

Bunk Mann

In nominating Bunk Mann for the Ocean City History Spirit Award, I would like to organize my thoughts and opinions as three parts; my relationship with him, why this nomination might not be well received, and finally why it should be considered.

First, I know Bunk Mann as an author, period. I contacted him when I was looking for a publisher. He was kind, straight forward and helpful...very different than the colleagues I recall from higher education, where it was literally “publish or perish”. Mr Mann, as I knew him then, was very supportive and encouraging concerning his publisher. Because of him, I began the process of producing my hardback book on Delmarva aviation history with his publisher who he so highly regarded. In 2009, when I retired from university as professor emeritus, I knew I would paint, but thought I would never write again. Bunk changed that.

Second, I really don't know the criteria or constraints for this award, but I am concerned that my nomination of Bunk Mann may be disqualified for two reasons. He is not from Ocean City and he holds a position on the museum board. In some societies, either one of these would disqualify him. I am hoping you will continue to read.

Third, I hope this nomination moves forward, because I believe Bunk Mann is one of the most polite and persistent historians Ocean City has ever known. He always has a smile and a good story to tell, no matter where we meet. And it is those many stories that he has managed to gather, along with countless images, rare and public, that make his work so special.

Not trained in ethnographic research methods...he does it anyway. Over the years, just wanting to learn more, he made his way into people's living rooms, kitchens, offices, and their hearts. With good questions and careful note-taking, he has managed to perform the painstaking practice of cultural qualitative research. It is often a slow process that only anthropologists and ethnographers use, as outsiders trying to learn about a culture. Bunk did it and is doing it again, simply because there are more stories to tell about the Ocean City he has loved. And it shows.

Lastly, his products are historically rich, entertaining, full of color and so alive, just like the beloved places and events he has attempted to portray. Just like him, full of spirit, full of Ocean City! I wish him the best.

Joanne K. Guilfoil