



# THE BINNACLE

Spring 2018  
No. 21

*Ocean City's Home for History*

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## The House that Kindness Built

*By Susan Hohman*

A heartwarming chapter in the history of Ocean City was written by a group of women whose dedication and generosity demonstrated the true meaning of charity. The story begins in Philadelphia in the early years of the twentieth century when these women started a club centered on their love of good music. As time went on, they wanted to expand their club to include philanthropy. Soldiers returning from World War I—wounded, ill, or unemployed, some without family, and many lonely and at loose ends—gave these women an opportunity to put their considerable skills and good will to work.

At first the club members took soldiers into their own homes, doing their best to provide for them and make them comfortable. However, the number of veterans needing help quickly outgrew the ability of the women to care for them. They sought a place where the men could be nurtured and feel part of a community. Ocean City seemed a natural solution, with its healthful sea air



RESIDENTS OF HOSTESS HOUSE SHARING A MEAL, C. 1940S

and wholesome atmosphere.

A small store on the Boardwalk offered a perfect site for this endeavor, and Hostess House was born. The men slept in a dormitory that held 18 cots, but there was no kitchen; feeding the men became the first problem to overcome. The hotels of Ocean City came to the rescue, with each providing meals for two to four soldiers. As the war continued, Hostess House was kept full and busy; the men who left were immediately replaced by others returning from Europe.

Even after the war ended, "The House That Kindness Built" continued to fulfill its mission.

In 1921, the U.S. congress consolidated existing veterans' programs to create the Veterans Bureau, including an ambitious program for the construction of veterans' hospitals. With the government taking over the care of veterans, the women of Hostess House were left with a choice: they could disband or repurpose their organization. It is not surprising that they soon identified another group that could

*(Continued on page 4)*

# FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR

## Hello Again, Lovers of Ocean City's History,



I am excited to bring you the first issue of the *Binnacle* for 2018. We continue our work preserving and honoring the history of a place we all hold dear. We continue to work hard to provide you with better experiences in and out of the Museum.

For some of you the Museum is part of a summertime tradition, for others it's a place to enrich your understanding of the community you see around you, and for others it is a place to enjoy the company of friends and neighbors. To all those groups, I would like to say the Museum has been and will continue to be a place for you. We have challenged ourselves to make 2018 the year we make the Museum *Ocean City's Home for History*.

I will take a moment to call your attention to two projects we have underway. First is obvious because you are holding it in your hands. The *Binnacle* is an important means of communicating with you and we have been remiss not prioritizing it over

the last two years. We now have a great team in place who will be working to bring you this publication on a regular basis. Second, we recently "soft" opened our latest exhibit which has been produced in cooperation with the Ocean City Juneteenth Organization, an African American community group dedicated to service and the preservation of Black culture. I have hopes that this partnership will continue to improve the Museum's relevance with the African American community. The exhibit is entitled *Seasons of Life: The African American Community in Ocean City*. The exhibit is organized around the annual rhythms of life as the seasons change and how the experience of African Americans differed from that of the rest of the community. There will be an Open House and Reception on February 23 @ 7pm. If you are nearby, I hope you will join us. Rarely has Ocean City's African American community been able to call our Museum home. It is my hope that this exhibit allows us to continue to correct that.

We are so very thankful to our membership for the support they provide. You allow us to function year-round, six

days a week. For 2018, we have a special gift in store for folks who upgrade or renew at the Benefactor level -- a signed and numbered print from Marie Natale, a noteworthy watercolorist who has a passion for Ocean City, entitled *The Sindia Crew*. Look for more information on that soon.

Please stop by and check out what we have going on in the Museum. It is very pleasurable when folks visit the Museum and let us know they are members.

