

JANUARY 2024

SCUTTLEBUTT

OCEAN CITY LIFE
SAVING STATION
MUSEUM



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OCLSSM Collection

The Story of the Isle of Wight Life-Saving Station

New Members

Top: Ocean City Life-Saving Station Crewmen, c. 1910; Collection of Marie Rickards

Bottom Left: North Beach Life-Saving Station, Assateague Island, Worcester County, Maryland, c. 1900; Collection of Mabel Rogers.

Bottom Right: Isle of Wight Life-Saving Station in Ocean City, Maryland, c. 1900; Left to right: John Jones, George Massey, Thomas Moore, Ned Dennis, Christopher Columbus Figgs, John William Quillen, Wallace Hudson, and unidentified; Collection of Sue Hurley.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Happy New Year! It seems impossible for it to be 2024. I wish all a happy and prosperous new year.

The Ocean City Museum Society is very busy with several projects, many of which center around restoring the Old Bank of Ocean City building. The contract to do the restoration was awarded to Oak Contracting, and they are busy at work, peeling back the layers and bringing the building back to its original 1910 glory. If you have not ridden by the building on the corner of Dorchester and Baltimore Avenue, you might want to take a little trip downtown and see the progress that has been made.

Many objects have been uncovered during this process, which includes early circa 1900s baby shoes, a fireplace ash scoop, and several glass bottles. A Davis Baking Powder bottle was one of 14 bottles uncovered during construction. Most likely a remnant from McGregor's Grocery Store. McGregor's was the first establishment to occupy the 1910 structure. These items have made their way into our permanent artifact collection and will be on display, helping tell the building's timeline and rich history.

The renovations of the building are slated to be done by Memorial Day 2024. The museum board has named the building the "Museum of Ocean City." The exhibits within the "Museum of Ocean City" will reflect not only the building's history but also the cultural history of Ocean City and Worcester County. You can expect to see exhibits on the businesses that once occupied downtown Ocean City, the history of local restaurants, and Native American history. These are just a few of the many "stories" we hope to tell. In addition to exhibits, this new space will allow the Museum Society to offer unique public programs. Book signings and archival and genealogy workshops are just a few examples of what we will be offering in this new space!

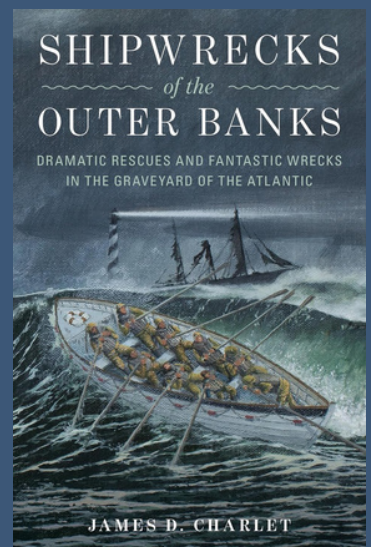
BOOK OF THE MONTH

"Shipwrecks of the Outer Banks: Dramatic Rescues and Fantastic Wrecks in the Graveyard of the Atlantic" by James D. Charlet

"More than 6,000 ships have met their doom in the waters along the North Carolina coast, weaving a rich history of tragedy, drama, and heroics along these picturesque beaches. These are the stories of daring rescues, tragic failures, enduring mysteries, buried treasure, and fascinating legends.."

Be sure to join us on Saturday, March 2, 2024, at 11:00 AM EST for "America's Forgotten Heroes - Precursor of the U.S. Coast Guard." Keeper James will host this "live theater" virtual presentation where you will learn all about the heroic deeds of the United States Life-Saving Service.

Registration Required - Visit ocmuseum.org to sign up.



CONTINUED...PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Fundraising for the restoration of the bank has been very rewarding, but we are still short of funds to complete the project. Please consider donating to the Bank Restoration. Go to www.ocmuseum.org/moc-fundraising to donate or send in the form found in this newsletter.

During the winter months, the museum staff works hard to continue to offer programs and activities for our visitors. A well-received program during this time of year is our Little Learners program, where children can learn about local history and wildlife through Storytime, crafts, live animal encounters, and hands-on activities. Little Learners is designed for children ages 0 to 5, but all are welcome! For more information on this program, take a look at the upcoming programs page within this newsletter.

Thank you for supporting the Ocean City Lifesaving Station Museum and now the Museum of Ocean City. I look forward to seeing you at the museum in the future.

Board President Mabel Rogers



Thank you to everyone who came out for our first Little Learners of 2024! We had 90 visitors of all ages meet Mermaid Tasha and learn about ocean conservation.



MUSEUM OF OCEAN CITY

217 South Baltimore Avenue | Ocean City, Maryland



The original building in the early 1900s



The vision for the restoration

Our Ocean City community has been given an opportunity to preserve and present, to the public, a glimpse of The Ocean City Historical Story.

The Original Bank of Ocean City building was built as a general store in 1910 and became the Bank of Ocean City, the town of Ocean City's first bank, in 1916.

