

**MORATTICO WATERFRONT MUSEUM
VILLAGE MAP
GOLF CART or WALKING TOUR**



STOP 1, MUSEUM:

This area encompasses many stories for so small a village, from Native American habitation and a visit from John Smith, to English planters and the early family home of Mary Ball Washington to the more recent history of a colorful waterman's village. This tour outlines that history, and some of the stories.

- The village is named for the first known inhabitants, the Moraughtacund Indians, who some scholars believe lived in the area as early as 8,000 B.C. Documented history begins with Captain John Smith's 1608 visit during his exploratory Rappahannock River voyage. Smith's journal records his meeting with the Moraughtacunds. During this voyage, Smith was involved in brokering an agreement between the Moraughtacunds and the Rappahannock Indians, both tribes of Chief Powhatan's Algonquian Nation.
- Circa 1698, Englishman Joseph Ball I, father of Mary Ball, purchased approximately 500 acres, including the land on which the museum now stands, and by 1706 had begun construction of a plantation house which he called Morattico Plantation about one mile east of the museum.
- In 1889, the second Morattico Plantation house (the first was dismantled by an heir in 1850) and most of the original acreage were purchased by brothers John S.H. and John H. Whealton, entrepreneurs from the Eastern Shore. Between 1889 and 1901 the Whealtons rented and sold parcels of land, built the Morattico General Store and a steamboat wharf, and established the first Post Office in the store. From 1892 until 1911, the name of the village was changed to Whealton, or Whealton's Wharf. The Morattico General Store operated for over a century under nine owners until 2003, when it became the museum.
- The Post Office was later moved into Captain Herbert Glenn's large store on the Point, and in the 1950s, the Glens built the existing P.O. next to their home across from what is now the museum. Captain Glenn, who sailed between Baltimore and the Indies, bought the home still under construction in the late 1890s, living with his wife and infant son on his vessel in the bay behind the house until its completion. He became a significant landholder in Morattico, owning a store and an oyster plant on the Point and property extending to what is now Emmanuel U.M. Church. In 1911, he became Morattico Postmaster.

- Adjacent to the museum on the Point side, in the front yard of the home with wrought-iron ornamentation, stood an inn offering overnight lodging to steamboat passengers. The inn, later a private residence, was taken down in the early 2000's.

Direction: From museum -- facing Glenn house, turn right toward the Point & proceed to STOP 2.

STOP 2, MORATTICO POINT:

Facing the river towards Dr. Lewis Office, small gray one-story building on right.

- This area projecting into the Rappahannock is known as Morattico Point or Lewis Point. The small gray building to the right of the home's driveway was Dr. Frank Lewis' medical office until 1933. The site of acetylene gas production for the doctor's use can still be seen behind the office. Dr. Lewis also served as a member of the Lancaster County School Board. One baby delivered in the doctor's office, still a Morattico resident, celebrated her 100th birthday on April 30, 2015. Her photo is in the museum.
- The steamboat wharf, owned by the Whealton and Hammell families and at one time the longest on the Rappahannock, extended far into the river. To the left of the steamboat wharf was the structure known locally as the "Long Wharf" as well as, in the early years of the 20th Century, a Lord Mott Company tomato packing facility. The late Ben Seawell (1925-2014), whose father worked for Lord Mott, recalled earning money as a boy by hauling passengers' baggage up and down the steamboat wharf on a small wagon at 10 cents a trip. The steamboat wharf was destroyed, along with virtually every wharf on the Rappahannock, in the Great Storm of 1933.

Direction --Proceed to STOP 3, the grassy area at the end of the gravel.

- On the left is the old Lankford home, no longer occupied. On the left also once stood the original Lewis home, destroyed by fire. On the right you will pass Tidewater vernacular farmhouses: first on the right was originally known as "Snug Harbor," home of Louise Lewis. Also in this area were stable and garden areas owned by the Lewis family.

STOP 3, RAPPAHANNOCK RIVER AND LANCASTER CREEK:

- To the left is the Rappahannock River; directly ahead is the mouth of Lancaster Creek where it enters the river. The settlement visible across the mouth of the creek is Whelan's Marina in Farnham. Upriver approximately a mile off Hale's Point is the Morattico Bar, a rich and well-known oyster ground and fishing area.
- To the right on Lancaster Creek on the Morattico side is Curlett's Point. Jack Curlett worked for many years at Morattico's RCV Seafood; the large Curlett home with its cupola is obscured among the trees to the right, accessible in Morattico from Saltwater Drive. On contemporary marine maps Curlett's Point is designated as *cupola*, referring to the Curlett home's distinguishing feature visible from the water.
- Also visible from this spot looking back toward Morattico is the 1980s dock built by Warren Rule and Lawrence Williams--approximately 500 feet long and at some points 8 feet high, notable for the terra cotta pipes encasing its support piers, necessary for protection in the past during annual burnings of the salt marsh for mosquito control.

Direction --Retrace route past museum, turn right on Riverside Drive and proceed to Stop 4.

- Turning the corner at Morattico Road and Riverside Drive, second house on the left facing Morattico Road is the old Whealton home. On the right corner, also facing Morattico Road is the Hale House, interesting for its fish-scale roof and for having a main entrance on each of its four sides. Next to the Hale House on the right on Riverside Drive is the former home of Captain Albert Walters, originally from Tangier Island. Following the Storm of '33, a number of Tangier watermen and their families migrated to Morattico. The Walters, Pruitt, and Parks families remain valued members of the community.

