

SCUTTLEBUTT

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I'm not certain how to begin. I do hope that this message finds you well. This is such a challenging time.

The Museum must plan for the future even though we don't know exactly what that is. Sandy will spell out more completely Museum operations for the foreseeable future. We want to make the Museum the attraction it has always been even in these trying times.

With the assistance of the City Grant Writer we are preparing an application for a State grant for the renovation of the exterior of the Bank of Ocean City building at Dorchester Street. Letters of support are always a plus in such an endeavor. If you are interested in submitting a letter please let me know.

Currently we are lining up houses for our third annual Historic Home Tour. We've targeted some interesting sites. If you know of anyone with an historic home in the downtown area who would be willing to add their house to the list please let us know. We are also planning some other interesting facets to the tour. Sponsorships are also welcome.

As you know, the tour is part of History Week. During the week we will present the Ocean City History Spirit Award. We are accepting nominations for the Award. Remember, organizations as well as individuals are eligible. A 500-word nomination is required. Nominations should be sent to the Museum.

Again, we're not certain what the future holds but we are making plans for our 7th Annual Storm Warriors 5K run/walk on November 14. We'll keep you posted.

One bright spot in this otherwise difficult time is the fact that Mary Adeline Bradford has joined the Museum Society board. Mary Adeline is an OC native and has long had an interest in the Museum. We are so fortunate to welcome her aboard.

Well, that's it for now. Keep yourself well. We will keep you posted with Constant Contact emails and social media posts as we maneuver through this period.



Nancy Howard
President

Staff

Sandra D. Hurley

Executive Director/Curator

Christine Okerblom

Assistant Curator

Cara Downey

Office Associate III

Museum Aides:

Harry Ballantyne

Robin Breeden

Richard Mance

Board of Directors

Nancy Howard

President

Mabel Rogers

Vice President

Gordon E. Katz

Treasurer

Melanie Ayres Merryweather

Secretary

Hal Adkins

Mary Adeline Bradford

Amanda Cropper

John Fager

Lee Gerachis

G. Alfred Harrison

John B. Lynch

Hunter "Bunk" Mann

Shirley Moran

Louis S. Parsons III

J. D. Quillin III

Robert Rothermel, Jr.

THE YEAR WAS.....1920

**From the Wilmington Daily Commercial (Wilmington DE),
Saturday, May 22, 1920 OCEAN CITY**

SMALLPOX AT OCEAN CITY

**Fourteen Cases at Maryland Resort Lead to Town Council
Enforcing Vaccination.**

Fourteen cases of smallpox, discovered this week among residents of Ocean City, Md., have given the people of that place a thorough scare. In order to try and check the disease the Town Council has passed an ordinance enforcing compulsory vaccination of all citizens. This measure, if obeyed, the health officials state will prevent other cases.

As the place is a seashore resort and its big season is July and August, this epidemic coming at this time threatens to spoil the entire year for the hotel and boardinghouse keepers.

The State Board of Health for Delaware is watching the situation, but if the citizens will submit to vaccination, it will meet all requirements.

Curator's note: *This report from a century ago eerily echoes the challenges that Ocean City is facing today as the 2020 season gets underway amid the COVID-19 pandemic.*

As the 1920 summer season approached, the town was still recovering from the effects of the devastating storm that had swept through the resort on February 4 and 5. Many structures were damaged, with some reported as a total loss. But the storm also created a natural inlet about four miles south of town that provided a much-needed stimulus to the local fishing industry.

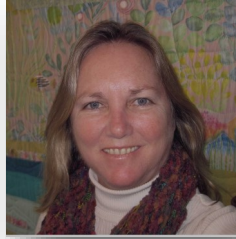
State of Maryland health officials moved swiftly to contain the outbreak and the local community cooperated with the town's vaccination mandate. Over 1,000 residents were vaccinated on May 24. A report the following day stated, "Prompt action in the way of quarantine and vaccination is being taken by the authorities to prevent the disease further spreading or developing into an epidemic."

On June 4 Dr. John S. Fulton, the State Health Officer, reported that, "Smallpox at Ocean City has been checked ... The entire population of Ocean City was vaccinated and only a few bad cases of smallpox were found." No deaths were reported. By June 12, "The smallpox epidemic which, it was feared, menaced Ocean City last week is now believed to be under control as the few cases are improving and no new ones have developed during the past few days."

The 1920 season was kicked off by the annual Maryland State Teachers' Association convention held on June 28 – July 1. Although the season was by most accounts only modestly successful, the town "weathered the storm", both literally and figuratively, and moved on. We hope that future historians will be able to write a similar story about the summer of 2020.

CURATOR'S CORNER

What an unusual time we are experiencing! Normally I would be sharing information about new exhibits, programs, group tours, etc., but since we have had to adjust everything in the interest of safety, I am letting you know how the museum will be operating in the foreseeable future.



Sandy Hurley

Curator

Since Governor Hogan announced his stay at home order in March, we closed the museum to the public and cancelled all of our programs, tours, and events. This has been a hardship on us both financially and emotionally. Our Little Learners Program had really started to take off and we so look forward to all of those smiling little faces twice a month. We had partnered with the Worcester County Library for the "Big Read" program that was going very well until it had to be cancelled, but there are plans to reschedule this in the fall. Normally we would be having school field trips, group tours, outreach events, and lots of visitors engaging in tours and activities.