In order to restore the existing building to its early 1900 state, we **NEED YOUR HELP**. We have grants for \$650,000 and need \$500,000 to complete this restoration and open it to the public.

Help us reach our goal of \$500,000
100% of your donation will go to this building.

\$50,000

\$25,000

\$10,000

\$5,000

Other

Please check a level of support and make your 501-C3 tax deductible donation to:

OC Museum Society

PO Box 603 | Ocean City, MD 21843

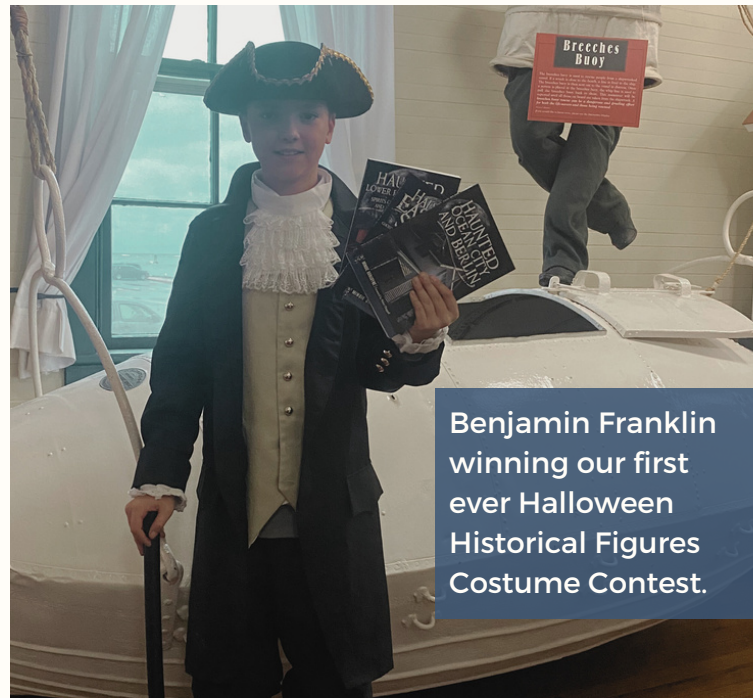
MUSEUM OF OCEAN CITY RESTORATION IS UNDERWAY!



HISTORY MONTH



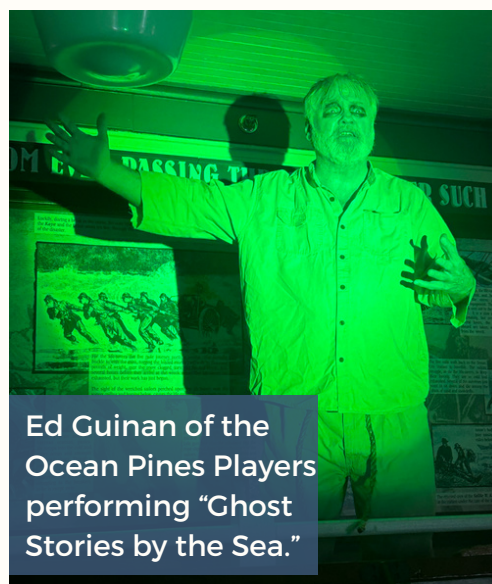
Keeper Allan at Harbor Day at the Docks.



Benjamin Franklin winning our first ever Halloween Historical Figures Costume Contest.



Authors Day featuring Bunk Mann and Joanne Guilfoil.



Ed Guinan of the Ocean Pines Players performing "Ghost Stories by the Sea."



Curator Christine leading "History and Mystery of the American Eel" program.

During History Month we hosted 18 programs/events and welcomed 936 visitors!



Our interpreter Bob giving a "Station 4 Historic Tour" during Locals Week.

STORM WARRIORS 5K WALK/RUN



The race raised \$31,060 for the reconstruction of the 1910 Bank of Ocean City Building.



Storm Warriors 5k Walk/Run

RACE STATS

1st place overall Male
Steven Maupin
Time 19:08.24

1st place overall Female
Melissa Wiley
Time 20:23.57

165 Participants



THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS

Humphreys Foundation, Inc., J.D. Quillin III, Faw Casson & Co. LLP, Joan W. Jenkins Foundation, Inc., Esham Family Properties, Quillin Foundation, Lions Club, Ocean City Elks Lodge, Buas Enterprises, Inc., Seaborn Seafood, Friends of the Museum, Taylor Bank, O.C. Seacrets, Inc., Joseph and Susan Moore, Jay Naish CPA, Frank Pasqualino, Vernon Powell Shoes, T.E.A.M. Productions, SS Pilates, Shore United Bank, Coastal Confections, Real Raw Organics, Patricia Wills, Thomas D. Wimbrow, Plak That, Hugh and Susan Cropper III, Jackie DeGroft, Carolynne H. Dorsey, Fat Daddy's, Ruark Golf, Shore Books LLC, Thank You Very Mulch, Floyd Ilyes, The Bajas, Inc., Found Penny Studio, Bonnie Mitrecic, Lucky Break Fishing Charters, The Original Greene Turtle, Rice's Termite & Pest Control, Hospitality Robotics Consultants , A Better Plumber Heating and Cooling

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE



Keeper Allan helping our younger guests complete the Artifact Scavenger Hunt.



