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THE BINNACLE

Fall 2018
No. 24

Ocean City's Home for History

The Moyer Company: Building Boats for WWII

By William K. Pehlert

As a barrier island on the Mid-Atlantic coast, Ocean City was in a unique position to contribute to the war effort when WWII began in 1941. One notable contributor was the company owned by C. Joseph Moyer, a contractor-builder with an office and shop at 1235 West Avenue. After war was declared, he transformed his business from building houses to building boats for the military.



Moyer Company officials presented with the White Star Flag.

Moyer was a businessman, civic leader, and patriot. Born in New York about 1897, he had an eighth grade education. In 1920 he married Helen E. Bard of Ocean City. By 1935 they lived on 1st Street in Ocean City where Joseph had his own construction company which, in 1942, he incorporated as the Moyer Co. for war-effort work. Active in G.O.P. politics, he was elected a Justice of the Peace in November 1940. In 1943, he led work on the city's WWII Honor Roll and monument. Joseph was a member of the Craftsmen's Club and was active in community War Bond drives. In 1944, the Moyer Co. was awarded the White Star Flag for 100% employee participation in payroll deductions for war bonds. Joseph was a promoter, as evidenced in the public events that he staged for significant boat launchings and in the celebratory dinners that he hosted. In December 1944 he was chairman of a new Veterans' Service Council to assist ex-servicemen transitioning to civilian life. Post war, due to zoning, he could not continue light industry work on the island. By 1948 he was living in Beesley's Point, NJ and was a contractor in Ocean City.

In September 1941, before WWII was declared, Moyer built 5 wooden 48-foot open-sided launch-type boats for the Army for troop transport in the Panama Canal Zone. He leased the facilities of the Ocean City Engine and Yacht Co. at 312 Bay Ave. and engaged its proprietor, Mr. Cancelmo, to superintend construction. He sublet work locally, and his expanded 26-person workforce labored long hours to meet an aggressive schedule.

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FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR

Helpers in History,

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of the Ocean City Historical Museum's *Binnacle*. In your hands is a look at what is happening at the Museum and what will happen as we close out 2018. I began this year promoting a new slogan for the Museum: *Ocean City's Home for History*. I believe that as an organization we have made strides toward that goal, but there is more work to be done. I appreciate your support of the Museum this year, whether through a visit, a donation or a membership. The Museum depends on all the support you have provided. That support has allowed us to do more this year than we have done in previous years. We opened four significant exhibits and are preparing a special holiday display. Several years ago, planning two exhibits in a year sent shudders down my spine.



Our Lecture Series was of great interest. By focusing on the business community, the programs had a different flavor and interested a wider audience. We provided American Sign Language support to those programs, which was not grant funded this year. Events were held in every month but January. We have enjoyed working in concert with our neighbors in the Community Center. Our Summer History Camp was so well received that we have already started a waiting list for Summer 2019.

All of this is possible because of the love, support and good will you share with your family and friends. Your word-of-mouth recommendations to your guests and friends allows us to contemplate our 10,000th visitor of the year. By the end of September, we had welcomed 8,335 people to the Museum. I have a special request. If you are in Ocean City before the end of the year—

VISIT THE MUSEUM! I believe that 10,000th visitor will come into the Museum some time on December 31st (First Night). We will keep an eye on the visitation numbers and will be presenting a gift basket to that 10,000th person through the door. **Will it be you?**

Until Next Time,

~Jeff

Jeffrey R. McGranahan
Executive Director

2018 Membership Annual Meeting

November 15, 2018

7 pm

Library Conference Room

This meeting is open to all the members of the Museum. If you are interested in learning more about how the Museum operates, this business meeting is how to do it. We will be reviewing the year's activities—the wins and losses. We will elect new members to the Board and thank members who are completing their service. Please mark your calendars and plan on attending. If you have any questions, please call the Museum: 609-399-1801.

Curatorial Committee



Harvey Y. Lake was the son of S. Wesley Lake, Methodist minister and co-founder of Ocean City. Harvey was an internationally competitive tennis player, lifelong supporter of youth athletics and is the namesake for the City's Annual Tennis Tournament.

It is believed that Harvey won this ring in the Veterans Championship Singles event at the Championship of Monte Carlo in 1927. The Veterans Championship event was for competitors over the age of 50. Harvey won the event with final scores of 6-8, 6-3, 6-4.

