

SCUTTLEBUTT

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Fall is just about here and it proves to be a very exciting time for the Museum. In my last message I briefly noted our plans for two events in October. Since then the City has proclaimed October 13 - 20 as Ocean City History Week. We are so pleased the City has officially noted how important the Museum is. The proclamation stated: "...the Museum has been preserving, exhibiting and disseminating the physical, cultural and natural history of Ocean City for forty years." A few weeks later we were honored to have Maryland's First Lady Yumi Hogan present us with a Governor's citation also celebrating our 40th anniversary.

Our Historic House Tour to be held Saturday, October 13, is well on the way to being a very inviting event. The event will support our George and Suzanne Hurley Memorial Scholarship Fund. Daphne Hurley and her team have been working very hard to make this a memorable event.

To round out OC History Week we will celebrate our 40 years with a *Surfin' the Seventies* party on Saturday, October 20, at Fager's Island. The seventies were such an exciting time for Ocean City. The town was growing - many new businesses were established, the condo boom was in full gear and the Museum began its job of keeping track of all that history. Kick back, wear your OP shorts (if they fit), visit with old friends, exchange memories and dance to the tunes provided by DJ Batman. There will be a 50/50 Raffle. To find out more about the Tour and the party visit the Museum website www.ocmuseum.org.

The Board has decided to award an Ocean City Historic Spirit Award to be presented at the party. We wish to recognize a person/persons or organization that have furthered the preservation of historical aspects of Ocean City and its surroundings. This includes but is not limited to: written documents, structure preservation, artistic renderings, educational materials, environmental attributes, or biographical materials. For example, a book in the field, distinguished teaching and mentoring in the classroom, film or digital projects. Any person or organization/group can make a nomination. Nominations must be in writing and are limited to 500 words. Nominations should be submitted to the Museum via e-mail or post.

In June we received the Editor's Choice as the Best Rainy Day option in Ocean City. This award is decided by a panel of experts around Ocean City who pick their favorites based on local experiences. We also were awarded the Best Museum in Worcester County in Coastal Style Magazine's Best Of 2018! Coastal Style will host a party at Seacrets September 28.



First Lady Yumi Hogan presented a governor's citation to the Ocean City Life-Saving Station Museum recognizing its 40 years of dedication to inspiring and supporting the interpretation and appreciation of the cultural and natural history of Ocean City and the Worcester County coastal region. With Hogan, front left, are, back row, Robin Beauchamp, Lou Parsons, John Fager, and Harry Ballantyne, and front Nancy Howard and Sandy Hurley.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CONTINUED

We received a note from long-time board member, Tom Wimbrow, thanking us for designating him Board Member Emeritus. The Board wished to recognize the very special contributions Tom made to the Museum over the years. He is missed.

We are pleased to welcome Lee Gerachis to the Board. Lee is the owner of Malibu's Surf Shop, a staple on the Boardwalk since 1986.

I know Sandy will have more to say on these events but I just have to say what a huge success the Children's Day on the Bay was this year. Special thanks to Christine for her efforts. Also, I have to acknowledge the terrific new exhibit highlighting the History of Fishing in Ocean City. The 'aquarium room' has been transformed into a vessel (that's what it feels like to me!) And it's chock full of information. Sandy and Christine deserve accolades for this exhibit.

Don't forget the 5th annual 5K is Saturday, November 10. Please help us spread the word. Details are on the Museum home page and you can register at www.octrirunning.com

Until next time.....

OCEAN CITY, MARYLAND - *THEN & NOW*
The Inn on the Ocean - 1001 Atlantic Avenue

Ocean City Mayor William W. McCabe and his wife Harriett purchased the vacant lot on the northwest corner of 10th Street and the Boardwalk in 1930. They arranged for the construction of a cottage on the property in 1931 or 1932, probably engaging local builder Charles S. Powell, a native of nearby Taylorsville, who erected a number of such structures in Ocean City during the 1920s and 1930s. After Mayor McCabe decided not to run for re-election in 1934, he and Harriett moved to Salisbury. They sold the house and lot at 1001 Atlantic Avenue in 1936 to J. Ada Beardsworth (1877 - 1963) of Staunton, Virginia.

