In 1925 the elementary schools of lower Calvert County were consolidated into one school at Solomons. This meant transporting children who lived along the several creeks dissecting the Solomons area. Roads, practically non-existent, were dirt, sand and gravel, or oystershell and deeply grooved by wagons, ox-carts, and the rare automobile. Naturally, the most reasonable form of transportation was boat.

Leaving behind their one-room schools, wooden outhouses marked “Girls” or “Boys,” water buckets with one dipper, and their one teacher, students boarded the schoolboat “James Aubrey” for the trip to the new school. Here were central heating, water fountains, inside lavatories, and a teacher in each of the classrooms.

The 42 foot “James Aubrey” was originally a brogan used for fishing and oystering. In the spring and summer of 1925 it was converted into a gas-screw passenger boat at the M. M. Davis Shipyard on Mill Creek. The masts, decking, and centerboard were removed and a cabin built to completely enclose the length of the boat, which was then divided into three parts, a pilot house, passenger section with benches along each side and down the middle, and an engine room. A small wood burning stove was set up just aft of the pilot house to provide heat in winter. Isaac (Ike) Hill was captain and owner and his son, Wilson, served as engineer.

“James Aubrey” operated as the schoolboat from September 1925 to June 1935, criss-crossing St. John’s and Mill Creeks and serving the communities of Olivet, Dowell, and Rousby Hall. The boat stopped at private wharves and piers to pick up children in the morning and drop them off after school. Its first pickup was around 7:30 a.m. and the trip took about 45 minutes one way. School records show a contract for $1,750 a year with Capt. Hill for this service.

Although the boat had an ice plow on the bow, sometimes it was unable to enter Back Creek due to thick ice; the children would then be dropped off at Solomons and had to walk the mile to school.

As better roads were built, the need for the old schoolboat waned until finally it was replaced by the more conventional school bus in 1935. For ten years the old “James Aubrey” brought the water community or “creek” children to school. The students identified themselves as “Up-roaders” or “Up-creekers” depending upon the method of transportation and competition at the school games between the two groups was very active.

It was said this was the only schoolboat east of the Mississippi River during the late 1920’s. All that remains today are some rotted piles from the school pier and the mast of the “James Aubrey” which serves as the flag pole in front of the “new” school - today the Calvert Marine Museum.

Jefferson Patterson

Museum Benefactor

The death of Mr. Jefferson Patterson of Point Farm and Washington, D.C., on November 12, 1977 is a distinct loss to the entire community and especially to the Calvert Marine Museum. He supported the Museum from its inception providing encouragement and financial support for making a dream into a reality.

In 1974 when the Museum made plans to move into the new facility at the old Solomons Schoolhouse, it was Mr. Patterson who donated much of the needed funds. The construction of the portico and front entrance was entirely funded by him.

In addition to financial support, Mr. Patterson gave inspiration and encouragement to those involved in the physical realization of the Museum. The entire Museum staff and membership will miss this fine gentleman.
MUSEUM SEEKS MISSING HEAD

The Museum's resident shipcarver, Pepper Langley, recently carved a reproduction of the stern carving from the schooner JAMES E. TROTT for exhibition. The original carving is the property of Mrs. Philip D. Lines of Island Creek, Calvert County, Maryland. Unfortunately, over the years, the bust portion of the carving was broken and has since been lost. The Museum is seeking help in finding the missing portion or a photograph of the schooner clearly showing the stern carving.

The Museum has been able to piece together the following history from its library, archives, and the Hance family.

The JAMES E. TROTT, a square stern, two masted schooner, built in Baltimore in 1880, had a length of 73.8 feet, breadth 22.9 ft., depth 6.2 ft., and was 59 gross tons. In 1884 it hailed from Crisfield, Md., but by 1887 was homeported in Annapolis. A Bill of Sale of Enrolled Vessel, dated October 5, 1899, shows that Isiah Tyler or Fairmont, Somerset County, Md., sold a half ownership to Thomas C. Hance (Mrs. Lines' grandfather) of Island Creek, Md. At this time the schooner again hailed from Crisfield. On June 13, 1902, Isiah Tyler sold his remaining half ownership to Hance.

From 1902 to 1910 the record is unclear but Hance apparently sold the TROTT as a Certificate of Enrollment, dated October 29, 1910, lists Major A. Lewis, of Baltimore, as 1/8 owner; William P. Price of Baltimore, 1/8 owner; William R. Lewis of Fishing Creek, 1/4 owner; and Thomas Moore of Solomons Island, half owner. Edgar R. Lewis was master of the schooner.

