Mission Statement
The Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum is dedicated to preserving and exploring the history, environment, and people of the Chesapeake Bay.

Museum Values
Relevance: We provide meaningful and accessible experiences to everyone who cares about our Mission—all of our communities and constituencies.

Authenticity: We seek genuinely to represent the people and cultures whose communities and constituencies.

Stewardship: We valeur the priceless assets entrusted to us and accept their preservation and enhancement as our paramount responsibility—our collections, our campus, our financial resources, and the volunteers and staff who perform our Mission and make our Museum the rich enterprise it is.

Sign up to receive Navy Point News, featuring announcements and info about our programs, festivals, and enhancement as our paramount Stewardship.

To sign up to receive Navy Point News, go to cbmm.org.

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Curator’s Corner

The Museum’s buck stem Pat Pie stuff is receiving restoration work in the Boatyard.

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The Museum’s buck stem Pat Pie stuff is receiving restoration work in the Boatyard.

Winter 2016
President’s Letter

by Kristen L. Greenaway

I’ve recently returned from the biennial conference of the International Congress of Maritime Museums—held this year in Hong Kong, and hosted by the Hong Kong Maritime Museum—one of 105 delegates from 21 countries, representing maritime museums from New Zealand to the Åland Islands.

The theme of this year’s conference was “Connections,” which soundly resonates with the work we are doing here at CBMM. Mention was often made of the responsibility of maritime museums today to tell the story of those that cannot tell their own; how the general public is becoming increasingly disconnected from the maritime world; and that we are losing the story that adaptation to our current environment—and globalization—essentially originated from all maritime.

Our world story is not that of the hunter-gatherer, but that of migration based on river, coastal, and sea exploration. And let’s not forget that most of the world’s population lives on or near the coast.

Thus today’s maritime museums must be able to articulate the world’s association with all maritime—we need to find and research new and compelling stories of the sea, and we need better ways to tell these stories, to develop a completely new orientation from a terrestrial to a contemporary maritime perspective, to see the old world anew.

What a challenge for the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum! Yet one we are already working hard to achieve. Every day at CBMM offers something different to see, learn from, and get involved with, from building a boat in our new sixth-grade program (see page 9), to discovering through our Crab Cakes program math, science, ecology, economics, and history through the lens of Maryland’s crabbing industry (see page 12).

In addition, we’re preparing for the 2016-2018 restoration of the 1889-built log-bottom bargeyead Edna E. Lockwood, the queen of our fleet. After a national search, we have finally secured the 12 loblolly yellow pines needed for her crews to life, Edna and her crews to life, us a tremendous opportunity to bring the story of the Chesapeake Bay.

Everything we do—to be a world-class maritime museum, to spread the maritime story of the Chesapeake Bay—relies on your support. Annually, more than 70,000 guests have the opportunity to develop a closer relationship with guests from around the globe, whether in person or online.

At this crucial time in CBMM’s history, we are working to not only provide a strong foundation for the Museum’s future, but to secure its reputation as the world’s leading museum dedicated to preserving and exploring the history, environment, and people of the Chesapeake Bay.

Please help us reach our critical goal of $675,000 by making your donation by December 31, 2015, and your gift will be matched dollar-for-dollar. For more information, visit cbmm.org.
Letter to the Editor

Pictured from left: Dundas Leavitt, Gus Van Lennep, Carroll Grafflin, and Vida Van Lennep, as seen on the 1879 Hooper Strait Lighthouse, after it was moved by barge and relocated to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, c. 1966.

Hello, my name is Dominic Scafuro. My family and I have been visiting St. Michaels since the 1970s because my grandfather was involved with moving the lighthouse from the Bay to St. Michaels. For years every summer was “Let’s go see Pop Pop’s lighthouse and get some crabs!”

My grandfather was the engineer/foreman on the job and was intimately involved with figuring out how to move the lighthouse. He spoke at length to us how they cut the lighthouse in half and reassembled it on land. He was very proud of this project and spoke fondly of it. Recently, I was looking through your website, and I came across the attached photo and noted the caption:

Pictured from left: Dundas Leavitt, Gus Van Lennep, unidentified person, and Vida Van Lennep, as seen on the 1879 Hooper Strait Lighthouse, after it was moved by barge and relocated to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, c. 1966.

The unidentified person is my grandfather, Carroll Grafflin [...] He has passed away now, but this project meant a lot to him.

Sincerely,
Dominic Scafuro

Academy for Lifelong Learning Celebrates 15 Years

by Ann DeMart

On January 21, 2016, ALL at CBMM celebrates 15 years with a Spring Social and program review from 4-6pm in the Van Lennep Auditorium.

Things have changed over the past 15 years. ALL recently began offering programs to non-members to embrace more of the community. ALL membership has evolved to include new generations and more newcomers to the area, and communications are increasingly electronic.

However, ALL remains committed to exploring ideas, exchanging knowledge, and sharing experiences. Whether in classrooms or in nature, these programs are splendid opportunities not only to learn new things, but to learn about others and their opinions, passions, and pasts by interacting in person.

Our 2016 spring session runs February 1 through June 24. Upcoming offerings include a six-part canasta course, “Tales of the Deep,” taking control of our lives, “Enlightened Living,” film production, and a Great Decisions program. Literature courses include “Alice in Wonderland” and “The Jungle Book,” “Richard III,” and several “Meet the Author” sessions.

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Foundation Grant Expands CBMM’s Education Programs

The Museum recently received a $60,000 grant from the Wallace Genetic Foundation of Washington D.C., to support a new boatshop educational program for local sixth-graders, and a new bus scholarship program to help more students from throughout the Delmarva region participate in CBMM’s curriculum-based programs and field trips. The Museum is seeking additional support to fully fund these initiatives and anticipates launching both programs in 2016.

