

SCUTTLEBUTT

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Nancy Howard, President

Spring finally did get here. Now we're in the throes of Summer. It's the usual thousands upon thousands of visitors day in and day out. We need to capture more of the time they spend in the City. Staff is working hard and so is your Board. But we can't always rely on the rain!

Our new exhibit, *The Stormy Sixties*, has opened to great reviews. I hope you'll have an opportunity to see it. The exhibit focuses on events, lifestyles and growth of that tumultuous time. It's a must see. Sandy and Diane spent a great deal of time collecting the memorabilia for display.

I would like to thank everyone who took the time to respond to the Survey Monkey questionnaire. Your answers were most helpful. I must admit some were as we expected and hoped for. Some, on the other hand, were quite provocative - but also helpful. The responses will be useful in updating our Strategic Plan

and in pursuing our building addition. If you didn't have a chance to respond and would like to now please e-mail me and I will send you the questions. neffiehoward@comcast.net

We have reserved two dates at our local libraries to show the '62 Storm video we have made to remember the 'Storm of the Century.' The response the last time we showed the video was very positive. It should be again. The dates are Tuesday, September 27, 2 p.m., at the Ocean City branch and Thursday, November 10, 2 p.m., at the Ocean Pines branch. If you're in the area stop by. Oh, and tell your friends.

The City is currently updating the Comprehensive Plan. This is done in accordance with the Annotated Code of Maryland. It is our desire to get the Museum more visibility in the Plan. After all, the plan is based on the "premise that Ocean City should be a desirable place in which to live, vacation and invest." The Museum certainly plays a part in that goal.

We presented our first George and Suzanne Hurley scholarship this year. The winner, Cole Mumford chose to write about William Julius Johnson (aka Judy Johnson), a native of Snow Hill. His essay is included in this Scuttlebutt. We were so pleased with the response to our scholarship.

Plans continue for the 3rd annual 5K to be held Saturday, November 12. Hope you will be able to participate. If you have a suggestion for a sponsor let me know or please feel free to contact them. On-line art contest plans continue - will keep you posted.

The Museum is always in need of volunteers. If you have some time to spare and would like to be added to our volunteer list please let Curator Sandy Hurley know. It would be appreciated.

And finally a photo of our plantings at the Museum. So lovely - hope you have an opportunity to see them this Summer.

Until next time, Nancy



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OCEAN CITY, MARYLAND – THEN & NOW

LOTS 58 and 71 (and parts of lots 57 and 72 too) –

“Schaefer’s Bakery and Ice Cream Parlor”


By Gordon E. Katz

Lots 57, 58, 71 and 72 on the original plat of Ocean City form a square on the west side of Baltimore Avenue between Somerset Street and Dorchester Street. At the stockholders’ meeting of the Atlantic Hotel Company held on August 31, 1875, Maryland State Senator Ephraim K. Wilson drew lots 58 and 71, fronting on the north side of Somerset Street, and Salisbury merchant Purnell Toadvine and his son, attorney E. Stanley Toadvine, drew lots 57 and 72, fronting on the south side of Dorchester Street. By 1890, E. Stanley Toadvine had acquired title to all four lots, which he sold to Thomas J. Cropper in 1895. The square formed by the four lots in downtown Ocean City was known for many years as the “Cropper block”.

Thomas leased a portion of lot 58, at the corner of Baltimore Avenue and Somerset Street, to Joseph Schaefer shortly after acquiring the block. Joseph Schaefer was a German immigrant and baker by trade, who came to Ocean City from Washington, D.C. During the town’s rapid growth in the 1890s and into the early 20th century, affairs in Ocean City were dominated by the social elite of Washington and Baltimore, who brought with them a supporting cast of workers, both white and black, to cater to their summertime pleasure. Joseph erected a wood frame building on his lot, out of which he operated a bakery, confectionery and delicatessen on the land leased from Thomas Cropper. His wife Annie managed the store.

