A NEW CMM EXHIBIT:

"An Early Impressionist’s View of Southern Maryland: The Seascapes and Waterviews of August H. O. Rolle."

Depictions of the Chesapeake Bay and Southern Maryland areas have been collected for the Calvert Marine Museum for several years. In the spring of 1987 an article in the Bugeye Times described the works of fourteen artists represented in the museum's collections. There have been significant additions since that time, some described in the Bugeye Times. Several interesting temporary exhibits have provided further evidence of the museum's interest in art pertaining to the bay, the area, and maritime subjects, such as the following: "A History of Sail: Watercolors of Commander E.C.Tufnell"; "Maritime Paintings of C. Leslie Oursler"; "Louis J.Feucht, Chesapeake Bay Artist"; "American Folkartist Earl Cunningham"; and "Woolies: Embroidered Ship Portraits, 1850-1890."

Museum visitors this summer will have an opportunity to view over ninety works in different media created during the period 1905 to 1941 by the Washington, D. C., impressionist artist August H. O. Rolle. These works are predominantly views of Southern Maryland, including Patuxent and Potomac river scenes, but also included are views of the Chesapeake Bay, Ocean City, and the countryside near Washington. They show Rolle’s artistic evolution from his early student works — which are somewhat awkward, stiff, and simple compositions — through his mature work that displays a rich variety of highly complex and imaginative coloring and brush techniques, with original and sophisticated compositions. Constant throughout Rolle’s later work is his ability to depict, in a most subtle and impressionistic manner, the varieties of sky, light, and atmospheric effects, and the gentle, poetic beauty of nature.

August Herman Olson Rolle was born in rural Sibley County, Minnesota, on March 30, 1875. His local education included the Red Wing Academy where he took courses in business and law. He taught school for a short period, managed a local lumber company, and enlisted for a few months of service in the Army near the end of the Spanish-American War. In early 1900 he applied for work with the U. S. Bureau of the Census in Washington, D. C., where he moved in June to accept a position. For the next forty-one years he worked in the bureau in positions of increasing responsibility, specializing in forest products. He married shortly before moving to Washington.

During the first few years in Washington, Rolle was concerned chiefly with establishing a home for his family, but his interest in his Scandinavian heritage led him to seek out others in the city and to establish the Norwegian Society of Washington. As a child in Minnesota Rolle sketched rural scenes, but he did not begin a serious pursuit of art until 1905 when he enrolled as a student at the Corcoran Gallery of Art. His formal work there continued during the next ten years, pursued mostly in evening classes. With a particular affinity for landscape art, he

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REMINDERS
- CMM's aquarium exhibit is now open — don’t miss this treat.
- Special evening tours of the Drum Point Lighthouse will be given on Saturdays and Sundays, beginning on July 4 and continuing until September 6. The hours will be 5:30 to 6:00, and 6:30 to 7:00.
- The construction work around the old schoolhouse is to renovate the building for administrative offices, library, and archives — no interference with museum visitors this summer.
- The Annual Report for 1991 will be ready this summer — mailed on request.
FOSSIL FACTS: By Sandy Roberts

Fossil Mako Shark Teeth

Makos (Isurus) are among the larger sharks whose teeth are found as fossils along Calvert Cliffs. The common name "mako" is of Maori origin, but its precise meaning is unclear. Living makos are open-sea sharks, very streamlined and built for speed. They are thought to be the fastest swimmers among living sharks.

Isurus hastalis is the typical Miocene species of mako that is found locally. This species reached a possible length of nearly twenty feet, and may have weighed close to four thousand pounds. The scientific name "hastalis" means spear or spear-like, and accurately describes the large teeth of this shark. The crowns are broad, triangular, and shaped like the blade of a spear. They are flattened and somewhat concave on the front or outer surface, with roots that are short and blunt and bear abbreviated lobes. On unworn specimens the cutting edges of the crown are literally razor sharp. Isurus is closely related to the Great White Shark Carcharodon, which has large teeth that are similar in shape to those of Isurus, but with serrated cutting edges.

SELECTED RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Listed below are some of the important items recently acquired by CMM. The generosity and support of those who have donated or lent materials to the collections are appreciated.