“This is exactly the type of support we need to help double the number of K-12 students we currently serve to 7,000 over the next five years,” commented CBMM President Kristen Greenaway. “I admire the Foundation’s dedication to innovative educational programs and its critical support of our mission, and we are very grateful for its generous support.”

The Museum’s new bus scholarship program is designed to boost student visitation from states throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The scholarships will prioritize Title I schools, providing disadvantaged students the opportunity to explore the Chesapeake firsthand.

Scholarships will be offered in the typically slower months of April, June, September, and October, which will provide a more intimate experience for classes on curriculum-based school tours and programs.

“The money we raise for bus scholarships is directly proportionate to the number of students that the Museum is able to bring to campus,” commented Greenaway.

“Bus transportation can regularly cost upward of $500 for a half-day field trip. By creating a bus scholarship program that will reimburse schools for up to $300 per bus, we will be able to expand our reach to area schoolchildren that have not previously been able to visit the Museum.”

CBMM’s sixth-grade boatshop program is a pilot initiative in collaboration with the YMCA of the Chesapeake and Academy Art Museum, Easton. The Museum plans to offer two, six-week after-school boatbuilding sessions annually, at no cost to Talbot County sixth-grade students. The pilot sessions will have limited participation, with the YMCA organizing registration and transportation from its Easton location. Designed to teach basic boatbuilding skills in a welcoming, relaxed environment, the program seeks both to empower students to develop a sense of self-confidence and pride, and to facilitate mentorships with shipwright educators that will provide guidance and support during this crucial year of their development.

“Middle school students are in flux—socially, developmentally, and academically,” said Greenaway. “These formative years influence the course these students will take for the rest of their lives, yet these are the years when children are most susceptible to negative outside influences, especially during ‘down time,’ or hours spent outside of the home or school. Especially within our underserved communities, these children are likely to fall through the cracks, subject to rising school dropout rates and even higher instances of drug use.

“In order to address this alarming trend, CBMM is teaming up with these other local non-profits to provide a safe alternative with a ‘third space’—neither home nor school. CBMM’s ‘third space’ will be our boatshop, where Talbot County’s sixth-grade students will be invited to build boats, connect with mentors, and ultimately set the foundation for a brighter future.”

During the pilot program, students will learn woodworking and boatbuilding during fall and winter sessions, and in the warmer months will be invited to participate in on-the-water activities on CBMM small craft and other vessels, where they will be introduced to basic navigational and maritime skills through safe, supportive, and fun experiences. Students enrolled in the program will have the option of continuing on as an after-school participant, joining CBMM’s Apprentice for a Day (AFAD) program, or exploring athletic or artistic activities offered by the YMCA and Academy Art Museum, respectively.

Once students graduate from sixth grade, they will be offered the opportunity to continue their work with CBMM through twelfth grade through other boatbuilding and educational programs sponsored by the Museum and funded through increased philanthropic support.

The Museum is also developing a program for Talbot County students in grades six through eight to participate in weeklong camp sessions, offered in collaboration with the YMCA and CBMM.

When full funding is met, CBMM plans to condense its six-week afterschool session into a weeklong, full-day summer camp. The existing boatbuilding and maritime activities will be enriched by off-site trips to outdoor destinations that complement the Chesapeake maritime theme, while underscoring self-discovery, personal achievement, exploration, and fun for each participant.

“CBMM views education as a key responsibility, and children here are given the opportunity to experience the Bay in multiple ways,” said Greenaway. “From learning to pick crabs from a professional crab picker, or holding a wriggling blenny on an ecology cruise, our mission is to provide experiences that inspire wonder, curiosity, and a lifelong passion for the Chesapeake. It is our commitment to introduce as many children as possible to programs like these and, through them, to foster the understanding that the Bay is their gift and, indeed, their legacy.”

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Captain William C. Geoghegan, a longtime master of steamboats out of Baltimore, received this Congressional Silver Lifesaving Medal for a rescue performed on December 10, 1876. During a building winter gale, Geoghegan and his crew found a naval launch adrift near Fortress Monroe in Virginia. Spray was blowing over the sailors and forming ice, exhausting and numbing them to the extent that they lost their oars. Capt. Geoghegan maneuvered the steamboat Sue alongside, walked aft along Sue’s perilously icy deck, and worked with his crew to rescue Midshipman James J. Smith and 16 men from the small boat that belonged to the steam sloop-of-war USS Hartford.

Geoghegan’s medal was presented years later, however. Although Congress had created the Lifesaving Medal in 1874 for acts of heroism—a gold medal for courageous acts that put the rescuer at extreme risk, and a silver medal for extraordinary acts performed at somewhat less personal risk—this one was awarded in 1909, more than 32 years later.

The medal commemorates the event with an inscription on the reverse:

“In testimony of heroic deeds in saving life from the perils of the sea to Capt. Wm. C. Geoghegan for gallant conduct in saving life December 10, 1876.”

Geoghegan learned seamanship aboard clipper ships trading between Baltimore and Rio de Janeiro. His long career as a steamboat captain began in 1862, when he commanded the steamboat Potomac, then in U.S. government service and supporting a Civil War military operation going up the Mississippi to New Orleans.