Joseph and Annie purchased lot 58 and parts of adjoining lots 57 and 71 from Cropper in 1901 to accommodate an expansion of their business. They subsequently bought the remainder of lot 71 and part of lot 72 in 1904. Joseph was active in the local

Joseph Schaefer
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL
ICE CREAM
DEALER



**BAKER AND
 CONFECTIONER
 DELICATESSEN**

Out of Town Orders Promptly Filled

BALTIMORE AVE. & SOMERSET ST., OCEAN CITY, MD.

community, serving on the City Council from 1908 to 1912, on the board of directors of the Ocean City Pier and Improvement Company that was responsible for constructing Ocean City’s first pier in 1907, and as treasurer of the Ocean City Ice and Fuel Company, which built a “modern ice plant” on the southwest corner of Somerset Street and Philadelphia Avenue in 1910.

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THEN & NOW CONTINUED

During the overnight hours of September 26 – 27, 1909, a fire caused by “an oil lamp exploding at the City Water Works” on the south side of Dorchester Street destroyed that building and Schaefer’s Bakery as well. Joseph and Annie rebuilt, erecting a two-story concrete block structure, the first of its kind in the downtown section. The new structure housed the bakery and added a new ice cream parlor fronting on Baltimore Avenue on the first floor, with rooms to rent on the second floor. Shortly afterward, the couple moved to Cape Charles, Virginia, but returned during the summer months to open their shop in Ocean City.

After thirty years in business in Ocean City, Joseph and Annie Schaefer sold the property in 1926 to Berlin restaurateur William J. Hastings, Jr. William and his wife Mary converted the former bakery and ice cream parlor on the first floor into the “Wil-Mar Restaurant,” while continuing to rent the rooms on the second floor to summer boarders. Ogden T. Davis bought the restaurant in 1945 from William and Mary, who used part of the proceeds to help their sons, William, III, and Norman, finance their purchase of the Colonial Hotel on the Boardwalk. Davis continued to operate the business as the Wil-Mar, but didn’t keep up with the maintenance. After the town condemned one of the buildings attached to the restaurant in 1950, Davis decided to sell rather than incur the expense of demolition.

Thomas Q. Cropper, one of the sons of Thomas J. Cropper, bought the property from Ogden Davis and his wife in 1951. He moved his family into part of the former restaurant space, and used the rest for an ice cream delivery business. After Thomas died in 1967, his widow Lura conveyed the building to their son, James T. Cropper. Once again, the first floor was converted to yet another use, this time into a storefront housing a sundries store. Joseph T. Hall, the owner of Hall’s Restaurant at 60th Street, acquired the property in 1976, operating it as Hall’s Pioneer Hotel (on the second floor) and Plaza (first floor store).

Hall sold the lot and building to the town of Ocean City in 2014 for \$816,000 under the “model block program” that the Ocean City Development Corporation envisions for that section of downtown Ocean City. The more than a century old structure was torn down in June 2015 and replaced by a municipal parking lot.

Hall’s Pioneer Hotel & Plaza in 1996.
Ocean City Museum Society, Inc.



WELCOME ABOARD NEW MEMBERS!

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

FAMILY

John Bowman
Brambleton, Virginia

Lydia Caron
Parkville, Maryland

INDIVIDUAL

Patricia Grubb
Riverdale, Maryland

Kathy Munn
Baltimore, Maryland

Leighanne Zeigler
Bunker Hill, West Virginia

Robin Zimmerman
Upperco, Maryland

THE YEAR WAS ... 1943

From the *News Journal* (Wilmington, Delaware), Thursday, April 15, 1943:

Mystery of Shooting of Soldier Investigated

OCEAN CITY, Md., April 15. – Worcester County Sheriff Edwin D. Lynch said last night that he was continuing the five-day-old investigation into the death of Private Kelvie Bryant, 30-year-old soldier of Camp Decatur, Berlin, whose body was found early last Saturday morning [April 10], with a bullet wound through his chest and body.

State's Attorney William G. Kerbin said county officials and Maryland State Police Trooper Samuel E. Sherwell were cooperating with a military board of inquiry from the Chesapeake Bay Army Sector headquarters in investigating the death of the soldier.

Private Bryant, native of Anna, Ill., met his death while on duty at Ocean City, it was said by Ocean City police. The body was found lying on the floor of a porch at an abandoned Ocean City building, formerly used as a Negro hotel, the police report added.

The death certificate issued in Worcester County stated that Bryant died as the result of gunshot wounds in his chest and body.

Bryant's body has been sent to a relative, Mrs. Mamie Chapman, in Anna, Ill.

