FOSSIL COLLECTING IN CALVERT COUNTY 1906

The following are excerpts from Frederick W. True's log book from 1906 to 1908. True was the head curator for the department of Biology at the U.S. National Museum. He wrote several research papers on fossil whales and porpoises from Calvert County. As you will see, collecting in the 1900's was prosperous and travel much different.

MARCH 28, 1906

"Went to Chesapeake Beach on 9:25 a.m. train (old Chesapeake Beach Railway). Weather dull, but cleared at noon. Collected from opposite R.R. station (next to Rod N' Reel Club today) to about 1/2 mile south of commencement of Calvert Cliffs - obtained about 100 pieces, including the fused cervicals (whale neck vertebrae) of a Balaena (?) whale. Left a large number of vertebrae and some fragments of jaws, etc., along the cliffs as could not carry so many - got nothing out of the talus - all from beach. One complete atlas (first neck vertebrae), however, had just washed out of the bank at the angle just north of the cliffs. There is a tree stump on the beach here and I put a number of vertebrae unto it, which I could not carry. Tide very low. Returned on 2:15 p.m. train. Expenses: car fares 20 cts. R.R. ticket $1.00, lunch 35 cts."

JUNE 26-27, 1908

"Made a reconnaissance to Governor's Run. Went down at night in a motor boat and returned by steamboat (probably the POTOMAC or WESTMORELAND) to Fair Haven and was carried by buggy to North Chesapeake Beach. At Governor's Run met Prof. Derickson of Annville, Pa., who was very friendly and pointed out places where specimens might be obtained; also presented an axis of a whalebone whale which he got out of the cliffs. Obtained a few bones from the cliffs immediately north and south of the wharf, but there was little or nothing on the beach and only scattered bones observed in the cliffs, usually high up and difficult to reach. They appear of a somewhat different character from those about Chesapeake beach, etc. One was a leg bone of an animal like a bison and there were also turtle bones. The place does not promise well but something peculiar and important might be found by chance. The boarding place at the wharf is very bad and another one should be found if anybody is to stay there again."

EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

The Museum is beginning its second year of bringing programs to its members. The staff is eager to have your response so that we may repeat popular items and add new programs which may be suggested. Please fill out the Evaluation Questionnaire and mail it or drop by the Museum.

DIVING EXHIBIT BECOMES LIVE

Our recently opened exhibit on underwater diving apparatus needed something. The SCUBA outfit and "Jake," the U.S. Navy's name for a mounted hard-hat suit, were erected on manikins making them life-like and easy to associate with. Our shallow water, open-bottom hard-hat, however, looked static. It was decided a photograph showing the helmet in use would better convey to the visitor how primitive this apparatus was to use. For example, no suit or airtight lining is used.

Bob Dawson, who loaned it to CMM, agreed to demonstrate the hard-hat for us. On a hot, muggy day we took the helmet off exhibit and outfitted Bob at the Museum's waterfront. No sooner had Bob come back to the surface than staff, volunteers, and even visitors were taking their turn in line to try it out.

The women folk really outshone the men. Dorothy Ordwein nearly drowned Bob who was swimming after her trying to keep her from going deeper. Nearly everyone tried it at least once going down about twelve feet under the water. All agreed it was very exciting but the view disappointing - only jellyfish and barnacles.

For the numerous visitors present, the open-bottom hard-hat demonstration was surely the highlight of the day. If you missed it, keep an eye on your UHF TV station. The Maryland Center of Public Broadcasting filmed the episode and will air it shortly on "Maryland Weekend" channel 22.
Volunteer Appreciation Night

Free labor? Unheard of, you say? But then you haven’t heard of the group of dedicated volunteers who give their labor freely to Calvert Marine Museum.

Our volunteers are an active group who participate in three different kinds of work.

There is the Visible group. You see them on Saturdays and Sundays when they welcome visitors to the Museums and act as guides or shop keepers. Since January this group has contributed 825 hours of free services. Then there is the Invisible group - the behind-the-scenes activators. They do the telephoning - to get the week-end volunteers, to pass the word about Museum needs, to organize Museum activities. The Invisibles also fold, address, and mail the “Bugeye Times.” They produce the refreshments for evening programs.

And then there is the Now-You-See-Them, Now-You-Don’t group. They are the men who paint and varnish, drive the nails, move an oyster shell mill from Galesville to Solomons, pick up and move boats about with cranes. They work side by side with the paid staff, but you can’t tell by looking which gets the money and which gets the pleasure out of doing something for nothing.

All these people are going to be honored on October 12. The Museum Committee will host an evening of recognition for the volunteers. Two films will be shown: Ship Ahoy! (life aboard a three masted schooner) and Afterglow of History: the History of the Drum Point Lighthouse. In addition, there will be induction of new members into the 1000-Hour Club.

Refreshments will end the evening. Be there - October 12th at 7:30 p.m.

DRUM POINT LIGHTHOUSE

Anna Weems Ewalt, who was born in the Drum Point Lighthouse on July 13, 1906, has been most helpful in describing to the CMM staff the furnishings at the light during the early 1900’s. Thanks to Martha Tongue and Dr. Lloyd Hazleton much of the furnishings have been obtained and are now being restored.

