Dee of St. Mary’s: From Dredge Boat to Classroom Afloat

By Robert J. Hurry, Museum Registrar

This is the 40th anniversary of the first oyster dredging season for the skipjack *Dee of St. Mary’s*. As commercial fishing became less profitable, owner Captain Jack Russell transformed the skipjack from an oyster dredge boat to a floating classroom. He turned his attention to teaching people about the Chesapeake Bay’s heritage and environment. It hasn’t always been smooth sailing, but it’s been an interesting journey.

After the *Dee of St. Mary’s* was launched in December, 1979, it took Jack Russell months of planning and preparation to get his boat ready to engage in the oyster dredging business. The vessel had to be properly outfitted with a mast, yards, sails, rigging, a push boat, dredges, winders, navigation equipment, and the other tools of the trade. He had to find an experienced skipjack captain and hire and train a crew in the operation of the boat.

By late fall of 1980, the *Dee of St. Mary’s* was ready to become the newest addition to the nation’s last commercial sailing fleet. But the new skipjack with her novice crew needed guidance to get started. Since none of the crew were sailors, Jack Russell hired Clyde Evans, a seasoned skipjack captain from Smith Island with over 50 years of experience, to pilot the boat. Russell and his crew learned a lot from the veteran Captain Evans. He taught them how to handle the skipjack, function as a crew, dredge under sail or power, and showed them where the best oyster dredging grounds were located.

In her inaugural 1980-81 oyster harvest season, the skipjack began with a six-man crew. In addition to Russell and Evans, the crew included Francis “Cully” Cullison, James Gardner, John Wright, and Wayne Goddard, who helped build the boat. That first season, the crew of the *Dee of St. Mary’s* worked all over the bay, spending nights at Annapolis, Chesapeake Beach, Solomons, Tilghman Island, and other ports. When away from home, the crew lived aboard the boat five days a week and their workday began before sunrise. As was the tradition, the crew worked on shares. The boat took about a third of the day’s earnings to cover expenses and the remainder was divided among the crew.

Skipjacks working in the dredge fleet were not permitted to be motorized, so a...
2021: Hope Anew

You already know this, but we live in extraordinary times. This winter the entire planet remains upside down, beset by a virus that travels nearly as quickly as our world turns. In response, our scientific community has moved remarkably swiftly to develop multiple vaccines, and will hopefully end this pandemic. Our country, and all our neighbors in their countries, are now beginning to implement the largest immunization project we have ever known. The logistics are daunting, but we will get the job done. Humanity has an innate ability to come together in the face of a common adversary to make unparalleled achievements possible.

What does all of this mean for the Calvert Marine Museum? It means a lot of outside the box thinking, planning, and pivoting. Like our sibling museums, we have had to make significant changes in the ways we accomplish our mission. Educational programs, field trips, summer camps, and smaller events have all been downsized or moved to a hybrid or virtual format. For larger events, we will enhance outdoor activities and look for ways to bring indoor components outside. Our goal is to maximize safety without losing visitor engagement, and we work hard to connect with guests—even through masks and with social distancing.

Despite the challenges, COVID has not kept us from planning wonderful new exhibits for 2021! The Maryland Federation of Art will open an exhibit on April 1, followed by a collaboration between our Paleontology and Exhibits Departments to unveil *Sharks! Sink Your Teeth In!* in July. New Assistant Curator of Paleontology Dr. Victor Perez is leading the research and development of this exhibit, which I’m sure will garner lots of positive attention given its subject matter.

Our infrastructure improvement projects continue unabated since they are relatively unhindered by the COVID situation. The museum recently replaced its aging phone system, and you’ll read elsewhere in this issue about the new aquarium chiller system and recently constructed pedal boats that will be available for public use in the boat basin this summer. We’re also working on assessments and bulkhead improvements in the boat basin and planning renovation work at the J.C. Lore & Sons Oyster House off-site exhibit.

On the financial side of the house we have been proactive in applying for new grants and converted one existing grant to help us through these difficult times, and there may be additional funds available to museums as a result of the latest federal relief package. I am proud that our financial outlook is as solid as it can be under the circumstances, and confident that once we get the green light to host large events again that the public will return in droves. To those of you who have renewed your membership, shopped in the Museum Store, or donated to our various fundraising campaigns in recent months, we thank you from the bottom of our heart! Despite the financial upheaval this pandemic has caused, our neighbors, friends, and visitors have shown us that they remain committed to our success. So many of you have stepped up to support us at the time when it was needed most, and we are ever so appreciative!

