MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. CT-1207

Magi No.

DOE __yes __no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Chesapeake Beach Wharf

and/or common

2. Location

street & number First wharf near Rod & Reel Resturant; second wharf at ___ not for publication

city, town end of 17th Street _X_ vicinity of congressional district

state Chesapeake Beach, Maryland county Calvert

3. Classification

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

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

name State of Maryland waters, access through Rod &Reel Resturant property and

street & number Chesapeake Station Home Owners Association telephone no.:

city, town 4000 Arcade Court, CHesapeakeBeach state and zip code MD 20732

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Town of Chesapeake Beach liber

street & number Town Hall, 8200 BaysideRoad folio

city, town Chesapeake Beach state MD

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. CT-1207

Condition		Check one	Check one
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	_X_ original site
___ good	___ ruins	___ altered	___ moved date of move _____
___ fair	_X_ unexposed		

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

Chesapeake Beach Wharf

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE COUNT: 1

Standing Wharf Structures: None.

Associated Standing Wharf Structures: None.

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

Previously Existing Wharf Structures: Wharf. The first Chesapeake Beach Wharf was built between 1899 and 1900. Photographs show that it was a long wooden pier located on the north end of the boardwalk approximately where the Rod & Reel Restaurant is located today. It had a wooden rail on each side. The second pier was built after 1912 and before August 2, 1914. It was located off the end of 17th Street and extended over a half-mile long into the Chesapeake Bay, necessitated by the shallow waters along the Bay shore. One writer called the wharf "very long."[32] When the resort boardwalk was abandoned in 1929-30, the wharf termination with the shore was moved to just north of the ballroom pavilion. This was accomplished by turning the wharf near where the boardwalk originally intersected the wharf northwestward toward the ballroom. This directed the excursion visitors to the heart of the amusement park which had now been moved onshore. To accommodate passengers off-boarding at the long wharf, a miniature train with open passenger cars was built to carry those unable or unwilling to walk. An undated photograph published by Robert Burgess in the *Sunday Sun Magazine,* July 10, 1955, depicts a wooden pier with cross planking, wooden rails on either side and the miniature railroad tracks located along the north side of the pier deck. The train operated on the wharf tracks from sometime in the late 1920s or early 1930s. CMM photograph P-1357, undated, shows the same construction. Unfortunately neither clearly defines the shape of the head of the pier. Photographs from the collection of the Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum include a scene of the *Dreamland* docked at the end of an "L" at the head of the wharf. Fender piling and at least one dolphin piling are shown. This probably depicts the first wharf.

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[32] Swepson Earle, *The Chesapeake Country* (Baltimore, Maryland: Thomas-Ellis Company, 1923) p. 175.

8. Significance

Survey No. CT-1207

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion
___ 1400–1499	X archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
1500–1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600–1699	___ architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	___ theater
X 1800–1899	X commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	X transportation
X 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ other (specify)
		___ invention		

Specific dates 1899-1942 **Builder/Architect**

check: Applicable Criteria: __A __B X C __D
and/or
Applicable Exception: __A __B __C __D __E __F __G

Level of Significance: __national __state X local

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

Continuation Sheet 8.1 Chesapeake Beach Wharf

Chesapeake Beach 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.

Chesapeake Beach Wharf, also called the "long pier" or "long wharf," was located on the Chesapeake Bay at the former resort town of Chesapeake Beach, chartered in 1894 by the Chesapeake Beach Railroad Company. The first wharf (1899 to circa 1912) was located at the north end of the resort boardwalk approximately where the Rod & Reel Restaurant is located today. The second wharf (circa 1912 to 1940s) originally terminated with the shore at 17th Street until the boardwalk was torn down in 1929-30; then the wharf terminated with the shore just north of where the ballroom pavilion was located, ran southeast into the Chesapeake Bay until in line with 17th Street (approximately where the boardwalk originally connected with the wharf) where the wharf then turned due east. The Chesapeake Beach amusement park (CT-98), also called "Seaside Park," opened June 9, 1900, with the pier only half finished. However, in 1899 the Weems Line, possibly in an attempt to get a cut of the potential excursion trade to this new resort and/or to bring construction materials, routed the *St. Marys* to Chesapeake Beach on its Wednesday and Saturday run to Fair Haven, even though the park facilities were only half completed. *St. Marys* continued this service through the winter and into 1900. When the Chesapeake Beach Railroad Company chartered its own steamers and with the opening of railroad service from Washington, D.C., the Weems Line dropped its service. On opening day it was the steamer *J. S. Warden*, a non-Weems steamer which brought the first resort goers. However, it was *Dreamland*, a sidewheel steamer and Baltimore's largest regular excursion steamboat,