For the kitchen an old wooden ice box and pie safe are still needed. For the living room a large pot-bellied stove (4 - 5’ tall), smoking stand and kerosene lamps are required. Old bed spreads and curtains are needed for the bedrooms.

Anyone knowing where these items could be procured are encouraged to call the Museum.

SUMMER VISITOR SURVEY

One of the Museum’s summer high school employees spent a large part of her summer interviewing and following visitors around the Museum. Some of the results are quite interesting.

Approximately 43 percent of our visitors live more than 100 miles from Solomons. Seventy-seven percent live outside of Calvert County. Only nineteen percent were repeat visitors; eighteen percent came to the Museum by boat; twenty-eight percent of our visitors were forty-five years old or more and fifty-four percent older than twenty-four years; fifty-four percent of our visitors were female; forty percent heard about the Museum through friends or relatives while seventeen percent just passed by and decided to stop in.

The most significant statistic, however, is that our 1976 registered attendance of 18,309 (actual attendance is much higher as most visitors do not sign the register) represents a more than 200 percent increase over our 1975 totals. Thus far in 1977 we have had 15,613 visitors through August, running approximately seventy percent above our 1976 figure.

Let us hope our attendance continues to increase as our Museum grows.

MUSEUM NEEDS

Polaroid Camera

Dr. Frank C. Whitmorem Jr., vertebrate paleontologist with the U.S. Geological Survey and member of the CMM Advisory Board, consults with artist Helen W. Chance who is painting an 11x10 foot mural depicting life in the Calvert Sea some 12 - 13 million years ago. This mural will be a part of the Calvert Cliffs Fossil exhibit which the CMM staff is presently preparing.
ACQUISITIONS

Elaine Cochran: collection of fossils from Calvert Cliffs.
Norma Taylor: schooner model.
William Grovermann: materials from the Benedict steamboat pilot house.
James A. Chambers: ledger of Dr. George F. Chambers, Lusby, Md., 1900-1927.
Peggy Richardson: Mamiya/Sekor 35mm SLR camera w/case and a Vivitar Strob light.
Robert Cheek: M1 stock/trigger grip and sling, WWII helmet w/liner. Also restored a powder flask in CMM collection.
Thelma Robare: Solomons Island Yacht Club Regatta programs.
Sallie Gant: table, rocker, mirror, and wash tubs for lighthouse.
Tim Brown: clay pipe found on the shore of Battle Creek.
Philip Lines: loan of sports fishing equipment.
Gordon Elliott: fishing, oystering equipment; including patent tongs, hydraulic pump and Briggs Stratton motor.
Mrs. Marling J. Ankey: loan of a model ship in a bottle.
Vernon F. Abell: an Indian projectile point.
Blair Van Valkenburgh: silk screening supplies and equipment for the graphics department.
Mr. & Mrs. Albert Zahniser III: sailing manuals to be used in basic sailing classes.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION AND THANKS

Virginia Lumber Co.: lumber for mounting bugeye hull.
Raynard Wilson: donation of blacksmithing skills.
Whiting & Turner Corp.: materials and assistance in preparing mountings for anchor exhibits.
Gordon Trueman: hooking up gas stove in staff kitchen.
Jeanne Carey, Garry Vaughan and Janice Hummell of the Calvert County Public Library for cataloging the Museums’ Research Library.

CMM’s newest exhibit - Small Craft Shed - opening day.
Loans To Or From Other Museums

- Mariners Museum: exchanged oyster shucking equipment for photographic reproductions.
- Christfield Historical Museum: loan of two exhibit cases from CMM.
- Newark Museum: Patuxent River rail bird gunning skiff to CMM.

FALL CALENDAR AND PROGRAM SCHEDULE

OCTOBER

12 Volunteer Appreciation Night. Movies, awards, refreshments.

NOVEMBER

16 “St. Leonard’s Creek: Focusing in on a local ecosystem.” A slide-lecture by Dr. Kent Mountford, research biologist, Benedict Lab., Philadelphia Acad. Sciences.
29 “Charles Reeder and the Development of Marine Steam in Maryland.” An illustrated lecture by Randolph Chalfant, Curator, Radcliffe Maritime Museum.

DECEMBER

7 “Weather or Not.” A lecture about weather forecasting; its secrets and tall tales by Walter Wilson, a “tame meteorologist” - retired from the U.S. Weather Service.
10 Fossil Walk: Calvert and Choptank Formations. Half day trip starting at Plum Point, 8 a.m. sharp. Boots (hip boots if available), warm clothing a must. Leader, Dr. Ralph Eshelman, Dir. CMM.

All programs begin 7:30 p.m. at the Museum unless otherwise noted. All programs are free to CMM members, $1.00 to non-members. For more information call D. Ordwein 326-4162.

Calvert Marine Museum
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

☐ $5.00 individual
☐ $7.50 Family
☐ $50.00 Supporting
☐ $25.00 Student
☐ $100.00 Sustain
☐ $500.00 Patron**
☐ $1,000.00 Benefactor**

**unrestricted contributions of $500 or more qualify for LIFE MEMBERSHIP.

MEMBERSHIP IS FOR ONE YEAR

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A Quarterly Newsletter for Members of the Calvert Marine Museum