Two of our guests making ornaments to add to their tree at home.



A successful Holiday Open House put on by our hard working staff.

The Holiday Open House welcomed 150 guests to experience two new special guests to the event: Mermaid Tasha and The Jolly Tars.



The Jolly Tars entertained us throughout the day with sea shanties and carols.



Mermaid Tasha lead a story time of her book and book signing.



Gingerbread, molasses, and gingerbread cookies were handed out as a sweet treat.

LOUIS PARSONS III MEMORIAL PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

THANK
YOU FOR
HELPING
US RAISE
\$3,305



Whether snapping a photo of the sunset or the entire family, there is no better place than Ocean City, Maryland, to capture stunning and memorable images. The Ocean City Life-Saving Station Museum's Louis Parsons III Memorial Annual Photo Contest honors the life and legacy of dedicated museum board member and photographer Lou Parsons.

Lou was a beloved member of the Ocean City Museum Society Board. He was taken from us much too soon, and we wanted to do something to honor his memory. Lou was a prodigious photographer, and some of his favorite subjects were sunsets, the Boardwalk, and our spectacular beach. So it seemed a very easy leap to put together a photography contest in his name.

Jeff Williams is the former publisher of Oceana Magazine and was a good friend of Lou's. They spent many fun filled times in Ocean City and Paris. Jeff always admired Lou's photographic talents and has donated the prize money along with his corporate sponsor, Associa, for this annual contest.

KID'S CORNER

WHAT'S THAT ON THE SHORELINE?

NORTHERN QUAHOG



This clam is a bivalve invertebrate with gills, a liver, a heart, and two oval shells connected with a thick hinge.



Quahogs dig themselves just below the surface of the seabed, then they send up two straw-like tubes: one to inhale sea water for oxygen and microscopic plants, and the other to exhale water and waste materials.



Also known as wampam, these clam shells had a cultural significance to Native American tribes and were used to make beads and tools for use and trade.

HOOKED MUSSEL



These mussels can be one to two inches long.



They attach to shells, rocks and other hard surfaces using strong, thin fibers made from proteins called byssus threads.

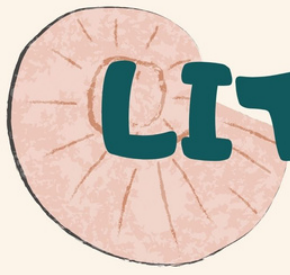


Found throughout the Chesapeake Bay and its rivers, but reach maximum size and greatest abundance in waters with low salinity.



Mussels are filter feeders; meaning they feed on plankton.





LITTLE LEARNERS PROGRAMS

Children will learn about local history and wildlife at the Ocean City Life-Saving Station with special guests. Little Learners is designed for children ages 0 to 5, but all are welcome!

FREE ADMISSION and free parking at the Inlet

January 8th, 10:30-11:30 am
Mermaid Tasha: Meet and Greet,
Story Time and a Craft



February 12th, 10:30-11:30am
Assateague State Park Scales and Tales:
Animal Meet and Greet and Story Time

March 11th, 10:30-11:30 am
Ocean City Police Department:
Meet the K9 and Mounted Unit and Story Time



April 8th, 10:30-11:30 am
Maryland Coastal Bays:
Story Time and Beach Scavenger Hunt



Contact with questions:
emma@ocmuseum.org
(410) 289-4991



More details can be found
on our Facebook page.

TEAR AND SAVE

OCLSSM COLLECTION

The museum collection contains almost 30,000 artifacts and continues to grow monthly! We are thankful to those who have donated this year and are excited to share with you items gifted in 2023...



Ocean City, August 19, 1933

***Dear Mildred,
Been spending the day at Fenwick Beach. Had a fine time at Ocean City
Now see you Tuesday.***

Nina H.



L-R: Hunter "Bunk" Mann, C.D. Hall, and Newt Weaver at the Worcester County Historical Society Annual Dinner at the OC Golf Club November 2023.

The postcard above is postmarked August 19, 1933. This would be only a few days before the Storm of 1933 made landfall on August 23, 1933.

In memory of Mildred Baylis Hall.

Gifted to the Ocean City Museum Society by C.D. Hall.

THE STORY OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT LIFE-SAVING STATION

BY GORDON KATZ

Prologue - Saturday, August 17, 1895

By the overloading of a small pleasure boat an entire family has been drowned and two other families are in mourning. A party of farmers from the neighborhood of Frankford and Selbyville, Del., had a fish fry on Grey's creek, a branch of the Isle of Wight bay, with bathing, fishing and amusements. William Hudson carried a party of nine out sailing, and as the boat was about to come back the women of the party jumped screaming on the high side, capsizing the little craft, which was hardly large enough to carry five persons.

