



Shoreline

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Searching for Clues

By Corinne Les Callette

Have you ever tried to identify people in a picture taken 85 years ago? It is a challenging and daunting chore, but one which you might not turn down. That is exactly what occurred recently at the Nabb Research Center. In our current exhibit, "The Voice of the Artifact," is a picture of the signing of the appropriations bill to establish Salisbury Normal School (now Salisbury University) in 1923. Unfortunately, no one in the picture is identified. Thus began the search for clues.

Our first step was to try and locate a living person who would remember our 1923 legislators in Annapolis. This search turned up fruitless. We next turned to one of our current members of the House of Delegates who recommended we contact Dr. Edward Papenfuss of the Maryland State Archives. A copy of the picture was given to Delegate Norman Conway who forwarded it to Emily Squires at the

Maryland State Archives.

In the meantime those of us here at the Nabb Center began searching resources in our collection in an effort to solve the mystery. We were able to identify Governor Albert C. Ritchie, as well as a few others. Squires also responded to our request and identified Senator William I. Norris, Senate President; E. Brooks Lee, Secretary of State; and John L.D. Lee, Speaker of the House. There are 12 men pictured though, which left us with eight more to identify.

As luck would have it, fate was on our side. While organizing our vertical file collection a *Daily Times* article, dated Sunday, August 27, 1989, written by Richard W. Cooper surfaced. The article was titled "Salisbury: Hub of Eastern Shore." In the article, Cooper described the many ways in which Salisbury came to be the hub of the Eastern Shore. One of those was the establishment of

Maryland State Normal School. Five more names were listed in this article: Charles R. Disharoon, State Senator; William S. Gordy, State Comptroller; L.W. Gunby; Dr. William J. Holloway—all of Salisbury; and John B. Robins of Crisfield. This left us with only three unidentified individuals.

Unfortunately, these last three individuals left us scratching our heads. Thanks to the diligent searching of the vault at Blackwell Library, by our archivist, David Ranzan, the three remaining names have been found and added to those on the picture. This interesting story demonstrates the type of research that routinely goes on here at the Nabb Center. If you have any information that may help us unlock the mystery of these last three individuals please contact us at 410-543-6312 or by email at rcdhac@salisbury.edu.



Signing the Bill Authorizing the State Normal School at Salisbury, Md.

Those positively identified in the photograph are Senator William I. Norris, Governor Albert Ritchie; Secretary of State E. Brooks Lee; Speaker of the House John L. D. Lee; Dr. William J. Holloway, to be Principal of the College; Charles C. Disharoon, State Senator; Henry M. Fitzhugh, President of the State Board of Education; Albert S. Cook, State Superintendent of Schools; Louis W. Gunby, President of the Wicomico County Board of Education; Orlando Harrison, State Senator; John B. Robins, State Senator; William S. Gordy, State Comptroller.

Upcoming Events Around the Shore:

Sunday, December 7

Mardela Springs Heritage Christmas Tour
3-8 p.m.

Enjoy a walking tour of historic homes, arts and crafts, parade, Santa Claus and more! Starts at the Mardela Springs Volunteer Fire Company on Station Street.

For more information call 410-883-3706
or 410-749-1210.

"We're History.. Without You"

Nabb Rescues the Printed Word of Salisbury

By David Ranzan

Newspapers are considered one of the most difficult documents to preserve. Printed on very low quality wood pulp paper, newspapers are highly acidic and are not meant to last forever. Even the ink used is of poor quality allowing the text to smear and fade over time. But to the Nabb Center, newspapers are valuable and essential components in the historical interpretation and analysis of days gone by.

When the Nabb Center was in the midst of reorganizing its archival collections, staff members decided that a room was needed to house the vast collection of regional newspapers. As they were busy moving shelves into Room 101, they remembered that an enormous collection of *Salisbury Daily Times* still existed in the basement of Blackwell Library. At some time, the bound volumes had been moved ... to the basement in an effort to deal with space issues. When the microfilm copies of the *Daily Times* arrived, there was no need for both the bound volumes and the microfilm on the main floor of the library. Unfortunately, or fortunately for the Nabb Center, among the forgotten junkyard of mangled



shelves and old chairs and desks sat numerous stacks of the bound volumes in a sandpit.

Spearheading Operation Sandy Beaches, research assistant and newspaper guru T. Aaron Horner, University archivist David Ranzan and staff member Donna Messick rescued the newspapers that could be salvaged and brought them back to the Nabb Center. Due to the proximity of the boiler room and their placement in the sand, temperature and humidity had a great effect on the paper causing them to deteriorate and become brittle and allowing mold to fester and grow. Once the newspapers had been removed from their sandy dungeon, the staff initiated conservation treatment for mold and an attempt to prevent further

deterioration of the papers. Although many of the volumes of the rescued *Salisbury Daily Times* will be restricted to the public due to their fragile state, this is a fine example of the Nabb Research Center's active pursuit to collect and preserve materials illustrating the rich historical and cultural heritage of the Delmarva region. ☺