Direction -- Proceed to Stop 4, just past the River Gazebos on the right near pine tree.

STOP 4, TIDAL POND:

- To the right is the mouth of Mulberry Creek, with Belle Isle State Park on its right shore. In summer, dolphins may be spotted entering Mulberry Bay from the river. To the left is a tidal pond, home to egrets, muskrats, herons, snapping turtles, and other wildlife.
- Looking back to Morattico Point on the right from this spot are the locations of the steamboat wharf and the "Long Wharf," although they no longer exist. One of several oyster shell piles in the area, created by discarded shells from the shucking houses, is located at the end of the old "Long Wharf."
- Directly ahead, the small gray structure on the right was originally Shelton's Seafood, a soft crab shedding operation. Soft shell shedding was introduced to the Rappahannock for the first time at the mouth of Mulberry Creek by Tangiermen (Sam Parks & Capt. John Walters) in 1933.

Direction -- Proceed to Stop 5 at the end of Riverside Drive. Note in passing: Morattico Hall, the oldest home in Morattico, was once the home of Captain Barney Wessels who operated a schooner out of Morattico, and house number 305 was originally the Methodist parsonage.

STOP 5, COLBERT'S POINT: *End of Riverside Drive at entrance to Sloop Pointe Condos facing sign.*

- The land for these condos was built up to make it the highest point in Morattico. The condos occupy the site of what was RCV Seafood, at one time one of the largest East Coast seafood processing plants. Prior to RCV, the Slaughter Oyster House occupied the same site.
- Across the river from this perspective are Jamaica, Waterview, and Butylo in Middlesex County.

Direction -- Proceed to Stop 6, into Sloop Pointe.

STOP 6, COLBOURN'S COVE: *Top of condo traffic circle, facing Condo swimming pool.*

- Directly across the water from the end of this point on the right is the mouth of Mulberry Creek, with Belle Isle State Park to the right of the creek. Behind the swimming pool is Colbourn's Cove, earlier known as House Cove. Across the cove to the left is a community dock, and to its right, the sites of Parks' crab house, Piney Island Seafood (no longer in operation), and farther up Mulberry Creek but not visible, Barrack's crab house.
- Behind the community dock is a white farmhouse, the third structure on the site of the original Morattico Plantation built ca. 1706 by Joseph Ball I, father of Mary Ball Washington who was the mother of George Washington.
- Farther up Mudd or Mulberry Creek is Brick Kiln Cove where bricks for the second Morattico Plantation were produced for Littleton Downman Mitchell, an heir of Joseph Ball.

Direction -- Retrace route along Riverside Drive toward Morattico Road. Note in passing: almost every home on Riverside Drive at the turn of the 20th Century was occupied by a working waterman.

STOP on left in front of BECK'S house: Looking toward the river and Morattico Point from this spot a viewer would have seen Mulberry Bay filled with crab floats. Prior to the advent of crab houses built over the water with their own water circulation systems, crab floats served the purpose.

Continue, turn right on Morattico Road and proceed to STOP 7.

STOP 7, EMMANUEL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH: *Direction -- Parking in front.*

- The original Emmanuel U.M. Church building was dedicated in 1893 and destroyed by fire in 1897. Some early parishioners came to church by skiff. Behind the church is Ivey Creek, named for Thomas Ives and the northern boundary of original Morattico Plantation property.
- The fields on the opposite side of the road are a rich source of Native American artifacts, likely from the Moraughtacunds. Axe and arrow heads have been found here and are displayed in the museum.
- Facing the church and Ivey Creek, to the left is Lancaster Creek. Across Lancaster Creek, the settlement of Simonson is visible.
- The mouth of Ivey Creek is shoaling in, no longer navigable by vessels larger than skiffs and small sailboats.
- Behind the large house on the far side of Ivey Creek is Chilton land, originally part of the Norwood tract.

Direction -- Proceed on Morattico Road to the left -- eastward to Stop 8.

STOP 8, HEAD OF IVEY CREEK: *Stop in the right of way just past the curve, you will see the golf cart sign on left.*

- To the left is the head of Ivey Creek and marshland. Just before the curve on the left ahead, a culvert runs under the roadway carrying high water from the salt marsh. During high tides and storms water overflows into the road. Morattico then becomes a small island. At one time the road was located closer to the shoreline of Ivey Creek; remnants remain, obscured by trees and vegetation.
- The next road to the right is Mulberry Creek Road, which leads to the existing Morattico farmhouse on or near the site of Joseph Ball's original Morattico Plantation.
- Land on the right of Mulberry Creek Road was the site of Frog Pond School, attended by Morattico children during the 1930's and 1940's.
- Also to the right was the Oyster Shell Road, a footpath beside the marsh created to allow access directly from Morattico Road to the Slaughter Oyster House/RCV Seafood without entering the village.
- This concludes the tour. We hope you enjoyed it. All this information and more can be found in the museum.

Direction" End of gold cart tour, return to Stop 1, Museum.

Direction for walkers -- Continue to Mulberry Bay Rd to view: Frog Pond School site, Frog Pond, and the Morattico Plantation house site.

Please respect private property.