

Capsule Summary
SM-654
Jefferson Island Club Lodge
Avenue vicinity
Private
(Page 1)

c. 1947, 1953-54

As noted by the August 10, 1972 issue of the Enterprise, the Jefferson Island Club Lodge has provided Democratic party members a safe haven from the "unending maelstrom of diplomatic Washington, D.C" and a place to talk about Jeffersonian politics.¹ Serving as a hunting lodge since 1946, the low lying, one story, frame and masonry building is situated on the southwest side of St. Catherine's Island -- a largely overgrown 50 acre fish and game haven that lies at the confluence of the Potomac and Wicomico Rivers.

The center section of the one story building was constructed for Dr. Benjamin Jacobs in 1940 by Avenue carpenter/boatbuilder John Long (See also SM-656).² Initially acquiring the Poplar Islands in the Chesapeake Bay, the Jefferson Island Club moved their lodge to St. Catherine's Island after their clubhouse burned in 1946. The original building was too small to accommodate the group and in 1953, the group hired Washington, D.C. contractor called the Merando Company to erect a long masonry wing on the south side. This was joined the next year by another wing on the north side that included a "Presidential Suite."³ A swimming pool was also added in 1961. Over the years the lodge has played host to a number of esteemed lawmakers, administrative assistants, and lobbyists, but Harry S. Truman represents the only former president to have visited the island.

1 Dorothy Shannon, "Jefferson Island is Democratic Hide-A-Way," The Enterprise, August 10, 1972.

2 Jefferson Caffery Glassie, The History of the Jefferson Islands Club and St. Catherine's Island (N.p.: n.p., 1981), 147.

3 Glassie, 147.

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SM-654, Jefferson Island Club Lodge
St. Mary's County
Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Data

Historic Context

Geographic Organization: Western Shore
Chronological/Developmental Period: Modern Period, 1930-present
Historic Period Theme: Architecture
Government/Law

Resource Type

Category: Building
Historic Environment: Island, Rural
Historic Function and Use: Residence, Lodge
Known Design Source: None

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. SM-654

Magi No.

DOE yes no

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Chesildine Island, St. Catherine's Island

and/or common Jefferson Island Club Lodge (pref.)

2. Location

street & number St. Catherine's Island (south side) not for publication

city, town Avenue vicinity of congressional district 7

state Md county St. Mary's TM-46, G-14, P-308

3. Classification

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

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

name Jefferson Island Club c/o Charles Cromwell

street & number 6709 Georgia Street telephone no.: John Kern 301-229-6435

city, town Chevy Chase state and zip code Md 20815

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Mary's County Courthouse liber CEG 18

street & number folio 401

city, town Leonardtown 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. SM-654

Condition		Check one	Check one
<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date of move _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input 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

The Jefferson Island Club Lodge is situated on the south side of St. Catherine's Island near the confluence of the Wicomico and Potomac Rivers. Located near the rural community of Avenue, Maryland, the Lodge is oriented on an east/west axis with the primary elevation facing west overlooking the Potomac River which is only a few feet from the building--separated only by a wooden bulkhead. Much of the island is overgrown, but the area surrounding the Lodge consists of mowed grass. This grassy area links the wharf and nearby two story farmhouse (SM-655) to the lodge. A clover-leaved, in-ground pool lies just to the west of the Lodge building and a small pavilion lies to the east. In July of 1998, the north wing of the building was destroyed by a tornado that passed over the island.

The Jefferson Island Club Lodge is a one story, three part, frame and cinder block building with a flat roof. Constructed over three different building periods, the building's center section was erected in 1940 while the south and north wings were added in 1953 and 1954 respectively. The frame center section lies on a concrete block foundation with the walls clad with clapboard that is fastened with wire nails to the circular sawn frame. The roofing materials could not be seen as the roof is flat but a large chimney flue is visible. The two cinderblock wings also feature flat roofs.

The front or west elevation is dominated by a semicircular masonry projection that extends from the center or main block. The projection is entirely ringed by a series of six-over-six windows. To the north of the projection is a glazed door flanked on either side by a six-over-six window and to the south is a door that leads to a porch. The south wing takes on the appearance of a motel as it is pierced by four panelled doors interspersed among four sets of paired eight-over-eight windows. The section immediately adjacent to the main block, however, is distinguished by three sets of glazed French doors that open onto the aforementioned porch. Because the north wing was demolished during the tornado, its appearance can only be recreated through historic views of the building. Nearly identical in dimension to the south wing, the north wing features a similar arrangement of four panelled doors and four sets of paired eight-over-eight windows. The section immediately beside the main block, however, is only pierced by a set of three six-over-six windows.

