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

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THE CHESAPEKE LOG
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 bugeye Edna E. Lockwood, the queen of our fleet. After a national search, we have finally secured the 12 loblolly yellow pine sills—$267,000 worth!—needed for Edna’s historic restoration. This project offers us a tremendous opportunity to bring the story of Edna and her crews to life, demonstrating the impact of this vessel on 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, demonstrating the impact of this vessel on the story of the Chesapeake Bay. We still have a long way to go. As funding becomes available, we will undertake many more capital improvements to help secure our next 50 years. For more information, visit cbmm.org.

Capital Improvements at CBMM
by Jen Matthews

Now in its 50th year, the Museum faces an exciting opportunity. Museum leadership has spent the past two years strategically examining campus operations and brainstorming ways to improve guest experience and campus functionality. While working to address structural challenges, such as aging facilities, CBMM is creating new opportunities to engage with both its local and regional community and with guests from around the globe, whether on campus 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.

We plan to invest $6M+ in capital improvements over the next five years, and have already accomplished much in the past year, including:

• Repainting the Hooper Strait Lighthouse and Point Lookout Bell Tower with ceramic paint warranted for 25 years. The Lighthouse’s lookout rails and copper lantern sheathing have been replaced, and the Bell Tower now has an upgraded electrical system and new bell striking mechanism, and now rings on ship’s time.

• Painting the Museum Store and staining the Oystering Building and its decking.

• Installing new composite decking on Waterman’s Wharf, and a new protective front at the pier’s T-head to help protect the Museum’s floating fleet from prop wash. Electric, water, and new lighting are being added. New decking will extend to the front of the VLA and the boardwalk joining Navy Point and Foggs Cove.

• Installing fiber to support campus-wide Wi-Fi, bringing the Museum into the 21st century. This initiative will improve guests’ interpretive experiences and provides the infrastructure necessary to upgrade Museum safety and security.

We still have a long way to go. As funding becomes available, we will undertake many more capital improvements to help secure our next 50 years. For more information, visit cbmm.org.

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.

To help secure our next 50 years. For more information, visit cbmm.org.

• Installing a new AV system in the Van Lennep Auditorium to enhance the quality of CBMM-related meetings and to help attract corporate meeting business.

• Purchase of a new forklift. In addition to saving enormous amounts of time on general campus maintenance projects, the forklift enables us to step most of our own masts, and launch the log canoe Bufflehead!

• Beginning work on the “Patriot Gardens” located between the Museum’s administrative offices and The Patriot. Lined by five-foot-wide walkways, the new gardens will stretch over 260 feet of waterfront and will be divided into three sections separated by brick patios, with benches for guests to enjoy views of St. Michaels Harbor.

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Letter to the Editor

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, 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.

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 pilot program offers after-school boatbuilding sessions to Talbot County sixth-grade students. The Museum continues to seek donations to fully fund and expand the initiative, with our pilot sessions currently limited to 12 participants.

Woodworking and boatbuilding tools and a finished toolbox project are shown as part of the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum’s new sixth-grade boatshop program, with CBMM Boatyard Program Manager Jenn Kuhn and Shipwright Educator Matt Engel working on a boat in the background. Funded by a generous foundation grant, the pilot program offers after-school boatbuilding sessions to Talbot County sixth-grade students. The Museum continues to seek donations to fully fund and expand the initiative, with our pilot sessions currently limited to 12 participants.

“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.”
Steamboat Master & Hero

by Pete Loser

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 award 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 Captain 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 Pocobonar, 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 the York River and various landings in Virginia for the Baltimore, Chesapeake & Richmond Steamboat Company. Geoghegan remained with the company 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, Pocahontas, Anne Arundel, Calvert, and 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 stories are preserved in a scrapbook in the collection of the Maryland Historical Society. His lifesaving medal remains on exhibition in A Broad Reach: Fifty Years of Collecting in the Museum’s Steamboat Building through March 1, 2016.

picked up, but the schooner’s captain was lost. Neither Capt. Geoghegan, who was asleep at the time, nor his mate, who was on watch, was blamed. Potomac had a proper lookout and had maneuvered to avoid the collision, but the schooner’s captain put his helm down and crossed the steamboat’s bow. It sank in minutes.

Geoghegan’s stories are preserved in a scrapbook in the collection of the Maryland Historical Society. His lifesaving medal remains on exhibition in A Broad Reach: Fifty Years of Collecting in the Museum’s Steamboat Building through March 1, 2016.

Volunteer Profile: Stephanie Ross

by Callie Pfeiffer

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 followed the retiring year of 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 hear about 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.”

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.
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 crabbing industry. Through an in-classroom session, curriculum materials, and a Museum visit, Crab Cakes takes students through the crabbing industry from a sponge crab releasing its eggs in the spring to a can of crabmeat picked, packed, and shipped to the restaurant.

