

The Broadside



The voice of The Mathews Maritime Foundation

Museum Located at 482 Main Street, Mathews, VA Mail to PO Box 1201, Mathews, VA 23109 804-725-4444

Visit us on the web at www.mathewsmaritimemuseum.com

Mathews Maritime Boat Shop...

For some time now the Foundation has been in need of additional indoor space to house its growing collections and sufficient outdoor space in which to locate static boat displays as well as



the boats we accept for resale in our boat donor program. As for the growing collections, we have renewed our lease with the County on our Museum building at 482 Main Street. Our new lease is a ten year lease that gives us the use of the entire building and permits us to renovate the interior to suit our needs.

We have also leased a portion of the property formerly known as Pulley's Marine. The leased portion includes the "repair shop" building, the marine railway and eight deep water slips.

This location will not replace our in town museum building. Instead it will serve as our annex and location for waterfront educational activities. Our present thinking is to use the location for: a boat building shop; a place to restore boats

donated to the Foundation for resale; a place to dock the "Peggy" as well as to haul her out for annual maintenance; and a site for both annual and transient boat dockage.

To be more specific, the boat building operation would be similar to the boat building shop at the Reedville Fishermen's Museum. People interested in boat building could come to the shop to take part in building a boat for a day a weekend or a week, whatever fit their schedule.

Restoration of boats donated to the Foundation for resale would be worked on under cover by volunteers in an area that is out of the weather and more conducive to this type of maintenance activity. This will allow us to get a higher price for these boats than we now get.

The deep water slips provide a docking venue for the "Peggy" and the presence of the railway gives us a means to haul her for maintenance at no cost for the haul out and no limit on the time spent on the railway.

The eight deep water slips provide dockage for permanent as well as transient boaters and will be a source of income for the Foundation.

Directors Elected ...

Elections were held on November 19th in the half hour prior to our monthly speaker meeting program to fill six director's seats on the MMF Board. Three of these seats were held by Marcy Benouameur, Dennis Crawford and Michael

Keeping the Past in the Present Preserving it for the Future

Swiderski whose three year terms expire at the end of this year. All three had expressed a desire to continue on the Board and were subsequently elected to another three year term. Also elected for a three year term was Jack Caldwell. Jack recently completed a term on the Board of the Mathews Historical Society where he was responsible for the buildings and grounds of Tompkins Cottage.

MMF Receives Generous Gift...

The Foundation received from MMF Treasurer Pete Hall a gift of 200 shares of Exxon/Mobil stock which when converted to cash as required with such a gift amounted to \$14,765.61. No restrictions were attached to this gift leaving the Board to decide how best to put it to use.

Pete has been most generous in giving of his time and talent to the growth of the Foundation. When asked, Why such a generous gift? he said, "I love this County and the people in it. I want, in this small way, to help to preserve its maritime history and supporting the Foundation is the best way to that end."

We encourage others with a similar view to help by becoming members, making a contribution, or donating or loaning maritime related artifacts to the Foundation. We also welcome volunteer participation in any and all of our educational programs for the community. Stop by the Museum or give us a call at 725-4444. We're not there every day, but you can leave a message on our answering machine and we will get back to you.

Museum Collections Growing...

Our collection of artifacts and other maritime related items is growing at an astounding rate. In June of this year our collections totaled 584 items. Today, December 2, they number 935. Our sincere thanks and gratitude go out to the citizens of the County for their generous outpouring of support in our effort to collect and preserve the rich maritime history that is Mathews County. Here are some of our most recent acquisitions.

On November 28th. William Travers presented a model of the submarine USS Finback to the Museum. Mr. Travers was a seaman aboard the "USS Finback" when it rescued the downed pilot, and future President, George H. W. Bush, in the Pacific in WW II. The company that made this model also made the model of the USS Finback that is in the George H. W. Bush presidential library.



Pictured in the photo above are: William Travers, center, presenting the model of the USS Finback to Nancy Lindgren, Mathews Maritime Foundation board member. To the right is E. Travers Thompson, Commander, Ret. U.S.N. who has served in 10 submarines, including the USS Patrick Henry and the USS Greenling. Photo by Dennis Crawford

On a recent visit to our museum C. Randolph Hudgins, Jr. donated a wealth of material about his ancestor, Lewis Hudgins, as well as a model of Lewis Hudgins' Civil War Blockade runner the "Caroline.". Lewis Hudgins owned Fitchett's Wharf, an important shipyard and major port of call until Union Forces burned it in 1864. Lewis supported the Confederate cause in the Civil War with supplies and the blockade runner "Caroline".



Pictured here are Randolph Hudgins and Nancy Lindgren MMF board member. Photo by Dennis Crawford

Another recent addition is an Oyster Shucking booth on loan from Jack White.

It's from Callis Wharf and was used there from 1950 to 1970. You can tell from the wear pattern that the person who used it was right handed.



Photo by Pete Hall

Mathews Maritime Heritage Trail Public Water Access Summits...

There will be a series of public meetings around Mathews County beginning in January of

2010. They will take place the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 7-9 PM. The purpose of these gatherings is to get a better understanding of public access needs and any waterfront conflicts around the county which should be addressed.