The ring was a prized possession of Harvey and was described in several articles about him. Harvey was well traveled and well respected in the community.

Both sides of the ring have a tennis racket and a diamond tennis ball. The inside of the ring bears the inscription:



*His Majesty
The King of Sweden
Tennis Trophy
Won by
Harvey Y. Lake
[obscured]
1927 Monte Carlo*

The ring is an exciting addition to the museum and we would like to thank the Lake Family Historical Association and an Anonymous Lake Family donor for allowing this artifact to be displayed at the museum.

Upcoming Events at the Historical Museum



November

- **Quiet Festival** will run Sunday, November 4th from 11am to 3pm.
- **Dinner at Randazzo's**
A portion of proceeds will go to support the Museum; November 14: 5-9pm.
- **Holiday Arts & Crafts Fair / Open House**
will be held on Friday, November 30 from 1-7pm featuring antique and craft vendors. Light refreshments. Join Mrs. Clause as we kick off Mrs. Claus's Market!!

December

- **Community Center Winter Festival** will be Sunday, December 2nd from 1pm to 4pm.
- **Mrs. Claus's Market** will run through the month of December. We will be having special hours until 7pm from Dec 3 - 7.
- **Museum will be closed for Christmas and New Year's Day.** Check facebook or our website for additional changes to the schedule.

February

- **2019 Children's Tea** - Saturday, Feb. 9, 2019. Tickets will go on sale December 10, 2018. More information to follow. If you have a sweet tooth, you may enjoy this year's theme.



LAST CALL FOR THE 2018 BENEFACTOR GIFT!

We hope you do not miss this opportunity. This limited edition Marie Natale print has been very popular. Benefactor Memberships are \$125 each year. Look for information about next year's gift in a future issue of the Binnacle. Call 609.399.1801 for more information.

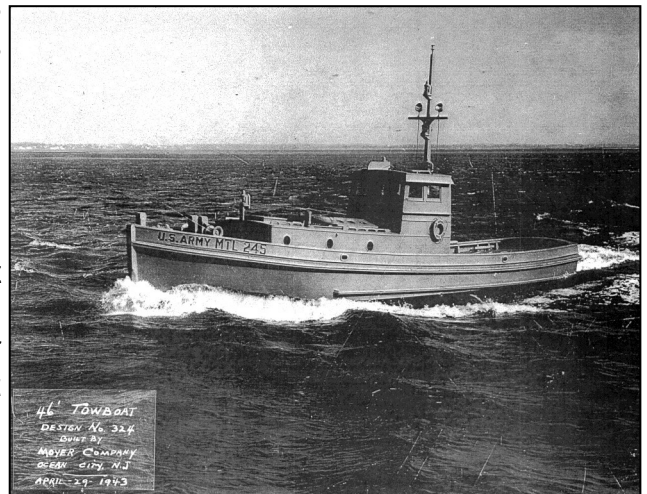


(Continued from page 1)

The last of these boats, the *Almirante*, was launched on November 11, 1941, just 69 days after the contract was signed in Philadelphia, PA. Its christening ceremony, serving as Ocean City's Armistice Day observation, started with an hour-long concert by the county American Legion band. Several hundred people including Red Cross, Sea Scout, Boy Scout, Girl Scout, Rotary, Kiwanis, and American Legion groups attended. Moyer's pastor, Rev. Fischer of First Presbyterian Church; Mr. Sargent, city publicity director; Mayor Richards; and Mr. Samuels of the

Philadelphia Division of the Army Engineers spoke. Later, Moyer hosted a dinner at a local country club for the five ladies who had christened boats, officials from banks and government entities, employees, neighbors, and the city police and fire departments.

In 1942, with a tight schedule, on an open bayfront property between 8th and 9th Streets, Moyer built 13 wooden 38-foot lighters (small barges used to load/off-load ships) for delivery to the Army in April. In August he delivered three more launch-type boats built at 3rd Street. In September, at Allen's 4th Street marine railway, he launched a 48-foot closed-cabin launch-type boat built in 41 days at his new shop at 7th Street and Bay Avenue. The Army inspector, Capt. Brown, fell and broke a leg during the launching. This boat was for a shuttle ferry at the site of a damaged bridge across the D & C Canal at Chesapeake City, MD. In November, Moyer Company contracted for five wooden 46-foot tow boats deliverable to the Army by mid-April 1943. On a renewable 6-month lease for \$50 per month, he used city-owned bay-front property at Texas Avenue between 19th and 22nd Streets for a huge new plant and employed more than 60 workmen. Initially, joinery and machinery work was done at his 7th Street shop, while assembly was done at the new plant's main 165' by 70' building, which had two side-by-side 147-foot skidways.