The following seven persons were drowned: William Storr, aged 45, Philadelphia; Laura Storr, his wife, aged 35, and his daughters, Ida May, aged 16, and Eva, aged 11; Myrtle Stevens, aged 16, a daughter of Joshua Stevens of Selbyville; Lana Hall, aged 19, and her sister, Lulu Hall, aged 14, daughters of Elisha Hall of near Frankford.

The capsizing occurred within 200 yards of the shore and in water seven feet deep. Mr. Storr had only one hand and was blind in one eye, but was an expert swimmer. He succeeded in getting his two daughters on the bottom of the boat and was getting his wife when the girls became scared and slipped off the boat and went to their parents and together the four perished.

Hudson, who was sailing the boat, got the Hall girls on the boat and was trying to save Miss Stevens, when they slipped off and were drowned before he could get to them. Two other young ladies, who were in the boat, were rescued by a fisherman, who put off from the shore as the boat capsized.

Cumberland Evening Times, published on August 19, 1895

A New Life-Saving Station on the Maryland Coast

The tragic incident reported above occurred about 6 1/2 miles north of the life-saving station in Ocean City, located on the Boardwalk at Caroline Street. Local residents had been urging the Life-Saving Service for more than a year to establish a station between those already in operation at Ocean City and Fenwick Island. Captain J. J. Dunton of the Ocean City station told a reporter for *The Baltimore Sun* that "if a life-saving station had been there on Saturday last some if not all of the lives lost might have been saved."

Spurred by the public outcry over the drownings, Representative Joshua Miles introduced a bill in the House on March 16, 1896 "for the establishment of a life saving station on the coast of Maryland between the Fenwick Island and Ocean City life saving stations, at such point as the Superintendent of the Life Saving Service may recommend." Superintendent Sumner Kimball of the Life-Saving Service provided his letter of support. President McKinley signed the legislation on February 2, 1897.

CONTINUED...THE STORY OF ISLE OF WIGHT

Captain B. S. Rich of the Life-saving Service was dispatched to Worcester County in early April to select a site for the new station. He settled on a location roughly midway between the Ocean City and Fenwick Island stations. The site chosen was close to a small creek that provided access to the Isle of Wight Bay (long since closed.)

At that time, virtually all the land north of present-day 33rd Street to the Maryland-Delaware border was owned by the Atlantic Coast Improvement Company, a company formed in 1883 by a group of Baltimore investors who had ambitious plans to develop a new resort north of Ocean City but had made little progress in doing so. The company conveyed a one-acre plot to the Life-saving Service on April 22. Figure 1, a plat prepared in October 1946, shows the parcel straddling 52nd Street and 53rd Street in North Ocean City, renumbered as 85th Street and 86th Street in the late 1960s.

The Life-saving Service contracted with John Collins and George Williams to build the new station for \$3,900. The two men wrapped up construction in October of “one of the most complete establishments on the coast”. The life-saving crew reported for duty the following April, as reported in *The Baltimore Sun* on April 11, 1898: “The new Isle of Wight life-saving station mustered in its new crew April 1. They are Capt. John B. Jones, keeper; surfmen, Chas. Lewis, Henry Parker, J. Hickman, Chas. Massey, G McNeil and George Lewis.”

Limited Operations

The men saw their first “action” on November 25, 1900, when the British steamer “Margaret Jones” ran aground on the beach nearly in front of the station. It was not a difficult “rescue”. According to a report published in *The Baltimore Sun* on November 26, the ship had run “so far up on the beach that visitors are walking to her bow at low tide.”

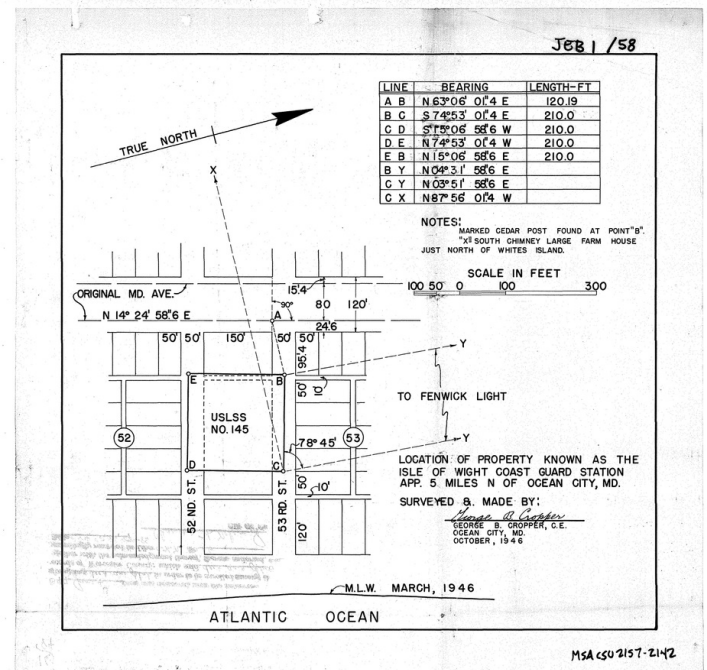


Figure 1. Isle of Wight LSS Plat JEB 1 58



Isle of Wight Life Saving Station, c. 1900. Collection of Ella Butler Quillen.

