Although the formal opening of the Calvert Marine Museum on Solomons Island was on October 18, 1970 — a date selected for being exactly one year from the “first stake” in the ground on the selected site — there had been visitors to the building for a month or so previous to that date. The facility was developed and managed by a fourteen-member committee of the Calvert County Historical Society, under the chairmanship of William L. Dovel. Very little funding was involved at the time, mostly from a donation from Mr. Jefferson Patterson and some funds from the historical society. Construction and furnishing were largely done by volunteers, who also staffed the museum during open hours, limited at that time to weekends. Judging from minutes of meetings from the period, all those involved considered the twenty-four-by-forty-foot building on Solomons Island to be temporary, as the historical society board and the committee were already looking toward the use of the Solomons School in Avondale as a permanent facility. But by October 1970 the Calvert Marine Museum was open and accepting donations and visitors.

Soon after the opening, the county agreed to turn over to the historical society the use of the Solomons School property for a permanent museum, and the committee began to plan its development, with a drawing revealed to the public in the Calvert Independent in September 1971. Work on this elaborate plan slowed when the acting curator, William Dovel, left in late 1971, but planning went forward to renovate the school building. The historical society realized that a larger museum would require a permanent staff, and it convinced the county to provide for the hiring of a director, Dr. Ralph E. Eshelman, in May 1974. During this same period the state and Calvert County were engaged in efforts to acquire the decommissioned Drum Point Lighthouse from the federal government,
EDUCATION UPDATES

CMM Partners on Three-Year History Grant

The CMM education department is delighted to be a partner in a “Teaching American History” grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Education called “Roots of a Nation — A Chesapeake Journey.” This three-year program will give master teachers from seven Maryland counties, including Calvert and St. Mary’s, the opportunity to learn about early American history by visiting sites, working with top historians, and sharing resources. The project was developed by Sultana Projects. In addition to Sultana and CMM, the other partners are the C. V. Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience at Washington College, and the Center for the Environment and Society at Washington College. Teachers will learn about Native American History and European Settlement, the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, and Slavery and the Civil War.

CMM’s focus will be the War of 1812, which will link to the approaching bicentennial. Working with Dr. Ralph Eshelman, author of The War of 1812 in the Chesapeake, and Donald Shomette, who wrote Floilla: The Patuxent Naval Campaign in the War of 1812, the museum will offer four courses each year over the next three years, as well as hosting a large conference in November 2011.

CILC Pinnacle Award to Education

The museum was honored to receive the CILC Pinnacle Award for 2009-2010. CILC is the Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration, one of the main online services for promoting distance learning both nationally and abroad. This award, presented annually, is based on teacher evaluations submitted through the CILC website and recognizes outstanding performance by a content provider. The award criteria require that the averaged score for all program evaluations for the year must be 2.85 or higher out of a possible 3 (an individual program receives a star rating if it averages a 2.4 or higher). This past year, CMM provided seventy-seven distance-learning programs to schools across the country. Many were funded through a grant from Dominion, which provided support for programs in communities where they have a presence. Helen Mote, the CMM interpreter who does the majority of the programs, deserves high praise for this important recognition.

MUSEUM PROGRAMS FOR FALL AND WINTER

Two new programs are planned for the fall and winter months, in addition to the many events that are normally presented by the museum and listed in the calendar that appears on the museum’s website.

The Calvert Cliffs Conundrum

This is a series of PEM Talks in the museum auditorium, at the dates and times listed below, to offer a holistic perspective on the issues surrounding the Calvert Cliffs. PEM refers to Paleontology, the Environment, and Maritime History, the three themes covered by the museum’s exhibits. The talks will dig into the geology, paleontology, ecology, and sociology of these much-debated landmarks. The series is free and is funded by Bob and Betty Currie, with additional support from Holiday Inn Select Solomons.

For more details about the fall and winter programs, see the CMM calendar at www.calvertmarinemuseum.com.