I see 2021 as a year of hope. I am hopeful that the vaccines will bring an end to this pandemic; I am hopeful that an end to the pandemic will allow far-flung friends and family to once again re-unite; I am hopeful that a return to normal will enable all of our volunteers to come back to the museum they love; I am hopeful that dormant revenue streams will once again become vibrant; I am hopeful that we can begin to move forward with the site master plan. All these things I see as highly possible, if not probable — I can’t wait!
Dee of St. Mary’s Continued from Page 1

Continued on page 4
and identifying what was caught in the dredge provided students a fuller picture of the underwater environment. A common theme of the instruction was the interdependence of people with nature and how small changes can have profound effects on the ecology of the local waters.

As the Chesapeake Bay oyster stocks plummeted and harvests declined steadily in the 1980s, Russell adapted to the changes. After 1989, when it was a challenge to catch even 25 bushels of oysters a day, Russell moved away from commercial oyster dredging altogether and transitioned to carrying passengers and educating the public. His new venture, “Skipjack Tours,” was launched in the early 1990s to offer environmental tours, charters, and crab feasts aboard his vessel that was licensed by the Coast Guard to carry 38 passengers. No longer needing to comply with Maryland’s strict dredging laws, he opted to install an internal engine and propeller to replace the push boat.

The environmental education venture evolved into the Chesapeake Bay Field Lab program that Russell and his wife, Viki Volk-Russell, established at St. George Island in 2000. In 2001, with assistance from 30 community service student volunteers from St. Mary’s College of Maryland, the former Sea Fruit oyster house was converted into an environmental education center with a water monitoring lab and museum displays to complement the skipjack program. The Chesapeake Bay Field Lab, Inc., received its nonprofit status as a 501(c)3 organization that year.

The operation of Skipjack Tours and Chesapeake Bay Field Lab programs continued until 2010 when age caught up with the 30 year old Dee of St. Mary’s and she required some serious structural work. The skipjack was lifted by crane onto Russell’s land at St. George Island to undergo major repairs. In 2011, the Dee of St. Mary’s received the dubious distinction of being named to Preservation Maryland’s Endangered Maryland structure list. But, with grant monies and private donations amounting to $150,000, repairs were undertaken. Boat builder Francis Goddard oversaw the repairs and much of the carpentry work was performed by his cousin, Benji Goddard. Once work was completed, the skipjack was relaunched in May, 2012, and her mast was re-stepped in July.

On August 26, 2012, the skipjack left St. George Island for Solomons to begin a new chapter in her life. On June 4, 2013, stewardship of the Dee of St. Mary’s and the Chesapeake Bay Field Lab program were officially transferred to the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners to be operated and maintained by Calvert Marine Museum. After a three-year trial period during which the boat was maintained and crewed by museum staff and volunteers and operated as a floating classroom and a public sail venue, the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to officially and permanently accept Dee of St. Mary’s as part of the Calvert Marine Museum on May 24, 2016.

Under the stewardship of the Calvert Marine Museum, the U.S. Coast Guard licensed vessel continues to be crewed by museum staff and volunteers and maintained by the Patuxent Small Craft Guild. As the Calvert Marine Museum celebrates a half century and the skipjack turns 41, the Dee of St. Mary’s is poised to continue her role to educate the public about the history and ecology of our local waters for many years to come.

On February 24, 1982, the Dee of St. Mary’s crew entertained visitors from the Calvert Marine Museum’s Patuxent River Folklife and Oral History Project. Folklorist and Project Director Paula J. Johnson brought audio equipment to record the sounds of the skipjack and her husband, Carl Fleischhauer, had his camera equipment to photo-document a day on the dredge boat. They left Point Lookout, Maryland, around 7:00 a.m., spent the day dredging under sail, and returned around 6:00 p.m. to unload their catch to a truck waiting to transport the harvest to Lumpkin Seafood at piney Point. These recordings and photographs are preserved at the Calvert Marine Museum as part of the Patuxent River Project Collection. Some of the images are presented here.