Donald Weisman contributed a selection of blacksmith and wheelwright tools and materials from Charles H. Weisman’s former shop in Prince Frederick.

A full model of the Solomons-built bugeye Gorman C., constructed by modelmaker Robert Barnes, was donated by Peter and Carl Owens.

The twenty-six wood fragments comprising the Lyons Creek Wreck, described in an article in the fall 1990 issue of the Bugeye Times, were donated by Peter Schwenk. He also gave the museum a selection of twenty-one representative artifacts from the wreck site.

CMM’s research library was enhanced by over four hundred books relating to naval and maritime history, largely of the World War II period. This collection of the late Eugene Handler of Kensington, Maryland, was donated by his children, Elizabeth, Eugene, Thomas, and Steven Handler.

Geoffrey M. Footner, author of the museum’s recent publication The Last Generation, donated his extensive research files on the M. M. Davis & Son Shipyard and the Davis family to the CMM archives.

RECENT ADDITIONS TO THE FOSSIL COLLECTIONS

The past year has been a busy one for the paleontology department in terms of planning the new fossil hall and working on a number of research projects. Along with these activities we are continuing to expand our collections of Miocene-age fossils from Calvert Cliffs and other regional sites. The most significant recent addition is a sample of over five hundred sharks’ teeth and fifty shark vertebrae, donated by well-known local collector (and dedicated volunteer) Wally Ashby and his wife Betty. Included are forty beautifully preserved fossil Great White Shark teeth. What makes these specimens (accumulated over the past fourteen years) particularly important is that they were collected in place, rather than lying on the beach. This means that we know the age and exact geological layer for each tooth and vertebra, making them more valuable for scientific studies.

Another significant donation is a series of seven vertebrae from the fossil seal Leptophoca lenis, found this past February by Dr. Peter Vogt near Governors Run. The vertebrae, which include part of the sacrum, were collected by Wally Ashby and Sandy Roberts, and add to our small collection of remains from one of the earliest-known fossil seals. Curators sometimes get lucky too—I recently found a set of five associated dental plates of the fossil ray Aetobatus arcuatus, also from near Governors Run. This specimen is unusually well preserved in that the five chevron-shaped dental plates are still joined together. Aetobatis plates are fairly common, but are almost always found one at a time. And finally, for those interested in very small animals, I collected a humerus (upper arm bone) from the fossil sea turtle Sylomus aegyptiacus that only measures about 1 1/2 inches long. In comparison, an adult Sylomus has a humerus four to five inches in length. This find suggests that very young sea turtles, perhaps not much older than hatchlings, lived here about fifteen million years ago. (Michael D. Gottfried, Curator of Paleontology)
OUTBOARDS, ANYONE?

Interested in old engines? If you are, you may want to talk with Richard Dodds, the museum's curator of maritime history. Richard has been working to set up a program to restore the best examples of marine engines from among a number that are in the museum's maritime collections.

Especially important are approximately sixty outboard engines, some dating to the early years of the "detachable motor." Several inboard and stationary engines are also in need of restoration.

Last year the basement of the North Annex building was cleared with the intention of making it the focal point of a volunteer restoration effort. The museum became a member of the Antique Outboard Motor Club, and engine restoration authorities Dick Day and Max Homfeld have identified those engines that should have priority. It is intended that finished engines will be displayed in the Exhibition Building.

If you have an interest in helping to bring these classics back to life, please call Richard Dodds. A planning session will be held to get this first-time volunteer program under way.

A. H. O. Rolle

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came under the influence of a number of Washington landscape artists. By 1912 his work was of sufficient merit that he was listed in Who's Who in American Art.

August Rolle pursued association with artists of similar interests. In 1913 he was one of the founders of the Landscape Club of Washington, serving as its president for most of the years through 1932. He also was active in the Water Color Club, the Society of Washington Artists, the Miniature Painters, Sculptors and Gravers Society, the Society of Washington Etchers, the Arts Club of Washington, and the American Federation of Arts. He exhibited his work through many of these groups. His paintings, watercolors, and prints are in numerous private and public collections, including the National Museum of American Art, the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the Birmingham Museum of Art, the Library of Congress, the Arts Club of Washington, and the Columbia Historical Society. The Calvert Marine Museum, which in 1987 owned but a single Rolle painting, now holds fifteen of his works.