CONTINUED...THE STORY OF ISLE OF WIGHT

The report went on to say that “Captain John Jones, of Isle of Wight Station, with Captain Long, of Fenwick’s, and Captain Dunton, of Ocean City, and crews, boarded the vessel and rendered what assistance they could. The life savers located the vessel almost as soon as she struck, Patrolmen South and Truitt, of the Isle of Wight Station, being near the ship when she came ashore.” Two tugs from the American Wrecking Company, out of Camden, New Jersey, arrived on the scene later to assist with refloating the “Margaret Jones”, which had not suffered any significant damage because of the incident. Meanwhile, the crew of the Isle of Wight Station would not be called on again for more than a decade.

A winter storm was lashing the Maryland Coast on December 4, 1911. The Italian ship “Fortuna”, with twenty men aboard, had struck the Fenwick Island Shoals around ten o’clock that morning, near the Isle of Wight station. After being pounded by the waves and wind for more than four hours, the captain had decided to intentionally beach the ship as the only hope of saving it and her crew members. She lay about 400 feet offshore, with her sails shredded and one of her three masts shorn off. The crews of the Ocean City station and the Isle of Wight station made several attempts to launch a surf boat, but “each time the lifeboats were driven back by the angry surf.”



FORTUNA - an Italian 3 masted schooner aground at 14th Street, Ocean City, Maryland; Collection of Melvin Quillin.

The rescue effort extended into the evening without success. The storm relented sufficiently the following morning to allow all twenty men to be safely evacuated by use of the breeches buoy.

Improvements in navigation during the early 20th century significantly reduced the number of shipwrecks off the Maryland coast and lessened the demand for life-saving services. A new mission emerged for the Coast Guard, formed in 1915 by the merger of the Revenue Cutter Service and the Life-saving Service. The enactment of national prohibition in the U.S. in 1920 almost immediately spawned a new industry: bootlegging. The sparsely populated Maryland and Southern Delaware coasts offered ideal locations at which to smuggle booze from the “mother ships” three miles or so offshore for transshipment to thirsty cities like Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York. Bootlegging on the Maryland shore was aided in no small part by a navigable inlet that was fortuitously cut through Assateague Island about four miles below the present inlet by a storm less than a month after Prohibition went into effect. Interdiction of the booming trade was now the responsibility of the Guard.

CONTINUED...THE STORY OF ISLE OF WIGHT

Shortly after midnight on October 3, 1932, about eight miles north of Ocean City, “the captain of the Coast Guard station at Fenwick Island saw a dory on the beach. He communicated with the Ocean City and the Isle of Wight stations of the Coast Guard and a group of men from these stations came to assist the Fenwick Island station in making the raid.” Six men, most of them from New York, were arrested, and 500 cases of liquor were seized. “Part of the liquor was found on two dories, used by the rum runners to carry it from the ‘mother ship’ to shore, and the remainder in an unused hotel.” The hired “helpers” on the shore fled to the mainland. Most were later arrested at their homes, as all were “well-known residents of Bethany Beach, Ocean View, Selbyville and nearby points in Delaware and Maryland.”



Ocean City Coast Guard guarding confiscated alcohol products during prohibition; Collection of Janet Bounds.

Faced with budget cuts mandated by Congress, the Coast Guard announced on March 22, 1933, that twelve stations would be decommissioned, one of which was the Isle of Wight Station. It isn't surprising that the station made the short list of targeted closures; it had seen little activity in its thirty-five years of operation. However, it wasn't completely abandoned; in 1935, the Coast Guard obtained an appropriation for “electric lights and general repairs” for the building. In 1938, Representative T. Alan Goldsborough asked the Coast Guard to allow the Ocean City Boy Scouts to use the building as a “camping base.” It isn't known whether the request was granted.

World War II

The U.S. entry into World War II in 1941 changed the Coast Guard's mission once again. Amid fears of possible enemy activity along both the east and west coasts, the Guard deployed its personnel as a large-scale “beach patrol.” A confidential report titled “The Coast Guard At War - Beach Patrol”, published in May, 1945 and since declassified, outlined the duties of the patrol:

“Personnel attached to Coast Guard stations and lighthouses were put to use as coast watchers in 1942, a move that stemmed from the landing of saboteurs from a German submarine on Long Island, NY in June of that year. After that incident, the Coast Guard established a comprehensive system of armed beach patrols that also reported and assisted the crews of downed airplanes and vessels in distress, kept unauthorized persons away from restricted zones, investigated reports of unusual occurrences, and generally served in a variety of ways not unlike those traditionally associated with the Coast Guard.”

