

Easement - term
expired

CH-368

SKIPJACK "MARY W. SOMERS"
St. Mary's City
Private

1904

The "Mary W. Somers" is a Chesapeake Bay skipjack built in 1904 at Mearsville, Virginia. She is a sailing vessel with sloop rig and has a registered length of 41.9 feet and a beam of 14 feet. Her overall length, including bowsprit, is 57 feet, and she draws 3.5 feet of water. The standing rigging is old style, i.e., shrouds are secured by deadeyes and lanyards. The small cabin sleeps two to three crew. Below deck is a hold for cargo, divided by the centerboard well. A longhead below the bowsprit includes a decorated and carved trail board of traditional motif in gold leaf and colored enamels.

Rising costs and dwindling oyster harvests forced Chesapeake watermen to seek a replacement for the large and expensive bugeye in the 1890's. The economy of construction and the working characteristics of the skipjack made it very successful for the short period before the gasoline engine was generally accepted on the Bay. When oysters weren't being harvested, the skipjacks were used for hauling fresh produce, lumber, and livestock to market in Baltimore and Washington. The working skipjack fleet presently consists of about 25 boats, a number fast dwindling from the thousands once operated. The "Mary W. Somers" is not one of the working fleet.

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 Skipjack, "Mary W. Somers"
AND/OR COMMON

Chesapeake Bay Skipjack

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

(Formerly on St. Inigoe's Creek) Goose Bay Marina, Goose Bay Lane
NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

(Formerly St. Mary's City)

VICINITY OF Welcome

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

four

STATE

Maryland

CODE

24

COUNTY

St. Mary's

CODE

037

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"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Boat	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

1/9/84 Educational Alternatives, Inc.

NAME

~~Thomas Rowe~~

Dr. Raymond Hartjen

P. O. Box 265

STREET & NUMBER

Box 71

Port Tobacco, MD 20677

CITY, TOWN

St. Mary's City

VICINITY OF

STATE

Maryland

20686

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

Vessel Documentation Office

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Dept. of Transportation, U. S. Coast Guard

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Washington, D. C.

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CH-368

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input 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 "Mary W. Somers" is a Chesapeake Bay skipjack christened and built in 1904 at Mearsville, Virginia. She is a sailing vessel of sloop rig with one mast 49' above deck. She has a register length of 41.9 feet and a beam of 14 feet. Her overall length, which includes bowsprit, is 57 feet, and she draws 3.5 feet of water. Included on the deck is a 100 pound anchor, a windlass, port and starboard dredge rollers, a steering wheel, a rudder screw, davits over the stern for yawl boat, and a 43 foot boom. The standing rigging is old style, i.e., shrouds are secured by deadeyes and lanyards. The running gear includes bob stay, jib halyard, main halyard, lazy jacks, down haul, etc. There is a small cabin with companionway. It has three port windows, sleeps two to three crew and has deck iron for a stove pipe. Below deck is a hold for cargo, divided by a centerboard well 13 feet in length. A longhead below the bowsprit includes a decorated and carved trail board of traditional motif in gold leaf and color enamels. Much of this vessel's construction is original and replacements in construction and rigging have been made in the original style.

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	__ARCHITECTURE	X__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
__1800-1899	X__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	X__TRANSPORTATION
X1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	X__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	X__OTHER (SPECIFY) Crafts
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of the skipjack, "Mary W. Somers", as well as the rest of the skipjack fleet, lies in their unique survival as the last "working sail" in North America.

A brief history of the development of the skipjack can be synopsisized from M.V. Brewington's book, Chesapeake Bay, A Pictorial Maritime History.¹ Of the half dozen or so sailing vessels to be developed on the Bay since its settlement in the seventeenth century, the skipjack was the last to come into being. Its design, taken from the skiffs used to work crab-trot lines on the Lower Eastern Shore, resulted from an economic depression in the early 1890's and a simultaneous drop in oyster production. The early skipjacks were economical boats, being comparatively easier and cheaper to build and in good weather requiring only one man to operate both the boat and the dredge. The skipjacks gradually increased in size until they were large enough to take their catch to the cities rather than selling it to the "buy-boats." These larger vessels were built by professional shipbuilders rather than by the watermen.