- Thursday, October 21, 7:00 p.m., Uncovering the Past: The Paleontology of Calvert Cliffs, presented by Dr. Stephen Godfrey.
- Saturday, November 13, 2:30 p.m., The Inexorable Slide: Current Rates of Erosion of Calvert Cliffs, presented by Mr. Jeff Halka.
- Thursday, January 20, 7:00 p.m., Who Cares? The Human Perspective on the Calvert Cliffs, presented by Dr. Ralph Eshelman.
- Saturday, February 5, 2:30 p.m., Tigers in the Cliffs: The Role of Calvert Cliffs as an Ecosystem for the Endangered Puritan Tiger Beetle, presented by Dr. Michael Fenster and Dr. Barry Kinsley.
- Thursday, March 10, 7:00 p.m., Shifting Shoreline: The Complex Case of Cove Point Marsh, presented by Dr. Doug Samson.
- Sunday Conversations with Chesapeake Authors

This six-month free series will offer presentations by local Chesapeake authors and artists as they talk about the process used to conceive, research, write, and illustrate their books. The presentations will begin at 2:00 p.m. and will be held in the museum’s exhibition building. All books and featured items will be available for purchase in the museum store — wonderful holiday purchases that can be signed by the author on the spot! The series is hosted by the museum store with support from Holiday Inn Select Solomons.

- Thursday, October 24, Saving Squeak, written by Jennifer Keats Curtis.
- Sunday, November 21, Dishing up Maryland: 150 Recipes from the Alleghenies to the Chesapeake Bay, by Lucie Snodgrass.
- Sunday, January 16, Pure Sea Glass, written by Richard LaMotte.
- Sunday, February 20, African Americans of Calvert County, written by William Poe.
Despite searing heat in June and the threat of Hurricane Earl in September, nearly 8,000 fans turned out to see the comedy of Blue Collar funny man, Bill Engvall and the classic rock of the legendary REO Speedwagon and Pat Benatar. Engvall ended his night with a lot of laughter during the “Here’s Your Sign” skit. REO Speedwagon and Pat Benatar took the crowd back to the ‘80s with their hot performances of “Take it On the Run,” and “Love is a Battlefield.” Both concerts helped raised thousands for CMM.

These fundraising events have been made possible by the generous support of the following sponsors: The Law Firm of Cumberland & Erly, Prince Frederick Ford/Dodge, Coors, Coors Light, Killians Red (Bozick Distributors), All American Harley-Davidson, Quality Built Homes, Isaac’s Restaurant, The McNelis Group, DM Group, 98 Star FM, Southern Maryland Newspapers, Bay Weekly, Calvert Independent, Quick Connections, Comcast, Jay Worch Electric, United Rentals, Roy Rogers-Solomons, and the Holiday Inn Select-Solomons.
The fortieth anniversary summer was a filled with a wide variety of activities, particularly camp programs that have proved most popular. Concerts and other events brought many visitors to CMM.

There were three Road Scholar (formerly Elderhostel) programs, one on lighthouses and two intergenerational programs for grandparents and grandchildren.

▲ Boating activities for Road Scholars included both canoeing and model-boat racing in the boat basin.

CMM photo by Lori Cole

▲ The members of one intergenerational program posed with the Drum Point Lighthouse in the background.

CMM photo by Lori Cole

▲ Learning about local history was one activity for the young campers in the Try-It camp. Here Alton Kersey, left, explains about oyster processing in the J. C. Lore and Sons building where he was a manager for many years.

CMM photo by Lucy Tonnaci

▲ Participants in the fossil camp searched for specimens on the shore, with guidance from instructor Tom Lewis.

CMM photo by Sherrod Sturrock

▲ Very popular with older youngsters was the cardboard boat camp, in which boats are built from cardboard, painted, and actually raced in the river at the upper end of Solomons Island.

CMM photo by Cindy MacArthur

▲ The life of the buccaneer appealed to campers at the pirate camp, led by Kevin Allor, using the museum’s centerpiece, the Carla Sue, as the pirate ship.

CMM photo by Sherrod Sturrock
Camps were only part of the exciting summer at the museum.

On July 13 Douglas F. Gansler, Maryland’s attorney general (center in shirt and tie), took a cruise on the Wm. B. Tennison as part of his statewide river audit effort. The Patuxent was the tenth river he has visited during his tenure. In addition to members of his staff, he was joined by CMM director Doug Alves and deputy director Sherrod Sturrock, delegate Sue Kullen, museum curators Stephen Godfrey and Ken Kaumeyer, and Patuxent Riverkeeper Fred Tutman.

Photo by Fritz Schantz

The rain garden at the Corbin Pavilion thrived this summer — thanks to the vigilant care of volunteers — and added a pleasant vista to users of the pavilion.

CMM photo by Bob Hall

A most successful Sharkfest! featured Doug Poole with his live shark tank.

Photo by Dave Taylor of Phous Videos Inc.