Mr. Hance again acquired a half interest when he purchased 1/4 ownerships from Thomas Moore and William R. Lewis on April 11, 1916. Hance remained her captain until his death in 1928.

In the fall of 1928 the TROTT broke its moorings during a storm and was washed ashore on Jacks Bay in the Patuxent River just below Battle Creek in Calvert County. No attempt was made to refloat her as Mr. Hance's widow wanted her husband to forever remain as the captain.

The Hance family was able to salvage many artifacts from the schooner. Parts of the masts were sold to Capt. Rodie Langley of Solomons; the remaining masts form the porch columns of Mrs. Lines' home. The hull of the TROTT survived many subsequent storms but finally disappeared with the great ice buildup in the winter of 1933-34.

The Lines family has donated several items from the schooner to the Museum. Anyone having additional information or photographs are asked to call or write the Museum.

Museum Expands Educational Activities—Discovery and Exploration Labs

The Museum's educational volunteer staff is offering a new series of programs aimed toward the youth of our community. Called the Discovery and Exploration Labs (D&E Labs), the program is geared toward encouraging youth to explore several areas of the environment in order to more fully appreciate the richness of their Patuxent-Chesapeake heritage.

All labs will be given at the Museum with opportunity for field work. Enrollment will be limited, reservations are required and specific age limits set according to topic. A nominal fee to cover modest expenses must be charged as funds are not presently available. The 1978 D&E Labs are described below.

PERSPECTIVES - WATERMEN AND THEIR HERITAGE

Grades 11 and 12. Led by Tom Wisner, this lab will attempt to compile an oral history of the folklife of local watermen, their living styles, families, and dependence on the water. From this association the youth should gain an understanding of the economic and social factors which influenced their life around the waterways of the county. Photographic and interviewing skills will be developed.

FOSSILS AND PAST LIFE

Grades 5 thru 7. This lab, led by Ralph Eshelman and August Seleckman, will be field oriented; exploring the fossil deposits of Calvert Cliffs. This open-air lab will concentrate on fossil diversity, life relationships, and collecting. Planned for May 1978.

CREEK CRITTERS

Grades 10 and 11. This lab will give participants a unique opportunity to explore the Museum's waterfront and hopefully Moll Legg's Island. Individuals will be encouraged to collect and examine several types of marine life with microscopes and live aquaria. Concentration will be focused on the food chain, differences in animal makeup from marshy and sandy areas, as well as variety, dependence on environmental variables such as tide, temperature, and pollution. Planned for late summer.

MAP MAKING

This session will be open to both youth and adults. Techniques of early map making will be contrasted with present day topographic mapping. It is planned that the group will actually make a contour map, possibly of Moll Legg's Island. Skills in use of surveying equipment as well as drafting should be developed. Planned for fall.

SPECIAL THANKS

Ellen Zahniser for decorating the Museum entrance for the Christmas Holiday season.
What's Happening at CMM

Now that the summer crowds are gone the staff can again concentrate on new exhibits and planning. The Cliffs of Calvert Fossils exhibit is well underway. The 10x10 foot mural by Helen Chance is now completed. As far as we know this is the first attempt at reconstructing a Miocene underwater marine scene depicting the life typical of 12-15 million years ago. Our volunteer crew, led by George “Rip” Van Winkle, is busy working on the display cases which will house the fossil exhibits. Several fine fossil whale and porpoise specimens, some collected in Calvert County, have been promised for display by the Smithsonian Institution.

Thanks to another federal grant the Museum has hired three temporary carpenters. This crew is presently building a new storage area in the attic which will house most of the maritime collection. Aside from doubling the present storage range, it will provide more gracious quarters for a registrar and allow almost immediate retrieval for the hundreds of artifacts, paintings, prints, etc.

The former maritime range on the lower level will be remodeled into our new library, archives, and conference room. Scheduled for completion this spring, the former library on the main level will then become freed for our next major exhibit room, "The River Patuxent." This exhibit will highlight, among other things, the naval history of the Patuxent, particularly the Battle of St. Leonard's Creek in 1814.

Although this rearrangement will involve a lot of work, the end result will concentrate all the major exhibits on the main level and provide better research and storage facilities.

The paleontology range hasn't remained dormant either. Norm Riker has been prospecting the cliffs nearly every weekend. Presently, three fossil porpoise skulls and one whale skull are awaiting preparation. Knowing Norm, this situation will be compounded by summer.

Plans for the Benning Oyster Shell Mill are complete and construction slated soon. This will be the first stage in the Museum's effort to exhibit and preserve the fast disappearing commercial marine aspects of our community. The old timers in the county can certainly remember the numerous oyster shell roads and crushed shell lime used for fertilizer and in chicken feed.