Until Next Time,

Jeffrey R. McGranahan  
Executive Director



EARLY AFRICAN AMERICAN MEMBERS OF  
THE OCEAN CITY BEACH PATROL



## Ocean City's Music Pier

by Noel Wirth

One of Ocean City's most popular attractions for both visitors and residents is the Music Pier. It was built in 1928-29 on the new boardwalk at 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Moorlyn Terrace after the disastrous boardwalk fire of 1927. This new historic building, with its red tile roof and in the Spanish Revival style, was designed by architect Vivian Smith who also designed the Flanders Hotel, City Hall and Ocean City High School. The large dance floor was the scene of record hops, and its solarium attracted people for its purported health benefits. In 1943 an observation tower was built on top of the building, manned by volunteer airplane spotters looking for enemy aircraft. It was the first such spotter tower in the nation.

The current Music Pier was not the first music venue on the boardwalk; it was preceded by the Music Pavilion, a wooden structure built in 1905 for the purpose of providing free concerts for the public. After the 1927 fire the Pavilion was moved back on 6<sup>th</sup> Street and was repurposed as Convention Hall. This building was eventually destroyed by fire in 1965.



THE MUSIC PIER IN THE LATE 1930S.

The Music Pier today hosts the Ocean City Pops, Ocean City Theatre Co., children's theater, exhibitions, and popular stars such as the Beach Boys and Temptations. It remains a popular destination for residents and tourists alike.



## Upcoming Events @ The Historical Museum

### APRIL

■ On Sunday, April 15, 2018, our **Brunch Buffet** will be held at Clancy's by the Bay Restaurant in Somers Point from 12:30-2:30 P.M. Tickets are \$25.00 for members and \$27.00 for the general public. Ken Cooper will present a program on "Historic Houses of Ocean City."

■ The **T-Shirt Contest** returns! We had so much fun with this event last year that we are doing it again. Comedic, Creative, Commercial and Vintage are the categories. We are looking for new or old designs; originals or store-bought. Shirts should be submitted by April 26. Community voting begins May 1.

### MAY

■ **Dining at Randazzo's**, located at 34<sup>th</sup> Street and Asbury Avenue, is a new event that will be held on Wednesday, May 16, 2018, from 4:00-9:00 P.M. Randazzo's will be donating a portion of your dinner check to the Museum.



### JUNE

■ Our fourth annual **Grace Kelly Tea**, "I Remember Grace," will be held at the Flanders Hotel on Wednesday, June 6, 2018, at 2:00 P.M. Tickets are \$35.00 for Museum members and 38.00 for the general public. They will be available on May 1.



### JULY

■ The fourth annual **Antique Fair** will be held on Saturday, July 14, 2018, from 9:00 A.M.-3:00 P.M. in the Senior Center and Atrium area at the Ocean City Community Center. This event is free to everyone. Donations are welcome.

■ **History Camp** will be held at the Museum the second and third weeks in July. It is open to children ages 8-15.

■ **The Summer Lecture Series** will kick off on July 5. Fred Miller and Stef Godfrey will discuss Ocean City Magazine's 50th issue and how history is a part of each magazine.

# *Ocean City's Hostess House*

*(Continued from page 1)*

use their help. The facility was now called The Hostess House for Convalescent Girls.

In Philadelphia and other large cities at this time, many jobs available to girls were low paying and often unsafe; girls who were injured on the job or who became ill had no resources to see them through their convalescence. If they were helping support their families, the loss of their pay was a catastrophe. In the summer of 1923, Hostess House opened its doors to these girls. Once again, Ocean City would be a haven for the needy, the sick, and the dispossessed.

Hostess House, located on the Boardwalk, first opened its door to girls in the summer of 1923. That year only 12 girls stayed there. Even then the facility was inadequate, but by 1926 the number had grown to 30-40 girls. Clearly, it had outgrown the storefront it was then located in. The women of the Hostess League were pleased to be able to rent a 10-bedroom house at 416-418 Ocean Avenue. Girls now came from all over the country; they paid what they could, but if they couldn't afford anything at all, they were still welcomed. All of them were able to benefit from sea breezes, nourishing food, and companionship.

