

Historic Preservation Commission Awards 2026

Presented at the May 12, 2026 Commissioner's
of St. Mary's County Meeting



This Year's Winners:

Preservation Service Award

Karen Stone

Preservation Project Awards

Historic Sotterley

Jocelyn Copeland

KT Harris

Preservation Service Award

Presented to: Karen Stone

Karen Stone, Museum Division Manager for the St. Mary's County Department of Recreation and Parks, researched and authored the first-ever book on the Black Diamond Disaster, *Shipwreck on the Potomac: Disaster in Pursuit of Lincoln's Killer*.

The Black Diamond Disaster is a largely “forgotten” tragedy that occurred on the Potomac River near present-day St. Clement's Island during the American Civil War. In April 1865, two ships, the *Massachusetts* and the *Black Diamond*, collided during the pursuit of Abraham Lincoln's assassin, John Wilkes Booth. Ms. Stone's book brings this story to light, exploring a long-overlooked chapter of St. Mary's County history.



Photo Credit: St. Mary's County Government Flickr

Additional Pictures of Karen Stone's Work

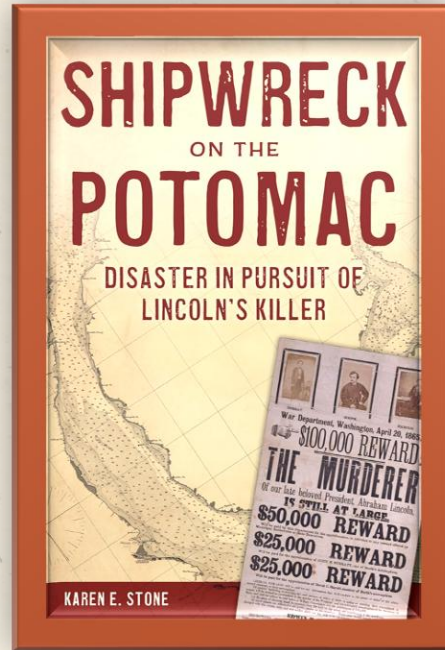


Photo Credit: The Baynet

Preservation Project Award

Presented to: Historic Sotterley

Historic Sotterley shares its history and stories from the early 1700s through the 1950s through its extant structures, most notably the manor house, a slave cabin, and various agricultural buildings. Recently, Sotterley relocated and restored a small tenant farmhouse from previously owned adjacent property onto its current grounds.

This tenant farmhouse interprets the post-slavery transition, a period when hired tenant labor was prevalent on farms throughout the region. Like the slave cabin, it offers visitors a tangible way to understand the contrast between those who lived in the manor house and those who resided in more modest dwellings on the property.

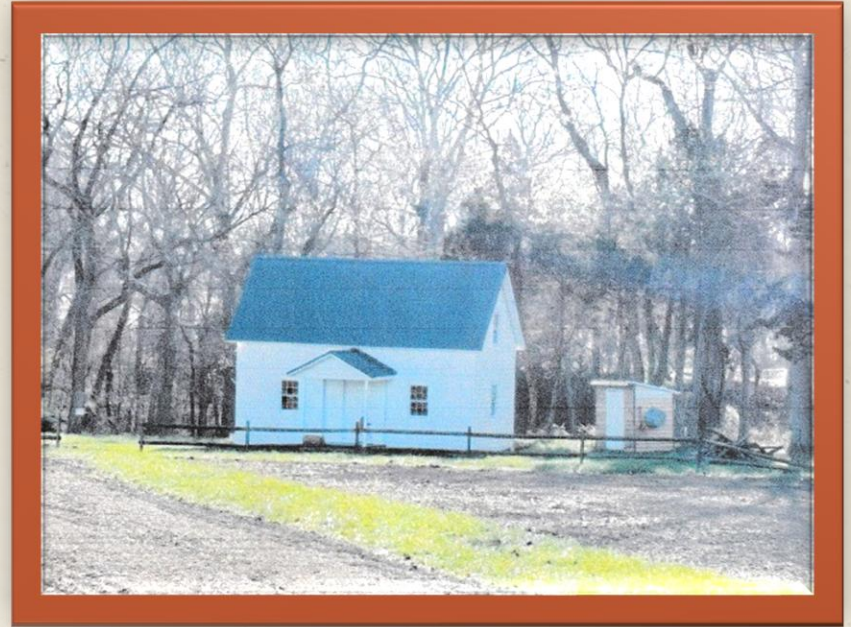


Photo Credit: St. Mary's County Government Flickr

Additional Pictures of Historic Sotterley's Work



Tenant House Before Move
Photo Credit: Provided with Nomination



Tenant House After Move
Photo Credit: Provided with Nomination

Preservation Project Award

Presented to: Jocelyn Copeland

Spearheaded by Jocelyn Copeland, the St. Mary's County Historic Preservation Commission researched, curated, and produced an educational pop-up museum experience for the 59th Annual U.S. Oyster Festival. The exhibit highlighted the rich history and vibrant community of the region's oyster industry and watermen culture. Artifacts were secured on loan through collaboration with the Calvert Marine Museum, the Maryland Archaeological Conservation Lab, and generous local watermen.



Photo Credit: St. Mary's County Government Flickr

Preservation Project Award

Presented to: KT Harris

KT Harris produced a video providing an immersive experience which highlighted the historical account of “The Dancing Molly” and the “Oyster Wars” in Maryland and Virginia. The exhibit quickly became one of the most talked-about additions to the festival, engaging more than 8,000 visitors and offering a meaningful, hands-on connection to the area’s maritime heritage.



Photo Credit: St. Mary's County Government Flickr

Additional Pictures of Copeland & Harris' Work



Photo Credit: Provided with Nomination



Photo Credit: Provided with Nomination