



Sassafras Update

Sassafras River Association
PO Box 333
Georgetown, MD 21930

December 2006

January Meeting — “Native Americans on the Sassafras”

To start off the new year, we’re going to try a few new things for our January 16 meeting:

- First, we’re going to partner with the Colchester Farm Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). Many SRA members are also Colchester Farm CSA members. We receive fresh, pesticide-free vegetables from the Farm every week during the summer.
- We will have the meeting at Colchester Farm, on MD 213 just south of Georgetown. We’ll meet at the usual time — 7 pm.
- This month we’re going to examine social, cultural and historical features of the Sassafras River rather than conservation issues.

Our guest speaker will be

John Seidel, Associate Professor of Anthropology and Environmental Sciences at



Washington College. He will speak to us about the Native Americans who occupied this part

of the Eastern Shore before the European period.

Charlotte Staelin, owner of Colchester Farm, will share with us a number of the Native American artifacts that have been found on the Farm and Dr. Seidel will give us insight about their use and the context in which they have been found.

This program comes at a perfect time, as we prepare to celebrate the 400th anni-

versary of the Jamestown settlement and Captain John Smith’s subsequent voyage of discovery on the Chesapeake Bay. As we have learned, John Smith visited the Sassafras River, where he met with the Native American inhabitants.

Directions to Colchester Farm

Colchester Farm is on the banks of the Sassafras, on the hill above Georgetown.

From Cecil County, cross the Sassafras River on MD 213 and climb the hill past the Kitty Knight House and Georgetown Marina. Turn right on Georgetown Cemetery Road and follow the lane back to the farm — about 1/2 mile.

From Kent County, drive north on MD 213 through Galena. Just before the hill down to the River, turn left on Georgetown Cemetery.

Quick Takes

- In February, we hope to look in more detail at the information that we’ve gathered in our Sassafras Samplers water testing program and get the thoughts of our DNR partners on our findings.
- For March, we’re planning a return to the Cecil County Fire Hall for a program *From My Backyard to Our Bay*, focusing on the role we all play as watershed residents in preserving the treasure that is the Sassafras River.
- We’re always on the lookout for great photographs of the Sassafras to use in the *Update* and in our information booth. To share, email your pix to johnvail@crosslink.net

Membership News

While we have more than 150 current memberships, 20 members have not yet renewed.

If you’re waiting until year’s end to make your tax deductible contribution, the time is here!

Join now or, if you’re already a member, get a neighbor to join—or bring them to the next meeting.

What’s in a Logo?

We’ve used the 4-leaf logo for the Sassafras River Association since we got started in late 2004. It’s on our *Sassafras Update* and our other literature, on our hats, and on our website. We’ve grown so accustomed to it that we’re surprised when someone asks what it means.

Our logo represents the four distinctive leaf shapes

found on the Sassafras tree — the trident, the simple leaf, the right mitten and the left mitten.

Sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*) is quick to return to abandoned farmland and provides browse material and fruit for wildlife. Sassafras root was one of the earliest new world exports - it was used to perfume soaps and to make tea. Native Ameri-

cans, we are told, used Sassafras trees for dug-out canoes.