Geoghegan wrote of Sue that he “commanded [her] for sixteen years with the greatest success of my career.” At the time of the rescue, Sue was running a route from Baltimore to York River and various landings in Virginia for the Baltimore, Chesapeake & Richmond Steamboat Company. Geoghegan remained with Sue when the steamboat was transferred to the Potomac Transportation Line for a regular run from Baltimore to Washington, and when the old boat was retired from that service, he continued to command a series of Weems Line steamboats on the Potomac River run—Potomac, Northumberland, Calvert, and, finally, Three Rivers. In 1912, Geoghegan was recognized for 50 years of service as a master of steamboats, and he retired about a year later—though he came out of retirement briefly to command the steamboat Washington of the Norfolk & Washington Line and then retired in 1915.

The heroic act performed aboard Sue was not the only rescue in his career. On October 10, 1910, Geoghegan found 10 men from a work party for the Canton Wrecking Company who were stranded in an open launch when their engine broke down. The powerful search light on Three Rivers found them adrift at about 2am, after they had spent most of the night on the Bay. The heroic act performed aboard Sue was not the only rescue in his career. On October 10, 1910, Geoghegan found 10 men from a work party for the Canton Wrecking Company who were stranded in an open launch when their engine broke down. The powerful search light on Three Rivers found them adrift at about 2am, after they had spent most of the night on the Bay.

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Stephanie’s duties as a Museum Store volunteer include working the register, setting up displays, assisting with merchandising, customer service, and greeting guests.

“...it is also very rewarding to hear all the positive comments from visitors about the quality and vastness of the displays and merchandise in the store. I look forward to expanding my opportunities at the Museum,” says Stephanie.

Museum Store volunteer Stephanie Ross was born in Flemington, N.J., and spent her summers growing up on the Jersey Shore. She has always loved anything to do with the water, so when she and her husband, Neil, retired to the Eastern Shore, volunteering at the Museum was an easy choice.

“We’d kept our boat in Oxford for 10 years and visited the Eastern Shore and St. Michaels frequently,” says Stephanie. “We always enjoyed visiting the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum and became members. Every trip, there is always something new to learn.”

Neil retired in 2013 and volunteers for the Museum’s Boat Donation Program. Stephanie retired the following year from her job as an accountant for a golf cart distributor.

“Being new to the area, I knew I wanted to volunteer at CBMM. I always had an interest in retail. I love setting up displays and meeting people. Working in the store, you meet the school groups and share their excitement about discoveries of the Chesapeake,” says Stephanie. “There are also the ‘old timers,’ and it is a pleasure to hear their stories of their days on the Bay.”

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Volunteer Profile: Stephanie Ross

by Callie Pfeiffer

Museum volunteer Stephanie Ross.
On a crisp October morning, 50 students with teachers and parents in tow arrive at the entrance to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum. Laden with lunches and buoyant with anticipation, they’re here for the Crab Cakes program, a day they’ve been looking forward to for weeks.

Developed through a partnership between CBMM and Talbot County Public Schools (TCPS), the “Chesapeake’s Best Crab Cakes” program teaches students math, science, ecology, economics, and history—all through the lens of Maryland’s iconic crabbings industry. Through an in-classroom session, curriculum materials, and a Museum visit, Crab Cakes takes students through the crabbings industry from a sponge crab releasing its eggs in the spring to a can of crab meat picked, packed, and shipped to the restaurant.

Complex concepts are addressed via the most familiar of Chesapeake foods, and local students connect with their Bay heritage in an engaging, hands-on way.

In the Museum’s courtyard, excitement runs high among the third-grade students for crabs and a day outside. “Will we get to eat some? I’m starving! I’m gonna eat ten packinghouse owner.”

“Talbot County Public Schools is proud that the Crab Cakes program continues to bring Chesapeake heritage and today’s crabbings industry practices to life for local students.”

Though much of Crab Cakes has subtly changed over the years, the central aspects of the program have remained. Crab Cakes begins with a pre-visit to the schools by Museum docents who provide in-class instruction. In this classroom session, students are introduced to the crabbing industry, such as Joe Spurry of Bay Hundred Seafood, and their tools into our classrooms.”

The pilot program, as conceived, included in-person cameos from professional crab pickers and classroom sessions led by a folklorist. One segment focusing on crab restaurants was even held in The Crab Claw Restaurant adjoining CBMM. Though many of these original elements have changed—the crab picker, today represented by St. Michaels resident Miss Mary Helen Holmes, is one of the most enduring aspects of the program—the mission to connect local students with their Chesapeake heritage has remained constant.

The curriculum has changed, too. “Over time,” Dill comments, “we wanted to include more reading, writing, oral histories, and investigation into the program.” So, just two years ago, Dill reconvened her teachers to tackle the program and align it with current teaching standards. It was a way both to update a beloved staple of the third-grade year and to renew a commitment to the Museum program begins a few weeks later.

The Museum’s Crab Cakes program was designed 15 years ago in an innovative collaboration between CBMM and TCPS, including input from TCPS teachers, a folklorist, Museum educators, and Museum docents.

Kathy Dill, TCPS social studies coordinator, reflects on that original team. “We wanted partnerships in the community, and to bring some of our local history and natural resources into the classroom and combine the lessons with field trips,” she recalls. “The Maritime Museum was a great partner, and brought crab pickers and their tools into our classrooms.”

The pilot program’s success led to the entire Museum experience costs only $4 a student. The low price is certainly not evident in the Museum program, which has been painstakingly designed to immerse students in the people of the crabbings industry even as it aligns with current Common Core standards.

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“We modified over the years in response to feedback from teachers, changing curriculum standards, experiences of docents, and with the Museum’s education department,” Dill states. “Talbot County Public Schools is proud that the Crab Cakes program continues to bring Chesapeake heritage and today’s crabbings industry practices to life for local students.”