The University of Virginia Library, which holds an extensive collection of Mrs. Beardsworth's personal correspondence, provides this biographical snapshot of Ada Beardsworth:



Mayor William W. McCabe on the boardwalk with his new Chevrolet, circa 1927.

THEN & NOW CONTINUED

“Ada loved politics, travel, socializing and was often in the company of people with wealth and influence even though her family had a modest income. She was strong minded and wanted to find employment during a time in which society did not encourage women to work outside of the home. She took stenography and typing and applied for positions at the post office, but had to give up after four years of pursuing contacts and making a less than ideal score on the postal examination. She was very concerned about being a financial burden on her father or a husband. Her father was also in favor of her finding a career. She eventually married Professor Thomas Beardsworth [in 1902] after a long courtship (1897-1902). Many of her letters during the courtship reflect her concerns about not having enough money and being dependent on others. However once she was married she maintained her independence and helped her husband to tutor the boys at the Staunton Military Academy [where Thomas was employed as the music director], creating a second home for them.”

Ada and Thomas spent their summers at their cottage in Ocean City. Ada continued coming to the resort almost every year after Thomas passed away in 1941, typically arriving in mid- to late June and leaving in early October.

Ada Beardsworth died on December 11, 1963. Her heirs (she and Thomas had no children) sold her cottage on the Boardwalk in 1969 to Ocean City realtor J. H. Lee Fisher and his wife Carroll. Following Carroll's death on March 1, 1983, Mr. Fisher sold the property less than four months later to William and Mildred Rhodes for \$250,000. The Rhodes couple operated a lodging business at the cottage that they called the “Rhodes Inn”.



“Annabell’s” as it appeared in 1996
Photograph by Sandy Hurley

In 1986 Joseph and Annabell Plumer bought the Rhodes Inn for \$360,000.

They converted it to a bed and breakfast with the name “Annabell’s”. *The Baltimore Sun* reported on May 24, 1987, “The boardwalk [in Ocean City] has its first bed and breakfast inn this year with the opening of Annabell's on 10th Street and the boardwalk. Annabell Plumer, a local real estate agent, has completely remodeled the interior of a two-story house, filling it with wicker and Victorian-style furnishings to bring a little hominess to beachfront vacationing.”

Mr. and Mrs. Plumer sold the inn in 1996 for \$649,000 to Robert and Joyce Landsman, who renamed it “Inn on the Ocean”. The present owners, Charles and Vicki Barrett, bought the inn in 1999 for \$950,000. A fire in July 2004 destroyed much of the interior and its furnishings, but the Barretts were able to remodel and restore the facility for guest lodging by early 2005.

Curator's note: The Inn on the Ocean is one of the buildings that will be featured in this year's Historic Homes Tour, to be held on Saturday, October 13.

WELCOME ABOARD NEW MEMBERS!

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

BENEFACTOR

Christopher Bennett

Owings Mills, Maryland

SUPPORTING

Elizabeth Clark-Lewis

Washington, D.C.

Robert Dixon

Fredericksburg, Virginia

FAMILY

Mark & M.B Connor

Westminster, Maryland

Abena Lewis-Mhoon

Silver Spring, Maryland

Geri Stoll

Ocean City, Maryland

INDIVIDUAL

Ted & Daris Cheetham

Ocean City, Maryland

Kristen Helf

Selbyville, Delaware

Joseph Schweizer

Ocean Pines, Maryland

STUDENT

Jessica Bentz

Baltimore, Maryland

CURATOR'S CORNER

Locals and visitors alike filled the Museum this summer, exploring our newest exhibit, discovering never before seen artifacts, and taking part in our daily programs. A new boardwalk program took place this summer called **Land, Sky and Sea**. During this program visitors looked out over the inlet with binoculars discovering wildlife such as Brown Pelicans and Bottlenose Dolphins, all while learning how the island was formed. This new hands on program was well received by visitors of all ages!



Salisbury University Interns

Katie Lawrence (L) and Kara Van Fleet (R)

Each Monday through Saturday at 11:30 am we held our daily aquarium program. All 368 people who attend this program, learned about native wildlife such as the Lined Seashores, American Eels and Striped Bass. Visitors even had the opportunity to help feed a Horseshoe Crab and hold a Channel Whelk. In addition to our well attended programs, the museum held its largest Children's Day on the Bay Festival to date. The 700 people who attended this event spent their time playing games, making crafts, dancing to live music, and taking a close look at the live program animals on display! This festival gave community members and vacationers alike the opportunity to connect with local organizations, such as Maryland Coastal Bays, The Art League of Ocean City, Ocean City Surf Club, and many other Delmarva organizations!