Moyer Company 46 foot towboat

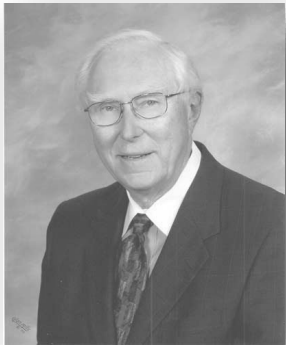
By January of 1943, the joinery work was moved to an extension added to the Texas Avenue plant. Ever the promoter, on a chilly April evening, Moyer hosted a dinner at the plant for the Rotary Club on behalf of the Second War Loan Drive. His guests, garbed in hats and overcoats, sat on benches at a long table between the skidways in the unheated open-ended main building. Moyer reported that, to date, he had delivered 15 boats and 13 barges for the war effort. By April, Moyer Company contracted for 27 more tow boats, deliverable at two per month, starting with one in November. Moyer added another extension to the plant for woodworking machinery and for prefabrication. His workforce, averaging about 67 men, worked 56-hour weeks to sustain a production line of six boats.

In July, the company contracted for an additional 12 tow boats to be delivered before November. Consequently, Moyer added a plumbing and hardware shop to the plant, increased the workforce

(Continued on page 6)

Annual Luncheon

The Members of the Ocean City Historical Museum were joined by officials, community members and guests to celebrate Ocean City's history on September 19, 2018 at Greate Bay Country Club. The Annual Luncheon is our biggest fundraiser of the year. This year, with your help, we were able to raise \$7,400 for the Museum's operations. The support from our community businesses was tremendous. The day was a great deal of fun.



Dr. Richard Stanislaw,
newly name Trustee
Emeritus

The Board of Trustees recognized Dr. Richard Stanislaw's appointment as Trustee Emeritus. Dr. Stanislaw was presented with celebratory proclamations from Mayor Jay Gillian and Cape May County Freeholder E. Marie Hayes.

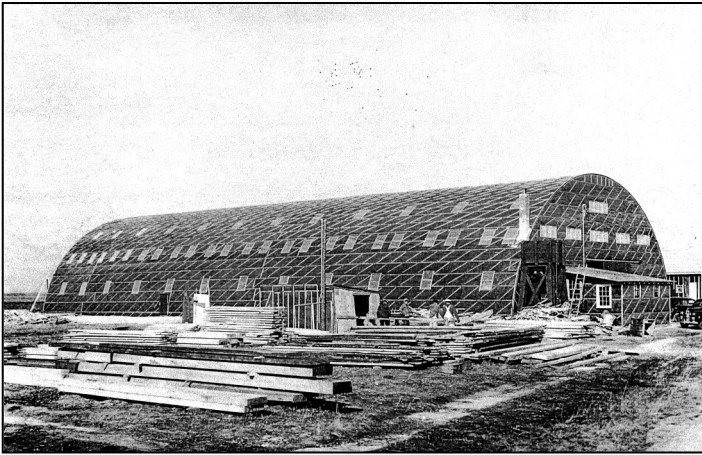
The day was capped off when the group heard from Aaron Bogushefsky, an artist, a teacher at the Ocean City Intermediate School and the High School's Boys' Soccer Coach. He spoke about his personal journey as an artist and the importance of encouraging children. Bogy's talk was inspirational. On behalf of the organization, we would like to extend a warm thank you to Aaron and wish him well with his teaching and the soccer season!

The Ocean City Historical Museum's Annual Luncheon held at Greate Bay Country Club on September 19, 2018.



Bogy, in front of one of his paintings, after auto-graphing a few of the T-shirts Seventh Street Surf donated to the event. The T-shirts were designed by Bogy.