Though much of Crab Cakes has subtly changed over the years, the central aspects of the program have remained. Crab Cakes begins with a pre-visit to the schools by Museum docents who provide in-class instruction. In this classroom session, the stage is set for hands-on learning at the Museum through videos of local figures in the crabbings industry, such as Joe Spurry of Bay Hundred Seafood.

Students explore the mechanics of catching crabs, whether through trotlines or pots, and learn about the merits of clams or bull lips for bait. They discuss regulations and the need for culling and sizing crabs.

“You have to throw them back if they’re too small or if they have eggs,” explains a student.

Museum docents illustrate disparity in pay between fast pickers and slow pickers through several group exercises, where the students—literally tangled in a yarn “food web”—learn about the interdependence of everyone in the industry. That interconnectedness continues once the Museum program begins a few weeks later.

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Separated into small groups to facilitate more hands-on exploration, students at the Waterman’s Wharf station learn about crab biology, get to see a live crab—an aspect that many students report as their favorite part of the day—and then learn how watermen use biological knowledge to their benefit out on the water to differentiate between sooks, jimmies, and peelers.

“What’s this?” asks volunteer docent Dot Low. A dozen kids yell in a unified voice, “Jimmy!”

Other stations stress the “piece work” aspect of the crabbing industry. Inside the small boat shed, the student with the “steamer” name tag pretends to load crabs off the boat and into the large commercial crab cooker at the Maryland Crabmeat exhibition. Students, each versed in industrial cleanliness standards and wearing an apron, busily work at the picking table. Each “picker” is given a fabric crab that contains cotton puffs about the size of a quarter to represent crabmeat.

Students pull out the “meat” with ice cream spoon “knives” and deposit the fruits of their labors in industry standard plastic pound containers. Depending on the weight of their container, each brings a different price. In this way, students explore the differences between claw and backfin meat, as volunteer docent Bob Hinkel explains the basics of “market price” and students use some multiplication to determine their wages for the day. Experienced crab picker Mary Helen Holmes underlines these points as she demonstrates professional crab picking for the group. Her hands fly as she disassembles two fat, red crabs and simultaneously fields questions from the curious group. “How much money do you make?” one boy asks.

“The more you pick, the more you get,” Holmes replies. “As much as $200 per day.” Holmes also explains the need for migrant workers—in her estimation, there were more than 80 pickers in the Coulbourn and Jewett packinghouse in St. Michaels when she was a girl 50 years ago. Today, only a few locals still pick—the rest of those working at nearby Chesapeake Landing are Cambodian pickers who commute from Annapolis.

An opportune teaching moment arises. “What do we call someone who travels from far away for work?” the teacher prompts. Hands go up.

“A migrant worker!” quickly replies a boy from the side of the table, momentarily looking up from Holmes’ brimming crabmeat containers.

At another station, students practice trotlining on Katie G, a real boat, but not on the water. Volunteer docent Barbara Boyd has the students each take a small wooden crab and sit a foot apart, at each bait knot. As the “captain” pretends to drive the boat, the trotline moves. The “crabber” uses a net to grab each crab as it comes close to the boat.

“Don’t drop it—that’s money!” someone yells, and the group falls into giggles. Everybody gets a turn to be a crabber and a boat captain at this station.

“OK, boat captain, what do you do when the Natural Resources Police show up?” asks Boyd.

“Hide?” asks the captain.

“Nah. You’ve got nothing to hide. You’ve been culling those crabs all along; let’s invite them on the boat and let them search through your harvest.” The officer boards and finds a legal harvest on the boat.
The job assignment each student was given at the beginning of the program really come into play at the last station—the restaurant—set up at the far end of the Oystering on the Chesapeake exhibition building. Here, the students turn over their badge to see their pay rate. One is $8, another $30. The “restaurant owner” passes out actual menus, and the students take a look at what they can afford to order for lunch. Faces fall when some students realize they can’t afford much. Math again, as everyone figures out how much they can spend, remembering to include a tip for the waiter.

“This is one of our signature programs,” says Kate Livie. “And I don’t mind saying it’s my favorite.” Though Crab Cakes is the most work intensive of all CBMM programs, and the most reliant on many docents to pull off, in Livie’s estimation it best reflects the Museum’s mission and ethos and is the most fun for children who participate. It resonates with a local community that is still water focused even as the crabbing industry has declined.

“Here in Talbot County, fewer and fewer students have direct experience with a working waterfront. Crab Cakes is a reminder for these students that there’s a lot of work—and learning—that can be gleaned from a little blue crab.”

By lunchtime, the live crab has been released, the crab picker has stashed her supplies, and the students leave behind their responsibilities as pickers, watermen, scientists, and migrant workers. Collapsing in happy piles on CBMM’s lawn, they lunch together overlooking the water, laughing and talking about their favorite parts of the morning.

Another successful Crab Cakes program has wrapped up—and with its conclusion, a new generation of 50 4-foot-tall Chesapeake stewards has been created. To be a fly on the wall at their family’s next crab feast—where no one, including the students themselves, will ever look at crabs in quite the same way.

Learn more about other unique programs offered at CBMM by visiting cbmm.org/learn.

Your gift to the Annual Fund makes it possible for the Museum to continue its work of inspiring, preserving, and stewarding all that we love about the Chesapeake Bay—its boats and boatbuilding traditions, its history, and, most importantly, the stories that connect the Bay’s objects and artifacts to the people of this region. Our education programs—spanning the ages from preschoolers to senior citizens—are made possible through your gifts to the Annual Fund, and are designed to foster an understanding of and appreciation for the Bay and its fragile ecosystems. Your support makes the difference in the lives of all the children and adults touched through our programs.