A Coastal Access Survey will be made available at that time. It will include questions about access to public beaches and waterways, waterfront conflicts, working waterfront infrastructure problems and ideas about improving access to the waters of Mathews County. The public is being asked to participate in the survey to help reach conclusions regarding current access challenges and trends, to set future public policy, and to qualify for future grant funding opportunities.

The Mathews Maritime Foundation will be assisting in sponsoring these summits along with the Middle Peninsula Chesapeake Bay Public Access Authority (PAA) and Mathews County. Lewis Lawrence of the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission (MPPDC) will be moderating the meetings.

The dates of these public access summits are as follows:

- January 12 - Gwynn's Island Civic Center
- February 9 - West Mathews Civic Center
- March 9 - Antioch Baptist Church
- April 13 - Mathews Memorial Library

We hope these meetings and the survey responses will provide information from the public about their interest and concerns regarding public access, working waterfronts, and dredging issues in Mathews County. We encourage everyone who uses the waterways for work or pleasure to come to one of these meetings and participate in the survey.

Mathews Maritime Heritage Celebrated at Thomas Hunter Middle School

Old timers remember the shipyards and watermen. Current residents, youth, and tourists are often unfamiliar with the celebrated maritime history of Mathews County. A time and an era are quickly fading from lives and memories. There is a need to preserve this heritage, to maintain the traditions and skills developed by Mathews' shipwrights, watermen, and captains. There is a need to protect the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. The products of the Bay are being lost to pollution and over harvesting. Those who once depended on the water for a livelihood are leaving the area in search of a more stable economic future.

Results of a needs assessment conducted by the Mathews Maritime Foundation with middle school students indicated a need for instruction in maritime history, Mathews County landmarks, and boating safety. The "Chesapeake Bay Day", hosted by the Foundation, helps meet that need. On November 16, 2009 ninety-nine Thomas Hunter Middle School 6th graders experienced this history first hand as part of the MMF's educational outreach program.

The theme this year was "Traveling the Tide of Time". Throughout the day, students learned about the Bay and maritime activities from the past to the present, as well as collected information and created items to take home. Students were taught how to tie knots and the



Tidewater Oyster Growers Association explained how oysters clean the water. Tidewater Soil and Water Conservation District demonstrated how yard runoff pollutes the Bay.

The Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 66 had an activity practicing the use of life jackets. "Shipbuilding Tools and Traditions" allowed students to caulk a seam using a caulking iron and mallet, cut lumber with a two-man cross cut saw, and plane a board. Photographs taken 70 years ago when these skills were common were displayed.



Dave Montgomery instructing on use of two man saw. Photo by Dave Machen

Costumed interpreters from the Mathews Maritime Foundation and the VA Cooperative Extension Service 4-H guided the students along Mathews' shoreline using an eight-foot square map of the county. Weaving a story of travel by steamboat from Norfolk and Baltimore to Mathews in the late 19th century, the students learned about the cargo transported between the wharves and the hazards of such travel. They also learned the steamboats were owned by the railroad companies and their routes traveled imaginary tracks up and down the Bay. Deltaville Maritime Museum had a crew member of Captain John Smith's shallow explaining the trip exploring the Chesapeake.

At left Pete Hall demonstrating knot tying. Photo by Dave Machen

The Mathews County Civil War Sesquicentennial committee presented the “Water and the War”, concentrating on why Mathews was important to the Civil War. History of the New Point Comfort Lighthouse was presented and a video of Mathews Maritime Heritage was shown.

area. We appreciate their participation and their flexibility in adjusting their schedules when a Nor’easter caused us to change the date of the event”.



In the photo above Earl Soles of the New Point Light Comfort Lighthouse Preservation Foundation explaining the importance of preserving this historic structure. Photo by Dave Machen

“The Chesapeake Bay Day is an opportunity for young people to experience the past and develop an appreciation of the maritime heritage of Mathews County” said Janet Loyd, coordinator of this annual event. “It is exciting to see so many volunteers and agencies who have a similar interest in preserving the maritime history of this



In the photo above Members of USCGA Flotilla 66 demonstrate the proper use of a personal flotation device. Photo by Dave Machen



In the above photo students learn about Mathews Civil War History. Photo by Dave Machen.



In the photo at left Dennis Gryder as Captain of the steamboat “Mobjack” and Nancy Roche as passenger “Miss Nancy” portray to students life as it was in the era of steamboat travel on the Bay. Photo by Dave Machen

Display Cases ...

Thanks go to member Dave Mortimer for the beautifully crafted display case made for the James Croxton model of a typical deadrise skiff displayed in the Watermen's Room at the Foundation's museum. Dave is also crafting a case for a model of a Tilghman Island Deadrise (*pictured at right*) made and donated by Michael Croxton, Sr. of Hartfield, Virginia in honor of Ricky Diggs.



We are in need of more cases in general but specifically for the recently donated models of the blockade runner "Caroline" and the submarine "USS Finback". If interested in building a case contact Curator Dennis Crawford at the Museum for details at 725-4444.



MATHEWS MARITIME FOUNDATION
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