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. CT-1207

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

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name North Beach **Quadrangle scale** 1:24000

UTM **References** do NOT complete UTM references

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A				B			
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

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 18, 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

[illegible]
[illegible]
100 COMMUNITY PLACE
CROWNSVILLE MD 21032-2[illegible]
[illegible]

PS-2746

"Map of Calvert County showing the Topography and Election Districts" 1902 depicts a long perpendicular wharf with a "T." "Patuxent Folio" 1907 depicts a long wharf perpendicular to the shore with no "T" at its head. "Chart no. 16 Natural Oyster Bars Calvert County, Maryland" 1908 depicts a wharf approximately 1200 yards long nearly perpendicular to the shore with an "L" head on the south side. This chart also depicts the boardwalk of the amusement park. "West Shore of Chesapeake Bay Holland Point to Plum Point" 1908 is essentially identical to Chart no. 16 except it shows no "T" or "L" at the head of the pier. "Soil map, Calvert County, Maryland" 1928 depicts a "T" head wharf nearly perpendicular to the shore.

More interesting is the depicted location of the wharf on these maps. Photographs and plats dating from the turn of the century through about 1912 such as "Patuxent Folio," "West Shore of Chesapeake Bay Holland Point to Plum Point," and "Chart no. 16 Oyster Bar," clearly depict the wharf at the north end of the boardwalk.[33]

Depictions after 1913 show the wharf on the south end of the boardwalk where 17th Street ends at the water. The first known depiction of the second wharf is entitled "New South Pier August 2nd 1914." On the reverse side of this photograph is the following label:

> *"New South Pier" at Chesapeake Beach, Md. Length 2,000 ft., depth of water at wharf at low tide, 10½ feet, estimated number of people, 3,000 on Pier, promenading and enjoying the fishing and crabbing, cool sea breezes and view of the beautiful grounds, boardwalk and beach at time of the picture was taken. Sunday August 2nd, 1914.*

This photograph also depicts some type of building structure located about two-thirds of the way out on the wharf.[34]

One undated photograph, but probably late 1930s to early 1940s based on car models present, depicts the second wharf with the bend in it as well as several structures present at the wharf head. "Map of Calvert County showing the Topography and Election Districts" shows the wharf

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[33] Examples of post cards and photographs which show a pier located at the north end of the boardwalk prior to 1913 include: "A Souvenir (sic) Book of Chesapeake Beach, Md. Washington's Only Salt Water Resort," 1971 reproduction of a 1912 booklet, original at the Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum; and Marion Warren copy photograph no. 263, original at Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum.

[34] Marion Warren copy photograph no. 20, "New South Pier August 2nd 1914," original located at Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum. Other early photographs which illustrate the second pier located at the south end of the board walk include: Marion Warren copy photograph numbers. 257, 260, and 263; all original post cards and/or photographs at Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum.

approximately at the south end of the boardwalk while the 1928 "Soil Map" shows two piers; one at the south end of the boardwalk and one near the north end. It is possible that both of these wharves may have been present at the same time for a short duration. When the Rod & Reel Restaurant put in its small marina just south of Fishing Creek they encountered numerous piling stubs in the water. These may be part of the first steamboat wharf and/or were part of the boardwalk. "North Beach Quadrangle" 1953 photorevised 1970 indicates a "pile" near the channel drop off directly in line with 17th Street. This may depict a remaining wharf pile or later piling placed to warn of submerged piles from the former second wharf. An aerial photograph dated 1938 clearly shows the second wharf beginning just north of the resort ballroom pavilion, running into the Bay in a southeastward direction for approximately 660 feet and then due east approximately 2,000 feet, directly in line with 17th Street. "Calvert County Topographic Map" 1939 shows the same wharf configuration. An aerial photograph taken in 1952 shows no wharf but a faint apparently underwater trace of where the wharf piles can be seen.[35]