To donate, contact René Stevenson at 410-745-4950, by email at rstevenson@cbmm.org, or make your donation online at cbmm.org/support/donate.
The Chesapeake Bay’s oystering industry is entering a brave new era. Though the wild harvest continues, oyster farms are exploding in popularity—growing out thousands of Chesapeake oysters in cages and floats that are destined for the upscale oyster bars of Baltimore and Washington, D.C. These cultivated oysters—largely sterile, to resist the diseases MSX and Dermo that ravaged the wild population a decade ago—are grown by oyster farmers whose back-grounds are as nontraditional as their oyster harvests.

Tim Devine, a former photographer, and Scott Budden, who worked for Booz Allen Hamilton, are part of this new generation of Chesapeake oyster entrepreneurs. Savvy and hardworking, the two aquaculturists are exploring this burgeoning new industry, where success or failure depends on the tides, the market, and the future of millions of tiny, fragile oyster spat.

Budden is a Kent County, Maryland, native who represents the new face of aquaculture—young, passionate, motivated, and armed with investment capital and a business plan. The first oyster lease applicant on the Chester River, Budden had dreams of producing an oyster renowned for its sweetness just a little upriver from Eastern Neck Island. Like many of the Eastern Shore’s twenty- and thirty-something population, he moved away from his hometown of Chestertown for college and then for career opportunities farther afield. Beyond farming or small business ownership, there just wasn’t much of a professional incentive to return home. Personally, however, Budden saw a million reasons—a close-knit community full of family and friends, a life lived close to the land, a slower pace, a beautiful landscape.

“I studied a little bit of aquaculture and environmental science in my undergrad studies, and it just seemed really interesting,” Budden comments, opening up a small marine notebook full of salinity measurements and oyster cage winch plans. He continues, “In the back of my mind I thought, wouldn’t that be really cool to try that in my hometown on the Chesapeake? And then when they passed the laws in 2009, all of a sudden, that idea came back, and I thought, I should look into this as a viable thing.”

For Budden, it was more than a way to support himself—he saw oyster farms as an opportunity to resuscitate a Chester River imperiled by worsening water quality.

“I saw it as a twofold opportunity,” Budden explains, “to make a living, but also to help clean up the Bay and river I grew up on and I love. I’ve seen it change a lot in my lifetime. When I was a kid, we used to go trotlining and catch huge crabs, way up in the river. Now, my friends will go out and catch one crab all day.”

Budden spent the next three years getting his ducks in a row. He interviewed other oyster farms and observed their growing practices, researched different gear and improvised when he couldn’t find exactly what he needed, took bottom soundings of different prospective locations along the Chester River looking for the ideal site: old shell bottom, good currents, a source of regular scouring from the Bay’s main stem. He finally applied for the place he thought would be perfect—a location just north of the protected Eastern Neck Island, one of the places where thousand-year-old oyster middens clearly indicated that once oysters had thrived there.

Budden was optimistic. He had the gear he needed, he
had a location identified that seemed prime for an oyster farm, and he even started reaching out to people who might provide some part-time work to get the farm up and running. Then the lease went out for public comment.

A routine part of the Maryland DNR leasing process, this allows different stakeholders to weigh in and voice concerns or obstacles. A waterman, Wayne Wilson, weighed in, protesting the lease. When DNR hosted a public open house on Budden’s application, Wilson and a few other members of the Kent County Watermen’s Association attended to share their opinions. Specifically, they objected to Budden’s planned use of oyster cages, which they felt would foul other kinds of fishing gear like crab trotlines.

Once the lease had a location identified that seemed prime for an oyster house on Budden’s application, Wilson and a few others felt that the community needed an opportunity to discuss Budden’s lease in a more public forum than a DNR hearing. The commissioners then added Budden’s lease proposal to one of their meeting agendas in January. It was a packed house—past standing room only, people trailed out into the lobby or leaned against the walls. Budden opened with a presentation on the lease, giving an overview of the process and his commitment to the region, the river, and the local economy. He was followed by a long line of members of the public who all had plenty of opinions on the matter. There was support, from the local river association, from locals who admired his entrepreneurial spirit, from another oyster farmer, Johnny Shockley, a waterman turned oyster farmer who testified to Budden’s thoroughness and the overall benefits of aquaculture.

“As Shockley stepped down, Budden’s detractors voiced their concerns. The landowners adjacent to Budden’s lease had a lucrative waterfowling outfitters and guiding business on their property, and they were concerned that frequent boat trips to maintain oyster cages would disturb the birds. Budden’s lease was only a few hundred yards from one of their hunting blinds. Moreover, the landowners had good relationships with the local watermen and were worried that Budden’s oyster cages would have a negative impact on their crabbing.

Next, a series of watermen voiced their concerns. Brian Nesspor, vice president of the Kent County Watermen’s Association, summed up the general gist when he said, ‘You let this through, this one lease for these cages, it’s going to lead to another one, and another one, and another one. Going right on up and down the shoreline. By a certain point in time, there is going to be no trotline bottom for these fellas when they have to go in four or five feet of water. It’s going to be bottom that’s once more taken away from the watermen that we’ll never get back.’