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ENDNOTES

The Patuxent Small Craft Guild (PSCG) recently designed and built two wooden pedal boats to celebrate the museum’s 50th anniversary. Why pedal boats? A few years ago, the PSCG built a replica pedal boat to commemorate the mass produced ones constructed by M.M. Davis & Son shipyard of Solomons for the 1939 World’s Fair. It’s a faithful replica, but a bit large and unwieldy for the museum’s boat basin! The 50th anniversary seemed a good opportunity to improve on the design.

The current wooden models are smaller and easier to handle than the 1939 replica. They will replace the popular, but well-worn, plastic pedal boats that visitors use during the museum’s festivals, camps, and other waterfront activities. These boats entertain approximately 1,200 guests a season, so they get a lot of use and a bit of abuse!

The box-like scow hulls and overall dimensions of the new boats are similar to the plastic boats. The hulls of both boats are identical, but there was some debate concerning choices of drive mechanisms. One faction favored the more traditional paddlewheel while others wanted to try a propeller drive system. What ensued was a friendly competition to compare and measure the differences between the two drive systems.

Longtime PSCG member Alan Suydam suggested a propeller drive system that he read about in Wooden Boat magazine. It was devised by Phillip Thiel who coincidentally had been a classmate of Al’s father at the Webb Institute. Thiel graciously sent plans for the propeller and the entire drive mechanism. Al glued up 14 identical segments of the propeller and faired out the assembly to produce a great looking prop. Meanwhile, PSCG members built a more conventional paddlewheel drive system for use in the other boat.

Similar to a catamaran, each boat is made up of two hulls. This arrangement provides plenty of naming opportunities to celebrate our maritime history while recognizing the other CMM themes of estuarine biology and paleontology. Each pedal boat will have three names; one for the pedal boat as a whole and a name for each hull. Thus, one of the boats is Sharks with hull names Meg and Don (a nod to the Megalodon shark that inhabited the area during the Miocene). The other boat, Otters, has hull names Bubbles and Squeak, in memory of CMM’s first pair of North American river otters.

Although the pandemic delayed progress on the project, both boats were completed in the fall and test launched. The boats, with fanciful paint jobs to resemble their names, will be available for public use in the boat basin in 2021. 🦈
Sharks are coming to Calvert County

By Dr. Victor Perez, Assistant Curator of Paleontology

The Calvert Marine Museum is preparing a new exhibit titled Sharks! Sink Your Teeth In! set to open in July, 2021. This exhibit juxtaposes the fossil sharks and rays found along the Calvert Cliffs with those living in the western Atlantic Ocean today. More than 50 different species of sharks and rays have been identified as fossils along the 20 to 7 million-year-old Calvert Cliffs. How do we identify these fossils and what can they teach us? CMM staff and volunteers are hard at work creating the exhibit content, designing custom display cases, and crafting educational lessons to coincide with the exhibit. Visitors will be able to examine shark teeth up close and learn how to interpret them the way a paleontologist would. This family-friendly exhibit will include rare and unique specimens that are typically not on display to the public. The fossils will be brought to life with amazing scientific illustrations depicting reconstructions of predator-prey interactions from millions of years ago. Immerse yourself in the past, as you see the world through the eyes of a paleontologist! 🦈

Diversity of fossil shark and ray teeth that can be found along the Calvert Cliffs.

Tom Younger designing custom wall mounts to display shark jaws for the upcoming exhibit. (Photos by Victor Perez)

MARITIME MAINTENANCE THIS WINTER

Paxontean Small Craft Guild volunteer Jim Wilson making a repair to the Dee of St. Mary’s. (Photo by Rob Hurry)

The Wm. B. Tennison visited the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in November for her annual hull maintenance and U.S. Coast Guard inspection. (Photo by Capt. Bill Nichols)
There are a few things that set the museum’s aquatic displays apart from aquariums that many of you might keep at home. The size of the tanks is an obvious one, but another big difference is the temperature requirements of the animals. Most people who have aquariums at home keep tropical fishes that do best at temperatures between 77° and 82° F, while a lot of the museum’s tanks need to be kept cooler.

Many of the aquatic specimens in the Estuarine Biology Gallery are found in the Chesapeake Bay and the surrounding waters. Water temperatures in these areas can vary dramatically depending upon location and season. Temperatures can range from sub-freezing in winter to the high 80s in summer. Animals living there are very adaptable, but we find that a lot of them prefer cooler temperatures of between 60-65° F. Their metabolisms are ideally suited for this temperature range, and parasites tend to be less of a problem in cooler water.