Our plans are to have the museum open to the public by mid to late June, but there will be new restrictions and modifications to normal operations in order to ensure the safety of our staff, volunteers, and visitors. These measures include:

- Limiting the number of visitors in the building to a maximum of 20
- Requiring face coverings for everyone 12 years and older
- Having one designated entrance door and exit door
- All programs will be held outside
- A rigorous cleaning schedule is in place

In an effort to continue our mission while our doors are closed, we will be implementing virtual tours and exhibits on our website and incorporating more social media interactions. We have increased the number of records on our online collection so that anyone can search our photographs, postcards, library, and objects from the comfort of their own home.

With any luck, later in the season, we will be able to ease some of the restrictions, welcome more visitors, and hold events, but until that happens, we will continue to provide virtual opportunities for interested persons.

WELCOME

NEW MEMBERS!

The President and Board of Directors take great pleasure in welcoming the following new members:

SUPPORTING

Kirk Burgage

Berlin, Maryland

Kathleen Clark

Ocean City, Maryland

FAMILY

Emily Collins

Berlin, Maryland

INDIVIDUAL

Autumn Bozzo

Frederick, Maryland

Tom Crowley

Ocean Pines, Maryland

Lynne Mallonee

Montgomery, Alabama

John Spivey

Cockeysville, Maryland

MEETING OUR MISSION DURING STORMY SEAS

By Christine Okerblom



Christine Okerblom
Assistant Curator

In 1891 the surfmen working at the Ocean City Life Saving Station strived to meet their mission. Their mission was twofold, to prevent shipwrecks and rescue ships in distress. The surfmen were faced with countless unrelenting storms, head high snowdrifts, and bone-chilling weather. The conditions never wavered the surfmen's mission to save lives. Fast forward 129 years later and the station has taken on a new mission to inspire and support the interpretation and appreciation of the cultural and natural history of Ocean City.

How do we as a museum remain steadfast in meeting our mission during today's stormy seas? We adapt. With proper precautions in place, such as mandatory masks for all visitors and employees, hand sanitizing stations, and reduced museum capacity, we can continue to offer an array of programs and unique museum experiences. All our summer programs will be taking place outside of the museum, allowing visitors to spread out! Our daily fish feeding program has been switched out for our newest

program, "Saltwater Fishing Then and Now". Join us, Monday through Saturday at 11:30 am for a glimpse into the history of sportfishing in Ocean City and receive angler tips to make your next fishing trip a success for the whole family!

When touring the museum this summer, you will experience our newest exhibit, ***A Feminine Touch: The story of the women who had a hand in shaping a town.*** Learn about the profound impact women have made within Ocean City from the 1800s through the 1990s. This display of historic photographs, postcards, military awards, and women's clothing provides a view into the lives of several influential women. With a focus on the hospitality industry, this exhibit will cover a group of eight forward-thinking women who represented what is now known as the "Petticoat Regime." These women were entrepreneurs who owned and operated some of the town's first hotels. Let's not forget about the "Steel Magnolias", a group of women honored by the O.C. Hotel-Motel-Restaurant Association as some of the most successful business owners of the 1980s. In addition to showcasing entrepreneurs and women in uniform, individuals who committed acts of bravery are woven into this timeline as well.

As we continue to offer new programs and exhibits, we will remain dedicated to providing you and your family a safe and exciting museum experience.

NAOMI WORKMAN

A Woman of Courage

In the 1920s, Naomi Workman, a polio survivor, held the position of lead switchboard operator for a local Ocean City telephone company. When a winter storm hit the island on February 4, 1920, Naomi remained on duty for fifteen hours answering and transferring calls. She received the Theodore Newton Vail Bronze Medal for her bravery during the storm.



A Feminine Touch: The story of the women who had a hand in shaping a town

ZIPPY LEWIS

A Source of Inspiration

Zipporah “Zippy” Lewis represents one of Ocean City’s earliest examples of female independence.

In the 1850s, using her resourcefulness, Zippy Lewis made a living by collecting and selling shipwreck remains. Stories have been told of Zippy finding and selling unique items such as Spanish coins and cowhides to support herself and her family.

With her earnings, she purchased two plots of land and built a home, where she independently raised her five children. In an era when women seldom owned land, Zippy choose to leave her property to her two daughters, Mary E. and Jinsey C. Lewis.



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Ocean City Museum Society is to inspire and support the interpretation and appreciation of the cultural and natural history of Ocean City, Maryland, the Worcester County coastal region, and equally, the historical role performed by the United States Life-Saving Service, and to preserve with subsequent mandate the 1891 structure that once served as the Ocean City Station.

UPCOMING EVENTS

2020 Summer Programming Schedule :

Monday-Saturday: 11:30 am Saltwater Fishing Then & Now

Monday: 10:00 am History of our Surfman

Tuesday: 10:00 am Beach Patrol

Thursday: 10:00 am All about Sharks

Friday: 10:00 am Land, Sea and Sky

Events:

October 10th—Historic House Tour

November 9th— Storm Warriors 5K Walk/Run



OCEAN CITY
Life-Saving Station
MUSEUM

813 S, Atlantic Avenue
P. O. Box 603
Ocean City, MD 21842

Phone: 410-289-4991
Email: curator@ocmuseum.org
www.ocmuseum.org