Sadly, the house that had seemed so perfect soon proved to be a disappointment. The landlord refused to paint or make repairs. The League members rolled up their sleeves and painted and varnished the halls and all ten bedrooms. But the old beds had broken down springs, and there was no money in the treasury to buy



HOSTESS HOUSE IN ITS HEYDAY—940 CENTRAL AVENUE

new ones. Then, disaster struck! The roof began to leak, ruining the wallpaper, threatening the newly varnished floors, and forcing the women to run around the house with buckets to catch the rain-water. Still the landlord refused to fix anything.

The League came up with a plan to replace the beds; 17 well-to-do Philadelphians donated beds as memorials to recently departed loved ones. But clearly new beds did not solve the other problems in the house, so a committee was formed to find new quarters. The members combed the city street by street, but houses that were large enough were too expensive or too rundown. Finally, they came across a house at 940 Central Avenue, which was filled with workers doing repairs. The house had been intended as a wedding gift to a bride, but with 17 bed-

rooms, it was just too big for a private home, but not really big enough for a business. The women were thrilled to find that the house was for sale. It was an answer to their prayers.

The asking price for the house was \$21,000; the League had only \$2,300. But these were women who were not easily discouraged. With shrewd negotiating and generous donations (including one from the owner), the women were able to obtain a mortgage and buy the house for \$16,500. Furnishing the large house was a daunting task, but once again donors supplied what was needed. As the years went by, visitors to the house would often notice what was lacking or in need of repair and arrange to remedy the situation. Eventually, the kindness of these donors pro-

*(Continued on page 5)*



(Continued from page 4)

vided an extension with a large kitchen and laundry room.

The Hostess League continued to use their ingenuity and considerable energy to raise funds to support their worthy cause. One such effort was the annual Mile of Dimes on the boardwalk; visitors could deposit a dime in a box labeled with the name of their home state. The League was able to expand the scope of Hostess House to include older women, and those who were disabled or had experienced other misfortune. Many of the girls and women who had spent time at Hostess House wrote warm thank you notes; their stay in Ocean City had helped them regain their health and a positive outlook on life.

Hostess House closed its doors in 1972, after more than five decades of service. The building was deeded to Shore Memorial Hospital in 1973. It was sold to St John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1993. Today, all that can be seen at the site is a parking lot, but the kindness that built and sustained Hostess House is an indelible part of Ocean City history.

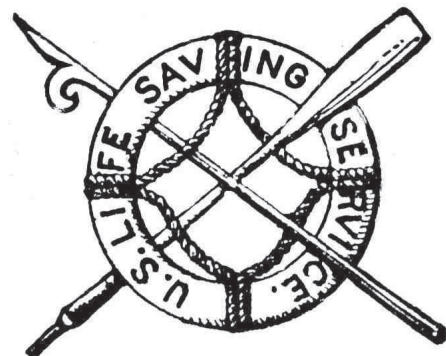


OFFICERS OF THE HOSTESS HOUSE ORGANIZATION  
CEREMONIALLY PASSING THE KEYS TO A REPRESENTATIVE OF  
SHORE MEMORIAL



## Scenes from the 2017 Trolley Tour to LSS No. 30

Special Thanks to Dennis Myers and John Loeper for providing a great and informative tour of the Lifesaving Station at Fourth & Atlantic, which is expected to be open to the public this summer.







***Clockwise from top:***

Teddy Bear Tea in full swing.  
Our volunteers—Judy Levy,  
Dot Aiken and Renate  
Johnston—serving the  
guests.

Carol Dotts, Babs Stefano,  
Paul Anselm sharing the  
finer points of tea etiquette.

Mary Ann Gring leads her  
kitchen staff, including Mary  
Jane Bullock, Wilma Murray,  
Dot White and Sonia Forry.

An appreciative audience  
takes in the story.





# 2018 Children's Tea

## Teddy & the Bears

Sponsored by:



The Museum held another successful Children's Tea on February 10. More than thirty children and forty adults were entertained by Paul Anselm and Babs Stefano, acting as Theodore Roosevelt and his daughter, Alice. We are particularly excited by the sponsorship provided by Gillian's Wonderland Pier. Thank you to Jay and Michelle Gillian who made a special visit. Last but not least, we truly appreciate all the volunteers who made the day extra special, with a huge pat on the back to Carol Dotts, Mary Ann Gring and Renate Johnston for being so helpful in the planning and hosting our annual event.