Keeping the water cool enough for these animals is a complicated task. Until last month, we relied upon individual refrigeration devices (known as water chillers) at each tank. These are electrically powered and operate just like your refrigerator, except that they keep aquarium water cool instead of milk and cold cuts. Most of these water chillers had been working continually for many years and maintenance costs were rising exponentially. Since animals’ lives depend upon keeping them at the proper temperature, repairs usually required emergency service calls adding even more to the costs.

Another big problem was the inefficiency of this system. In the process of cooling the water, chillers generate waste heat. Our chillers had to be close to the tanks they were cooling, meaning that waste heat was being expelled into the same room containing the tanks we were trying to cool. It became necessary to run a large air conditioner constantly to keep the room cool enough to counteract the heat being produced by the water chillers. It is easy to see the inefficiency of this system. This situation wasn’t the result of poor planning in the past but came about slowly over time as the staff added more and more chillers to address changing needs.

We needed to do something to improve efficiency and reliability, ensure the continued health and safety of our animals, and reduce the costs of maintaining or replacing the old chillers. The solution was to replace all those old, worn out chillers with a single, large unit located outside that can chill all the tanks inside at one time.

Water is pumped from a reservoir, to the big chiller where it is cooled down, then through a system of pipes to devices called heat exchangers at each tank. These heat exchangers allow the water from the main chiller to come into indirect contact with the aquarium water inside a plastic chamber. The chilled water flows through titanium pipes inside the chamber, while the aquarium water is pumped through the chamber, around the outside of the titanium pipes, and back into the aquarium. Titanium piping is chosen because of its excellent ability to transfer heat. The aquarium water cools down as it flows around the titanium pipes containing the colder, chilled water. A programmable, electronic thermostat at each heat exchanger maintains the desired temperature by opening or closing a valve controlling flow of the chilled water to the chamber. We currently have new heat exchangers mounted on 12 exhibits and holding tanks with the ability to add to these in the future if necessary. At present, the coldest tank is being kept at 62° F, however we could easily decrease it to 55° or even lower should the need ever arise.
Aquarium animals chill out in 2020  Continued from Page 7

Since the late 1980s, Calvert County Public School System has introduced students to a variety of field trips in collaboration with local, state, and regional partner agencies to provide hands-on environmental education experiences. CHESPAX is named for the two major natural settings in Calvert County, the Chesapeake Bay and the Patuxent River. It is a unique program that offers students the opportunity to visit science laboratories, museums, parks, and other sites to learn about the natural environment and helps students advocate for responsible decisions regarding their future. Each year, the Calvert Marine Museum participates as the 4th grade field trip destination, welcoming hundreds of students to learn about fossils and animal adaptations.

This year, CMM educators are excited to offer our program virtually to Calvert County Public School children. Through our GoogleSite and live classroom interaction with students, we will explore how Calvert Cliffs formed over millions of years, what fossils are, and what paleontologists learn from the fossils they study. Students will also have the opportunity to think like a biologist by studying adaptations of skates and rays as well as our North American river otters.

But ... how does a virtual program actually work?! Each 4th grade teacher registers their class through our online portal. In exchange, they receive a link to our GoogleSite, which is a website specifically for the CHESPAX field trip. It includes lessons, activities, videos, and additional resources for students and teachers. We also offer a live component to the CHESPAX field trip at which time the class connects with one of our educators through a virtual meeting platform. During this session students interact with our educators and get an up-close look at fossils and have the opportunity to ask questions. While we’d rather see students in person, this has been one of the most exciting field trip experiences for CMM staff this fall.

We’re fortunate to be able to continue this program through the pandemic and look forward to inviting classes back to the galleries when the health crisis subsides.

By Rachelle Green, Deputy Director

Spotlight on the CHESPAX Program at CMM...

