

Part I: From the Sandaway, with love

Leigh Cort
Columnist

I yearn to return to the Sandaway — quietly embracing the long Indian summer days on the shore of the Chesapeake, Choptank and Tred Avon

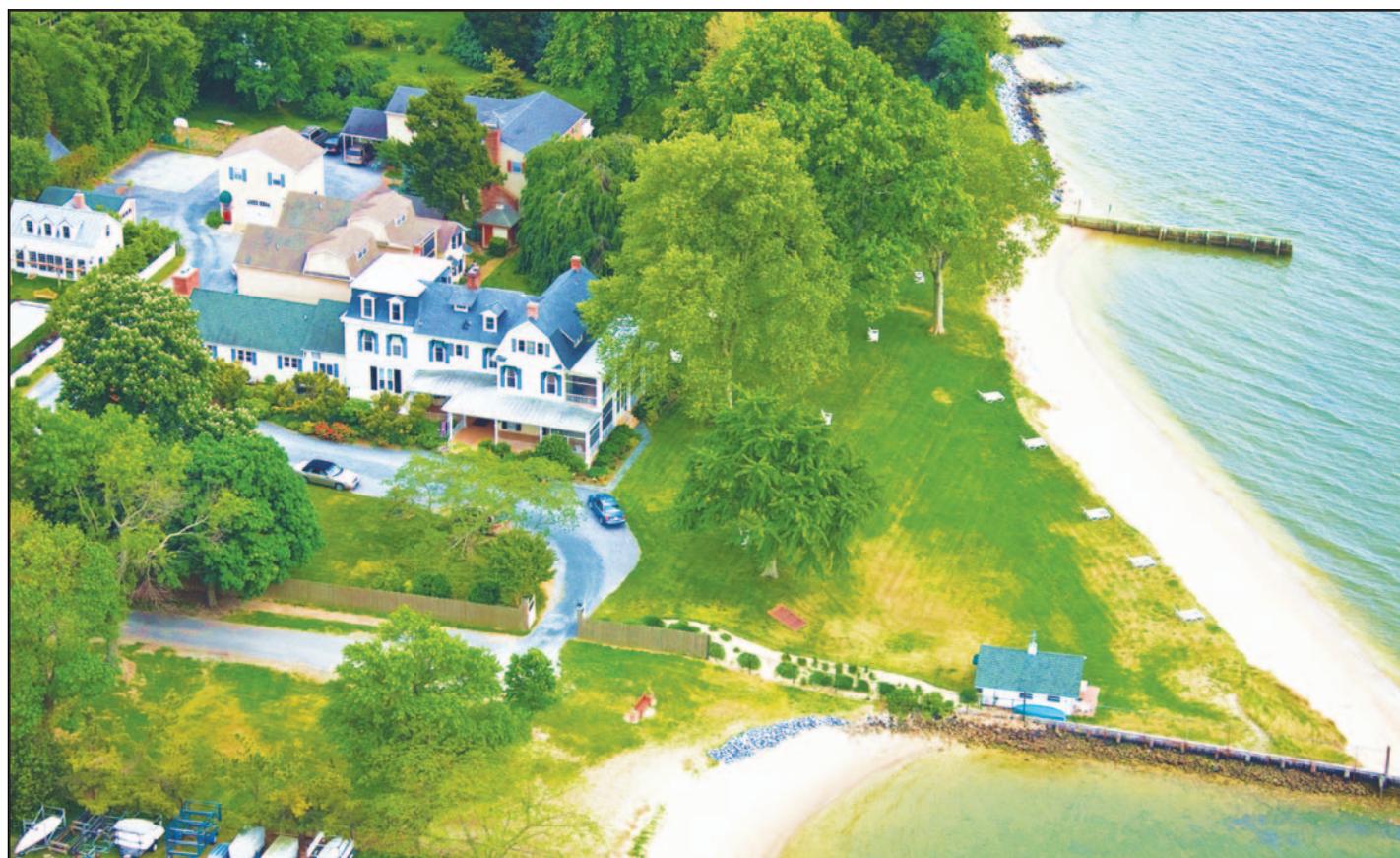


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Rivers. A graceful and stately mansion with sloping green lawns and gardens... dotted with white Adirondack chairs and chaises — reminiscent of a turn-of-the-century postcard. It's a sentinel of gracious Southern living —

Oxford, Maryland embraces four centuries of American history surrounded by three renowned bodies of water.

