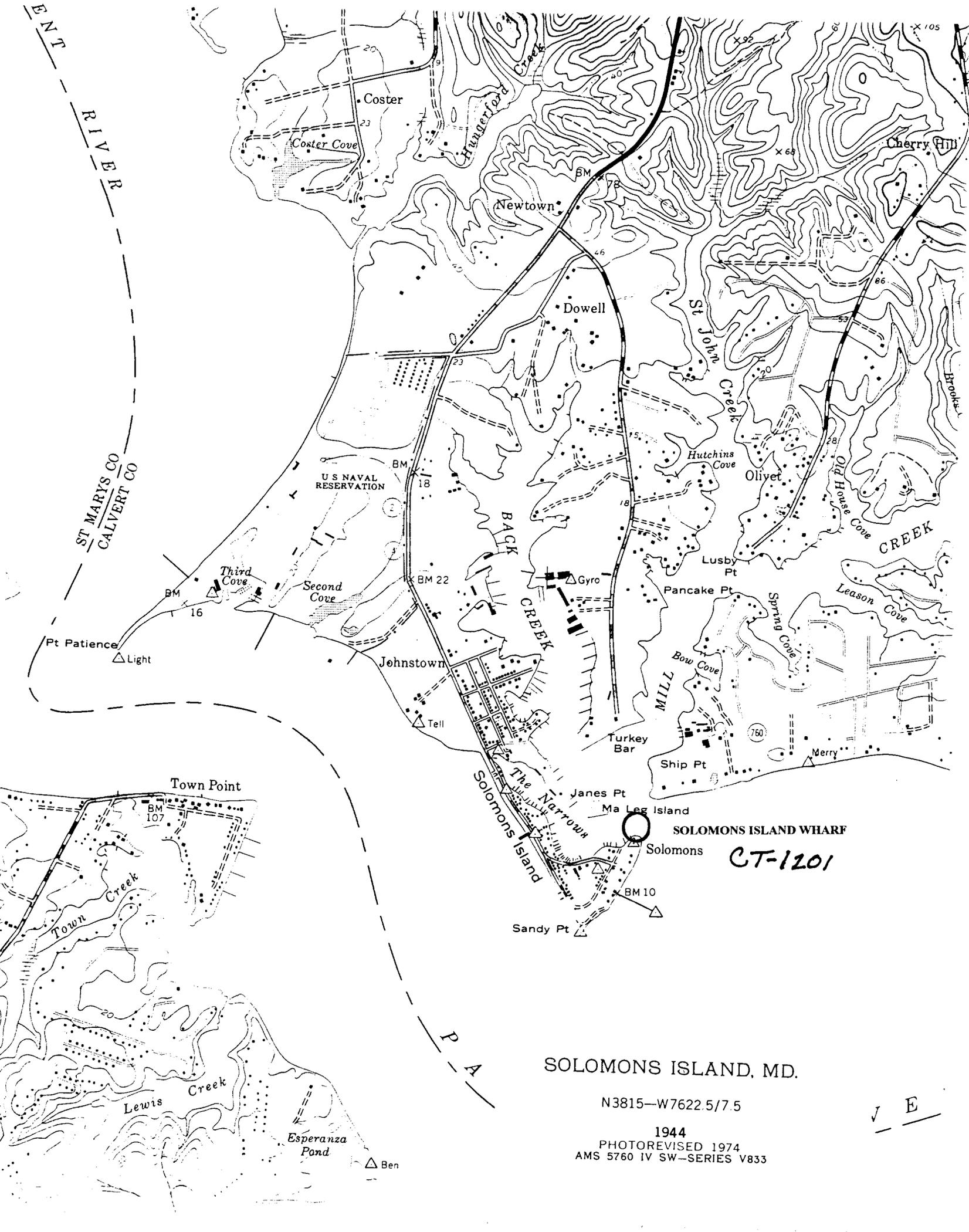
*20-1-44*

Solomons Island Wharf

AHS 10-45

1978

Calvert Soil Conservation District



ENT RIVER  
ST MARYS CO  
CALVERT CO

U.S. NAVAL RESERVATION

BACK CREEK

MILL

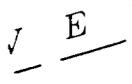
SOLOMONS ISLAND WHARF

CT-1201

SOLOMONS ISLAND, MD.

N3815-W7622.5/7.5

1944  
PHOTOREVISED 1974  
AMS 5760 IV SW-SERIES V833



Town Point

The Narrows  
Solomons Island

Solomons

Sandy Pt

Ben

Esperanza Pond

Lewis Creek

Creek

Town Creek

Pt Patience

Light

Johnstown

Tell

Turkey Bar

Ship Pt

Janes Pt

Ma Leg Island

Solomons

Solomons

BM 10

760

Merry

Bow Cove

Spring Cove

Leason Cove

Old House Cove

Lusby Pt

Pancake Pt

Gyro

Dowell

St John Creek

Hutchins Cove

Olivet

Newtown

Coster

Coster Cove

Cherry Hill

Hungerford Crade

Brooks

BM 16

Third Cove

Second Cove

BM 22

BM 18

BM 78

x 64

x 92

x 105

61

66

60

20

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28



Solomon Island Wharf  
photo into on back

CT-1201

CT- 1201

Solomons Island Wharf

Calvert Co., MD

Ralph Estelmann

Aug 1996

neg: MD SHPD

view NW of wharf site

CT- 1201

Solomon Island Wharf

Calvert Co., MD

Ralph Estelmann

Aug 1996

neg: MD SHPD

view southeast of wharf site