Parks family members and friends gathered with CMM staff and volunteers to witness the launch of a sixteen-foot traditional crabbing skiff, a reproduction of an original built by Thomas Parks of Broomes Island in 1969. Museum staff and Patuxent Small Craft Guild volunteers took measurements off the original and built the cedar and oak skiff as an educational project and to see if there was an interest in new, wooden crabbing skiffs. Standing left to right are: volunteers Ed Bahniuk, Al Suydam, Bill Wright, Al Lavish, and Joe O’Brien; family members Buddy Parks and Jennifer Parks Price; volunteer Ed Gies; family members Daniel Parks, Kirk Parks, Gale Parks, and family friend Wayne Hatcher; volunteers Jim Wilson, Bill Lake, and Butch Garren; and CMM boatwright George Surgent.

CMM photo by Richard Dodds
culminating in approval of the change in ownership by late 1974, with the decision made to relocate it to the new museum property. During 1974 and early 1975 considerable effort was required to prepare the school building for museum use (with a special grant for an entrance and lobby from Jefferson Patterson), to move exhibits and artifacts from the temporary building, and to prepare a site for the location of the Drum Point Lighthouse, moved on March 22, 1975. The new museum building was formally opened on June 29, 1975.

The next five years saw major developments in the museum, with new staff hired, new exhibits developed, and the management by the historical society turned over to the county government. By late 1975 an exhibit designer, Max Chance, was hired, and the new director and he began planning for further development of the grounds and for new buildings. Without additional funding, however, the expansion was limited to the small craft shed near the location of the relocated lighthouse. Additional parcels of adjacent land were acquired by the county, doubling the museum area, and the J. C. Lore and Sons Oyster House on the island was added as a museum building in 1979. A large number of projects were completed in the new museum building, and a grant from the Maryland Historical Trust made possible the restoration and furnishing of the Drum Point Lighthouse (dedicated officially in June 1978). In the spring of 1976, the first issue of the Bugeye Times appeared, and the first club, the American Shipcarvers Guild, was started. In the late 1970s the Patuxent River became the focus of museum interest, with the first Patuxent River Appreciation Days festival held at CMM (now an annual event) and a cooperative effort to study the underwater archaeology of the river, especially looking for traces of the War of 1812. The most significant event at the end of the museum’s first decade was the official transfer in September 1979 of the management of CMM from the historical society to the Calvert County government, establishing a fifteen-member Board of Governors, later increased to seventeen members. At that time the county also provided funds for engaging the firm of Cambridge Seven Associates, Cambridge, Massachusetts, to create a museum master plan, a plan that shaped the museum for the next two decades.

During the decade of the 1980s, two of the three phases of the master plan were carried out: a boat basin to expand the CMM waterfront was added in 1984, and the construction of the present 28,000 square-foot exhibition building was begun in 1986 and completed in 1989. The new building’s first permanent exhibit — “Maritime Patuxent: A River and its People” — was opened in November 1989. In 1981 the museum received its accreditation by the Association of American Museums, clear recognition that it was now an accepted, functioning museum. A fundraising organization — the Calvert Marine Society (later renamed the Calvert Marine Museum Society) — was incorporated in 1984 to provide support that augmented county funding, and this group began raising funds through several projects. One effort in 1985 — the Waterside Concert Series — began successful programs that have continued up to the present day. There were so many new exhibits, new clubs, new programs, and new fundraisers during this decade that a list would be too extensive for this article. With the opening of the new building, the museum in the Solomons School was closed for renovation, and administrative activities were carried out in the annex to the north and in a former apartment building to the east on Lore Street on property acquired by the county for the museum. This decade also saw a number of publications by the museum — too numerous to list here — written by museum staff and museum research associates.

The decade of the 1990s was marked by a change in leadership, more building changes, more exhibits, and more programs. In 1990, the first paid director, Ralph Eshelman, retired, and a new director, C. Douglass Alves Jr., took over in 1991. The next year the second permanent exhibit — “Estuarine Patuxent: A River and Its Life” — opened in the exhibition building, and in 1993 the third phase of the master plan saw the renovated Solomons School reopened as the Administration Building, with offices, an expanded library and archives, workspace for exhibits and paleontology, and workspace and storage for maritime history. The big event of 1994 was the opening of the new otter habitat, and the otters soon became CMM mascots and very popular with visitors. In 1994 there was recognition of the Wm. B. Tennison as a National Historic Landmark, and in 1996 the museum received reaccreditation. The third permanent exhibit in the exhibition building — “Treasurers from the Cliffs: Exploring
Marine Fossils” — opened in 1997, and in 1998 work was started on an expansion of the estuarine biology workspace at the south end of the exhibition building. Beginning in 1997, there were negotiations between the county and the Coast Guard for the transfer of the Cove Point Lighthouse to museum management, an effort that was finally completed in 2000. Because of success of the Waterside Concerts, more space was needed, and this was provided by a grant in 1998 for the construction of the Washington Gas Pavilion to the south of the museum parking lot. One final accomplishment of the decade was the establishment of the museum website, opening access to the wide world of the Internet age.