August Rolle's work received favorable critical acceptance during his lifetime and beyond. At the time of his death on October 9, 1941, his work was on exhibit at the Arts Club. In more recent years he was recognized at a 1983 exhibition at the National Museum of American Art, an important retrospective appreciation of the neglected Washington artists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. William Gerdts, the noted American art scholar, in his definitive 1984 work, American Impressionism, featured Rolle, together with only twelve other artists in his analysis of impressionism in the South. In his recent book, Art Across America, Gerdts called Rolle a "first rate landscapist" and included Rolle's "Wharf, Leonardtown, Maryland," one of the paintings exhibited by the museum.

The Calvert Marine Museum exhibit, which can be seen in the Changing Exhibit Gallery and the Mezzanine Gallery from June 20 until October 20, 1992, has been arranged in great part by Washington, D.C., collector Robert S. Fastov. He has not only collected Rolle's works, but has written and lectured on Rolle's life and contributions to the Washington art scene. (Most of the information in this article has come from his research.) Mr. Fastov has lent a quantity of material to CMM for the present exhibit and has advised on the development of the exhibit here. In addition to paintings, there will also be memorabilia of the artist, such as his brushes, paints, and sketchbooks.

The museum is indebted to Mr. Fastov for his guidance and support in making the current exhibit possible. A grant from the Calvert County Cultural Arts Council provided funds for the proper mounting of CMM's Rolle works.
Spring

The exhibit, "Estuary Patuxent: A River and Its Life," was opened formally on May 3 with a ribbon cutting. Museum director Doug Alves holds the ribbon while it is cut by donors Ellen and Skip Zahniser (Zahniser's Inc.), Jim Lemons (Baltimore Gas and Electric Company), and Wayne Swann (Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative).

CMM photo by Taylor Gregg

CMM's draketail in "flight" — the Hooper Island draketail was moved from the boat basin to a location in front of the Small Craft Skills Shed for extensive repair, through use of a large crane courtesy of Richard Gibbons, Allied Marine Services of Solomons.

CMM photo by Richard Dodds
Activities

Russian scientists were toured and entertained at CMM on April 17 at an event sponsored by NASA. Members of the Russian Deep Space Tracking Network are shown here receiving CMM caps from Marilyn Force, museum volunteer and wife of NASA official Charles Force.

CMM photo by Taylor Gregg

Museum volunteers enjoyed a spring tour on May 8 with a Rappahannock River cruise aboard the Capt. Thomas.

Photo by Margie Wilbar, CMM volunteer
The Baltimore Clipper

We are fortunate in having an increasing number of studies of a special type of Chesapeake schooner whose reputation for handsomeness, speed, and maneuverability attracted wide attention on both side of the Atlantic in the first several decades of the nineteenth century: the Baltimore clipper. We are especially fortunate in having Thomas C. Gillmer’s study of the type and its impact on commerce and naval warfare, and having him also as the designer of the two “Prides of Baltimore” that have so successfully brought these vessels back to life in our own time. His account is now available and finds its place in any marine library, alongside the earlier, essential studies by Howard I. Chapelle.2

The Baltimore clipper grew out of a need for a vessel capable of dodging and passing through blockades created by the British in the period leading up to and throughout the War of 1812, especially at the narrow entrance of the Chesapeake. The Baltimore clipper was not only a swift carrier of goods but a feared predator on the shipping of Britain; its swiftness and ability to “climb to windward” and sail circles around larger, heavily-gunned warships earned it extraordinary attention. Its design came to be widely copied, but for the British, at least, the single American ingredient — with which the Royal Navy could not contend — was unique in its time: the singular readiness of American skippers and crews to risk all — masts, yards, sails, and the vessel itself — in all kinds of weather to reach maximum speed. These were not the attributes prized by conservative, cautious British merchants whose captains could only rarely avoid capture once sighted. Moreover, the larger, heavier warships of the Royal Navy could not match the speed of the elusive Baltimore clipper which danced away from close engagement. As a merchant raider, the Baltimore clipper had no equal in its day. Those same qualities made the type superb at smuggling, gun-running, and in later years, slave trading; British warships active in stopping out trafficking in slaves, especially to the Caribbean and the United States, found themselves dependent on fast vessels remarkably similar to the Baltimore clipper itself.