CONTINUED...THE STORY OF ISLE OF WIGHT

The Coast Guard reactivated the Isle of Wight Station in 1942, with a crew of ten men, as part of the beach patrol in Maryland. Little information has been found about the men assigned to the station or their daily routines. In its preview of the 1943 season, published on May 16, *The Baltimore Sun* provided this brief glimpse: “Coast Guard surf stations maintain a constant night patrol, and visitors this year will have an additional interest in seeing sailors on horseback as well as war dogs in action. At Ocean City these animals will operate right in front of the boardwalk.”

Perhaps being assigned to the beach patrol far up the beach from the summertime activity at Ocean City was lonely duty, allowing time for other pursuits. The *Morning News* (Wilmington, Delaware), reporting on the Delaware Festival of the Arts being held in downtown Rehoboth Beach during the first week of May 1944, shared this story: “Art relics of Sussex County being displayed in the ocean block store windows at Rehoboth Beach this week...are attracting wide attention from residents and spring visitors...Two lighting fixtures of intricate design, made from sea shells, were contributed for display in the Moore [Moore Drug Store] window by First Class Boatswain Mate Fred Guerin of the Isle of Wight Coast Guard Station.”



8 USCG Men on the beach with K-9 dogs - drilling at Cobb Island, Virginia during World War II - c. 1940s; Collection of George Phillips.

A New Life for the Old Station

Following the war, the Coast Guard once again decommissioned the Isle of Wight Station and discharged its crew. The property, including “the six-room station, a barn, pumproom and another small building”, was put up for sale at auction in February 1946. The auction attracted over fifty bidders, with Ocean City Mayor Daniel Trimper, Jr. placing the high bid of \$3,175. A formal conveyance was executed on December 30. The Coast Guard filed a Declaration of Abandonment “in or to the said land” later in 1948.

Trimper entered into an agreement with Ralph Tribuani in April 1948 to purchase the building for \$16,000. Tribuani was a boxing and wrestling promoter from Wilmington, Delaware. He reopened the former station as “Club 21” that summer.

CONTINUED...THE STORY OF ISLE OF WIGHT

The activities at the nightclub apparently attracted the attention of Worcester County law enforcement. On September 1, Sheriff Arthur Duer and Deputy Sheriff Simon Small raided the establishment, arresting four men and seizing “a quantity of liquor” and \$2,500 in cash. The hearing held on September 4 was reported in *The Salisbury Times* on September 7:

“Four men arrested in a raid at 21 Club [*Club 21*] near here [*Ocean City*] last week were convicted and fined before Magistrate James Robins Saturday.

“Alfred Tribuani [*Ralph’s brother*] was fined \$500 and costs on a charge of unlawfully selling liquor without a license.

“Salvatore Maiorana and John Hammen were each fined \$50 and costs for unlawfully keeping a gaming table.

“Tony Picciotti was fined \$50 and costs for permitting a gaming table to be opened.

“All four pleaded guilty through attorneys John Sanford and William G. Kerbin. Franklin Upshur, Worcester County state’s attorney, prosecuted.”

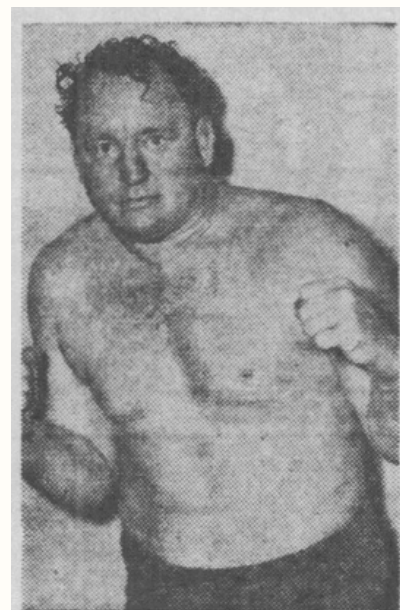
The raid and arrests didn’t hamper the club’s operation. An advertisement placed in *The Salisbury Times* on September 15 plugged this off-season promotion:

“CLUB 21 - 4 Miles N. of Ocean City on Beach Rd. [Coastal Highway] - Open All Winter - Fri. & Sat. Nites - 3 Floor Shows Nightly - No Cover & No Minimum - Floor Shows Changed Weekly - Finest in Italian Foods - Spaghetti - Raviola - Pizza Pie“

After Tribuani failed to make his scheduled payments, he and Mayor Trimper worked out a new deal in 1949 that allowed him to pay off past due taxes and mechanics’ liens while continuing to operate Club 21. Less than a year later, Tribuani and Trimper sold the property to LaSalle Athletic Club, a Wilmington, Delaware wrestling club headed by James Houghton. The club gave a mortgage to Mayor Trimper and one of his associates, W. Sidney Timmons, a well-known distributor of slot machines that proliferated in Ocean City in the 1930s to the early 1950s, for \$5,000.