The museum advanced into the twenty-first century with fine facilities, strong programs, a dedicated staff, and support from the community and the visiting public. January 2001 was the date that the annual “Winter Lights” programs started, honoring lighthouses in the Southern Maryland area. The Maryland Lighthouse Challenge was later added in September each year. In April of that year the first of the yearly Chesapeake Antique Boat and Marine Engine shows was hosted by CMM along with a Family Discovery Day, both events evolving into the Solomons Maritime Festival. Another maritime outreach was the hosting of the United States Vintage Model Yacht Group event, starting in 2002 and repeated several times during the decade. A more auspicious beginning was the first of the Sharkfest! programs in July 2002, an annual event that now draws capacity crowds each year. The second Friday in October 2006 saw the beginning of the Patuxent River Summits as a prelude to the annual Patuxent River Appreciation Days weekend, and this event is now in its fifth year. Attracting even more attention was the inauguration in 2007 of the monthly First FREE Friday, drawing visitors to a free evening with a wide variety of musical and other attractions.

Summers at CMM have become increasingly active with weeklong camps for various ages of children and with Road Scholar (formerly Elderhostel) senior-group and intergenerational programs. The most active outreach to schools was the development of a distance-learning program in which teachers anywhere in the world have the ability to bring a real-time educational experience to their classes through point-to-point videoconferencing via the Internet. CMM programs are presented by staff based on its three themes. (CMM received recognition for its programming — see page 2.) These are but a few of many innovations of the 2000s, all contributing to the third accreditation received in 2009.

Facilities at CMM received considerable attention during the decade. In 2000 the transfer of the Cove Point Lighthouse to Calvert County (for museum management) was finally effected by formal deed, and plans were developed for its use, with the Coast Guard still responsible for the light itself. By 2002 the lighthouse property was first opened to the public on a limited basis, but by decade’s end was open on a more generous schedule. An open pavilion was built for photo exhibits, a platform constructed to view the adjacent unloading pier for liquid natural gas, and the fog signal building converted to a small viewing space for a brief video history. Further changes are still in the planning stages.

There was also considerable repair work during the decade. The J. C. Lore & Sons Oyster House building was designated a National Historic Monument in 2001, and it also received attention, with a complete refurbishing of the exhibits beginning in 2008 and reopening in 2010. A larger and more efficient building for the Patuxent Small Craft Guild opened in 2003, providing better facilities to build and maintain the museum’s small boats and to permit offering classes in boatbuilding to the public.

Discussions within CMM during 2004 and 2005 looked at how to update the existing permanent exhibit galleries, with first attention given to the Discovery Room, which underwent renovation and a new touch tank, reopening in 2006. Similarly, there was a very extensive overhaul of the paleontology exhibit hall that stressed the introductory descriptive area, and this was opened in 2008. The estuarine biology hall had some upgrades, chiefly additions to the outdoor otter exhibit and an exhibit of eco-invasive species added in 2008. Work began in 2008 on an upgrade to the maritime hall, the first permanent exhibit in the exhibition building in 1989. This will be finished during the current year. An outdoor open facility — the Corbin Pavilion — was built in 2009 in the museum’s south field and has proved to be very popular.

Recognizing that the original master plan had been essentially completed, a committee of staff, board members, volunteers, and community leaders was formed in mid-decade to begin work on a new master plan. The firm of Ewing Cole was selected to guide that process. The new master plan was approved by the Board of Governors in March 2008 and subsequently by the Board of County Commissioners. This plan, designed to guide growth over the next twenty years, stresses maximizing existing space and building on our strengths. The first phase of implementation — renovating the auditorium, the museum store, redesigning the lobby, and expanding the mezzanine to add much-needed educational space — has been designed by the well known architectural firm, GWWO. The museum Board of Governors is launching a capital campaign to raise funds for the first phase, which we hope to complete within five years.