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[35] Personal communication to Ralph Eshelman from Gerald Donovan, August 25, 1996. Mr. Donovan stated approximately $20,000 were spent removing the unexpected piling stubs. Aerial photographs AHS 7-169, dated 1938, scale 1 inch equals 660 feet; and AHS 4K-140, dated 1952.

capable of carrying 2,600 passengers, which became most popular for its trips to Chesapeake Beach from 1909 to 1925.[36] Other steamers serving the resort were the *State of Delaware*, 1931 to 1935, *Dixie*, 1936 to 1941, and *Bay Bell* in 1942. The *Dixie* was described as "built especially for Seaside Park.." with four "open-air breeze swept decks," "open-air dance decks," and "open-air talkie Theater." An advertizing card from 1914 gives the round trip fare at 50 cents; leaving Baltimore's Broadway Street pier 10:30 a.m. Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and Saturday at 1:45 p.m.; returning from Chesapeake Beach at 6:45 p.m. except Saturday 7:30 p.m. Between 1933 and 1936 a round trip fare was 75 cents for an adult and 40 cents for children; except Monday and Friday when the fare was lowered to 40 cents for adults and 20 cents for children. The steamer left Baltimore's Light Street at 9:00 a.m and departed the park at 4:00 p.m.[37]

An early 1930s Wilson Line brochure described "Seaside Park" as:

> *unlike most so-called amusement parks in that it is a spot of great* natural, *scenic beauty. The grounds are rolling and covered with grooves of trees of all sorts. A promontory rises from the bay and overlooks the steamboat wharf. Below this is the mammoth dance hall, from the many broad windows of which one looks directly down on the huge swimming pool. The bath houses are in the lower portion of the Casino. Off to the right is the roller coaster, whose serpentine tracks disappear and reappear in the leafy woods.*

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[36] "Memorandum of Operations of Steamer Dreamland, Baltimore to Chesapeake Beach, Md.," no date, states the passenger capacity of the *Dreamland* was 2,600; it did about 50 trips per season averaging about 55,000 to 65,000 passengers per year until 1921 when numbers declined to about 30,000 per year. In 1925, her last year of operation, it only made 43 trips. In 1919 it carried 56,988 passengers; 1920 carried 65,671; 1921 carried 46,808; 1922 carried 37,697; 1923 carried 37,213; 1924 carried 27,805; and in 1925 carried 30,330. Carbon copy of original located in archives of Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum, file RH/ETC 650 "Ferries." Note, David C. Holly, *Tidewater by Steamboat; A Saga of the Chesapeake: The Weems Line on the Patuxent, Potomac, and Rappahannock* (Baltimore, Maryland, Johns Hopkins University Press, and Calvert Marine Museum, Solomons, Maryland, 1991), p. 132-33, states *Dreamland* carried 3,000 "picnickers at one time." This at variance with above memorandum.

[37] Holly, p. 132; Robert H. Burgess, "A Ship-to-Shore Railway" (*Sunday Sun Magazine*, July 10, 1955), p. 5; Robert H. Burgess and Graham H. Wood, *Steamboats Out of Baltimore* (Cambridge, Maryland: Tidewater Publishers, 1968), pp. 205-206 and 212; advertising card from the Robert H. Burgess collection, photo of same in Burgess and Wood, p. 213; "Chesapeake Bay Trips, Seaside Park" Wilson Line, brochure, no date but dates between 1931 and 1935 as it promotes the *State of Delaware*, original is located at the Steamship Historical Society of America Library, Baltimore, Maryland, copy of original deposited at Calvert Marine Museum; and "Presenting to Baltimore the Dixie, the newest, most modern steamer on the Chesapeake Bay," brochure dated 1936, original located at the Steamship Historical Society of America Library, copy of original deposited at Calvert Marine Museum.