Houghton and Tribuani continued to operate Club 21 through the summer of 1950. The men expanded their venture in 1951, erecting the “Beach Road Arena” next to the nightclub. The *News Journal* announced the plans for the new venue on June 27:

“Jimmy Houghton, wrestling promoter from Wilmington, will present the first program at his new Beach Road arena, next to Club 21, tomorrow night at nine o’clock. Houghton plans to operate shows all summer at the arena, which will seat 1,800 fans.



TOUGH GUY. Jack Dillon, above, Irish toughie from Boston, will come to grips with Primo Carnera Saturday night at Ocean City’s new Beach Road Arena. It will be a best two out of three falls match.

The Daily Times, Salisbury, Maryland, Tuesday, July 03, 1951.

CONTINUED...THE STORY OF ISLE OF WIGHT

“Girls will be in tomorrow’s wind-up, with Gloria Barattini opposing Mars Bennett. Ivan Kamaroff will take Jim Austeri, and a team match will pair Tony Cosenza and Steve Gob against Jack Dillon and Natie Brown.”

According to a later report, “Jimmy Houghton’s first rassling show in his air-conditioned arena north of Ocean City, Md., drew about 500 customers. He’s got another card scheduled for this Saturday [July 7],” The wrestling matches at the beach lasted only for the summer of 1951, while Club 21 offered its entertainment through the summer of 1953. It isn’t known what happened to the large, air-conditioned arena next door.

1954 brought a new occupant to the former station building, as reported in *The Salisbury Times* on June 12: “The Dunes Club will be organized at Ocean City in the old Coast Guard Building, formerly known as the 21 Club [Club 21], according to an announcement here today. It’s to be a private club by invitation only. Preparatory to the opening July 1, a lounge furniture shower is to be held tonight at 9 o’clock in the club.” The Dunes Club Formally opened with a gala party on July 3 for the “invited” members, mostly social elite from the Baltimore area. *The Baltimore Sun* depicted the Club in August 1955 as a “[favorite] rendez-vous of Baltimore society, summering in Maryland’s own Ocean City” that “has been the scene of many gay parties this season.”

1959 was the Club’s last season in its North Ocean City hideaway. The LaSalle Club, the building’s owner, had defaulted on its mortgage, and a public auction was held on June 13. The property was sold to William and Leigh Carpenter of Wilmington, Delaware for \$53,000. The Carpenters then sold it for \$65,000 to Earl and Florence Short, also of Wilmington, who, in turn, sold it to Ocean City businessman Francis X. Hoen and John Clark Mitchell, of Baltimore, for \$75,000.

“Frank” Hoen was a well-known figure in Ocean City, having operated a couple of popular businesses there, including The Paddock, on Philadelphia Avenue and 17th Street, and the Irish House bar on the Boardwalk. He owned a building on the Boardwalk between 6th Street and 7th Street, where he lived with his daughter and her two children, and where, it was rumored, he also ran a bookmaking operation.

Hoen rebranded the station building as the “Carriage House” restaurant, opening in 1960. *The Salisbury Times* noted on June 17, “The old Dunes Club building is now being used for a restaurant and antique shop.” Hoen’s neighbors complained to the Worcester County Commissioners that same month that he had “bulldozed to a smooth plan the protective dunes between his establishment and the ocean.” There is no record of the Commissioners taking any action the complaint.

The Epitaph

The “Ash Wednesday” storm of March 6-8, 1962, wreaked havoc all along the Maryland coastline. The “Carriage House”, no longer protected by the sand dunes intended for that purpose by nature, was one of the many casualties.

CONTINUED...THE STORY OF ISLE OF WIGHT

The storm “punched a huge hole in the ocean front side which was used as a dance floor.” The restaurant was a total loss.

Hoehn made no attempt to salvage the building. Other property owners in the area “have become tired of the haunting reminder of the storm in their midst,” *The Salisbury Times* reported on April 17, 1963. And so, on May 21, 1963, the former station reached its end.

“An old resort landmark, the former N. Ocean City [*Isle of Wight*] Coast Guard Station, is no more.

“Ocean City firemen burned what remained of the building at 86th St. last night. The old station in recent years served as the Carriage House, a night spot. The ‘Storm of the Century’ a year ago wrecked it.

“Fire Chief Alfred Harmon said it required 70 gallons of kerosene to get rid of the old building last night. Last night was foggy and damp, an ideal time for burning. Firemen were out five hours on the job.”

Epilogue

The one-acre plot between 85th Street and 86th Street is now part of the footprint of the “Antigua” condominium, first started in the fall of 1972, and finally opened for unit sales in 1977 after a series of financial setbacks.



Ocean City, Maryland, 83rd St to just above 100th Street; Collection of Donna Abbott.

