

APPROVED, 2/10/2022

Pending Virginia Place Name Proposal before the Domestic Names Committee, USBGN

Change Mogarts Beach to Morgarts Beach: populated place (unincorporated); elev. 32 ft.; on the S shore of the James River NW of Days Point, between Burwell Bay and the mouth of the Pagan River; named for John Addison Morgart (1859-1918), who owned and operated the Day's Point Hotel (also known as Morgart's Hotel) at this location; Isle of Wight County, Virginia; 37°01'56"N, 76°36'03"W; USGS map – Mulberry Island 1:24,000; Not: Mogarts Beach.

37.0320925, -76.6007875

Proposal: name change to recognize correct spelling

Map: USGS Mulberry Island 1:24,000

Proponent: Harry Dowsett; Aldie, VA

Administrative area: None

Previous BGN Action: None

Names associated with feature:

GNIS: Mogarts Beach (FID 1495958)

Local Usage: Morgarts Beach (local road sign)

Published: Mogarts Beach (USGS 1950, 1957, 1965, 1984; VA Division of Mineral Resources Report, 1976); Morgarts Beach (VA Division of Mineral Resources Report, 1976; USGS Bulletin, 1980); Morgart's Beach (*The Daily Press* [Hampton Roads] articles, 1990, 2006)

Case Summary: This proposal is to correct the spelling of Mogarts Beach, an unincorporated populated place in Isle of Wight County, to Morgarts Beach. The community is named for John Addison Morgart (1859-1918), who owned and operated the Day's Point Hotel (also known as Morgart's Hotel or Morgart's Beach Hotel) at this location.

Mr. Morgart, a native of Pennsylvania, became an investor in the Day's Point Land and Improvement Company. He moved to Isle of Wight County, built the hotel, and sold spring water from a well dug there. His obituary in a Fayette County, Pennsylvania, newspaper reported: "While instructing a young man how to swim, J. Addison Morgart of Smithfield, Va., former wellknown business man of Connellsville, was drowned recently. Of late years Mr. Mogart made a business of bottling medicinal spring water." [Note that both spellings of his name were used.] Other accounts state that he drowned while swimming back to shore after he and a neighbor moved his boat to deeper water on a stormy day. Mr. Morgart is buried in a cemetery in nearby Smithfield, Virginia.

A road sign in the community reads "Morgarts Beach Rd."

USGS recognizes a geologic formation named the Morgarts Beach member of the Yorktown Formation. It was formally described in 1980 in a USGS Bulletin: “The Morgarts Beach Member is herein named for beds exposed at Morgarts Beach. . . .” It was also published in a 1986 USGS Bulletin 1564, “Lexicon of New Formal Geologic Names of the United States 1976-1980.”

The spelling of the name has varied, but “Mogart” seems to have become more common after its appearance on USGS maps:

- a 1913 Virginia Geological Survey Bulletin mentioned a well at Day’s Point owned by J. A. Morgart

- the 1920 “Annual Report of the Secretary of the Commonwealth” listed “Morgarts Beach Hotel, Inc.”

- a 1945 Virginia Geological Survey Bulletin mentioned the well of “J.A. Morgart, at Morgarts Beach” and the “Morgarts Beach Hotel”

- a 1975 Navy Department environmental impact statement included what appears to be a Virginia Department of Transportation map with the label Morgarts Beach

- a 1976 Virginia Division of Mineral Resources Report referred to the location as both Mogarts Beach and Morgarts Beach

- a 1978 real estate advertisement in *The Smithfield Times* referred to Mogarts Beach

- a 1993 Virginia Division of Mineral Resources Report referred to the location as Mogarts Beach and the Morgarts Beach Member: “I find no published explanation for the extra ‘r’ in ‘Morgarts’, but that usage [*sic*] is consistent in [the 1980 definition of the member] and in all subsequent literature”

- a 2003 National Park Service Paleontological Resource Inventory and Monitoring referred to both the Morgarts Beach Member and the Mogarts Beach Member

- a 2007 Virginia Department of Historic Resources report referred to the “Morgart’s Beach Hotel”

- a 2009 article in a Geological Society of America Special Paper referred to “the Morgarts Beach Member (also spelled Mogarts Beach)”

Articles in *The Daily Press* [Hampton Roads] use the name Morgart’s Beach for both the community and the shoreline.

Source: Quarterly Review List 445 Released October 7, 2021 (<https://www.usgs.gov/us-board-on-geographic-names/dnc-review-lists>)