

Author's latest book blends local history with mystery

Posted by [TBN Editor](#) On 03/12/2019

Bushwood, MD - An 11-acre estate located on the Wicomico River in St. Mary's County is the setting for an award-winning author's latest work—a blend of mystery and history. Author Amy Schisler, a former Calvert County resident with strong ancestral ties to St. Mary's, has a pirate yarn for readers to enjoy. "The Devil's Fortune" is her seventh novel. The tale begins in Colonial days at a St. Mary's County location called River Terrace (which is based on a Bushwood estate known as Ocean Hall. A real but mysterious historic figure, an Irish pirate named Anne Bonny, who primarily plundered in the Caribbean, ends up in Bushwood and brings treasure with her. Fast forward to modern times and a young woman who has purchased the estate sets out to renovate the house and hears rumors about pirate treasure on the property.

During a recent telephone interview with TheBayNet.com, Schisler, who resides on the Eastern Shore, recounted the events that led her career choice as an author. Her family moved to Calvert County when she was in high school. Schisler attended Northern High School and it there the career foundation took shape. In addition to her advanced placement English teacher, English/language arts teacher Pam Enrico also got Schisler enthused about writing. She graduated from Salisbury University after majoring in history and political science and subsequently graduated from the University of Maryland with a master's degree in library information science. She was a librarian for 15 years. While living in Calvert she was the children's librarian at Fairview Library. Schisler moved to the Eastern Shore after getting married and worked in the Talbot County Public School system and later became a librarian and head of the media department at Chesapeake College.

"I've always written poetry, articles," Schisler explained, adding that she eventually quit her job as a librarian to become a full-time writer. Her first novel was "A Place to Call Home." Two of her novels—"Whispering Vines" (2016) and "Island of Miracles" (2018) received Illumination Book Awards. Illumination is an entity that recognizes literature that incorporates faith-based values. "Whispering Vines" also received a Lyra Award for excellence in independent fiction.

"The Devil's Fortune" is a yarn that stays true to authentic local history as the main character begins to do research on the estate she feels is plagued with pirate spirits. "Whenever I write I do a lot of research and I want it all to be accurate," said Schisler. In "The Devil's Fortune," through her main character, Schisler delves into the history of Catholicism in Southern Maryland, including the story of Father Andrew White.

Schisler said she did some online research but also made a few trips to St. Mary's County. She found a lot of interesting accounts at the St. Clement's Island Museum in Coltons Point. Both her parents are from St. Mary's County—her mother's ancestors came over on the Ark and Dove, and her father's ancestors used to own St. Clement Island. Schisler's ancestors' history is woven into the story.

Schisler took a tour of Ocean Hall and was told stories about the estate by current owners Dr. James Boyd and his wife, Jennifer. "They have been wonderful and supportive," the author said.

During March, Schisler will be available to discuss her latest novel at two book signings. The first is Sunday, March 24 at Ocean Hall, which will be the novel's official launch event. The second signing will be Monday, March 25 at St. Mary's County's Maryland Day celebration on St. Clements Island. Signings are from noon to 3 p.m. each day. The web site [Visit St. Mary's](#) can provide directions and other location information.

Schisler is currently working on the third and final part of a trilogy on the Chincoteague area. The first two books have won national awards.

For more information about author Amy Schisler, visit her [web site](#).

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