CMM Educator Kevin Allor giving instruction to a 4th grade class in the Benning Education Center. We use a variety of portable devices including a laptop, two cameras, and microphones to give the best virtual experience to our students. (Photo by Rachelle Green)

Education UPDATE

One of 12 heat exchangers that were recently installed on some of the museum’s exhibits and behind-the-scenes holding tanks. (Photo by Perry Hampton)

The installation of the equipment and piping was conducted by staff from Kelly HVAC in Waldorf, Maryland. They did a magnificent job on a project that was notably different from their usual installations. The system was engineered by Aqua Logic of San Diego, California, who also fabricated the specialized heat exchangers. The museum’s Estuarine Biology staff strive to achieve the highest standards of care for our animals and the new chilled water system represents a significant improvement in our ability to do just that. 🐟

Electronic thermostats control the temperature of each aquarium, individually. (Photo by Perry Hampton)
I am usually saddened by the knowledge that another year has gone by, but 2020 is the exception. The pandemic made 2020 a year of challenges and it has been a crazy year for all of us. Wearing masks and social distancing are not my idea of fun. All the major events had to be cancelled in 2020 for the safety and well-being of our volunteers, staff, and visitors. While we were closed for four months, the museum was quiet with only a few staff members in each day and no volunteers or visitors. It was a lonely place until we were finally allowed to reopen and welcome our volunteers and visitors back in July. Through it all, the volunteers kept in touch and helped with “at home” projects so we would be ready when it was time to reopen. Believe me when I say, I don’t know what we would do without our awesome volunteers!

In fiscal year 2020, our volunteers logged 22,921.5 hours which equates to $623,465 worth of in-kind service. That is an incredible accomplishment with being open only 8.5 months during FY’20. Even with the restrictions and guidelines that had to be put in place due to the pandemic, our volunteer family continues to make CMM the kind of destination our visitors are looking for to enjoy an awesome experience while they learn about our three themes. Thanks to our volunteers for all they do every day of the year, to make CMM the best it can be! Happy New Year to all!

CMM staff and volunteers partner with the American Legion Post 274 Ladies Auxiliary to collect and deliver snacks, goodies, and supplies to the residents of the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home (CHVH) every month. From left are CHVH Director of Recreational Services Ashley Radano, CMM Volunteer and Events Coordinator Sherry Reid, CMM Board of Governors member Nancy Wieck, American Legion Ladies Auxiliary member Kathryn Rivers, and CMM Group and Visitor Services Coordinator Melissa McCormick. (Photo by Rodney Jones, CHVH deputy director)
Kee-eyes Habit for Humanity ReStore volunteer David Templeman recently discovered a C. Leslie Oursler oil painting titled “Help for a Stricken Warship” and donated it to the Calvert Marine Museum.

Oursler’s work has a significant place in the Calvert Marine Museum’s artwork collection. Clarence Leslie Oursler (1913-1987) was a self-taught Maryland artist with a passion for painting ships, seascapes, and waterside scenes of the Chesapeake Bay region. He created over 180 marine paintings during his career and the Calvert Marine Museum curates the largest collection of his works. Dating from 1967 to 1986, CMM’s collection reveals the changes in the artist’s painting techniques from his realistic portrayals early in his career to a more impressionistic approach to painting in his later years. “Help for a Stricken Warship,” dated 1986, is one of his later works.

As Templeton relates: “I was lucky enough to retire in 2018 at the age of 60, and started volunteering that year as a cashier at the Pineville North Carolina [Habitat for Humanity] ReStore …” He often browses the artwork that people donate to the ReStore. “I recall speaking to a customer who purchased an unframed painting. I commented that the picture was a nice piece, and he said he was just buying the picture so that he could whitewash the canvas and use it as a blank for his own painting. That conversation played in my mind when I saw the back of the Oursler canvas.”

“I noticed the Oursler painting leaning against the wall, partially hidden by some bookcases. It caught my eye, especially since it appeared to be an original painting. The Restore sells a lot of framed prints, and also some unframed canvasses at pretty low prices. I believe many of our customers purchase the framed pictures as a way to get a nice but inexpensive frame. I Googled C. Leslie Oursler and that led me to the Calvert Marine Museum. I saw some pictures of his steamer paintings in the more realistic style.”

“As a volunteer, I get a 10% discount on Restore purchases, so I was able to buy the Oursler painting for $13.50 plus tax! What a deal!”

Upon accepting the painting for CMM, Director Jeff Murray affirmed that it is a fine example of Oursler’s later work and expressed his gratitude that we have this opportunity to add it to the museum’s permanent collection.

Templeman concludes: “Not quite the same as bringing a long lost Rembrandt to Antiques Roadshow — but probably the closest I’ll ever get.”