→ *Curator's note: We have been able to learn very little about Kelvie Bryant. He was born in 1912 in Indiana. The 1930 census report shows 18-year-old Kelvie living in Anna, Illinois, a small town in Union County in the southwestern part of the state, with his mother Pearl, a widow working as a private family servant, and a younger sister, Mildred. According to the report, Pearl was only 13 years old when she gave birth to her son.*



Grave marker of Pvt. Kelvie Bryant, 1912 – 1943, Casper Church Cemetery, Anna, Illinois.

From findagrave.com.

Kelvie joined the Civilian Conservation Corps, a Depression-era public work relief program, in 1935. Military records disclose that he enlisted in the Army at a recruiting office in Chicago on April 17, 1941. The enlistment record reports that Kelvie was slight in stature, 5' 6" tall, weighing 128 pounds, and had only a grammar school education. He was probably assigned to Camp Decatur near Berlin shortly after the camp officially opened on April 25, 1942.

The former "Negro hotel" where Kelvie's body was found was the Pine Tree Hotel (or Inn), located on the southeast corner of South Division Street and Baltimore Avenue, directly across Baltimore Avenue from the better known Henry Hotel, which also catered to a black clientele. Clarence Carey, the part owner and operator of the Capitol Theatre on Worcester Street, owned the building in 1943. The hotel, which Clarence had leased to John W. Smack since the late 1930s, closed in 1941 or 1942, after many of its tenants, principally hotel workers in Ocean City, left the area for jobs in war-related industries. Clarence sold the building in 1944 to James Graham, a black man whom Clarence and his wife Sadie had employed as a laborer for several years. Graham reopened the hotel in 1945 as the "Grand Terrace," again serving "colored only." The building was torn down in the 1970s after the Trimper family's Windsor Resort acquired the property.

As far as we can tell, the outcome of the military board of inquiry into the death of Kelvie Bryant was never made public. We also could not find any reports of his death or funeral in the Illinois newspapers. His body was buried at the Casper Church Cemetery in Anna.

If anyone has more information regarding Kelvie Bryant, please contact us at curator@ocmuseum.org.

A LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

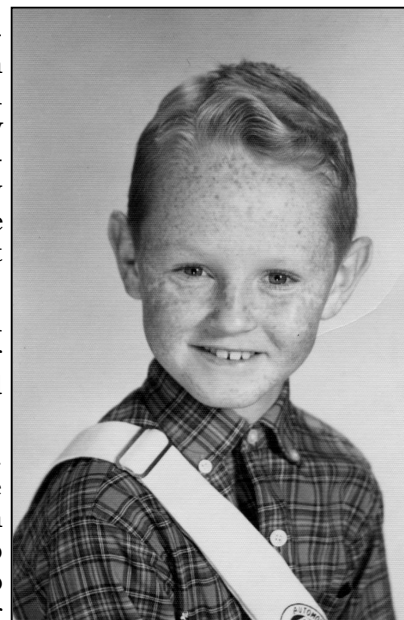
GROWING UP IN OCEAN CITY

BY BRUCE GIBBS

Growing up in a small seaside resort was a unique experience by today's standards. I was fortunate to have been born in 1948 when Ocean City was a very different place, sort of like a "Mayberry by the Sea." You knew everyone, and it was a very close-knit community, tied together by your school and church. I was baptized in the Episcopal Church by Father Dewees, who also confirmed and married me. I attended elementary school where City Hall is today. My class was the last to graduate from the sixth grade in 1960. The elementary school was moved to West Ocean City, and the school became City Hall.

In those days you could not get into too much trouble because if you had done something wrong, your parents knew all about it before you ever got home. Everyone watched out for each other's children, good and bad.

In the summer, the living conditions changed for many of us locals. Our homes were turned into rooming houses so our folks could earn some extra money. In my family, all of us kids were moved to the sun porch and my parents moved to the dining room. We just hung up curtains to separate the rooms for privacy. The bedrooms upstairs were rented out to boarders for the season. It was always fun in the beginning, but by Labor Day we wanted our rooms back. In the spring we had to get the apartments that my parents rented ready for the summer. One of my jobs was painting the white picket fence every summer. Oh, how I hated that job! Many hours were spent painting, repairing, and trying to hurry up so we could get to the ball field. We played at the 3rd Street ball field and we could hear the kids practicing.