In the following weeks, a mediator was called in to try to find some common ground between Budden, the adjacent property owners, and the watermen. One of the terms agreed upon was that Budden would choose another lease site slightly south of the one he’d originally applied for. Located off Eastern Neck Island wildlife refuge, his only neighbors would be tundra swans and loblolly pines. The local delegate, Jay Jacobs, also a former waterman, promised to fast-track Budden’s lease application in Annapolis if he shook hands on the deal. Budden agreed—just one concession among scores made in deals just like this around Maryland, as oyster farmers, watermen, property owners, and recreational hunters all try to navigate these new, worrisome waters of aquaculture.
Scott Budden’s experience is not an isolated one. Conflicts continue to arise in Maryland over aquaculture and its new take on an old tradition, but cultivated oysters, and those who raise them, are still multiplying across Maryland and Virginia. Nationally, the United States is transitioning from an era of cheap, plentiful, processed foods into a period where regional flavors and sustainability rule the table. Oysters—a key component of that “slow food” trend—are once again flourishing in the Chesapeake’s quiet coves as national demand grows for a cultivated product. In Virginia alone, hatchery-produced plantings of oyster triploid “seed” grew from 6.2 million in 2005 to 138 million by 2014—an increase of over 2,125 percent in less than a decade.

Maryland, which only unrolled the red carpet for aquaculture in 2010, is just beginning to encourage an oyster farming industry. To date, it only has 13 working oyster farms, but hundreds of applications for farms or leases are in the pipeline. It’s the beginning of an exciting period of growth for Maryland’s oyster cultivators, but plenty of challenges still remain. In particular, the quality, consistency, and volume demanded by the white-tablecloth market represent dauntingly lofty goals, especially when most new small farms begin with only five to ten acres under lease.

Tim Devine, owner of the small but mighty Barren Island Oysters, knows these challenges only too well. His “slightly salty” oysters can be found in plenty of the Bay’s high-end oyster bars, including D.C.’s Pearl Dive—surely a marker of success. But Devine readily admits that achieving even this level of success was facetimely achieved. Devine has figured it out as he goes along. Finding ways to grow as many perfect oysters as possible has taken a lot of ingenuity, experimentation, and hard work. Most importantly, it’s also taken Devine’s stubborn conviction that if it’s possible to produce the best-cultivated oyster in the Chesapeake, he’s going to do it.

“The way I’ve always done things is to take my weaknesses and make them my strengths,” Devine says. It didn’t faze him that he knew nothing about growing oysters. As a new farmer to the activity of prepping cage after cage of oysters for months of rigorous cultivation. Devine and his crew dedicate hours every week to tending their oyster crop. Each oyster cage must be regularly shaken to remove built-up algae and sediment, and individual oysters are allowed to spend time in. You don’t have enough in the day to get the sediment, the growth of things that block water flow off—you really have to break that up consistently, shaking them, turning them so they get better current, better algae.” – Tim Devine

So, I could look at growing oysters with fresh eyes. I really allowed myself the chance to fail at this business."

A trip down to Devine’s business on Hooper’s Island clearly shows he hasn’t failed—indeed, things are thriving for Barren Island Oysters. The cinderblock building hums with the activity of preparing cage after cage of oysters for shipment all around the region. It’s the week before Super Bowl Sunday, and several thousand of Barren Island’s finest are headed out to share table space with buffalo wings and nachos during the big game. Several men in bibs and sweaters pile remarkably clean, well-shaped oysters on a conveyor belt to be sorted into boxes.

Tim and his crew have worked hard to prepare his oysters, “BIOs” for short, for this moment. Like many other oyster growers competing for a piece of the half-shell market, they have invested each individual oyster with months of rigorous cultivation. Devine and his crew dedicate hours every week to tending their oyster crop. Each oyster cage must be regularly shaken to remove built-up algae and sediment, and individual oysters are also sent on a few trips through the large industrial tumbler. Pricey, but essential for many oyster farmers, tumblers allow cultivators to “finish” their product in large rotating drums that toss the oysters around and chip off the fingernail-fine edges of their bills. Aquaculturists claim that this creates an oyster with a deeper interior “cup,” fewer rough edges, and, over time, a thicker shell free of barnacles and other reef animals.

It’s a time-consuming and laborious step, requiring oyster farmers to move their oysters from the lease site to the tumbler and back multiple times. But tumbling and other cultivation techniques are necessary when consumers expect oyster shells to be as pleasing to the eye as the meat is to the palate. If tumbling provides an edge, many oyster farmers are willing to swallow the cost and extra work it entails. Stakes are high for Chesapeake oyster farmers to produce ever more, ever better oysters to meet the upscale industry’s demands. However, excellence and volume are hard to achieve simultaneously—a fact Devine readily acknowledges.

“There are a lot of hurdles for Maryland oyster farmers at this early stage. The real problem is manpower and time. Finding labor in these rural places where you see oyster farms is really hard.” Tim continues, “You have to put the time in. You don’t have enough in the day to get the sediment, the growth of things that block water flow off—you really have to break that up consistently, shaking them, turning them so they get better current, better algae.”

Devine hopes to find a happy medium for his Barren Island Oysters between quality and quantity—a difficulty, when more intensive cultivation produces a better oyster but can limit the amount of shellfish a farmer can grow. It’s a delicate balance, and it’s relative. Each individual oyster grower has to identify how many oysters to plant and how much work to invest in each individual shellfish. Some cultivators may skip a bit on manual processes, like tumbling, in favor of a larger crop. Others, like Tim Devine, will sacrifice a bit of their production quantity to get smoothly tumbled, buttery oysters.

After several years of trial, error, and painstaking detail, Devine thinks his BIOs may have finally found their equilibrium. This summer, barring any unforeseen circumstances like ice events or freshwater flooding, his Barren Island Oysters are poised to be ready for market in larger numbers than ever before. “I pushed it this year—put in 3.5 million. If the losses are what I expect, then this year, in June, I can bring 250 to 300 boxes—that’s 25,000 to 30,000 oysters a week. It’s set up to be consistent, producing that much from them on.”