Soon after the War of 1812, the need for vessels that type disappeared, to be replaced by the common features of merchant shipping in which moderate speed and much greater carrying capacity were more desirable. Still, recollections of the extraordinary Baltimore clipper never died out.3

The vessel was of moderate size, usually between seventy-five to ninety-five feet on the water line; a raking stem and stern post; a “sharp” entrance and drag to keel, with unusual deadrise, low freeboard, a clear deck, moderate sheer; a striking rake to lightly stayed masts which could rise over one-hundred feet; a bowsprit and jibboom which could extend fifty-four feet; an astonishing amount of sail — oversparred and over-canvased — with square yards on the foremost (and sometimes on the main) with a large foresail and jib and a very large mainsail with close-woven sailcloth superior to the flax more commonly used until then. Perhaps, in all these respects, as Gillmer says, “a more efficient sailing rig than had ever been devised before.” For such a vessel, it is difficult to accept how little about the design was ever recorded — or, at least, has been found. Some of our knowledge comes from artists whose paintings recorded this legendary clipper. The Royal Navy did capture several and took their lines off — a vital source of information. (These can be obtained through the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, England.) As Gillmer tells us, the type had to be a combination of “native intuition, traditional knowledge, and inspired creativity.”

The Baltimore clipper could be built in shipyards or locally. Labor and wood were readily available. White oak, mulberry, pine, sassafras, chestnut, and cedar were all found locally, as were cordage and fittings. From 1812 on, ballast was usually pig iron.

The color scheme of a Baltimore clipper could vary depending on fashion or the preferences of the owner or captain. Favorable colors appear to have been black, blue, red, green, or yellow on hulls, decks, or bulwarks. Gun ports were highlighted either to emphasize that the vessel was armed or to mislead others as to how much.

Views vary among marine historians on the extent to which the Baltimore clipper had its origins in earlier Chesapeake Bay designs, or from imported ideas, or was nearer to being unique. It is a lively exchange, without resolution. More interesting to some is the question as to the influence of this “extreme clipper schooner,” as Gillmer describes the type, on subsequent designs in the bay or elsewhere. It seems obvious that the famous Ann McKim, a fast, three-masted commerce carrier, built in Baltimore in 1832, owed much to the characteristics of the smaller Baltimore clipper. Whether, as some claim, she was the first of the later clipper ships whose great era was the 1850s and 1860s, is debatable. Gillmer answers the argument for this writer when he quotes Arthur H. Clark, one of the great sources:
“Although the Ann McKim was the first clipper ship ever constructed, it cannot be said that she founded the clipper ship era.” That came only with the great yards of New York and New England and their astonishing construction of one masterpiece after another.

More relevant to the Chesapeake Bay has been the re-creation of Pride I and II, both Baltimore-built — an enterprise of the port city and of those who helped create the “Inner Harbor”; and of the dedication of the designer, Thomas C. Gillmer, and the workers who built her in plain view of citizens. Both “Prides,” in spite of the tragic loss of the first, have been living reminders of an earlier period in which need for speed and quick maneuverability produced a classic.

1. Melvin A. Conant has had a long-time interest in maritime history. He served on an advisory committee of the Calvert Marine Museum for a number of its formative years. His activities in the Solomons Island Model Boat Club include races in the museum’s boat basin. In 1990 he authored I Remember: Recollections of “Pepper” Langley (Solomons: Privately Printed, 1990).


3. Today, they are recalled by the contemporary construction of these vessels in Baltimore, and by the author’s seven-foot, radio-controlled model of Lynx, to be seen sailing in the waters off the Calvert Marine Museum. Chapelle described the original Lynx as “an example of the highest development of the Baltimore Clipper.”