Bruce Gibbs circa 1960
"Paper Boy" for
The Baltimore Sun

I got my first job when I was six years old from Ciss and Ted Lauer. They introduced a lot of us local boys to the working world. I sold *The Baltimore Sun* newspaper. The papers were 5 cents and I got 2 cents for every one I sold. I had my regular customers and sometimes I would get tips. At six years old, I thought I was rich. My route was from 3rd Street to the inlet, and the fishing docks down on the bay. My father's family were boat captains and owned the docks and restaurants, so I was a familiar sight down there. I walked many a mile hawking *The Baltimore Sun*.

As I got older, it was time to move up in the world and become a beach boy. Many of us local boys worked for Lionel Massey – 3rd Street was my block. You had to get your umbrellas and chairs all set up for the folks that were here for the week, and then you just sat up by the boardwalk and rented out the rest of your stuff by the day. Rates were a bit cheaper then: umbrellas were \$1.25, chairs were 75 cents and surf mats were 50 cents. It was hard work in the hot sun and sand, but the perks were all the pretty girls in bathing suits.

My next two jobs were at Dolle's Candyland and Lombardi's Pizza. When I worked for Mr. Dolle I learned about the importance of brushing your teeth. I really like turtles and salt water taffy and ate more than my fair share. By summer's end when I went to the dentist, I was in for quite a surprise. I had 13 cavities, and my Dad made me pay my dentist bill ... lesson learned! I then moved on to making pizzas for Mr. & Mrs. Lombardi. By now I was driving and dating, so I needed gas money and courting money. Once again, not too much money was saved. Pizzas, as I remember, were 35 cents a slice and drinks were 15 cents.

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GEORGE & SUZANNE HURLEY MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

A Scholarship Fund was established recently in memory of two of the Museum's biggest supporters. The George & Suzanne Hurley Memorial Scholarship, in the amount of \$1,000, is awarded to a graduating senior of Stephen Decatur High School who plans to further his/her education at Wor-Wic Community College, Salisbury University, or the University of Maryland Eastern Shore.

The 2016 winner of this scholarship was Cole Mumford of Berlin, Maryland. He will be attending Salisbury University in the fall in order to pursue a degree in business. His winning essay is featured below.

Daphne Hurley, daughter of George & Suzanne Hurley, presented the scholarship to Cole Mumford during an awards ceremony at Stephen Decatur High School in May of 2016.

Photograph Courtesy of Stephen Decatur High School

WILLIAM JULIUS JOHNSON AKA JUDY JOHNSON BY COLE MUMFORD

As I was researching which of the three topics I was going to select as my essay topic, I ran across an interesting fact that I was completely unaware of. I chose to name a historical Worcester County person and tell why he should be remembered, or how he is significant.

William Julius Johnson, aka Judy Johnson was born in Snow Hill, MD (Worcester County) in the year 1899. He would pass away at the age of 90, in 1989. What I believe is so significant about him, is the fact that he was not afraid of what others thought and he actually proved that he had the skill set that was needed to play baseball. I failed to mention that I have a passion for the sport! Judy was not your average baseball athletic build. He was known as an undersized boy, and at the age of 18, weighed 150 pounds. His father wanted him to become a boxer, but Judy had other ideas in mind. He wanted to play baseball, and that is exactly what he did.

Judy was initially told he was too small to play for the Hilldale Daisies in Philadelphia, PA. The Hilldale Daisies were the city's Negro League team. He was so determined and dedicated, that he played his way onto the team in 1920. Judy was considered to be one of the best third basemen to play in the Negro leagues. He had several years of sensational play and accomplishments before being named the Negro League MVP in 1929. He retired in 1936, and in 1954, the Philadelphia Athletics hired him as a temporary coach for Spring Training. He was the first African-American to coach in any capacity in the major leagues. He also served as a scout for the Braves, Phillies, and Dodgers. These are all outstanding accomplishments for an individual from Worcester County.

On February 10, 1975, Judy Johnson was elected to one of the most exclusive award programs in baseball. He was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame. What a tremendous accomplishment for a gentleman from the Eastern Shore of Maryland!