The north elevation of the wing features a set of paired six-over-six windows on the section that immediately adjoins the main block.

The rear or east elevation of the main block is pierced by a door, a paired set of six-over-six windows, a small bathroom window, and another six-over-six window. The section of the north wing that lies next to the main block is pierced by a small bathroom window and a set of paired six-over-six windows. The rest of the wing is pierced by four sets of paired six-over-six windows and four small bathroom windows. The part of the south wing closest to the main block is pierced by four six-over-six windows and a door. As with the north wing, the rest of the wing's fenestration is composed of four sets of paired six-over-six windows and four smaller bathroom windows.

The south elevation of the wing is pierced by a door and two six-over-six windows. It is otherwise unglazed.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates _____ **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.

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² Jefferson Caffery Glassie, The History of the Jefferson Islands Club and St. Catherine's

SM-654, Jefferson Island Club Lodge
St. Mary's County
7.1 Description

The interior of the main block is largely laid out to facilitate views of the Potomac River and to accommodate the recreational atmosphere of the lodge. This central section, for instance, contains two lounges, a foyer, a bar, and a bathroom. A large brick fireplace dominates one of the lounges and is decorated with fishing and duck hunting memorabilia and large picture of Thomas Jefferson lies on its thick shelf. Much of the interior is also sheathed with dark, elaborately beaded vertical boards. The north wing cannot be entered from the main block as the only entrance is through an exterior door. The space that adjoins the main block is referred to as the "Presidential Suite" and contains a brick fireplace-heated living room, bathroom, and bedroom. Four double-bedrooms lie to the north of the presidential suite with each containing a bathroom. The south wing is directly linked to one of the main block's lounges. Used as a dining room, this space is well lit by the aforementioned series of French doors that open onto the Potomac. A kitchen lies to the east of the dining room as does a boiler room. To the south of the dining room is another four double-bedrooms that also contain a bathroom.

SM-654, Jefferson Island Club Lodge
St. Mary's County
8.1 Significance

Chain-of-Title

(All deeds are located at the Land Records Office, St. Mary's County Courthouse, Leonardtown, Maryland unless otherwise noted.)

Reference: Liber CBG 18, Folio 401
Grantee: Jefferson Island Club
Grantor: Benjamin R. Jacobs
Date: June 28, 1946

Reference: Liber CBG 17, Folio 50
Grantee: Benjamin R. Jacobs
Grantor: The St. Catherine's Island Corporation
Date: January 5, 1945

Notes: The description of the property notes that the fifty acre island is bounded by the Wicomico and Potomac Rivers as well as St. Catherine's Bay.

Reference: Liber JMM 4, Folio 486
Grantee: The St. Catherine's Island Corporation
Grantor: Benjamin R. Jacobs
Date: January 22, 1927

Reference: Liber JMM 4, Folio 351
Grantee: Benjamin R. Jacobs
Grantor: Charles H. Beitzell
Date: October 25, 1926

Reference: Liber EBA 15, Folio 177
Grantee: Charles H. Beitzell
Grantor: A. Freeman Cheseldine
Date: June 17, 1916

Reference: Liber EBA 5, Folio 241
Grantee: A. Freeman Cheseldine
Grantor: E. Gray Pendleton and Emily B. Pendleton
Date: November 4, 1905

Notes: A "swash" is mentioned as being a portion of the property expressly reserved by the Pendleton's for the planting of oysters. "House Cove" and "Roger's Cove" are both mentioned in the description.

