

Glossary

Adze - a heavy hand tool with a steel cutting blade attached at right angles to a wooden handle, used for dressing timber

Anthropologist – a person who studies the origins, physical and cultural development, biological characteristics, and social customs and beliefs of humankind

Architecture - the art and science of designing and overseeing the erection of buildings and similar structures

Bog iron – a low-grade iron that is easily smelted

Bird flu - a form of influenza occurring in poultry and caused by a virus capable of spreading to humans, also known as avian flu

Broad axe – an axe with a broad head used for wood chopping, once used to build canoes from felled trees

Buckram - a crab with a semisoft shell during the first twenty-four hours after molting

Bugeye – a sleek, two-masted ship that used for harvesting oysters and carrying cargo; it was 30-80 feet long and very swift at sailing

Buster – a crab that is just beginning to molt

Buy boat – boats that take on the catches of several oystermen and deliver them to port so that the oystermen can continue harvesting

Cherrystones – clams that are between 2 ¼ and 3 inches across

Corduroy road – a road with logs placed side to side covering large potholes

Crabscrapper – a workboat used to drag a crab scrapper trap through eel grass to get peelers and soft-shelled crabs, also known as a Bar Cat and a Jenkins Creeker

Crochet - to make a piece of needlework, such as a garment, by looping and intertwining thread with a hooked needle

Cull – a crab that is too small to be caught legally

Culling – the process of separating individual oysters from an oyster clump, usually with a hammer

Cultch - a mass of broken stones, shells, and gravel that forms the basis of an oyster bed

Cultural conservation – safeguarding the living traditions and stories that give life to the historic buildings, communities and landscapes that we value

Cultural heritage - is the legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes of a group or area that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and preserved for the benefit of future generations

Curator - the administrative head of a museum, art gallery, or similar institution

Decoy – a representation of a bird or animal, usually carved out of wood or made of plastic, that is used to lure game into a trap or within shooting range

Doublers – a male and female crab that are mating and locked in an embrace

Dredging - a dragnet or other device that is pulled behind a boat for catching fish, oysters, or other seafood from the bottom of a river or bay

Drift netting - a fishing technique where nets, called drift nets, are allowed to drift free in a sea or lake. Usually a drift net has floats attached to a rope along the top of the net, and weights attached to another rope along the foot of the net

Ethnicity - identity with or membership in a particular racial, national, or cultural group and observance of that group's customs, beliefs, and language

Fiber art – any textile work that uses threads of fiber, such as knitting, crochet, quilting, and weaving

Folklife – the body of local or traditional knowledge that has been passed down, by showing or telling, from generation to generation, including verbal arts and oral history, material culture, occupational culture, foodways and vernacular culture.

Folklore – the stories, songs, food and art of a particular local community

Folklorist – a scholar concerned with the study of folklore

Foodways – the traditions associated with foods, their preparation, and their consumption.

Fyke nets – nets set in deep water with no above surface markings and only used during winter seasons, also referred to as sink nets

Genre - kind, category, or sort, especially of literary, artistic, or folkloristic work

Gill nets - a curtain-like net, suspended vertically in the water. When a fish sticks its head through the netting, its gills are caught.

Historian - a scholar who studies and writes about history

Hogchokers – small, flat, freshwater sole

Huckster – a farmer who raises a small crop and takes the produce to the customers to sell

Huckstering – selling vegetables and other produce directly to customers in an open setting

Jimmy – an adult male crab

Joke - something said or to provoke laughter or cause amusement

Knitting - to make a garment by interlocking loops of one or more yarns either by hand, with knitting needles or by machine

Legend - a story handed down by tradition from earlier times and popularly accepted as historical

Line fishing – setting out a buoyed line of baited fish hooks for collection at a later time

Littlenecks – clams that are less than 2 ¼ inches across

Log canoe – an early wooden boat that was used for

fishing, crabbing and harvesting oysters; usually 12-40 feet long and hollowed from a felled tree with hand tools.

Longhouses – huts that were used by Native Americans that usually housed multiple families

Macadam – a mixture of tar and stone used to pave roads during the early 1900s

Maninose – softshell or steamer clams

Material culture - the physical objects created by a culture; the buildings, tools, and other artifacts created by the members of a society

Medicine man – spiritual leader for Native Americans who also worked with traditional remedies for healing illnesses or injuries

Middens – the Native American word for oyster shells

Muskrat - a North American beaver-like amphibious rodent

Oral narrative – part of verbal art including legends, personal narrative, tales, jokes, and riddles

Oyster wars – conflict from the late 1860s between tongers and dredgers stemming from a law that limited dredgers to deeper waters. Instead, dredgers began working at night closer to shore.