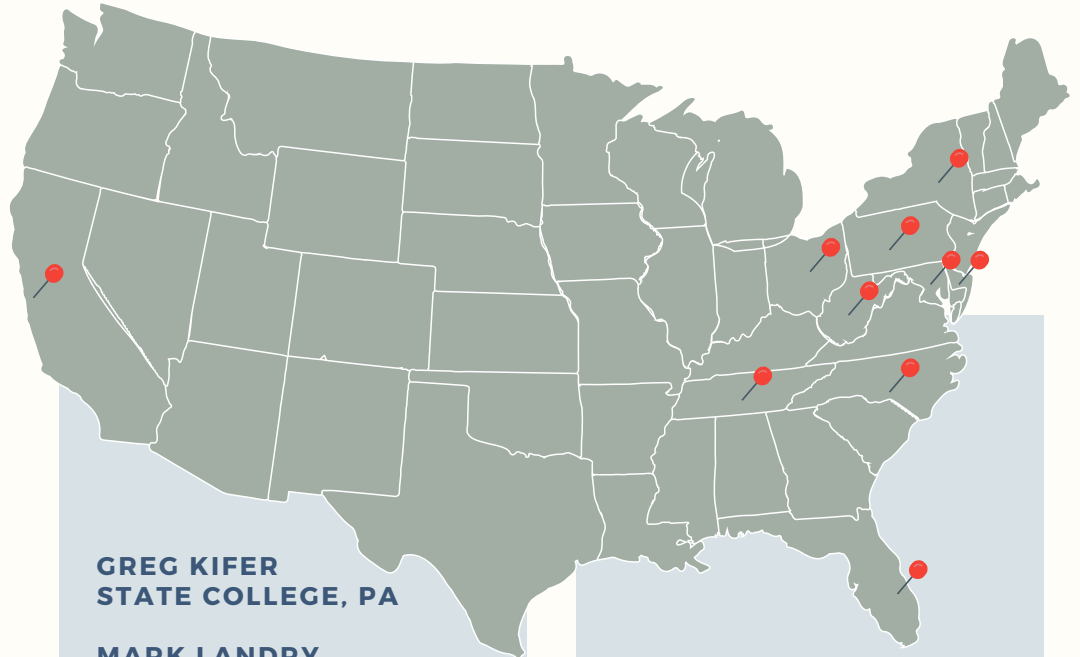


Damage from the 1962 storm on the Carriage House; Collection of Bonnie Mitrecic.



Brass Surfmen's Badge; Collection of Anna Larson Calloway.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



**DANELLE AMOS
BERLIN, MD**

**AMY BELL
OCEAN CITY, MD**

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PHOENIX, MD**

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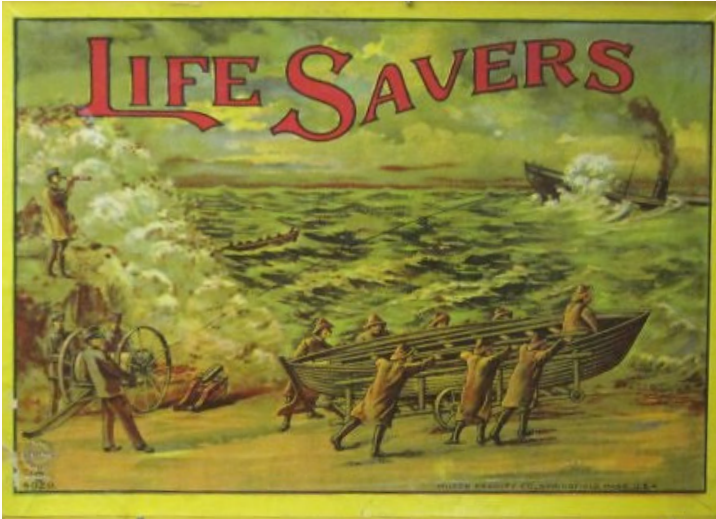
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OCEAN CITY LIFE-SAVING STATION MUSEUM



"Life Savers," by Milton Bradley Company in Springfield, MA, c. 1905. Collection of the Ocean City Museum Society.



The Milton Bradley game is for two, four, or six players. The object of the game is for the players to use their lifeboats to rescue sailors from a wrecked ship and bring them to the beach all while avoiding the hazardous "reef of rocks"!

The components consist of one "dial" (spinner), six differently colored counters (representing lifeboats), and six differently colored discs (representing sailors.)

The player with the most sailors saved wins!



The Ocean City Museum Society

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May-October: 10:00-5:00, Open Daily

November-April: 10:00-4:00, Sat & Sun

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The mission of the Ocean City Museum Society is to inspire and support the interpretation and appreciation of the cultural and natural history of Ocean City, Maryland, the Worcester County coastal region, and equally, the historical role performed by the United States Life-Saving Service, and to preserve, with subsequent mandate, the 1891 structure that once served as the Ocean City Station.

OCEAN CITY LIFE-SAVING
STATION MUSEUM
P.O. BOX 603
OCEAN CITY, MARYLAND 21843