Reference: Liber JFF 11, Folio 1-2
Grantee: E. Gray Pendleton
Grantor: A. J. Cheseldine and Maria Cheseldin
Date: September 28, 1888

Reference: Liber JFF 2, Folio 190-191
Grantee: A. J. Cheseldine
Grantor: Benjamin W. Jenkins
Date: March 18, 1876

SM-654, Jefferson Island Club Lodge
St. Mary's County
8.2 Significance

Reference: Liber JAC 5, Folio 342-343
Grantee: Benjamin W. Jenkins
Grantor: James Etchberger
Date: October 26, 1871

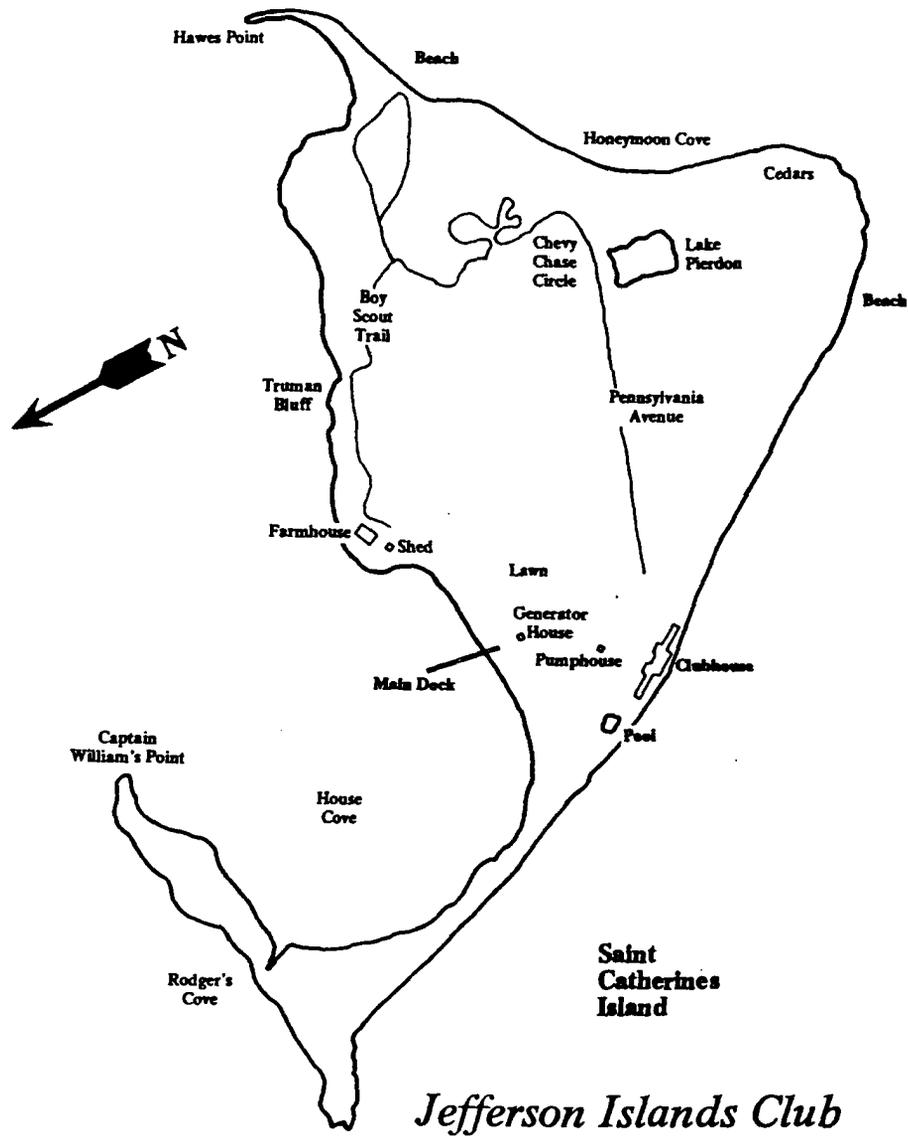
Reference: Liber JAC 5, Folio 342
Grantee: James Etchberger
Grantor: George Y. and Ann M. Wethered
Date: October 26, 1871

Reference: Liber JTB 2, Folio 52
Grantee: George Y. and Ann. M. Wethered
Grantor: Morris Shanks
Date: December 18, 1854

Reference: Liber JH 9, Folio 51
Grantee: Morris Shanks
Grantor: Dent Blackistone and Nathaniel Blackistone
Date: March 14, 1831