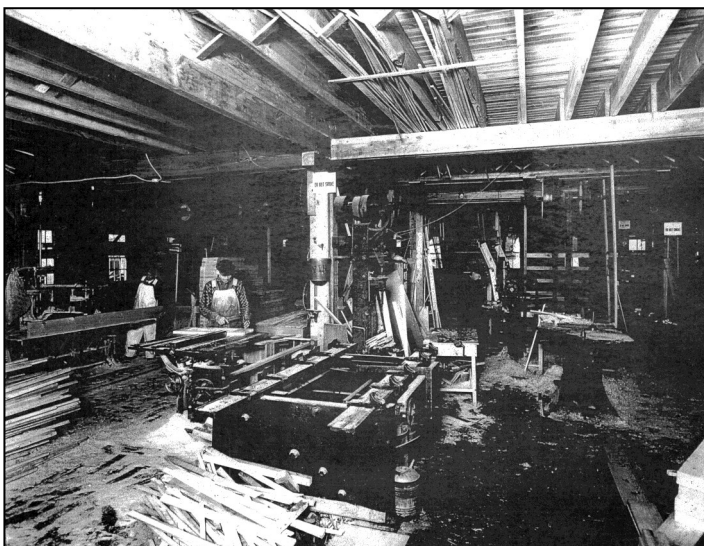
The Texas Avenue Factory under construction.



Interior of Moyer factory at Texas Ave

to 92 employees working six 10-hour days per week, added a special slip for installing engines, and added a third skidway to sustain a production line of nine boats. Then, demonstrating confidence, Moyer Company plant employees adopted the slogan *"A boat a week, That's our aim, How we do it, we'll never tell, Until our foes are smashed to _____."* On August 13, 1943, he launched the first six of 39 tow boats, each being christened by a prominent woman. Rev. McKeever, assistant pastor of St. Augustine's R. C. Church, led the ceremony which was attended by 400 spectators. Moyer Company hosted its workmen, then numbering 106, and their wives at a dinner at a local country club on September 11. Moyer noted that their boats served in the South Pacific, the Panama Canal Zone, Iceland, and the Mediterranean. By the end of September, Four months ahead of schedule, all 12 tow boats of the second contract were delivered.

In April 1944, with a workforce of 125, Moyer Company fulfilled the first contract for 27 tow boats originally set for December completion. Many boats were necessarily launched without great fanfare. However, all were christened, albeit some by less prominent women such as the daughters of employees. In June a picture, published in U. S. newspapers, showed a Moyer-built tow boat in the English Channel during the invasion of Europe. By April, Moyer Company contracted for four 100-foot Air Force crash-rescue boats. Two were launched in June. A special ceremony, including a WACS recruiting presentation, was planned for the July 28 launching of the third. Lacking more boat contracts, Moyer contracted for over 19,000 tool chests for the Army Engineers. Three rail cars were needed to deliver more than 19,000 4' by 8' sheets of plywood for the project. Moyer stated, "Before we started building boats, I didn't know a stem from a stern — but the darn things floated! We knew nothing about tool chests but we are making them."

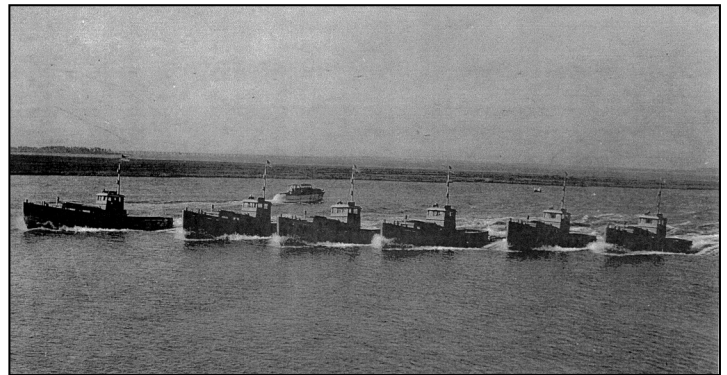


Interior of one of the Moyer Co. workshops

Other contracts for 15,000 ammunition boxes, 33,000 spotting charge boxes, 2000 distress signal boxes, and 50 prefabricated barracks were signed early in 1945. In April, Moyer contracted for 30 40- foot launches. V-E Day came soon thereafter on May 8. In July a contract for 11 more launches was signed for the continuing war with Japan. Only a few, if