Maryland — one of the original thirteen colonies and accustomed to its position in the middle — where land meets sea and North meets South. I felt as though I landed in the most beautiful spot in the world. It was a quiet Sunday afternoon; schooners, sailboats and skip-jacks dotted the waterways surrounding Oxford. People walked slowly to and from the ferry — occasionally dipping their toes into the chilly water along pristine little beaches.



An aerial view of picturesque Sandaway in Oxford, Maryland.

Provided by Leigh Cort

For discerning visitors who enjoy tranquility, privacy and exclusivity, there

aren't many places on the globe that one can feel at home the moment you arrive. The tiny hamlet of Oxford (population 600) is perfect for walking along the river shores, exploring the lovely architecture of days gone by with many homes circa 1700's – 1800's and unhurriedly bicycling the town – all of which is an historic area. It sprawls a bit inland from the waterways into grandiose farm country known for corn, tobacco and soybeans yet is only 1.5 hour drive from Washington, D.C. and America's Capitol commotion.

Once the most thriving port of entry for the entire Maryland province (1694), Oxford enjoyed prominence as an international shipping center surrounded by wealthy tobacco plantations. Famous statesmen, sea captains, war heroes and industrialists brought acclaim to its borders. "During the early glory years, if you could buy riches and fineries of the world in Paris and London, you could buy it in Oxford too!"

Once I checked in and wandered from the Sandaway, I discovered the famed Robert Morris Inn. Its pub and dining rooms lured me to dine for breakfast, outdoor verandah lunch and a late night dinner throughout the week. Only a block from my bed & breakfast, it was easy to see how a guest could truly relax and enjoy not caring about schedules except perhaps reading a book. Better yet — delve into the Sandaway's library of books that impart the magical history of Oxford and the legendary Chesapeake Region of America's Mid Atlantic coast.

Guide to Oxford

Restaurants:

- Robert Morris Inn serving breakfast, lunch, dinner and Sunday brunch daily. Historic setting with celebrated British master chef/partner Mark Salter. His innovative award-winning style is evident in every season's menu. The cozy tavern and classic dining rooms are romantic; the outdoor patio and verandah irresistible! One of America's oldest inns (circa 1710)
- Latitude 38 Bistro & Spirits serving dinner Tuesday – Tuesday and Sunday brunch. Where the locals meet – in a casual pub setting. The setting is friendly ~ the prices very affordable. From crispy skin rockfish to steak & frites their nightly specials can't be beat.
- Masthead @ Pier Street Crabhouse is opened and bustling in season until early October. In the winter, don't miss weekend dinner with a killer view of the River; the breathtaking sunsets lure even the 'who's who' from Washington, DC to take a drive for their blue crabs, clams and regional fare.
- Pope's Tavern serves dinner on the weekends in an intimate 40-seat European Bistro atmosphere. Request that the cool English Taxi pick you up!

Shops:

- Oxford Museum & Gift Shop
- Oxford Market & Deli
- Mystery Loves Company Booksellers
- The Treasure Chest

All are within walking distance to the Sandaway. Innkeepers will let you know shop hours and days opened!

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Patricia Owings

patricia@strategicsites.com

Kate Clifford

kate@strategicsites.com

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Cort

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The magnificent, seafood-rich Chesapeake Bay is one of the country's great wonders. The mighty estuary played a formative role in the development of industry and culture in Maryland... and Maryland itself played a large role on the American stage. I was enchanted to know that the state had four signers of the Declaration of Independence, which defined its traditions of low-key individualism and religious tolerance. (Signers were Charles Carroll, Samuel Chase, William Paca and Thomas Stone).

Inside the Oxford Library, I disappeared into a wondrous place in Ameri-

can history. The words that resonated over and over to me confirmed my affinity and delight in staying at the Sandaway Inn. H.L. Mencken wrote "Marylanders have a tradition of sound and comfortable living".