**CMM VISITING GROUPS IN MAY SET RECORD**

The education department reports that there was a significant increase in special tours in May 1992, compared with the previous year. Museum interpreters took 1,470 visitors through the Drum Point Lighthouse, welcomed 3,074 children-of-all-ages to the Discovery Room, and helped 339 visitors to enjoy the J. C. Lore Oyster House. In a period of only twenty days, the department received 1,027 school children, teachers, and chaperons for tours and programs — itself a thirty percent increase from May 1991. These may be museum records for the month.

**REMEMBER FOR CMM’S BRITISH MARITIME HOLIDAY TRIP**

There is still space on the museum’s DOWN TO THE SEAS AGAIN — an all-inclusive, guided, ten-day adventure in England, October 8 to 17, 1992. Glorious London, visits to historic Portsmouth, and the New Forest highlight this exploration of England’s seagoing legacy. The program also includes the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich, Lord Nelson’s HMS Victory, the ironclad battleship HMS Warrior, the restoration of Henry VIII’s Mary Rose, the eighteenth-century shipbuilding village of Buckler’s Hard, the Royal Submarine Museum, and the D-Day Museum.

Program fees for DOWN TO THE SEAS AGAIN are $2,145 per person, double occupancy, including round-trip airfare (including taxes) from Dulles Airport. A donation of $200 to CMM is included in the price. There is a single supplement for an additional $300, and singles certainly are invited. Meals include full English breakfasts daily and evening dining (except for two nights in London). Theater tickets, admissions, ground transportation in luxury touring coaches are part of the package, along with the services of a tour courier.

For further information and a full registration packet to consider, call or write Lord Addison Travel identifying yourself as a member of the Calvert Marine Museum Society. The address is: Lord Addison Travel, P. O. Box 3307, Peterborough, NH 03458, or call 1-800-326-0170.

**CMM LOSES FORMER BOARD MEMBER**

Dr. Paul V. Lemkau, a member of the museum’s Board of Governors from 1983 through 1985, died at his home in Lusby in April. Dr. Lemkau participated in many CMM events and supported the museum through donations to the maritime and library collections. His service to the museum was recognized by the Board of Governors at its meeting on June 3.
It was a lucky day for the museum when Art and Joan Pore decided to relocate to Southern Maryland in 1983. Joan (pronounced “Jo-Ann”) had just left a position at Rockville High School as teacher of earth sciences and was feeling at loose ends. Seeing an ad for CMM volunteers in the local papers, she applied to Scott Rawlings, then CMM educator, as a docent. After a few false starts, she was part of the team.

In the old schoolhouse, Joan remembers when experienced docent Dorothy Ordwein took her around the exhibits (“I still have my notes”) and, before long, being called in weekly to teach. Groups ranged from preschool to high school age, but all, she recalls, were interested by that “water” in the Waterman’s Room exhibit. Children could be counted on to kneel down to see for themselves if the water was real (a rippled epoxy resin on Plexiglas).

Following a medical absence in 1990, docenting gave way to Discovery Room duty, and then a position in the museum archives. Joan, along with husband Art, stabilized and organized materials collected from the Albert Brown Sail Loft, the M. M. Davis Shipyard, and the J. C. Lore Oyster House. In addition to help from both the Pores at PRAD festivals and with visitor surveys, Joan served on the ad hoc committee for the formation of the Volunteer Council. She now acts as orientation chairman, helping to get new volunteers on board. Changing gears again from archival work, Joan is greeting visitors as a lobby host this summer.

But now, as they say, for the rest of the story: Joan’s volunteer path has not been an easy one. Staff turnover, miscommunications, and traveling schedules have interfered with this lady’s genuine willingness to be of service. But Joan’s volunteer spirit is strong, and this very pleasant, efficient person continues at CMM.

“I love it,” says Joan. “I love being here and helping.” And that really says it all.

CMM has various opportunities for adult volunteers this summer, especially as hosts and tour guides. See the copy of the Anchor, a newsletter for volunteers and staff, included with this issue of the Bugeye Times. For information on volunteer opportunities, call volunteer coordinator Layne Bergin on (410) 326-2042.