

# The Hale Hotsheet!

## Real Estate News and More from Maryland's Eastern Shore

### *Springtime in Oxford...*

I can't help it, I just get excited every spring when the trees start blooming on Morris Street, the daffodils pop up through the ground, and the Ferry starts humming out on the creek. The evenings are longer and warmer making for great porch sits, and the town starts to bustle as boats go into the water and the snowbirds return from their retreats down south, just in time for Oxford Day!

And what a day it will be this year as the town celebrates the 325<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Oxford-Bellevue Ferry, the oldest continuously operating ferry in the United States! Captains Tom and Judy Bixler will be the Grand Marshalls of the parade, and will host a party at the Ferry dock in the afternoon. Of course, Oxford Day is jammed pack with all sorts of fun activities for children and adults, including this year a group of Civil War Reenactors who will camp outside of town and stage drills and possibly a skirmish during the day. The attached Oxford Day 2008 program will give you a pretty good idea of why you should make plans now to be here on April 26<sup>th</sup>.

Of course, in real estate, spring also means new listings, and more buyers looking for the home of their dreams. And, despite what the media has labeled as a general malaise in residential real estate across the country, properties on the Eastern Shore continue to attract a high level of interest, inventory is moving, and buyers are motivated. Check out the next page of the Hotsheet for some of our current listings, or go to [www.lacazemeredit.com](http://www.lacazemeredit.com) and click on "Our Listings". Your best home is only a click away!

### *Did you know...*

You are entitled to a free credit report from each of the three major credit reporting agencies on an annual basis. However, you won't get it for free if you go directly to Transunion, Experian or Equifax. Instead go to [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) and follow the directions. Once you have your report, review it, reconcile any negative accounts, and make sure that you recognize all of the accounts that are listed on the report. And a word to the wise, don't close older accounts even if you don't use them anymore. Your credit score (that handy dandy number that helps determine the mortgage payment on your Eastern Shore dream home will be) is determined partly on the basis of the number of years satisfactory payments are reported; as the years get higher, your mortgage payment gets lower! So set a time each year (I suggest when you file your tax return) and check your credit. As they say, an ounce of prevention...

### *Maryland Assessment update...*

On January 1, 2008, the State of Maryland began a property reassessment program. One-third of the properties in the state will be reassessed in 2008, one-third in 2009, and one-third in 2010. Property owners who maintain the property as their principal residence will receive an assessment notice containing a Homestead Tax Credit Application. This one-time application must be submitted in order to insure that the Homestead Tax Credit will be applied to your property. The Homestead Tax Credit does not limit the market value of your property as determined by the State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT), but as a credit reduces the amount of tax due on the increased assessed value to the limits set by the state (10% above prior assessed value) and local jurisdictions (varies).

For example, assume that your old assessment was \$100,000 and that your new phased-in assessment for the first year is \$120,000. An increase of 10% would result in an assessment of \$110,000. The difference between \$120,000 and \$110,000 is \$10,000. The tax credit would apply to the taxes due on the \$10,000. If the tax rate was \$1.04 per \$100 of assessed value, the tax credit would be \$104 ( $\$10,000 \div 100 \times \$1.04$ ). However, in this example, if your property was in Easton, you would pay taxes on the entire assessment amount as Easton has an additional 10% limit above the state limitation.

Bottom line: when you receive your assessment notice, complete and return the Application for Homestead Tax Credit Eligibility. Included with this letter is a copy of the form so you know what to look for with your assessment notice. If you have any further questions, or would like more information, call the SDAT at 888/246-5941, or go to their website [www.dat.state.md.us](http://www.dat.state.md.us) and click on Homestead Tax Credit Applications.



Henry S. Hale, Realtor®

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## Residential & Commercial Listings Spring 2008

Looking for the perfect pied-a-terre in Oxford at a price that can't be beat? Look no further than this two-story condominium, centrally located just across from the post office. Three bedrooms, newly remodeled kitchen, a wood stove that will keep you warm for days, and a sun deck up top with views toward the Hinckley boatyard. Great for weekend getaways or full-time, move-in condition, only \$320,000!

One of the prettiest lots on Tilghman Street in the Oxford Historic District. Charming home suffered a chimney fire and is in desperate need of someone with vision to restore it. Includes two-story outbuilding that might serve as a guesthouse. Price drastically reduced and buyer is very motivated. \$350,000.

Two for the price of One! Two-bedroom (one up, one down) house in the historic district completely remodeled in 2004. Great screened in porch (I've enjoyed many a porch sit there!), with circular staircase outside to upper deck. And, on the same property, a one-bedroom cottage, also remodeled in 2004, and currently rented full time. Lovely plantings around the outside of the house, easy to show. \$725,000

Ah, sitting on your front porch, chatting with neighbors as they walk by, and looking out at the sunset on the Tred Avon River. Does it get any better than this? Well, it does if you step inside this historic home and discover a updated kitchen/family room with both counter seating and just the cutest breakfast nook! Four bedrooms, two and a half baths, wood burning fireplace, wood floors throughout, and a large screened in rear porch with a private, fenced yard. Yes, that's why we call it the good life! \$895,000

Only a few homes in Oxford are privileged to have a clear view out the mouth of the Tred Avon, and this home has one of the best! Enjoy spectacular sunsets from the unique second-floor living area with open floor plan, fireplace, large deck, and screened-in porch. And peruse the Chesapeake Bay for miles from the third-story cupola with sitting bench & captain's wheel! Two bedrooms and adjoining bath upstairs; first floor master suite, den with wood stove, and laundry. Large. Two-car garage, professionally landscaped, convenient yet secluded location, Jet Ski and Sunfish included. An amazing find at \$1,200,000 (and we didn't even tell you about the wine cellar!)

Fancy yourself an innkeeper a la the infamous Robert Morris? Well fancy no more and just step into his shoes. The Robert Morris Inn, circa 1730, is being offered for sale for the first time in 37 years. Owners Ken & Wendy Gibson have worked hard to create the Inn's current reputation as one of one of the most beloved lodging and dining establishments on the Eastern Shore, adding modern conveniences while preserving the Inn's inherent charm. Located at the end of Morris Street (how cool is that – even the street is named after him!) with views across the Ferry dock and Town Creek, \$3,250,000

And these are just a very few of the properties I have available to show you! Please log on to my web site, [www.Haleproperty.com](http://www.Haleproperty.com) for more information, or contact me at [Henry\\_Hale@msn.com](mailto:Henry_Hale@msn.com) for a personalized listing report or complimentary market appraisal. Because really...

... *Why would you want to live anywhere else?*



[www.LacazeMeredith.com](http://www.LacazeMeredith.com)

**HENRY S. HALE**  
Realtor<sup>®</sup>

Office 410/822-1414

Cell 410/829-3777

Fax 410/822-0894

[Henry\\_Hale@msn.com](mailto:Henry_Hale@msn.com)

[www.haleproperty.com](http://www.haleproperty.com)