With that kind of production, Devine would be well positioned to sell his BIO brand oysters to big restaurants like D.C.’s venerable Old Ebbitt Grill, where they might win over the hearts (and palates) of oyster consumers and chefs alike.

Whether on the Chester River or the low marshes of Hooper’s Island, the Chesapeake’s tributaries are fostering a new kind of white gold—oysters, carefully raised and artfully promoted. Their growers face skepticism, labor woes, and environmental impacts, but their excitement and energy are palpable, nonetheless. For the first time in a generation, a wholly new facet of oystering’s long history in the Bay has been established, opening up the industry to fresh ideas and a discerning market. It’s the beginning of a new era of salad days for Chesapeake oysters—delicious, timeless, and, for the first time—farmed.

Chesapeake Oysters: The Bay’s Foundation and Future is available from the publisher online at arcadiapublishing.com, for purchase in the Museum Store, on Amazon.com, and in local book stores.
The Museum's tuck stern Pot Pie skiff is receiving much needed restoration work in the Boatyard. Her hull has been flipped over, with deteriorating wood identified and removed. Shipwrights, apprentices, and volunteers are crafting new cypress bottom planking and white oak stringers, with sections of deadwood and a new horn timber to be crafted from loblolly pine. The prop shaft has been re-drilled and her 37hp Westerbeke 4107 motor will be realigned once all work has been completed.

Waterman Lock Brandoo used this small skiff to catch crabs with a trotline, and perhaps to tong for oysters. The boat is steered by a simple mechanism with a stick on the starboard side, connected by ropes to the rudder in the stern. Chesapeake watermen like this kind of steering because they can steer with one hand and net crabs with the other. The Pot Pie skiff is named for the place it was built—a neighborhood called Pot Pie in the town of Wittman, Md. Some also refer to the boat type as a tuck stern skiff because of the way the back of the boat is tucked up out of the water on each side.

Pot Pie Skiff

She was built in 1961 by George Jackson. Her length is 26', with a beam of 7'11" and a draft of 1'10". Collection of the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, St. Michaels, Md. Gift of Charles F. Novak. 2005-32-1.

Apprentice For A Day Boatbuilding Program

OPENING WEEKEND: JANUARY 9-10, 2016

Saturdays & Sundays, 10am-4pm in CBMM Boatyard

Journeyman Special: Choose any four classes for $150 CBMM members and $200 non-members.

Single classes: $45 CBMM members, $55 non-members.

Saturday Special: Every third Saturday of the month, we offer a reduced rate of $25 per person. (Jan. 16, Feb. 20, March 19, April 17, May 14, June 18)

Email questions to afad@cbmm.org or call 410-745-4980.

Learn traditional boatbuilding under the direction of a CBMM shipwright. You can be part of the 17-week process or sign up for those aspects of building a boat that you want to learn. Must be 16 or older unless accompanied by an adult.

25' Draketail Chesapeake Bay Fishing Launch

A Hooper Island work boat with a reverse-rake round stern, also referred to locally as “torpedo stern,” “divetail,” or “ducktail.” These were the first type of power workboats developed in the Bay region. Our Draketail will be built using plank on frame and started upside down on a strong-back. The bottom will be traditionally cross planked with bead and cove strip planking for the topsides.

New Member Reception

Thursday, January 28, 2016
5pm in the Van Lennep Auditorium
RSVP to 410-745-4991 or dcollison@cbmm.org

We’re rolling out the red carpet for the 800 new members who teamed up with CBMM in 2015! Please join us for an evening reception to meet your fellow new members and get to know a little more about the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum. Chat with President Kristen Greenaway, who will also give a brief welcome and unveil her exciting plans for the Museum’s future. Refreshments served. Free to members; reservations required.

Exhibition Exploration

A Brood Reach: 50 Years of Collecting

Wednesday, February 17, 2016
5pm in the Van Lennep Auditorium
RSVP to 410-745-4991 or dcollison@cbmm.org

Join CBMM’s Chief Curator, Pete Lesher, for a final look at our 50th Anniversary exhibition that features 50 outstanding highlights from the Museum’s collection. Lesher will tell the rich stories behind these historic artifacts, ranging from gilded eagles to a sailmaker’s sewing machine, a log-built bugeye to an intimate scene of crab pickers. Free to members; reservations required. Space is limited.

Three-Day Bronze Casting Workshop

Join nationally renowned sculpture artist and Shepherd University professor Christian Benefiel as he guides you through the intricacies of casting bronze, including creating molds, working the sand, the furnace, and pouring molten metal. Participants will take home a working knowledge of casting metal and their own creation.

She was built in 1961 by George Jackson. Her length is 26’, with a beam of 7’11” and a draft of 1’10”. Collection of the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, St. Michaels, Md. Gift of Charles F. Novak. 2005-32-1.

Blessing of the Fleet

Thursday, April 14, 2016
5pm under the Hooper Strait Lighthouse
RSVP to 410-745-4991 or dcollison@cbmm.org

Join CBMM members, volunteers, and Boatyard staff for an official ceremony honoring our own floating fleet as well as other Bay working vessels and pleasure craft. The Reverend Kevin M. Cross from the Church of the Holy Trinity in Oxford, Md., will offer prayers for a safe and bountiful season. This event is free and the public is welcome.