**From top:**

Paul and Babs in character  
Maycee Capille enjoys the entertainment and refreshments.



## Membership Elects New Trustees

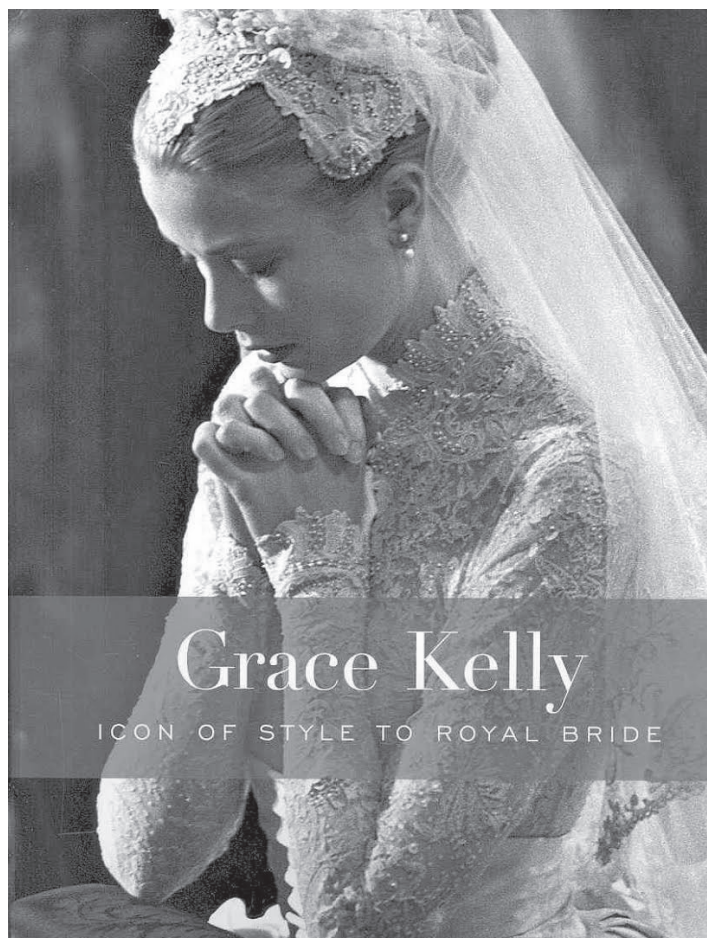
The Board of Trustees of the Museum welcomed four new members this year. Each of them has demonstrated commitment to the Museum and its goals.

**Loretta Harris** has deep roots in Ocean City, her family having lived here for four generations. When she began doing genealogical research, she wanted to find information on “the people, places, and things that impacted [her] ancestors’ lives and made them who they were.” In the Museum archives she found a wealth of information on the things she wanted to know. Loretta has won numerous awards for her service to the community. She brings to the board extensive experience in management and public relations.

**James Houck** has been a part of Ocean City most of his life. He began coming to Ocean City when he was 12, later becoming a homeowner and then a permanent resident. He has been a frequent visitor to the Museum over the years. He is an avid reader of history, and as a Veteran of the US Navy, he has a special interest in the Civil War and WWII. James hopes to use the skills and knowledge he acquired during his career as a pharmaceutical executive to help make the Museum more of a focal point in Ocean City.

**Duane Sonneborne** is a resident of the Gardens section of Ocean City. Now that he is retired, he spends winters in Florida, returning each summer to Ocean City. Duane has volunteered as a docent at the Museum; he also leads trolley tours of local bed and breakfasts. In addition, he has worked with the Ocean City Chamber of Commerce to welcome visitors to the city. He is dedicated to making the Museum the best it can be.