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DRUM POINT LIGHTHOUSE UPDATE

Those who have passed by the Museum recently have noticed the bustle of activity around the Drum Point Lighthouse. Carpenters are hard at work replacing the rotted and vandalized wooden portions of the structure. The cypress wood needed for the renovation to be purchased in Illinois and the milling specifically done to replicate exactly the original specifications.

Our previous plea for appropriate furnishings was very rewarding. Several volunteers have been busy stripping paint and restoring several pieces of period furniture. We still need a pot-bellied stove about four feet in height, a few more kerosene lamps, old bed mattresses and spreads.

In preparing for the painting specifications, we did a paint chip analysis which revealed that the entire inside of the lighthouse had been painted a drab light grey color; how gloomy it must have been to live in. Later colors included black, dark blue, baby blue, and predictably white.

ACQUISITIONS

MRS. DARBY PEDDICORD. Two kerosene lamps for the lighthouse.
MRS. PHILIP LINES. Oak icebox for the lighthouse.
ANNE K. REIFSNEIDER. Polaroid camera and accessories in memory of Dorothy B. Thomas.
ROBERT CHEEL. M1 rifle hand guard, boat blocks and tackles.
RUSSELL McQUEEN. Double-sharp-end Patuxent River Rail skiff.
CLAIRE C. RICHARDSON. Polaroid camera model 335.
Peggy richardson. Miocene three-toed horse tooth.
JACKIE FRANKLIN. Fossil dental ray plate in excellent condition.
VERNON ABELL. Indian projectile point.
MRS. MARLING J. ANKEY. Ship in a bottle, model of the bugeye "J. J. Saunders."
ARNOLD HUMPHREYS. Ledgers and papers from M. M. Davis Shipyard.

MUSEUM NEEDS

Solomons Island Yacht Club Regatta programs. Coffee Urn (50 cup) for lecture series. The following books by Hulbert Footner: CHARLES GIFT, MARYLAND MAIN AND THE EASTERN SHORE, RIVERS OF THE EASTERN SHORE, SAILOR OF FORTUNE (Joshua Barney), MORE THAN BREAD, and DARK SHIPS. Pot-bellied stove, 4 feet high, for lighthouse. A folding wheelchair.
WINTER CALENDAR AND PROGRAM SCHEDULE

JANUARY
28 - Discovery and Exploration Lab. “Perspectives”: Watermen and Their Heritage. A three hour lab experience using cameras and tape cassettes to record the folk history of our area. Led by Tom Wisner. Pre-registration necessary, limited to 12 persons in high school, grades 11 or 12. Saturday morning 9:00 to 12:00 a.m. CMM members $5.00 to cover materials. (For more information see article this newsletter or call Dot Ordwein 326-4162.)

FEBRUARY
10 - PRIDE OF BALTIMORE, the Latest Baltimore Clipper. A slide show and lecture by Thomas Gillmer, designer of the PRIDE.
25 - Nautical Knots. A do-it-yourself session on learning the art of making eel pots, crab nets, boat fenders, and other basic knots necessary to boating. Taught by experienced local watermen. Participants pay for supplies used. Pre-registration required. 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

MARCH
9 - Energy, Man and The Coastal Zone. A slide-lecture by Dr. Joseph Mihursky of the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory.
25 - Calvert Marine Museum: Past, Present and Future. A slide-lecture by Dr. Ralph Eshelman, director of the Museum. This is your opportunity to learn about the Museum, where it is going and where it has been.

APRIL
15 - Baltimore Harbor Maritime Tour. A full day trip including “Five Fathom Lightship,” “U. S. Constellation,” Brown’s Wharf Warehouse, and World Trade Center. Advanced registration and payment are required. CMM members $12.75, non-members $15.00. Fee includes bus, entrance, fees, and lunch aboard the “Nobska.”
28 - Ship Decorations, Old and New. A slide-lecture and demonstration by Mel Conant and Pepper Langley. Exhibition of work done by CMM sponsored John Olsen Chapter of the American Shipcarvers Guild.

All programs being at 7:45 p.m. at the Museum unless otherwise noted. All programs are free to CMM members: $1.00 to non-members unless otherwise noted. For more information contact D. Ordwein 326-4162.

Calvert Marine Museum Membership Application

MEMBERSHIP IS FOR ONE YEAR

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

Send a GIFT subscription – in my name

My name is

Address

City State Zip

Send with your check to: Calvert Marine Museum, Box 97, Solomons, Md. 20688

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