When the Calvert Marine Museum was started in 1970, the founders were interested in preserving and documenting the rich heritage of the local area—Solomons and its adjoining communities near the mouth of the Patuxent River on the Calvert County side. There was plenty here to occupy the attention of the founders and volunteers, since many local residents had stories and items to contribute and since much of the fabric of the community still remained. This emphasis was continued into the mid-1970s when the museum was moved to the present location in the Solomons School building and new exhibits were developed.

It wasn’t long, however, before museum leaders began to expand their interest up the Patuxent River, a rich trove of local and maritime history. By 1979 the museum was participating in the Patuxent River Underwater Cultural Resources Survey that extended the full length of the tidal Patuxent; and by 1981 was engaged in the Patuxent River Folklife and Oral History Project. The first of these projects was a systematic survey of the submerged cultural resources of the river, with particular emphasis on the War of 1812, resulting in 1981 in the publication by CMM of the book *Flotilla: Battle for the Patuxent*, written by research associate Donald G. Shomette. The second project, however, was directed toward interviews to document the oral and pictorial history of the maritime heritage of the river. Directed by CMM staffer Paula J. Johnson, with support from folklife specialists...
PATUXENT RIVER APPRECIATION DAYS
Celebrating Thirty Years of Southern Maryland Tradition

In 2008, Patuxent River Appreciation Days (PRAD) activities will celebrate the OYSTER. This greatly diminished fishery will be debated at the “State of the River Summit” on Friday, October 10, from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., in the museum’s auditorium (see article below).

Celebrating thirty years, the two-day PRAD event will be held at the museum on Saturday, October 11, and Sunday, October 12, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., supported by the Calvert County Board of Commissioners. Free museum admission, boat rides, toy boat building, arts and crafts, music, great food and games will offer fun for everyone! Pony rides, pet adoption opportunities, and free parking are across the street. Don’t miss the annual parade on Sunday at 2:00 p.m. with cash prizes for “Best Parade” entry. “Go Green” and learn how your everyday actions will help preserve the Patuxent River. Visit the “Green Village” where nonprofit groups will showcase exhibits, demonstrations, displays, and educational activities about “green” products, recycling, oyster restoration, native plants, and more. Join the movement with a “People for the Patuxent” tattoo or PRAD sticker, and get your picture taken with our own Senator Fowler wading in the river. Documentaries highlighting environmental issues related to the Patuxent River and Chesapeake Bay will be showing in the auditorium throughout the weekend. Returning PRAD favorites on the museum grounds are the juried arts and craft fair and delicious local food; music performances include bluegrass with the Jay Armsworth Band and Deanna Dove; free boat rides on the museum’s buyboat Wm. B. Tennison and the skipjack Nathan of Dorchester; and rowing in the boat basin.

A special treat on Saturday, October 11, will be two public sailings on the Patuxent River of the schooner Sultana from the Waterman’s Wharf in Solomons. The Sultana is a replica of a Boston-built merchant vessel that served for four years as the smallest schooner ever in the British Royal Navy. Launched in 2001 and based in the historic port of Chestertown, Maryland, Sultana now sails as the “Schoolship of the Chesapeake,” embarking nearly 5,000 students for unique educational programs between April and November each year. The two public sailings are only on Saturday from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. The cost for adults is $30; children under 12 are $15. All children must be accompanied by an adult, and there is an age minimum of five years old. To reserve space or inquire about the “Public Sails in Solomons” on Saturday, October 11, please contact Sultana Projects at 410-778-5954.

State of the River Summit:
The Great Oyster Debate
Friday, October 10, 1-5 p.m.

The Calvert Marine Museum annually presents the State of the River Summit on the Friday prior to the Patuxent River Appreciation Days celebration. This year’s summit, titled “The Great Oyster Debate,” will bring together scientists, watermen, public policy makers, elected officials, aquaculturists, and environmental activists to debate the major initiatives being discussed to restore oysters to the Chesapeake Bay — including the potential use of native and/or nonnative oysters, a moratorium on public lands, commercial aquaculture, and large scale restoration. Dr. Michael Paolisso, a cultural anthropologist from the University of Maryland, will offer his unique perspective on the oyster’s role in Chesapeake culture. The summit will conclude with a “Call to Action” by former state senator Bernie Fowler, and an invitation to get involved with one of the many grass-roots groups trying to make a difference.

We invite you to join us for what promises to be an informative, lively, and passionate debate on the challenges confronting this cultural, ecological, and economic symbol of the Chesapeake Bay. Held in the museum auditorium, there is no charge.

Senator Bernie Fowler at an earlier River Summit.
CMM photo by Bob Hall.
ENJOY A NIGHT OF ELEGANCE
AT THE BUGEYE BALL

On Saturday, October 18, the Calvert Marine Museum hosts its annual Bugeye Ball. Enjoy an evening of fine food, entertainment, a silent auction, and dancing within the exhibit halls of the museum. Tickets are $150 per person. Auction items include an eight-course catered dinner in your home from Ken’s Creative Kitchen, a selection of jewelry from G&H Jewelers, overnight accommodations at local hotels and inns, and framed artwork. Ken’s Creative Kitchen will prepare a delectable menu for the evening featuring rockfish stuffed with crab.