**Susan Hohman** is featured in this issue’s Volunteer Spotlight.



We are excited about our guest speaker for this year’s Grace Kelly Tea, on Wednesday, June 6, 2018. Our speaker will be Kristina Haugland, who is the Le Vine Associate Curator of Costume and Textiles. She has written two books on Grace Kelly’s impact on fashion. She also speaks on fashion and other related topics throughout the country. But her favorite topic to discuss is Grace.

We are also excited about the partnership we have with the Ocean City Arts Center. For their June exhibition, they will be highlighting art inspired by Grace. Look for more information in our next issue.



# Volunteer Spotlight

By Babs Stefano & Noel Wirth

*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 will spotlight the*

*"unsung heroes" who give their time and energy to the Museum. Our spotlight this issue shines on the dedication and commitment of "two girls named Sue."*

## Sue Fasy



Sue Fasy has been a year-round resident of Ocean City for many years. She volunteers for shifts on four days, so she is a familiar presence to visitors to the Museum. Sue can always be counted on to fill in wherever she is needed. Her smiling face and friendly wave are appreciated not only by Museum visitors, but also by people who pass by the front entrance. Her sisters, knowing her love of history, encour-

aged her to volunteer at the Museum. She enjoys her time at the Museum and looks forward to meeting and talking to the visitors who come to tour and learn about OC history. In her free time, she designs and makes interesting and colorful jewelry from natural stones and shells. She is an avid reader and always comes to volunteer with a book in hand. She is a valuable and reliable member of our team.

## Susan Hohman

Susan Hohman was born in Xenia, Ohio, the site of numerous tornadoes. She graduated from Ohio State and received her masters degree at Northeastern. Majoring in English and creative writing, Susan put her talents to work teaching in Ohio, Guam, California, Maryland and New Jersey. Shortly after marriage, Susan and her husband, Tom, ventured to Guam where she taught English, and Tom taught science.

After Susan and Tom moved to the East Coast, they visited Ocean City often as one daughter had a summer home here. Another had worked at the Chatterbox when she was a student. The Hohmans purchased a summer

home in Ocean City about 5 years ago. When Susan visited our Museum, she said, "I love history and would love to volunteer at the Museum when we move here permanently." Luckily for us, the Hohmans made Ocean City their home two years ago, and Susan joined our Museum, becoming a volunteer! She enjoys leading tours and working with children at our History Camp. She is now a trustee and part of the Binnacle team. This talented and creative lady enjoys writing, reading history and sewing—quilting and embroidery are her specialties.

She loves volunteering here, and we most certainly love her too!