> *The custer car and other rides and amusements are placed strategically through this delightful bit of rolling woodland-by-the -sea...*[38]

During or shortly after World War II the second pier fell into disrepair and was eventually removed, though remnants of the pier where visible up until the early 1950s.

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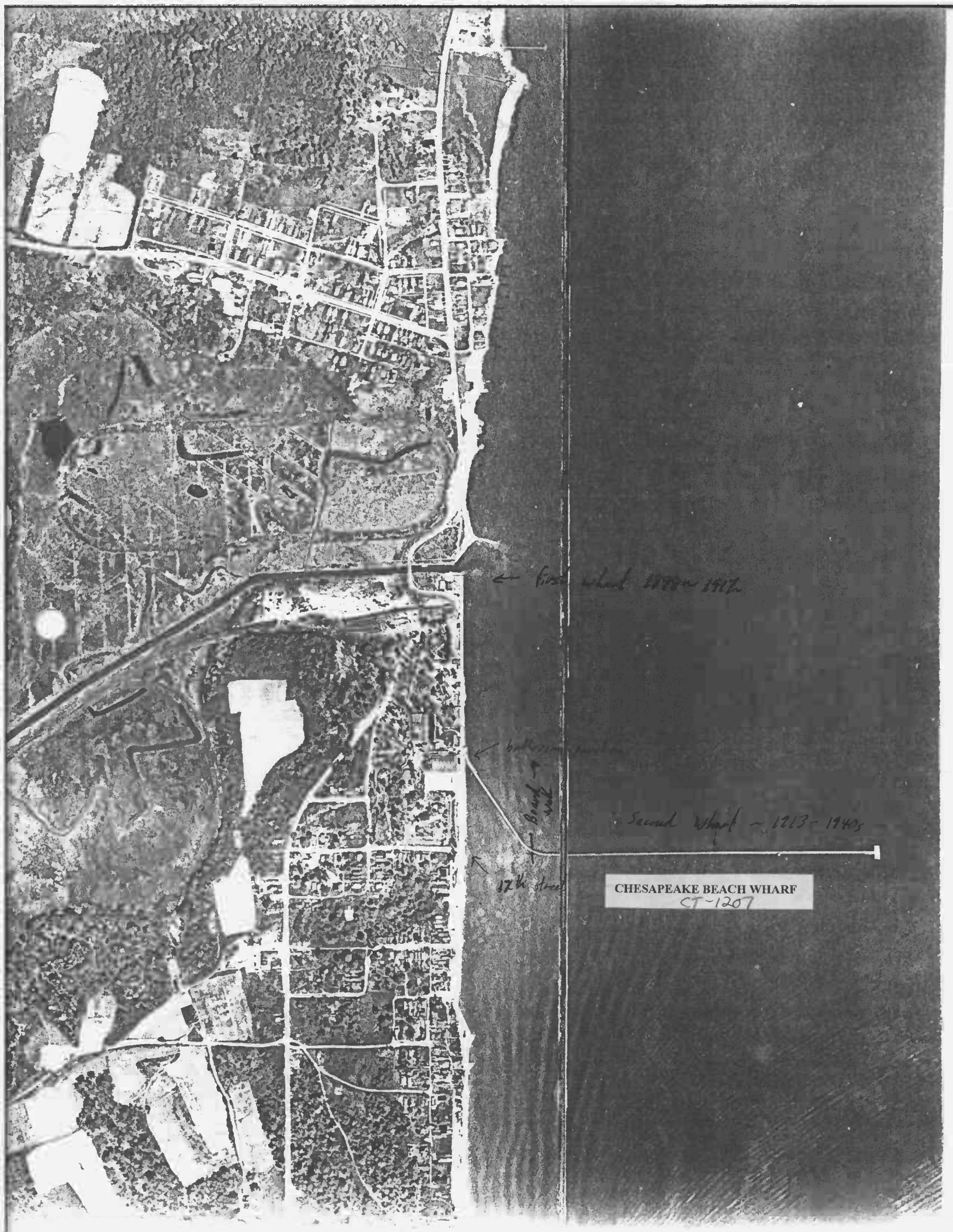
[38] "Chesapeake Bay Trips, Seaside Park" Wilson Line, brochure.