It is impossible to do justice to the forty-year history of the Calvert Marine Museum in a few pages. Those attending the official dedication on October 18, 1970, could hardly have foreseen the dynamic and vibrant museum of today, tucked away at the end of the Calvert County peninsula. Support has come from the county, from state and federal agencies, from private organizations, and from a host of dedicated individuals — staff and volunteer — to create what we this year celebrate as a forty-year triumph. There are many more accomplishments to look forward to in the years ahead.
**VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT**

By Sherry Reid, Volunteer/Event Coordinator

On Wednesday, September 15, the Volunteer Council held its annual meeting with the main order of business being the election of officers for 2010-2011. The slate of officers was presented to the membership and voted into office by acclamation. The newly elected officers are Sherma Munger, president; Dennis Baker, vice president; Denita Sanders, treasurer; Teddie Watts, recording secretary; and Anne Harrison, corresponding secretary. Peggy Hovermale, the outgoing president, was thanked for her contributions and dedication to the council board with a small token of appreciation. Peggy has served as president for the past three years and has been a huge asset to the council board. Thank you Peggy for all your hard work!

A perfect summer supper in the Corbin Pavilion followed the official meeting. The tables were adorned with beautiful centerpieces by Anne Harrison and everyone enjoyed the delicious ham that was prepared by Janet Addiss. The volunteers and staff had a chance to mix and mingle and get to know the new Volunteer Council board members. Congratulations and best wishes to the new board!

Board officers for 2010-2011 (left to right): Anne Harrison, Teddie Watts, Denita Sanders, Dennis Baker, Sherma Munger, and Peggy Hovermale.

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**40TH ANNIVERSARY EVENTS**

Founded in 1970, the Calvert Marine Museum has been celebrating forty years of excellence throughout 2010. The year-long celebration, sponsored by the Community Bank of Tri-County, began in March with the dedication of the founders’ plaque and was followed by the premier of the new orientation video in April. Summer ushered in annual events such as the Solomons Maritime Festival, Sharkfest!, and the Waterside Concert Series, along with a student essay contest on “My Favorite Thing about the Calvert Marine Museum.” The fall brings the opening of the newly renovated maritime gallery and the launch of an all-new website. In October, we’ll celebrate Patuxent River Appreciation Days for the thirty-second consecutive year.

An official BIRTHDAY BASH will take place all day on Saturday, October 23, with a 1970s theme. The museum will be open free to the public and will include a costume parade and contest, crafts for the kids, clowns, Badd Company Dance Company demonstrating and teaching dances from the ‘70s, a play entitled “Solomons, Our History” in the auditorium at 2:00 p.m., and free hotdogs and pizza. The grand finale of the day will be the cutting of the Drum Point Lighthouse cake at 4:00 p.m. Come and join in the fun! A special thank you to our Birthday Bash sponsors — Maggie Moo’s Ice Cream of Dunkirk, Papa John’s, and Sugar Rush Cakes and Confections.

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**2010 STATE OF THE RIVER SUMMIT**

The 2010 State of the River Summit will take place at CMM on Friday, October 8. This year’s focus is on the President’s Executive Order and what it means for all people living in this region. It is free to the public from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the museum auditorium.

President Obama’s Executive Order for the Bay has produced a sense of possibility and hope for change, which has sweeping implications for the people that live and make their living within the drainage area of the bay and its tributaries — but what will the impacts be? Join Senator Bernie Fowler, Will Baker, president of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Jim Edward, acting director of the EPA Chesapeake Bay Program, Ann Swanson, executive director of the Chesapeake Bay Commission, Dr. Robert Summers, deputy director of the Maryland Department of the Environment, and Greg Bowen, director of Calvert County Planning for what will surely be a stimulating dialogue.

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**Museum Personnel**

Due to an existing vacancy and a resignation at mid-term, two members were recently approved by the County Commissions for the museum’s Board of Governors. Mark Fisher, a resident of Owings, replaces Jeannie C. Stone who resigned. He is associated with the Telecon Capital Group, LLC, is a trustee of the Calverton School, the executive director of Gray's Field Foundation, and a member of the Maryland Economic Development Association.

David E. Butler of Solomons, who earlier served two terms on the board, has returned for a third term.

Recent staff changes have included the appointments of Kathleen Porecki to replace the retired Jean Phelps in the museum office, Frank Sears as mate on the Wm. B. Tennison, and Dave Snyder as an admissions clerk.