Sandaway owners Ken, Wendy and Ben Gibson reflect these words from the moment you drive through the welcoming circular driveway to gaze astoundingly at the grand glorious and glistening rivers. Throughout my visit their presence was everywhere — speaking kindly and softly to guests and staff — and to each other. Every detail of their home/hotel reflects a three-generations long family heritage of gracious hospitality.

Check next week's Ponte Vedra Recorder for Part 2.



Provided by Leigh Cort

The Robert Morris Inn—one of America's oldest—is an ideal dining location, set within walking distance of the Sandaway in Oxford, Maryland.

Amendments

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Amendment 7:

This proposal was known as Amendment 7 until a legal challenge by opponents led to the rewriting of some of the ballot language and its reinstatement on the ballot as Amendment 8. This is the reason there is no Amendment 7 on the 2012 ballot.

Amendment 8: Religious Freedom

Title on Ballot: Religious Freedom
Sponsor: The Florida Legislature
Note: This proposal was known as Amendment 7 until a legal challenge by opponents led to the rewriting of some of the ballot language and its reinstatement on the ballot as Amendment 8. This is the reason there is no Amendment 7 on the 2012 ballot.

What it would do: This amendment would remove the prohibition in Florida's Constitution that prevents religious institutions from receiving taxpayer funding.

If you vote yes: A "yes" vote means you want to remove from the Florida Constitution a prohibition against the state funding religious institutions and replace it with a provision that prohibits the state from denying funding to institutions based on religious affiliations.

If you vote no: A "no" vote means you want to retain the provision in the Florida Constitution that prohibits the state from funding religious institutions.

Amendment 9: Homestead Property Tax Exemption for Surviving Spouse of Military Veteran or First Responder

Title on Ballot: Homestead Property Tax Exemption for Surviving Spouse of Military Veteran or First Responder

Sponsor/Originator: The Florida Legislature

What it would do: This would grant a full property tax exemption to the surviving spouses of military veterans who die while on active duty and to the surviving spouses of first responders who die in the line of duty.

If you vote yes: A "yes" vote means you want the state to grant the full homestead exemption to the surviving spouses.

If you vote no: A "no" vote means you do not want the state to grant the full homestead exemption.

Amendment 10: Tangible Personal Property Tax Exemption

Title on Ballot: Tangible Personal Property Tax Exemption

Sponsor/Originator: The Florida Legislature

What it would do: This amendment would double the tangible personal property tax exemption and allow local governments to increase the exemption.

If you vote yes: A "yes" vote means you want to double the tangible personal property tax exemption and allow cities and counties to expand the exemptions beyond that.

If you vote no: A "no" vote means you do not want to double the tangible personal property tax exemption and you do not want to allow cities and

counties to expand the exemptions.

Amendment 11: Additional Homestead Exemption; Low-Income Seniors Who Maintain Long-Term Residency on Property; Equal to Assessed Value

Title on Ballot: Additional Homestead Exemption; Low-Income Seniors Who Maintain Long-Term Residency on Property; Equal to Assessed Value

Sponsor/Originator: The Florida Legislature

What it would do: This amendment would give an additional property tax exemption to low-income seniors who have lived in their home for more than 25 years.

If you vote yes: A "yes" vote means you think cities and counties should have the authority to grant a full property tax discount to eligible seniors.

If you vote no: A "no" vote means you do not think that cities and counties should have the authority to grant a full property tax discount to eligible seniors.

Title on Ballot: Appointment of Student Body President to Board of Governors of the State University System

Sponsor/Originator: The Florida Legislature

What it would do: This amendment would change the way the state selects the student representative on the state university system's Board of Governors, which oversees the university system.

If you vote yes: A "yes" vote means you want the state create a new council of university student presidents from which the student representative to the Board of Governors will be chosen.

If you vote no: A "no" vote means you want to keep the current system of selecting the student representative to the Board of Governors.