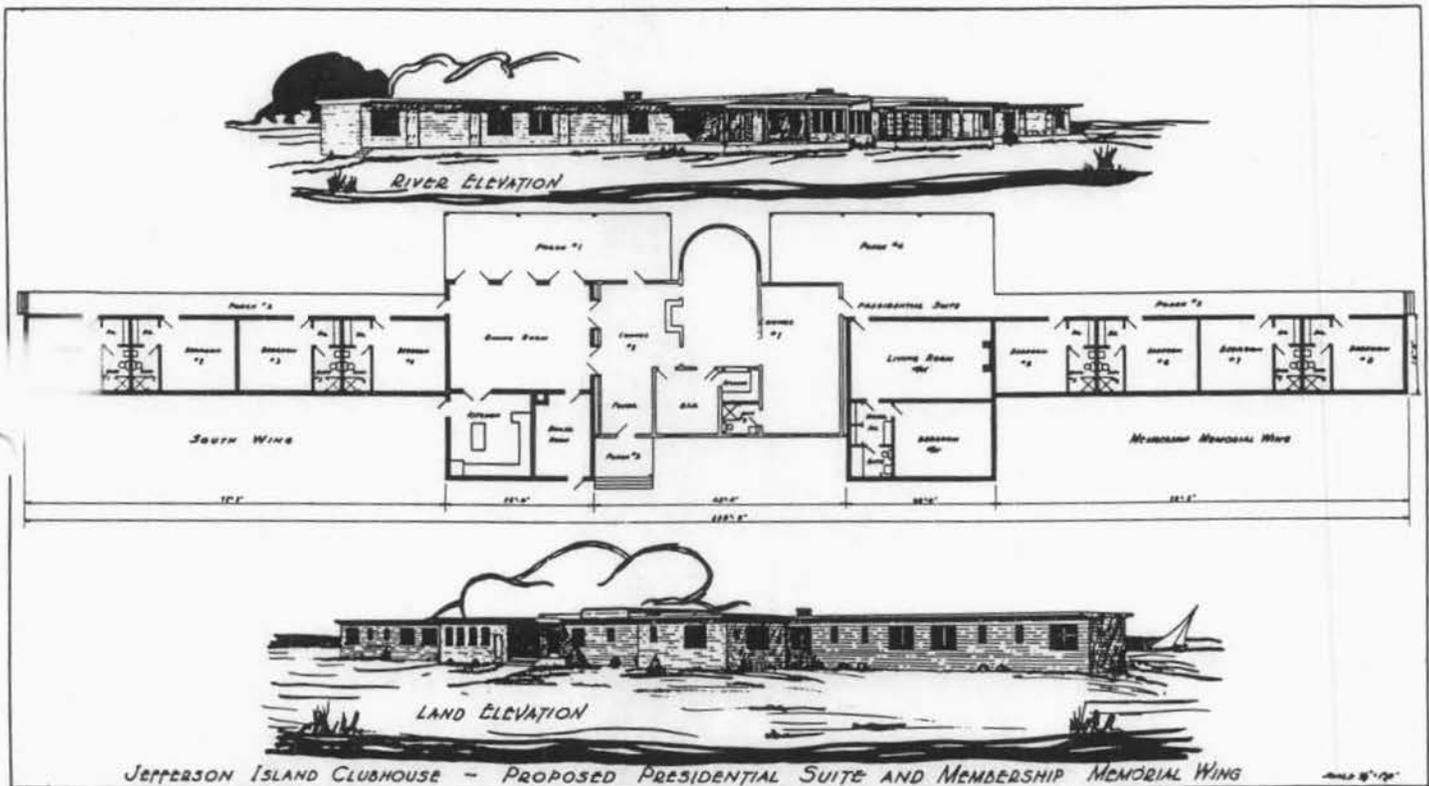
Reference: Decree Record JH 2, Folio 48
Notes: Initially brought before the Circuit Court of Equity in 1821, the case between Morris Shanks v. Dent and Nathaniel Blackistone is settled when the court appoints both brothers as trustees for the property (which was formerly owned by Kenelm Chesildine). A proper deed of conveyance is then elicited.

SM-654, Jefferson Island Club Lodge
St. Mary's County
8.3 Significance



Map of St. Catherine's Island showing the location of the Lodge. From Jefferson Caffery Glassie, The History of the Jefferson Islands Club and St. Catherine's Island (N.p.: n.p., 1981), page not numbered.