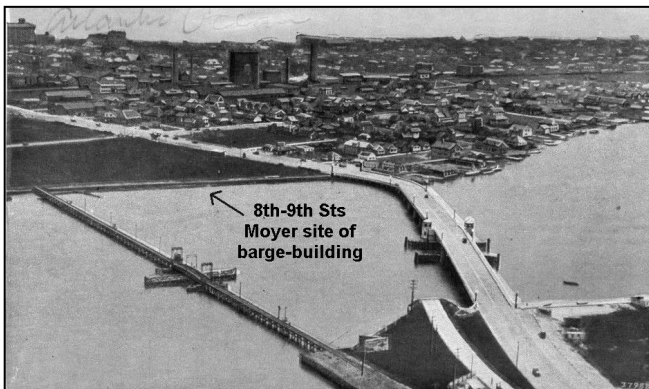
The Moyer Company employees taken in 1943. Above them hangs a sign proudly proclaiming the Company's slogan, "A Boat per Week."



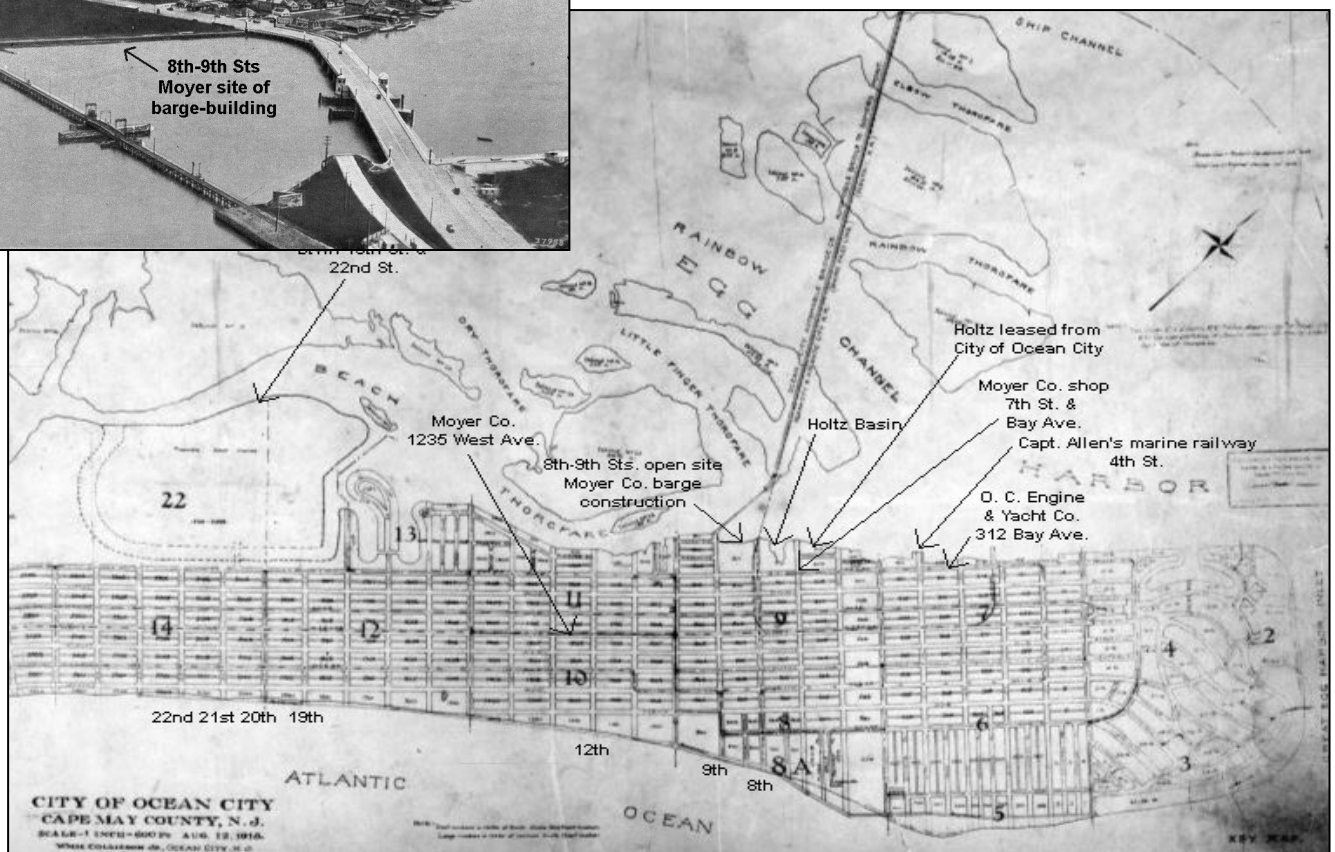
Flotilla of Moyer Boats on parade in September 1943.