Baseball is so well known in Worcester County and there is such a deep love for the sport. I think Judy should be remembered for his courage and ability to not give in, even when all others are doubters. I believe he is a fantastic role model for the younger generation. I am so glad that I was given the opportunity to apply for your scholarship and learn about this fascinating man from Worcester County who was inducted to the Hall of Fame.

A LOCAL PERSPECTIVE CONTINUED

I married my childhood sweetheart right out of high school and then enlisted in the Coast Guard Reserves. I had different jobs for a few years before I went to work for the town of Ocean City, where I was employed for 39 years. I was an ambulance driver with the Fire Department, a police officer, and then transferred to the Department of Public Works. Over the years I have seen many changes as the town grew from a tiny seaside community to the major resort it has become today. I wish I could turn the clock back to a time when you didn't have to lock your doors and you knew everyone. I miss Laws' Store, the Bandshell, walking under the boardwalk looking for money, the old Firemen's Parade, and the grand old hotels with the rocking chairs and the wonderful dining rooms, when Ocean City stopped at 15th Street, and when the season was only three months long.

Growing up in Ocean City was a special time. We had the small town life for nine months and the city life for three months. I am retired now and enjoying "the good life" with my wife. Memories are wonderful things. I am blessed to have so many of them and to be able to share them with my grandchildren to give them a glimpse of Ocean City through the eyes of a "good old local boy."



The Ocean City Baseball Team circa 1960.

Coaches Bill Gibbs, Bob Jackson and Jack Mumford.

Players (L to R): Chip Gordy, Guy Ayres, Gordon Wilkins, Darrell Nottingham, Gary Lewis, Jack Mumford, unidentified, Tom Gibbs, unidentified, Bruce Gibbs, Jimmy Fisher, Billy Gibbs.

Photograph taken on the Baseball Field at 3rd Street and Baltimore Avenue

Courtesy of Bruce and Theresa Gibbs



*The Times and Tides of
Ocean City, Maryland*

813 S. Atlantic Ave.
Boardwalk at the Inlet
Ocean City, MD 21842

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

CURATOR'S CORNER

Summer is in full swing and there are lots of things happening at the Museum including our Free Summer Programs. These educational programs will continue on Monday through Saturday mornings at 10 AM from now until August 27th.

Children's Day on the Bay is just around the corner on Sunday, August 7th, from Noon to 4 PM. This is our sixth year hosting this fun family event. As always it is held at Sunset Park in downtown O.C. next to the Coast Guard Station. Once again we are partnering with the Ocean City Police Department, U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, O.C. Beach Patrol, and the Delmarva Discovery Center, along with many volunteers to make it an exciting afternoon. Lollipop the clown and Cascading Carlos will be back to entertain the crowds and, new this year, the band *IMAGINE* will be performing music we all know and love!

This event is sponsored by the Ocean City Development Corporation

If you would like more information about Children's Day or are interested in volunteering please contact me by phone or email Sandy@ocmuseum.org



Sandy Hurley,
Curator/Director

READER'S FORUM

Q: Has there ever been a car dealership in Ocean City?

A: While there are no car dealerships in Ocean City today, there were two in the past, both short-lived. The first one, called "Ocean City Motors", operated in 1957 and early 1958 at the southeast corner of North 2nd Street and Philadelphia Avenue. We don't know the name of the owner. The company sold a small 2-cylinder German make called the "Lloyd". Despite an advertised 47 MPG, the car was not a big seller in the U.S. in the "big fin" era of the 1950s. Even in Germany, where the car had a certain appeal, it was said, "He who is not afraid of death, drives a Lloyd." In the spring of 1958, the dealership moved 10 blocks north to a service station located between 12th Street and 13th Street, but closed shortly thereafter.

Only one station wagon offers all three:

1. 4-wheel drive 2. V8 power 3. Turbo Hydra-Matic

'Jeep' Wagoneer

You've got to drive it to believe it... see your 'Jeep' dealer for test drive.

SHOWELL MOTORS
2nd & Philadelphia Ave. Ocean City, Maryland

A second car dealership, this one selling Jeeps, was opened at the same site on North 2nd Street in 1965 by John Dale Showell, III, under the name "Showell Motors". The operation moved to West Ocean City in 1967 but was not a success.

Under
\$1500.00
Delivered

47 Miles Per Gal.

FRONT WHEEL DRIVE
AIR COOLED ENGINE
Made in Germany

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OCEAN CITY, MD.