# TREE OF HONOR

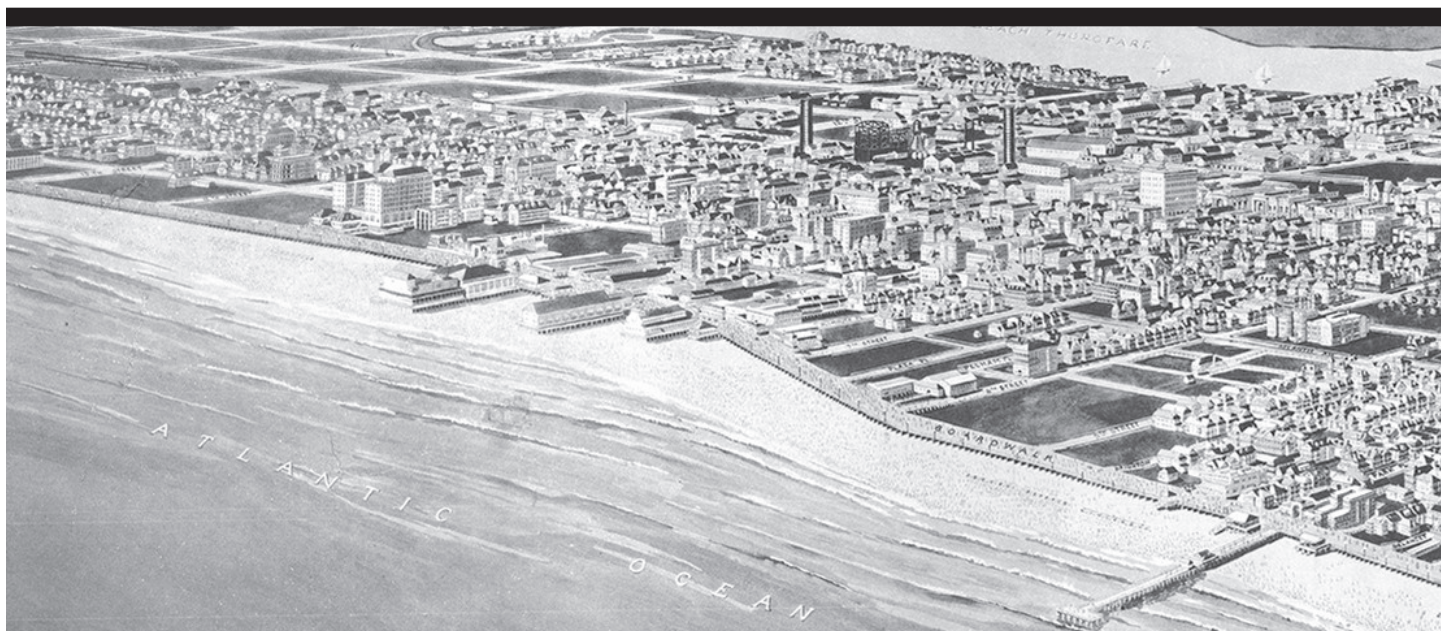
2017

*The Tree of Honor Program was established to give Museum members a way to recognize friends and family, both living and dead. As part of the program, we list those honorees here.*

Frank Allen  
*In memory of Ruth Allen*  
Cheryl Kelchner  
*In memory of Mr./Mrs. Raymond Chatten*  
Lois Fagan  
*In memory of Mary & Tom Fagan Sr.*  
George Swartz  
*In memory of Laura Swartz*  
Dan Sullivan  
*In memory of Robert "Bingo" LaFaye*  
John and Eleanor Parker  
*In memory of Dorothy Parker*  
Meredith Donaldson  
*In memory of George & Alice McCoy*  
John Baublitz  
*In honor of the Baublitz Family*  
Bobby Barr  
*In memory of Jerry Barr*  
Marie Knight  
*In memory of Mayor Henry "Bud" Knight*  
Ron & Virginia Gifford  
*In honor of their 3 granddaughters*  
Mary Michaels  
*In memory of Anna Murray*  
Judy Santianni  
*In honor of Geri Pileggi*  
Joe and Sharon Grimes  
*In memory of Susan Miller*  
Mary Kenny Lee  
*In memory of J. William Lee*  
William Harvey  
*In memory of Shirley T. Harvey*  
Betty Shumacher  
*In honor of Gareth DiPaolo*  
Doris Broadley  
*In honor and memory of Gam Broadley*  
David & Patricia Branch  
*In honor of Beth Bowman*

Barbara Taylor  
*In memory of Steffie Gordon, Gene Green*  
Patricia Lynn  
*In memory of Dennis Lynn*  
Eleanor Parker  
*In memory of Elliot G. Parker*  
Judy Perkins  
*In memory of Esther Weil*  
Carmen Concelli  
*In memory of Carmen Concelli Sr.*  
Duane Sonneborn  
*In honor of Jeffrey McGranahan*  
Florence Dungan  
*In memory of Benjamin Dungan Sr.*  
Bonnie Ault  
*In memory of Benjamin Dungan Sr.*  
Lewis & Deborah Barrett  
*In memory of Lewis & Martha Barrett*  
Paula Engard  
*In memory of Chester J. Zillig*  
Robert & Anita Kinghorn, Carol Dotts, Joan Kurtz, Mary Lois Hughes, Barbara Stefano, Margaret Schock, Dick Stanislaw, Noel Wirth and other friends  
*In honor of Dorothy Turner*  
Bob & Colleen Snodgrass, Janice & Jim Johnson and Fred Miller  
*In memory of Helen Kroesser*  
Steve & Mary Ann Gring, Dennis & Joan Myers, Rhoda Brown, Al Crescenzo, Judy Thomas, Barbara Stefano, Joan Kurtz, Fred Miller, Dot Turner, Beth Bowman, Renate Johnston, Margaret Schock, Carol Kearney, Ken Cooper, Noel Wirth, Dick Stanislaw, Antique Collectors Club, Questers and other friends  
*In memory of Bill Dotts*  
Friends and Relatives  
*In memory of Barbara Murphy Quinn*