Papershell – a crab whose shell has begun to harden, about twelve hours after molting

Peeler – a crab that is ready to molt into a soft crab

Post road – foot or packhorse trails that were widened to allow the postal service to deliver mail

Pound nets - fishing traps having an arrangement of standing nets directing the fish into an enclosed net

Pungy – a smaller version of the Baltimore Clipper, this sailboat was 30-80 feet long and was used for working inside the Chesapeake Bay.

Punt gun – a large gun built for commercial hunting of waterfowl, usually consisted of a large metal pipe with a wooden stock and was so large that they had to be mounted on a boat. When fired into a group of birds it could kill multiple birds in one shot; outlawed in 1945.

Quahogs – clams that are over 3 inches across, most commonly found in the Delaware Bay and Delaware River

Quilt - a thick warm cover for a bed, consisting of a soft filling sewn between two layers of material, usually with crisscross seams

Quilting – the process of making a quilt, often done in clubs as a social setting among a group

Quilting bee – a gathering of quilters, usually friends and family members, to work on a quilt in order to finish it quickly

Riddle - a question, puzzle, or verse so phrased that ingenuity is required for finding the solution or answer

Rolling road – made when rolling 300-800 pound barrels across fields to riverside warehouses

Roundhouses – small huts used by Native Americans that were usually occupied by one family

Runner vessels – a special boat that delivered oyster cargo to the wharves of markets and shucking houses

Salt hay – marsh grasses harvested for cattle feed

Schooner – a two-masted ship up to 70 feet long used for transporting freight across the Chesapeake Bay, they also sometimes included living quarters for longer trips

Scowgang – workmen who unloaded the cargo of scows or runner vessels into baskets or sacks

Scows – another word for a runner vessel

Scrapple - cornmeal mush mixed with pork scraps, seasoned with onions, spices, herbs, etc., and shaped into loaves and sliced for frying

Scythe - an agricultural tool consisting of a long, curving blade fastened at an angle to a handle, for cutting grain by hand

Seasonal round – a circular chart showing the seasonal progression of when certain things occur, usually themed such as agricultural cycles, maritime cycles, etc.

Seining – using a fishing net that hangs vertically in the water, having floats at the upper edge and sinkers at the lower

Shad barge – a long, narrow boat with a flat bottom and low sides, used by fishermen on the Nanticoke River

Sharptown barge – another name for a shad barge

She-crab – a young female crab

Shell roads – roads where oyster shells were used to fill in potholes and then surface the road

Shucking – the process of taking the clam or oyster from its shell

Sickle – a tool for cutting grain consisting of a curved, hook-like blade mounted in a short handle

Sink nets - nets used in deep waters to catch fish during the winter seasons

Skipjack – last surviving boat of the log canoe style used, 25-60 feet long used for dredging oysters. No two boats are the same

Smith Island cake – traditional Maryland cake that had anywhere from 6 to 12 layers with icing in between, Maryland's state dessert.

Sook – a female crab that has molted her exoskeleton for the last time

Spat – free swimming larvae that affix themselves on hard objects such as rocks or empty shells

Sponge – a female carrying an extruding egg mass; a pregnant sook

Stagecoach - a large carriage that was pulled by horses to transport passengers from one area to another, usually long distances

Tale - a narrative that relates the details of some real or imaginary event, incident, or case

Taxidermy - the art or process of preparing, stuffing, and mounting animal skins so that they have a lifelike appearance

Textile - any cloth or goods produced by weaving, knitting, or felting

Tractor pull – competition between local farmers to see which tractor can pull the heaviest load the farthest distance.

Trawling – when fishermen used a large strong net that is dragged behind the boat to catch fish along the sea bottom

Verbal arts – part of folklife that includes jokes, legends, tall tales and anecdotes

Wampum – purple part of clam shells used by Native Americans for money, the darker the color of the shell, the more valuable the wampum

Watermen – fishermen, crabbers or other people who rely on the waters as their way of life

Weir - a series of traps or enclosures placed in a stream to catch fish, used by Native Americans