This year’s Ball proceeds help support the historic Cove Point Lighthouse. Tickets can be purchased by calling 410-326-2042, ext. 16, 17, or 18.

THOUSANDS
ENJOY SUMMER
CONCERTS AT
CMM

Country star Dierks Bentley, rock legends ZZ Top, and classic singer/songwriter Kenny Loggins lit up the Solomons sky this summer with memorable performances. Thousands of fans turned out in May, June, and July for the hot tickets at CMM.

GEORGE WINSTON TO PERFORM
IN THE CMM AUDITORIUM

On Thursday, November 13, and Friday, November 14, Cumberland & Erly, LLC, and Prince Frederick Chrysler/Jeep/Dodge present pianist George Winston live in concert in the CMM indoor auditorium. Showtime each night is 7:30 p.m. Tickets are $50 each plus a $2.50 per order service charge. Limited VIP tickets are available for $100 each. All tickets are general admission, and seating is limited. Tickets can be purchased by calling 410-326-2042, ext. 16, 17, or 18, or online at www.calvertmarinemuseum.com.


STAFF CHANGES

In the development department, Traci Cimini has moved up to fill the vacancy of development associate. She is responsible for preparing press releases and other media contacts, will prepare grant requests, and provide general support to the department. Scott Forman is working in buildings and grounds maintenance.

PALEONTOLOGY STAFF
RECOVER WHALE FOSSIL

In a fortuitous find in one of the Calvert Cliffs, our paleontology department’s collections manager, John Nance, discovered a skull and virtually complete skeleton of a ten-ton, twenty-five-foot-long prehistoric baleen whale. More complete information, with photos, will be in the next issue of the Bugeye Times.
While summers are always active at CMM, this past summer had many educational and other events that brought increased numbers of visitors – many of them young.

Cardboard boat race at the boating camp. CMM photo by Bob Hall

The boating camp participants. CMM photo by Bob Hall

Attendees at the “Strange Creatures of the Deep” camp. CMM photo by Bob Hall

Another boat camp group CMM photo by Bob Hall

Doug Poole (right) brought his live shark to educate the visitors. CMM photo by Bob Hall

The shark craft table was popular. CMM photo by Bob Hall

A special INTERGENERATIONAL ELDERHOSTEL, and grandchildren proved to be lots of fun for...

A canoe ride, with grandchildren providing the power. CMM photo by Diane Milgrim

Jackie Takacs from Chesapeake Biological Laboratory talks to the Elderhostel group about the bay and river during a Tennison cruise. CMM photo by Diane Milgrim
If you didn’t get to the members’ sneak preview during September’s First Free Friday, then be sure to schedule a visit to this dramatic new exhibit. Located at the end of the Estuarium gallery, it offers a new perspective on our role in the ecosystem — the unintended consequences of introducing nonnative species into the environment. Sponsored by Dominion, the exhibit features live northern snakeheads made notorious in the 2002 Crofton Pond episode. It also highlights such familiars as the mute swan, nutria, kudzu, and the ubiquitous phragmites that have taken over so much of the Chesapeake marsh. Special lighting and vivid original illustrations add drama to this provocative story.
and consultants, field researchers, and photographers, and supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the project amassed an archive of color slides, black and white photographic negatives, and tape-recorded interviews with local residents. Much of this material was used later in museum exhibits and publications, particularly *Working the Water: the Commercial Fisheries of Maryland’s Patuxent River*, a 1988 publication edited by Paula Johnson. Clearly, the museum had expanded its scope up the Patuxent.

In the 1982 and 1983 there was another project that was sponsored by the Southern Maryland Regional Library Association (also supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities) to provide small guides to the southern Maryland area. The museum participated by providing two booklets in the “Historical Tours through Southern Maryland” series: *Solomons by Foot, Bicycle and Boat*, by museum director Ralph Eshelman and volunteer Clara M. Dixon, and *Broome’s Island*, by Paula Johnson. Both of these represented the first organized efforts at publishing histories of these two Patuxent River towns. Unfortunately, both went out of print within months of their publication in 1983. As the result of many requests from visitors and residents for a more extensive history of Solomons, the museum in 1995 published *Solomons Island and Vicinity: An Illustrated History and Walking Tour*, written by the Richard J. Dodds, the museum’s curator of maritime history. This guide continues to be a popular item sold in the museum store and local restaurants.