any, of the total of 41 launches were delivered before hostilities with Japan ended in August. V-J Day came soon thereafter on September 2. Precipitously, all of the 1945 contracts were canceled.

Moyer wanted to begin post-war light industry at the plant, arguing benefits to the community of more year-round jobs. The City of Ocean City decided against extending his lease at the Texas Avenue site and against zoning for light industry elsewhere. So as Moyer Company's light industry work had started suddenly - often described "like a sprouted mushroom" - it ended just as suddenly.



Postcard and Map of Ocean City showing locations involved with the Moyer Company.



Arts & Crafts Fair / Open House

Friday, November 30, 2018—1 pm to 7 pm

Ocean City Community Center

FREE

We have invited 10 vendors to bring in arts and crafts, antiques and collectibles, jewelry and local products. This will be a great chance to get some early shopping in for all the approaching gift-giving holidays. Vendors made donations to the Museum to rent the space. If you are familiar with the Museum's Antiques and Collectible Show which occurs every July, this will be a much smaller version and some different vendors mixed in. It should be a lot of fun.

This event will be held in conjunction with a Museum Open House and the kickoff of Mrs. Claus's Market. This will be a great chance to check out the Museum's holiday exhibit. Help support our campaign to greet 10,000 visitors before the end of the year. Also enjoy all that the Community Center has to offer.

Keep reading to learn more about Mrs. Claus's Market.



Mrs. Claus's Market

Come join us for our fourth annual Mrs. Claus's Market which will open on Friday, November 30th at 1 pm and will remain open until First Night. Mrs. Claus will make a special appearance on November 30th and Sunday, December 2nd during the Community Center's Winter Festival. She will be pleased to pose with children to have their picture taken. The Market will feature holiday gifts and vintage Christmas items. Our expanded gift shop will include food items, books, and educational toys. During the first week of the Market, the Museum will be open until 7 pm for your shopping pleasure.



Volunteer Spotlight

By Noel Wirth and
Susan Hohman

Volunteering at the Museum takes many different avenues: greeting visitors, becoming a docent and giving tours, making phone calls, performing computer activities, or becoming a researcher. Each issue of The Binnacle spotlights the "unsung heroes" who give their time and energy to the Museum.

Betsy King



Betsy, easily recognizable by her curly hair, is a graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University with a BS in Fine Arts. She studied jewelry, textiles, ceramics and interior design. She loves the beach and Ocean City was the perfect place after finishing a job in Cherry Hill, NJ.. Betsy has made art and jewelry which she has sold across the country. One day she came into the Museum to donate items from her mother's estate and she was approached by a volunteer who suggested she might enjoy volunteering at the Museum! Betsy then became a volunteer and is now on our Board of Trustees and is chair of our

gift shop. She likes to look for new and different items, and our gift shop sales have increased due to her efforts. She has also worked on our calendar and helping with exhibits.

Betsy has been working for Stephen Bradway Coppersmith for many years part-time and is an employee of Platts Beach House Furnishings where her interior design experience is a great asset. Betsy loves to keep busy—attends music and art events, bike rides, photography and travel. Happy at her home at the beach, she is company to her two cats, Wabi and Sabi.

Judi Levy

Judi grew up in Ocean City. Though she left to marry and raise sons in Vineland, Ocean City was always home. Even today, she gets a thrill coming over the Ninth Street Bridge and seeing Ocean City spread out before her. She returned in the spring of 2015 with her golden retriever Maggie.

Once settled, she became friends with Babs Stefano, who brought her to see the museum; the rest is history. Judi has since served at the children's teas, worked at the antique fairs, volunteered at Bubblemania and the history camps. She regularly

greet visitors at the reception desk, give tours, records data, and helps out wherever she is needed. She is also active in St. Damien's Parish, the Colony Club, Friends and Volunteers of the Library, and Gilda's Club.