Photos by David Templeman

In Memory of Frances Hutchins

Frances Catherine King Hutchins, 95, former custodian and “unofficial ambassador” at the Calvert Marine Museum, died on November 9, 2020. Born in Barstow, Maryland, she was the seventh of 14 siblings born to Frances and John King.

Frances attended Central School in Prince Frederick and worked on her family’s farm. At age 16, she began working at her family’s tavern, “Dukes,” in Prince Frederick. There, she met her future husband, George Washington Hutchins. They married in 1943 and moved to Dowell, Maryland, before building a home in Lusby, Maryland, where they raised ten children.

Frances lived a life of community service. She was a longtime member of St. John United Methodist Church in Lusby where she volunteered in various leadership capacities. In the 1960s, she was an active participant in the NAACP’s non-violent protests at local lunch counter sit-ins. An achievement Frances was most proud of was organizing the first Girl Scout Troop for African American girls in Calvert County in the early 1960s.

Frances worked as a domestic house cleaner for many years to help support her family and she loved fishing and crabbing in her spare time. From 1983 to 1987, she was employed as the custodian at the Calvert Marine Museum where she was named its “unofficial ambassador” by a local newspaper. Frances always greeted visitors with a warm welcome and enjoyed sharing her knowledge about the museum’s exhibits and the marine life indigenous to this area.

Frances left the museum to become a bailiff in the Circuit Courts of Calvert County under the Hon. Judge Thomas Rymer. Frances will be missed by all who knew her, but will long be remembered for her kindness, love, and compassion.
HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS at the MUSEUM

Patuxent Small Craft Guild members, led by Ed Gies, decorated the bugeye Volunteer for the holidays. (Photo by Rob Hurry)

Visitors Kelly Antosh, Benjie Porecki, Connor Porecki, Kim Jackson, and Camden Jackson, held by Dustin Jackson, enjoy the holiday train display set up by volunteers from the Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum at Special Needs Night at CMM. (Photo by Kathleen Porecki)

The otters enjoyed their very own Christmas tree, covered with toys and treats. Click here to watch the video. (Photo by Anjelica Eitel)

Dee of St. Mary’s participating in the Solomons Lighted Boat Parade. (Photo by Anjelica Eitel)

CMM departments took turns decorating this year’s beautiful 18-foot tree in the Solomons Pavilion. This was one of the traditions that still took place during the Solomons Business Association’s 37th annual Christmas Walk. (Photos by Rachelle Green, Perry Hampton, and Judi Kane)
It wasn’t easy, or pretty, and it feels like we’ve all aged much more than a single year, but we made it to 2021. With the notable absence of all live events, including summer concerts, the Calvert Marine Museum Society lost a significant source of revenue for the year. However, we were able to persevere, adapt, and end 2020 with several successful fundraising efforts.

In addition to traditional appeals and campaigns, this year we introduced a creative way to support CMM: The 50 Miles for 50 Years Virtual Challenge. Beginning on the museum’s 50th anniversary, participants were challenged to log 50 miles of activity, by walking, running, swimming, or even sailing. For an entire month, we saw posts on social media popping up with the hashtag #CMM50for50 and it was wonderful to follow along with many of you during your journeys. At the same time, thanks to a little interdepartmental collaboration, weekly guides helped participants identify fossils, plants, and boats that they might encounter while walking around Southern Maryland. We even distributed our first ever Waterside Music Series playlist for you to enjoy while logging your miles. Thank you to everyone who participated, and to our amazing sponsors: Bird Barkman Financial Strategies Group of Wells Fargo Advisors, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices McNelis Group Properties, and Calvert Health Foundation. Not only was this an effective — albeit impromptu — fundraiser, but also a great way to stay connected to many of you, while still physically apart.

Thank you for your enduring support; it is much needed and always appreciated. We begin this new year with optimism, and as plans continue to develop, we look forward to sharing them with you.

#CMM50for50

Members of the Patuxent Small Craft Guild sailed 50 miles during the challenge. Shown here is Alan Suydam’s boat (Nonsuch 26), just forward of Lowell and Marilyn Martin’s Catalina 27. Photo taken by Butch Garren from his Nonsuch 30.

Patti Snyder walked with her granddaughter and sported a number of DIY otter t-shirts during the challenge.