The skipjack, among other sailing craft, saw year-round service in commerce until the advent of better roads and freight hauling by truck. Lumber, farm products, and coal were transported to and from ports around the bay area. Until World War II, it was common to see twenty-five or more skipjacks laden with watermelons and cantaloupes at Long Dock and at Fells Point in Baltimore. Washington and Georgetown also received the goods of commerce by this means of transportation.

Today the skipjacks are used for the dredging of oysters in the Maryland waters of the Chesapeake, from November through April.

¹M.V. Brewington, Chesapeake Bay, A Pictorial Maritime History (Cambridge, Md.: Cornell Maritime Press, 1956), pp.65-66.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CH-368

- Beilsell, Edwin, Lif on the Potomac.
- Brewington, M. V., Chesapeake Bay, A Pictorial Maritime History.
- Brewington, M. V., Chesapeake Bay Log Canoes and Bugeyes.
- Burgess, Robert H., This Was Chesapeake Bay.
- De Gast, Robert, Oyster Men of the Chesapeake.
- Maryland Historical Society, Archives of Maryland.
- Pogue, Robert, History of St. Mary's County.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY N/A

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 1 8	3 7 1 5 8 1 8 1 0	4 1 2 1 2 5 1 3 1 2 1 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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 Thomas Rowe, Associate Professor, St. Mary's College of Maryland

ORGANIZATION Owner-master of skipjack "Mary W. Somers" DATE July 15, 1975

STREET & NUMBER Box 71 TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN St. Mary's City STATE Maryland

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 N. Pence DATE 3/18/76

TITLE _____

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
	DATE
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	
ATTEST:	DATE
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	

CH-368

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Chesapeake Bay Skipjack Marv W. Somers

Continuation sheet Charles County, Maryland Item number 2, 4, and 10 Page 1

2. LOCATION

Goose Bay Marina, Port Tobacco River
Port Tobacco vicinity
Charles County (Code 017)

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

Educational Alternatives, Inc.
Raymond H. Hartjen, Ph. D., Executive Director
P. O. Box 265
Port Tobacco, Maryland 20677

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

U.S.G.S. Quadrangle: Mathias Point, MD-VA
UTM References: 18-320980 - 4257890

Prepared by Peter Kurtze
Assistant National Register
Administrator
Maryland Historical Trust
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

November 7, 1985

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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NOT FOR PUBLICATION

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St. Mary's City

VICINITY OF

four

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COUNTY

CODE

Maryland

24

St. Mary's

037

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

X Boat

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

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VICINITY OF

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SURVEY RECORDS

CITY TOWN

STATE

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<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
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<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Crafts
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CH-368
CHESAPEAKE BAY
SKIPJACK
MARY W. SOMERS
CHARLES COUNTY,
MARYLAND

0.4 MI. TO U.S. 301
POTOMAC RIVER BRIDGE 8 MI

27'30"

4258

4257

S CREEK
1650 IV NW

7 NOVEMBER 1985

CH-368

Goose Creek

TOBACCO
PORT

NECK

Brentland

Chapel Pt

Deep Pt

Fourth Pt

Windmill Pt

POINT
NECK

CEDEY

BREWERS CREEK

Goose Bay Marina

x150



Chesapeake Bay Skipjack Mary W. Somers CH-368

Charles County, Maryland

photo by R. H. Hartjen, 29 December 1984

negatives at Educational Alternatives, Inc.

115 LaGrange Ave.,

La Plata, MD 20646

at a berth in Goose Creek, Port Tobacco River
1/2



Chesapeake Bay Skipjack Mary W. Somers CH-368

Charles County, Maryland

photo by R. H. Hartjen, 29 December 1984

negative at Educational Alternatives, Inc.

115 LaGrange Ave.

La Plata, MD 20646

at a berth in Goose Creek, Port Tobacco River

2/2



CH-368

62R

D-3669

se. of rd.

sheet #
p. 160 ~~160~~



~~SN-305 SNIPACK MARY SOMERS~~

CH-368



MADE
IN
KODAK
K
APR 1950