Museum programs • member nights • special events

January | February | March | April | Save-the-Dates

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Three-Day Bronze Casting Workshop Thursday, March 17 through Saturday, March 19, 2016 9am-4pm in CBMM Boatyard. $225 CBMM members, $275 non-members. Plus $100 materials fee. Registration required to 410-745-4941 or aspeight@cbmm.org

Join nationally renowned sculptor artist and Shepherd University professor Christian Benefiel as he guides you through the intricacies of casting bronze, including creating molds, working the sand, the furnace, and pouring molten metal. Participants will take home a working knowledge of casting metal and their own creation.

Blessing of the Fleet Thursday, April 14, 2016 5pm under the Hooper Strait Lighthouse RSVP to 410-745-4991 or dcollison@cbmm.org

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1965-2015: 50 Years of a Changing Chesapeake Environment

2016 Winter Speaker Series
Join Chesapeake experts as they explore the incredible stories of the Bay’s changing environment over the last 50 years and how it has impacted the people and culture throughout the Chesapeake watershed.

Cost per session for this series is $6 for CBMM members, $8 for non-members. Register for all sessions and receive a discount. $20 CBMM members, $28 non-members. Registration required by contacting 410-745-4941 or aspeight@cbmm.org.

Session 1: Invasive Species & the Changing Environment of the Chesapeake Bay
Thursday, February 18, 2016
2pm in the Van Lennep Auditorium
Phragmites to nutria, snakeheads to blue catfish, invasive species are everywhere in the Chesapeake Bay. In the last 50 years, their increasing numbers have dramatically impacted the Bay’s environment and ecology. Join Jonathan McKnight, associate director of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Natural Heritage Program, for a discussion of the origin of these invasive species and their impact on the Bay’s landscape and people, and discover how Maryland is addressing the concerning growth of these destructive interlopers.

Session 2: Beautiful Swimmers Revisited: Warner’s Classic Crabbing Book, 40 Years Later
Thursday, February 25, 2016
2pm in the Van Lennep Auditorium
For four decades, William W. Warner’s Pulitzer Prize-winning best-seller, Beautiful Swimmers, has delighted readers everywhere. Now, in a riveting new film, award-winning writer Tom Horton, film-maker Sandy Cannon-Brown, and photographer/producer David Harp pick up where Warner left off with the story of Colineectes sapidus, the Atlantic blue crab. Join Cannon-Brown for a sneak peek into this new project and a discussion of what the team discovered when they explored how the culture, science, and management of the Chesapeake Bay’s iconic blue crab have changed in the last 40 years.

Session 3: From Wild Caught to Cultivated: The Chesapeake Oyster Industry from 1965 to 2015
Wednesday, March 9, 2016
10am in the Van Lennep Auditorium
Join Maryland Extension agent and shellfish aquaculture expert Donald Webster for a discussion on the major changes in the oystering industry over the last 50 years. Impacted by debilitating diseases and an environment swept by storms, sediment, and freshwater, the Chesapeake’s oyster industry has innovated, embracing oyster farming even as our wild harvest continues. Webster, a key figure in Chesapeake oyster policy for 20 years, looks back on the transformation of the Chesapeake oyster and the Bay’s oyster traditions.

Session 4: The Perfect Storm: The Legacy of Hurricane Agnes
Thursday, March 17, 2016
2pm in the Van Lennep Auditorium
Join Dr. Kent Mountford, estuarine ecologist and environmental historian, as he explores the history, impact, and legacy of Hurricane Agnes. A storm of tremendous environmental impact, Agnes was a watershed moment for the Bay’s ecosystem and fisheries— and many believe they have never recovered from the repercussions of the 1972 storm. Through stories, images, and data, Mountford will revisit the epic hurricane’s days of destruction and discuss how Agnes inspired the first generation of Chesapeake Bay environmentalists.

Family Programs
ChesAdventures

Select Saturdays in February & March
$12 per class for CBMM members and $15 per class for non-members. A special four-session pass is available at $40 for CBMM members and $50 for non-members. Registration is required to 410-745-4941 or by email to aspeight@cbmm.org.

March 5 – Teeny Tiny Treasures
10am-12pm for ages 4-6 and 1-3pm for ages 7-9
Join Academy Art Museum educator Constance Del Nero as she teaches children and adults how to transform their trash into treasure creating Junk Mail Fish! These beautiful and unique family-made maritime collages use print advertising to make underwater scenes of fish and other aquatic life.

SAVE-THE-DATES

Boater Safety Courses
Begin April 2016

Members Boating Season: KICKOFF COOKOUT
Saturday, May 7, 2016

Brightwork Workshop
Saturday, May 14 & Sunday, May 15, 2016

Summer Kids Club Half-day Camp
Begin June 2016

Antique & Classic Boat Festival
Father’s Day Weekend, June 17-19, 2016

Big Band Night & Fireworks
Saturday, July 2, 2016

Watermen’s Appreciation Day
Sunday, August 14, 2016

Charity Boat Auction
Labor Day Weekend - Saturday, September 3, 2016

Boating Party Fundraising Gala
Saturday, September 10, 2016

Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival & Maritime Model Expo
Saturday & Sunday, October 1 & 2, 2016

OysterFest
Saturday, October 29, 2016
When you donate or purchase a used boat from CBMM's Boat Donation Program, you are supporting the children and adults served by our education programs.

CBMM’s Boat Donation Program is one of the most reputable, highly experienced operations in the region. We accept all manner of craft year round, and offer long-standing boat sales and lease/charter operations as well as the much anticipated Charity Boat Auction held annually on Saturday of Labor Day weekend. Through your generosity, you are helping to ensure the sustainability of the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum for future generations. To receive a no-obligation evaluation of your boat for donation purposes, or to inquire about current inventory, contact:

Lad Mills at 410-745-4942 & Todd Taylor at 410-745-4990 or visit cbmm.org/auctionboats.