She is well known for hosting great Night in Venice celebrations. She enjoys spending time with her grandsons and nieces. She is fond of saying, "I've got sand in my soul."



2018 Support received from July through September

Individual & Family Renewals

John E. Baublitz	Elaine Fell	Alan Raughley
Ronald and Nancy Benek	John & Martha Frantz	Dorothy Ray
Marguerite Bernstine	Paul Gilson	Gail Richert
Janice L. Betts	Alan Holden	Alice Rinkavage
Dale Braun	Janell Holtz	Patricia Rowe
Dorothy Burnham	Eleanor Jannetti	Dr. & Mrs. Carl Scheetz
Ed Butler	Michael Kunz	Joan Selby
Joan Chapman	Rebecca Lebeda	Bruce & Sally Shirey
Gayle Cogan & Family	Jacequelyn Maccarone	Linda Short
Patricia Collins	Joseph Mathiot	Connie & Don Smedley
Stephen Crowley	Nancy McNeil	Anna Sneeringer
Michael & Patricia D'Archangelo	David McQuiston	Rosemarie Speitel
Hon. Bernice DeAngelis	Debbie Moreland	Marion Staub
Bruce DeLussa	William Parkhurst	Bobbi Taylor
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Linda Doerr	The Perfetti Family	Mr. & Mrs. Leonard West
Donna Dorney	Angelo Psaltis	Karl Wirth
Marilyn & Bob Evans		

Patron Renewals

Connie Boens	Nikki Lihou & Family	Carol & Neil Randall
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Benefactor Renewals

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Gary & Joan Clemente	Mary Anne Kull
Stephen Cooper	Gary & Jerilynn Wikander
Victor Daniel	Noel Wirth
Hank Glaser	Bob & Fran Woolery
E. Marie Hayes	Luann Wowkanech
Thomas & Susan Hohman	Joseph Zerbo Family

Special Donations

Carol Dotts	Richard & Rebecca Stanislaw
Paul Gilson	Barbara & Joseph Stefano
Loretta Harris	Noel Wirth
Craig & Renate Johnston	

We make every human effort to get these names correct. If you believe something is listed in error, please contact the Museum at 609.399.1801. We will make corrections in the next issue. Thank you for your patience.

History Camp 2018

By Babs Stefano—Camp Coordinator

As the days become cooler and shorter, we have time to reflect on the summer events at the OCHM. One of my fondest memories is of the Third Annual Children's History Camp.

For two weeks this past summer, the Museum became a hub of learning and fun-filled interactive educational activities for a group of enthusiastic children ranging in age from 8 to 13. Under the direction of a dedicated group of museum volunteers, the campers were nurtured, taught, and guided through many learning experiences.



During the first session, the campers prepared to be tour guides, explaining various exhibits to their families, friends, and other visitors to the museum on Children's Day. The second session allowed the campers to select their own exhibit to research; they then prepared Power Point presentations that were shown in the Ocean City Library's lecture hall. Each session culminated with a pizza party that was enjoyed by the campers and their families.

For the past two years the camp has been made possible by the generous sponsorship of the Friends and Volunteers of the Ocean City Free Public Library. We greatly appreciate their working with us to make the camp a success.

We are already planning the camp sessions for the summer of 2019. Look for information about registering for next summer here in the Binnacle, in the museum, and in city publications as the summer approaches.

LEGACY GIFTS



Join The Parker and Louisa Miller Society!

An easy and lasting way to help Ocean City Historical Museum continue its work of preserving local history is to direct a gift through your estate plans. The following is language you may wish to use to include the Museum in your Will or Trust:



"I give (the sum of \$____) or (____%) of my estate to The Ocean City Historical Museum."

"I give and bequeath to Ocean City Historical Museum, after all debts, expenses, and other legacies have been paid, all or ____% of the remainder of my estate."

Please remember that these are topics that should be discussed with legal and/or tax professionals and are only presented as suggestions.



Hogate's Seafood Restaurant, c. 1940s
 At the foot of the 9th Street Bridge
*A Senior Studio Photo
 from the Harp Collection*



*The Mission of the
 Ocean City
 Historical Museum,
 Inc. is to delight,
 inspire and
 educate the public
 about the story of
 Ocean City, New
 Jersey.*



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