Elizabeth Harrington participated in a variety of different ways, including walking with her dogs and kayaking.

Board Member Nancy Wrek kicked off the challenge by walking 50 miles in just five days, all around Solomons Island.
Membership

By Lisa Howard, Membership & Development Associate

Ending on a Positive Note

Normally, my article for this issue of the Bugeye Times is a no-brainer. I recap what is always an amazing members’ trip, sharing photos and funny stories from our end-of-year adventure together. Obviously, this year is a bit different. Although we weren’t able to take our annual trip, I still wanted to end this year on a positive note.

Shortly after Thanksgiving, Aquarist Linda Hanna, Communications and Marketing Coordinator Anjelica Eitel, and I came up with a fun contest to give away a one-year family membership. In exchange for sharing a favorite museum memory, an individual’s name was entered to win. In just the first 24 hours, we received dozens of submissions! We heard from amateur fossil hunters, past interns, concert attendees, and parents who now bring their kids to the same museum they visited as a child.

I cannot tell you how much this overwhelming response warmed our hearts. This year has been rough, but watching these lists grow on social media is the perfect reminder that there are so many reasons to love the museum — and to love our members!

As always, if you have any questions about your membership benefits or how the four-month extension has affected your renewal date, please do not hesitate to contact me at Lisa.Howard@calvertcountymd.gov or 410-326-2042, ext. 8063.

Winter brings another round of staffing changes for the Calvert Marine Museum Society, with the departure of Facilities and Events Coordinator Veronica Jordan. This means there will be some adjustments to how this arm of CMMS functions. The majority of new facility rentals will be temporarily put on hold, and those interested in weddings or Cove Point Lighthouse Keeper’s House rentals should contact CMM Deputy Director Rachelle Green to inquire about rates, availability, and current COVID safety requirements by calling 410-474-5370 or emailing Rachelle.Green@calvertcountymd.gov.

Staff UPDATE

DEPARTURES:

Part-time educator Heather Maggard has accepted a full-time position of recycling coordinator (an education position) at the county’s Appeal Landfill. In addition to outreach and other education programs, Heather will soon be coordinating Calvert County’s second grade CHESPAX field trips to the landfill. She departed the museum on November 16 to begin her new job.

Lisa Haycraft left her museum role as part-time educator on December 18 to pursue a full-time teaching position at Chopticon High School in St. Mary’s County. Lisa loves working with older students and she will be teaching biology and honors biology. We wish her the best as she continues her career as a classroom teacher.

Facility and Events Coordinator Veronica Jordan left the museum November 25 to pursue a full-time position supporting the NAVAIR Digital Department’s Innovation and Culture Division. Since coming to the museum, Veronica has grown Cove Point rentals, weddings, and corporate events while also leading or participating in Calvert Marine Museum Society fundraising events and Waterside Music Series concerts. We will miss her, but know she’ll succeed in her new position.

ARRIVALS:

Longtime Customer Service Attendant Margaret “Sissi” Moore has been hired as the museum’s weekend coordinator! Her front desk experience and warm personality are a winning combination as she takes on this leadership role. She’ll also continue to work at the admissions desk on an as-needed basis.
Thank you for believing in us and supporting the Museum Store during 2020! We believe that our new procedures shouldn’t stop you from having an enjoyable experience, so there is still plenty of laughter in the store. Our beautiful, fun, and creative merchandise is constantly changing and, as always, the proceeds from store sales support the educational programs and projects of the museum. We welcome 2021.

— Maureen Baughman, Director of Retail Operations

I love shopping for my grandchildren at the Museum Store and sharing with you which activities, books, and toys they enjoy the most!

— Patti Snyder, Assistant Store Manager

An important part of my job right now is ensuring everyone’s safety and I take that very seriously. You can count on all of us!

— Kim Zabiegalski, Senior Assistant Store Manager

Call me anytime to schedule a Zoom shopping session — it’s an easy, no pressure way to shop from home. I will be happy to ship your purchase or arrange for curbside pickup. 410-326-2750.

— Rae Dera, Assistant Store Manager

Our members have been so kind and supportive of us throughout the past year. Thank you!

— Marilyn Baler, Weekend Sales Associate

I believe everyone can still have fun while shopping safely! Let me show you what’s new!

— Judi Kane, Weekend Sales Associate