Amendment guide from "Proposed Constitutional Amendment: Summary Information" by the Collins Center for Public Policy, available online at <http://collinscenter.org/2012/amendments/proposed-constitutional-amendment-summary-information/>.

Amendment 12: Appointment of Student Body President to Board of Governors of the State University System

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From Sandaway with love: Part II

Leigh Cort

Special to The Recorder

I was delighted to open the door to my suite at the Sandaway in Oxford each morning to find a bounty of breakfast in my little crab basket: yogurt, cakes, granola, coffee, fresh



Cort

fruit, juices, snacks and surprises. I felt free to take breakfast in my room, on the lawn, private verandah or just 'away for a picnic'. The Inn's tiny Boat House is a perfect hideaway too—a charming

little place to spend time alone or to meet others. The most thoughtful spot in the house is the 'library—TV room' with deep comfy sofas and beverages/snacks available through the day and night. Note: it's the ONLY place to watch TV. I loved NOT having one in my room, giving me time to just enjoy the view and other pleasures.

My accommodation was a perfect combination of alluring linens on the plush king bed and a step-out porch that lured me to the view and symphony of autumn breezes. It became obvious that Ben and the Gibson family enjoy seeing their guests take pleasure in the Inn's privacy and natural setting. It was haunting yet romantic to be somewhere on the property at noon and 6:00 p.m. when the church bells tolled, echoing through the town. I learned about the 'cardboard boat races' and other boating activities in which Oxford takes pride. The water has served Marylanders as much for pleasure as for serious business; even George Washington was known to enjoy boating entertainment on the Chesapeake!



Provided by Leigh Cort

Sandaway Waterfront Lodging is located in historic Oxford, Maryland, close to St. Michaels, Easton and Cambridge. Visit www.sandaway.com or call (888) 726-3292 for more information.

The Sandaway's appeal grew day after day. Unlike other destinations where I've felt compelled to plan meals and activities, I realized that once on the Eastern Shore, my watch seemed to not have any minute hands. I felt that I was re-energizing, re-connecting and re-reflecting. The small Oxford market is a short walk away where I found (simply) two small aisles of groceries, ice cream and sandwiches. It was 1950 all over again and it felt great! Missing from the landscape were mailboxes at each home. There aren't any. Residents go to the post office and pick up their mail. Alas—a wonderful morning activity!

The Tred Avon Yacht Club across the 'Strand' from the Sandaway is a thriving club that carries the traditions of yesteryear into the 21st Century. Boasting the oldest privately owned

ferry in the United States—the Oxford-Bellevue Ferry—(est. 1683), a trip across the Tred Avon to historic St. Michael's was my personal favorite boating adventure. Only a short ¾ mile trip that takes 7-9 minutes, it reminded me that Oxford is still a waterman's town. Disembarking near the delightful

village of St. Michael's, I found that it's replete with thriving shopping, dining and tourist adventures. It's not to be missed when creating a jam-packed vacation but there is nothing sweeter than leaving the people and activities behind when you board the Ferry and let the river's breezes blow you back to the Sandaway!

Now that I'm not a stranger to Oxford, I eagerly await my next visit to again step back in time, savoring the simple pleasures of walking along the Strand, sitting under the shade trees in a rocking chair and cherishing the Sandaway's timeless grace and privacy. I plan to return soon to meet some of the town's artists and attend a play at the Tred Avon Players. Kayaking on the Choptank River from the Inn's sandy beach awaits me too, and taking an historic walking tour through the town with Les Nollmeyer—Oxford Museum's curator, official tour guide and native son.

When James Michener wrote his book 'Chesapeake' he often visited Oxford and lived nearby to inhale the past that influenced his writing.

I'm waiting to fall in love again and continue my story and love affair with Oxford and the Sandaway!



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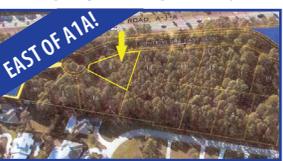
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39 Players Club Villas	3/3 \$2,400

UNFURNISHED	BR/BA PRICE
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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Katie Kirchner **Kate Clifford**
katiek@strategicsites.com kate@strategicsites.com
904-242-2828



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