## 2017 Special Donations

Anonymous	Colony Club of Ocean City
Peter and Bonnie Ault	Foster Karney Foundation
Beth Bowman	Miss Night in Venice
Carol Dotts	New Jersey Council for the Humanities
Roy Gillian	Ocean First Foundation
Patricia and John Poprik	Ocean City High School Class of '57
Barbara Stefano	Ocean City Regional Chamber of Commerce
Deborah Walker	Riverboat Club
City of Ocean City	Yianni's Cafe

## LEGACY GIFTS

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.

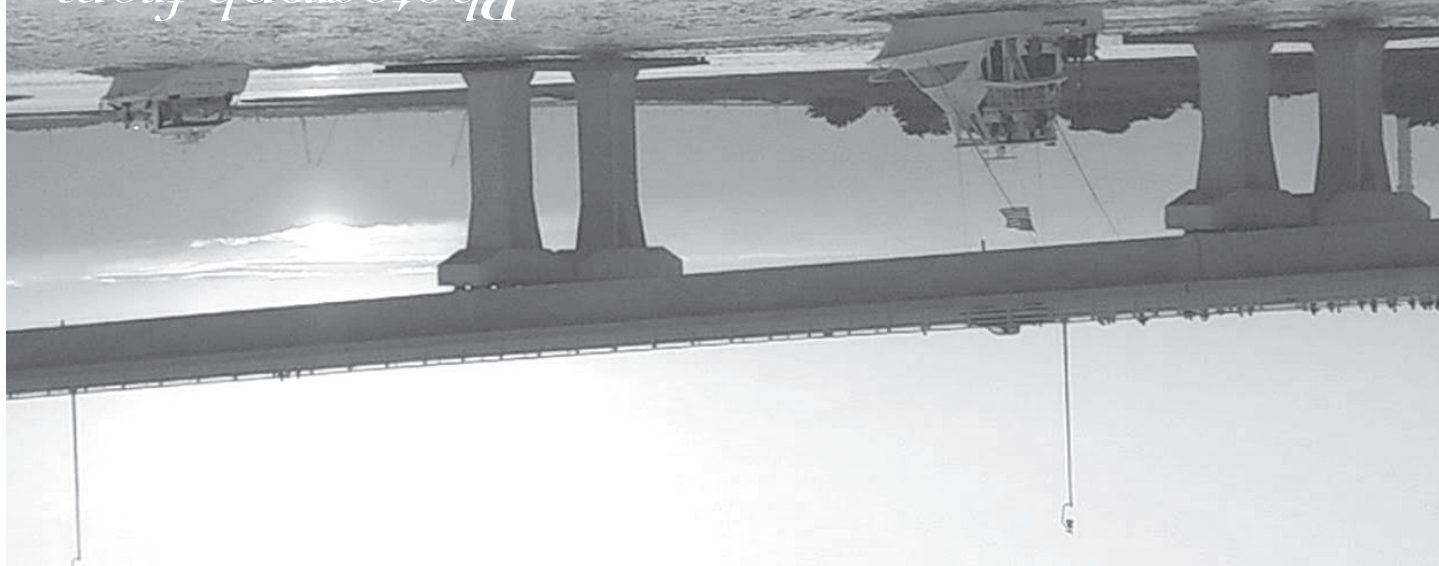
The following is language you may wish to use when including the Museum in your Will or Trust:

**"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.

THE OCEAN CITY HISTORICAL MUSEUM  
*the 2014 Night in Venice Boat Parade*  
*Photograph from*



*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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