Talbot County third-graders—a group of 350 students—participate in Crab Cakes annually. Supported by a grant from the State of Maryland’s State Aided Institution (SAI) initiative, the entire Museum experience costs only $4 per 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 crabbing industry even as it aligns with current Common Core standards.

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, 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 endearing 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 a fruitful and long-lasting partnership with CBMM.

“By now,” Dill states, “Talbot County Public Schools is proud that the Crab Cakes program continues to bring Chesapeake heritage and today’s crabbing 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 crabbing 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 crabs or bull limits for bait. They discuss regulations and the need for culling and sizing crabs.

“Students,” 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.
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 underscores 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.
The following photos and excerpt are reprinted with permission from

Chesapeake Oysters: The Bay’s Foundation and Future

by Kate Livie

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...
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.

Shockley spoke not only to the commissioners but also to the skeptical group of Chester River watermen: “The watermen here tonight I consider my peers—I would be very interested to see if in five years, how many of these same individuals are coming forth and asking for this same lease opportunity as aquaculture continues to flourish. We started out [at Hooper’s Island Oyster Aquaculture Company] three years ago. This year, we’ll be at $1.4 million. I’m supporting three other businesses right on Hooper’s Island, employing twenty-five people. I see nothing but upside from this industry—to revolutionize seafood in the Chesapeake Bay.”

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.

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.

The Kent County commissioners were divided on the issue. One commissioner in particular, a former waterman himself, felt that 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.

“Really, we’re in trouble with our seafood industry,” Shockley stated. “We have to figure out what the future is going to be around this industry. This oyster aquaculture industry is the answer to all of these problems. I’ve jumped into this business because I want to create a way to carry on the heritage and future of the Chesapeake.”

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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 apace in 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 best restaurants, and his devotion to quality has earned him a loyal following. But that’s the beauty of it. “I push it this year—put in 3.5 million. If the losses are what I expect, then 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 then on.”

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.

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 preprocessing 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.

“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 native of Maryland’s Eastern Shore turned New York photographer turned prodigal son returned, he had plenty of opportunities to reinvent himself—a useful attribute when seeking to plunge into a career in oyster farming. The wide-open newness of the industry in the Chesapeake appealed to him. Devine continues, “All these other people in the business were coming from some sort of tradition. I don’t have that, so I’m not going to be boxed in by anything, turning them so they get better current, better algae.” – Tim Devine

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, 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 oysterking’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.
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 Brando used this little skiff to catch crabs with a trotline, and perhaps to tow for oysters. The boat is steered by a simple mechanism with a stick on the after deck, 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.

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

Saturday & Sundays, 10am-4pm in CBMM Boatyard
Journeymen 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 for each class. (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,” “dovetail,” 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 boat will be traditionally cross planked with beaded cove strip planking for the topsides.

Exhibition Exploration
A Broad 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.

Magic Lantern Story: An Evening with Marc Castelli
Wednesday, March 16, 2016
5pm in the Van Lennep Auditorium
RSVP to 410-745-4991 or dcollison@cbmm.org
Renowned artist Marc Castelli will share a unique slide presentation featuring his annual show of photographs collected while out on the water. This year’s presentation features all new and spectacular photos. Free to members; reservations required. Space is limited.

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.

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. Onat 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.

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Electronic Navigation for Non-Technical People
Saturday, February 6, 2016
10am-noon in Dorchester House
$10 CBMM members. $20 non-members. Registration required to 410-745-4941 or aspeight@cbmm.org
Join Captain Jerry Friedman, a 100-ton, USCG-licensed Master, as he provides short non-technical descriptions of how GPS, GPS plotters, radar, depth sounders, and automatic identification systems work. These are common electronic navigation systems used on recreational and commercial boats.

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 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.

Two-Day Chart Navigation Workshop
Saturday, January 9, 2016, 10am-noon
Sunday, January 10, 2016, 1-3pm in Dorchester House
$25 CBMM members. $35 non-members. Registration required to 410-745-4941 or aspeight@cbmm.org
Join Captain Jerry Friedman, a 100-ton, USCG-licensed Master, for this two-day workshop. The course is designed to teach participants the necessary steps needed to plan a cruise using navigation charts, which includes plotting courses to safely pilot a boat from one location to another. Boaters interested in being more proficient in navigation will learn the techniques to determine a boat’s locations without the use of electronic aids.

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1965-2015: 50 Years of a Changing Chesapeake Environment

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 landscape and people, and discover how Maryland is addressing the increasing numbers 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, filmmaker Sandy Cannon-Brown, and photographer/producer David Harp pick up where Warner left off with the story of Callinectes 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 oyster 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.
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.