In addition to our dedicated volunteers, the museum had two summer interns from Salisbury University. Along with their other responsibilities Katie and Kara hosted two of the boardwalk programs and led all of the daily aquarium programs. Together they conducted a total of 68 programs and reached over 800 people. We are proud of our interns and are grateful for our new partnership with Salisbury University.

The staff here at the Museum is switching gears in preparation for our fall events. This fall season we are offering a wide variety of events which are listed below:

- Smithsonian Magazine Day - September 22nd
- Historic House Tour ~ October 13th
- 40th Anniversary Party at Fager's Island ~ October 20th
- Locals Appreciation Week ~ October 25th—31st
- Paranormal Investigation ~ October 27th
- Storm Warriors 5K Walk/Run ~ November 10th
- Shop Small Saturday ~ November 25th
- Holiday Open House ~ December 2nd



Boardwalk banners were a good way to publicize our free summer programs. Perhaps you saw them.

THE YEAR WAS ...

1977

From *The Daily Times* (Salisbury MD), Wednesday, September 21, 1977

Ocean City Landmark To Be Torn Down

OCEAN CITY – One of this resort's finest old hotels, an elegant landmark on the boardwalk at 12th St., will soon become a victim of progress.

The Stephen Decatur, named for an Eastern Shore naval hero, is destined for destruction the end of this month, to make way for a brand new gleaming, 85-foot tall condominium, replete with shops on the ground floor.

Ocean City Zoning officer William Hoover recently confirmed Decatur owner Angelo Puglisi's application with the city to demolish the 1930, 50-room landmark.

The Stephen Decatur has seen the likes of many of Maryland's top political figures climb the steps to the graceful front porch for annual summer visits. Former Gov. and Baltimore Mayor Theodore R. Mckeldin was a regular visitor, as well as former Comptroller James Lacy, and former Mayor Thomas D'Alesandro II.

Mayor Harry Kelley, who is familiar with the once stiff competition for the best of Ocean City's tourist trade – his family for many years ran the Royalton Hotel near the Stephen Decatur – said, "There's always mixed emotions when something like this happens. There are always tugs at the heart in situations like this."

But, as always, the mayor is looking to the future of the resort. "I don't want to go back to the old days. We're glad to have so many people visit Ocean City, and it takes modern buildings and related facilities to service their needs."

Hotels like the Stephen Decatur, the Mayflower, and the Commander used to handle Ocean City's 15,000 to 25,000 summer visitors, who could sit down to three hot meals a day, dressed in sharp clothes.

Mr. Hoover said the new 49-unit condominium may be a wave of the future for the older beach front area, characterized by shingled, wooden structures.

It remains to be seen whether new taller townhouse units can offer the grace and charm hotels like the Stephen Decatur could present.

But one thing is for sure, the landmark could weather storms, rain and high seas, but it could not weather progress.

Curator's note: *Theodore Purnell opened the Stephen Decatur Hotel in 1930. Mr. Purnell died in 1934, and the property passed first to his wife Essie, and then to their daughter Pauline (Purnell) Conley. Pauline and her husband Earl operated the hotel until Earl passed away in 1970. Pauline Conley sold the hotel to a partnership headed by Washington, D. C. developer Angelo Puglisi in 1974. The Decatur House condominium now occupies the site of the former hotel.*



Stephen Decatur Hotel circa 1930



Decatur House Condominium
Collection of Bunk Mann



OCEAN CITY
Life-Saving Station
MUSEUM

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

Phone: 410-289-4991

E-mail: curator@ocmuseum.org

www.ocmuseum.org

*The Times and Tides of
Ocean City, Maryland*

CHILDREN'S DAY ON THE BAY ON AUGUST 5, 2018



Rackliffe House Volunteers



Over 700 people engaged in this year's event making it our biggest yet!

Chincoteague Bay Field Station let two young visitors get up close and personal with a spider crab at Children's Day on the Bay held at Sunset Park.