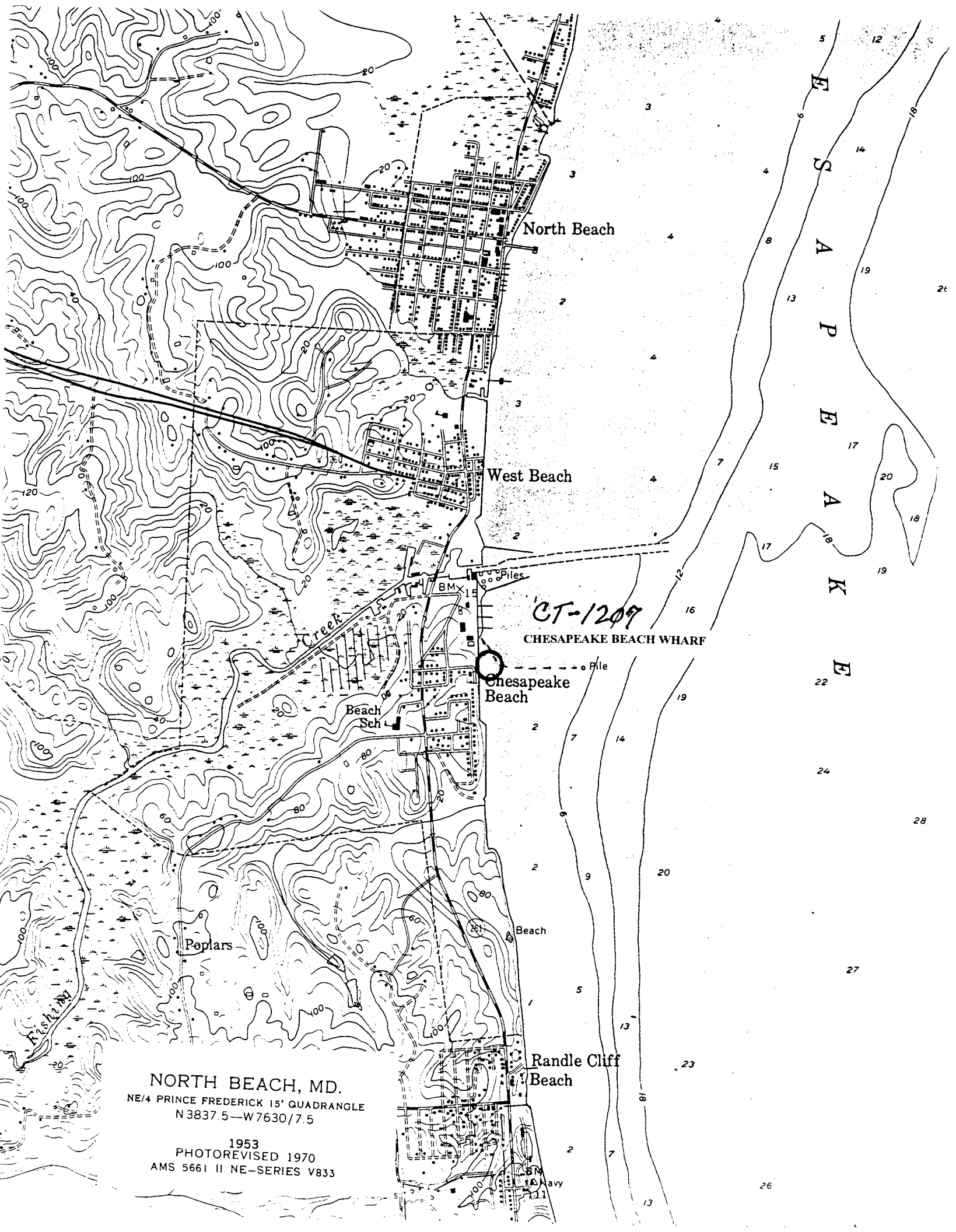
CHESAPEAKE BEACH WHARF
CT-1207

AHS 7-169

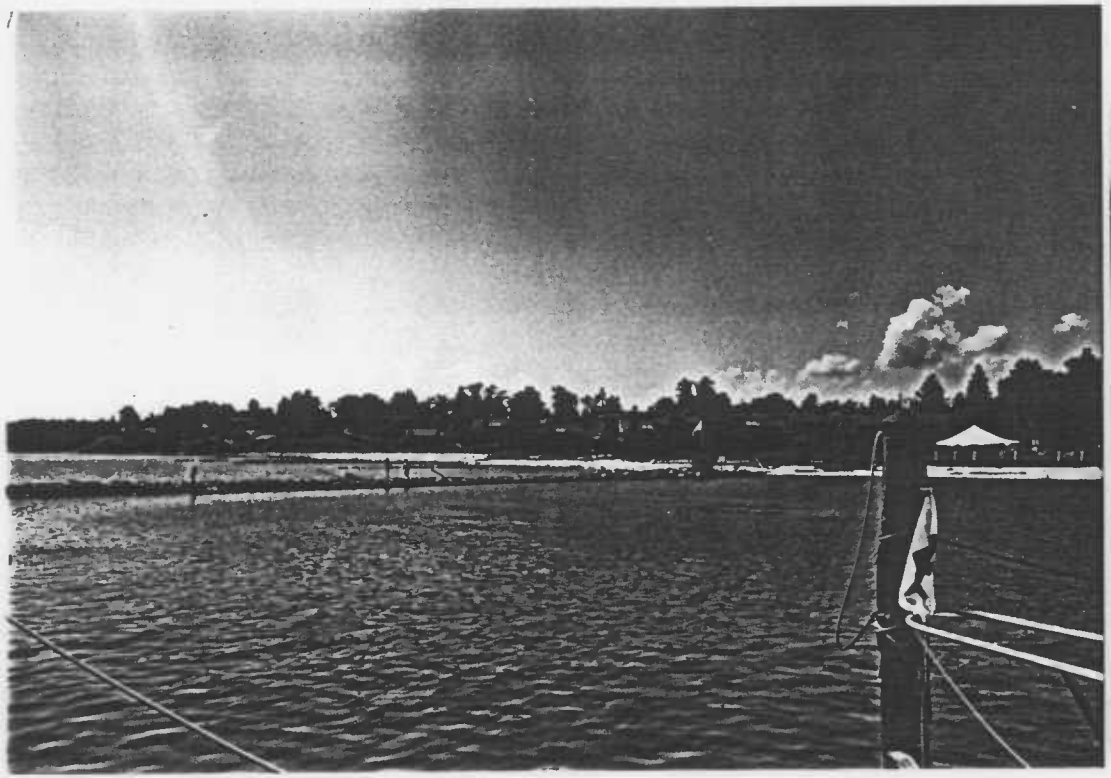
1" = 600'

Chesapeake Beach Wharf

1938 source: Calvert County Soil Conservation District


North Beach
West Beach
Piles
BM 15
CT-1207
CHESAPEAKE BEACH WHARF
Pile
Chesapeake Beach
Beach Sch
Creek
Poplars
Beach
Randle Cliff Beach
Navy
ESSAPEAKE
NORTH BEACH, MD.
NE/4 PRINCE FREDERICK 15' QUADRANGLE
N3837.5—W7630/7.5
1953
PHOTOREVISED 1970
AMS 5661 II NE—SERIES V833

Chesapeake Beach Wharf - photo info on back



1207

speake Beach Wharf

ert Co., MD

Eshelman

1996

MD SHPO

north of site where second wharf connected to shore after
dwalk removed 1929-1930

4

CT-1207

Chesapeake Beach Wharf

Calvert Co., MD

Ralph Eshelman

Dec 1996

neg: MD SHPO

view south of site where second wharf connected to land after
boardwalk removed 1929-30.

1 of 4

-1207

sapeake Beach Wharf

vert Co, MD

h Eshelman

1996

MD SHPO

north of site where second wharf connected to shore after
boardwalk removed 1929-1930

4

CT-1207

Chesapeake Beach Wharf

Calvert Co., MD

Ralph Eshelman

Aug 1996

neg: MD SHPO

view south west from end of Red & Red Marina where first
wharf located to mark location of second wharf site

4-4