None of these publications, however, did full credit the rich local history of the area, and the “vicinity” in the 1995 guide did not cover Broomes Island. Mr. Dodds realized that there is a close relationship between Solomons and Broomes Island, both in their location on the Patuxent River and in the common bond of deriving a living from the river’s waters. Although the two communities were established at different times —1865 for Solomons and the late 1880s for Broomes Island — they were both homes to watermen with common interests and, to some extent, shared families. For the past decade, Mr. Dodds has collected information about both places and then began documenting their histories in more detail, with the result that a new museum publication is now available for purchase. Titled *Islands in a River: Solomons and Broomes Island, Maryland*, this 230-page, generously illustrated book provides a valuable history of the two towns.

Two features of the book are especially noteworthy and have particular appeal: personal photographs and quotations from various local sources, mostly county newspapers. These photographs in many cases have been loaned by various family members to the museum for copying, and these members also shared details of their family histories — details not otherwise available from published sources. Solomons, of course, had families engaged in working the water and in processing the catches of seafood, and it also had many families engaged in the shipbuilding industry. Broomes Island, in contrast, was almost entirely a watermen’s
town, with limited boatbuilding by locals for their own use. In both places, typically, a community structure was important for support: each had a post office, schools for the children, stores to supply the needs of residents, and churches to provide spiritual (and social) opportunities around which community life revolved. These institutions are well documented in the book.

World War II changed both communities, with the three navy bases built at Solomons and restricted access to areas of the river. Many left the river for better-paying jobs, and there was more intrusion from the outside world. These changes continued to affect the towns after the end of the war, along with a decline in the productivity of the river’s resources and increasing environmental problems affecting the lower reaches of the river.

The early history of both towns is removed from what we think of these areas today. As described in the “Foreword”:

Solomons and Broomes Island were relatively isolated, insular, and largely independent for many years. . . . In a time when most people did not travel far from their place of birth, most everything could be found within the community. What could not be bought locally might be ordered from Baltimore, the city at the center of the Chesapeake’s transportation network. Families intermarried with other local families, forming strong bonds of kinship, and providing a safety net in time of illness or misfortune.

Despite these changes, descendants of the older families living in Solomons and Broomes Island look back with pride at the hard work and achievements of their ancestors, the history of which is often unrecorded. The book can only offer some of the highlights of this rich tapestry, with the hope that future generations in Calvert County will gain a greater appreciation of the region’s long and diverse maritime heritage.

Two new exhibits are related to the publication of the new book. A photo display panel has been prepared by CMM and installed in the Broomes Island Community Center with photos from the book and descriptive text. Early in 2009 there will be a new photo exhibit on “Solomons Then and Now” in the mezzanine gallery of the museum’s exhibition building.

Islands in a River is available at the museum store for $15.95 (less a 10 percent discount for museum members); it may be ordered by phone from the store at 410-326-2750.
VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

By Sherry Reid, Volunteer/Events Coordinator

It has been a very busy summer at CMM. Our visitors were wowed with several big events such as the Solomons Maritime Festival, Sharkfest!, and three summer concerts. Through sun and rain, heat and humidity, the one thing that remained constant was the support of our volunteer family. Thank you for giving 20,500 volunteer hours during fiscal year 2008. That equates to in-kind services totaling $390,730. Wow! These numbers represent just how much we depend on our volunteers and the knowledge, ability, and talents they share with the museum. Congratulations on a job well done!

On September 2, the Volunteer Council held its annual meeting in the auditorium to elect officers for the upcoming year. The meeting was followed by a reception in the lobby giving everyone an opportunity to mix and mingle. All of the current board members were gracious enough to remain in office for another year: Peggy Hovermale, president; Diana Waring, vice president; Harry Childers, treasurer; Teddie Watts, recording secretary; and Anne Harrison, corresponding secretary. This group has done a great job over the past year expanding and moving volunteer programs forward. The bake sales have been revamped and are now including additional items for sale along with some decorative touches to entice visitors to buy their wares. The Volunteer Council has donated money to the “CMM Green Team” to help with the recycling program, expanded the volunteer shirt program, provided another CPR class, and the list goes on and on. Thank you to the elected officers as well as the liaisons to the Volunteer Council executive board for all their hard work and dedication to the betterment of the volunteer program.

On September 7, volunteers who are also members of the Solomons Island Model Boat Club visited the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in St. Michaels to compete with model skipjacks in races there. Alan Suydam won an award as best captain, Tom Younger took a third, and the CMM club was winner in overall points for the second year in a row. Others from CMM participating were: Len Addiss, Jon Dann, Butch Garren, Rick Navickas, and Richard Rogers.

REMEMBER THE MUSEUM STORE FOR HOLIDAY SHOPPING

Keep the museum’s store in mind when you shop for the upcoming holidays. There are wonderful gifts there — jewelry, clothing, fashion accessories, books, posters, and many other things. Museum members receive a 10 percent discount at all times (bring your membership card), but this is increased to 20 percent during the Solomons Christmas Walk, December 5 and 6, and also during the Members’ Yule Party on December 7. The store will provide free gift-wrapping from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on December 6.

CALVERT MARINE MUSEUM

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