SM-654, Jefferson Island Club Lodge
St. Mary's County
8.4 Significance



Floorplan of Jefferson Island Club Lodge. From Jefferson Caffery Glassie, The History of the Jefferson Islands Club and St. Catherine's Island (N.p.: n.p., 1981), page not numbered.

IV SE (POINT)

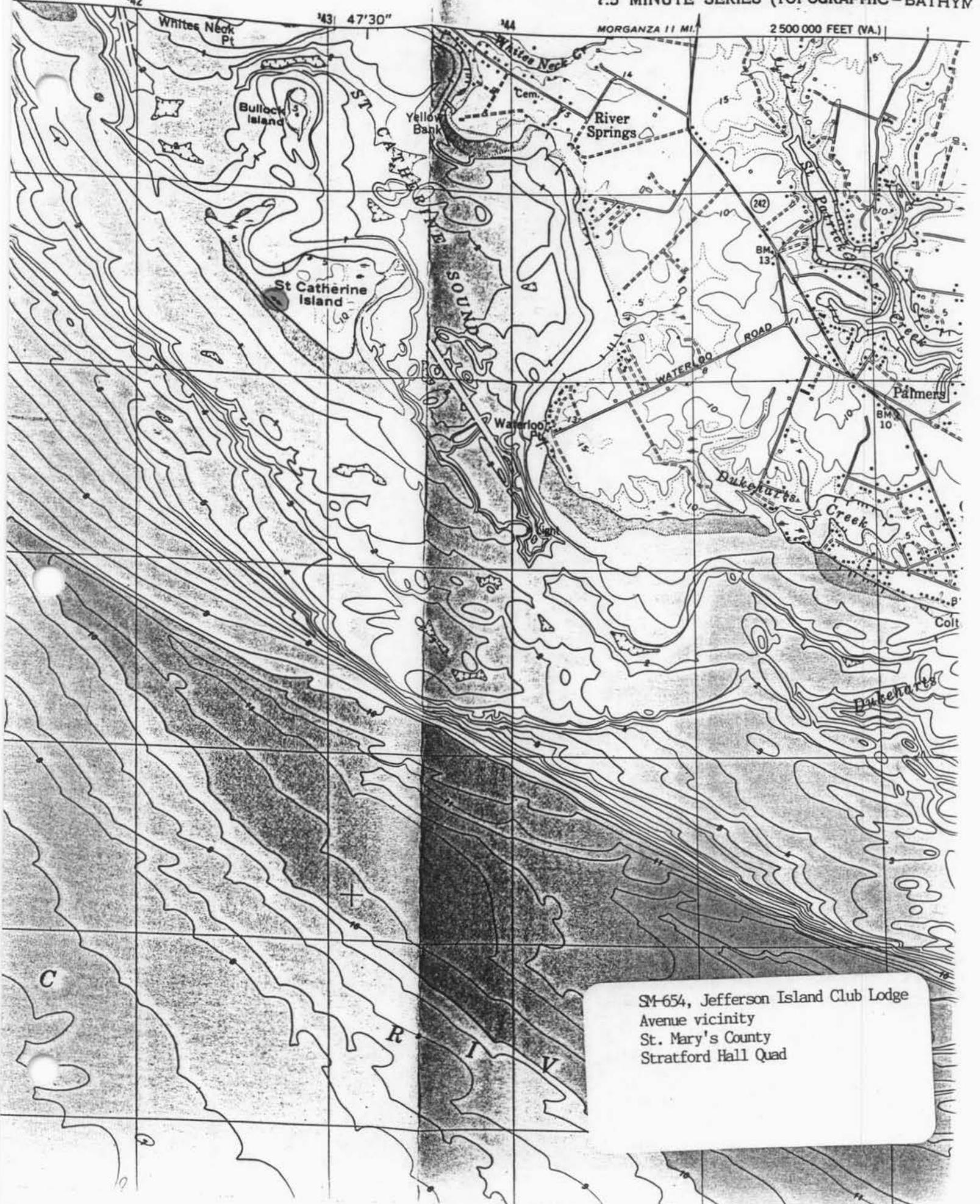
42

43 47'30"

44

MORGANZA 11 MI.

2 500 000 FEET (VA.)



SM-654, Jefferson Island Club Lodge
 Avenue vicinity
 St. Mary's County
 Stratford Hall Quad





