

## Looking Forward

We have before us a serious issue which needs your attention and help. Board members have continued to grow older, as we all do, but a significant percentage of us are now near or above the 80 year mark. The board clearly recognizes the need to bring to the board some younger members with passion for the mission of CCHS—preservation and sharing of Cape Charles history—and who can contribute to running the museum and assuring adequate financial resources for the near and coming years. Especially valuable are a background in museum work, business or community experience here or elsewhere, technical expertise, writing skills, and ability to work in groups. It could be yourself or someone you suggest we might approach. With board elections coming up in November it is important that this process begin now. An ideal way to get acquainted would be to attend some monthly membership meetings. They fall mid-month generally on a Wednesday or Thursday and usually last about an hour. Call John Griffith 757 287 1983 early in a month to get the exact date or check the website. If you would like to discuss this issue and/or suggest promising candidates including yourself, please be in touch with Marion Naar 757-442-2821 or any current board member.

## Memberships

As always, your memberships are essential. Please be sure to renew or join as a new member. We count on memberships to finance the operating expenses which enable the museum to continue to be open and provide new and traditional exhibits. Checks by mail, credit cards through our website, and Paypal are all avenues by which to donate. Last year we especially benefited from contributions of appreciated stock, IRA distributions, and donations of salable merchandise. As noted on the membership form, additional contributions to special funds—unrestricted, railroad, and endowment are especially welcome. As noted on the form, donations of \$250 or more enable you to get a plate added to our museum plaques for a person of your choice.

If you would like to receive more CCHS news by email, enter your email address on the membership form or send an email to Laura Smith at [capecharleshistory@gmail.com](mailto:capecharleshistory@gmail.com).

## CCHS Treasurer Function

The treasurer is one of four CCHS officers and is responsible for maintenance and reporting of all revenues, expenses and related financial information. Following the death in 2002 of treasurer David Flora, Marion Naar became treasurer. Brigitte Giese, a local accountant, put the books into Quick Books from David's hand records. Marion has continued in that post through 2022. During that time substantial growth and numerous capital projects took place: the 2002 budget was \$17,650; in 2022 it was \$52,500. Marion will continue as newsletter editor.

Our new treasurer is board member Dawn Kern who has strong accounting experience, a commitment to the mission of CCHS and some surprising career experience. She came to the Eastern Shore in 2019 after viewing an HGTV program about house hunting in Cape Charles. Born and raised in Vineland, New Jersey where there are still farms, the peace and quiet of Cape Charles appealed to her. She joined CCHS as a member in 2020, soon afterwards making volunteer contributions to museum gardens, and depositing museum sales and contributions, organized for proper accounting. Dawn was elected to the Board in November, 2021.

Dawn has led a full and varied life and career. As she puts it, "I have career A.D.D." After high school graduation in 1977, she moved on to college in New York City, earning her degree in Public Accounting in 1981. During her college years, she worked part-time as a bookkeeper for a Brooklyn business and then a NYC medical practice. Following college graduation and after some years as an auditor, accounting supervisor, and senior financial analyst, Dawn sought and found new challenges, becoming a caterer, real estate agent, high school and adult education business teacher, and a computer teacher in an alternative school where most of the students had parole officers. Always the perpetual student, she also studied Asian medicine at the Eastern School of Traditional Chinese Medicine in New Jersey, earning her degree in acupuncture and starting her own practice, then in 2009 getting a Chinese herbal degree from Pacific College of Oriental Medicine in New York City. After the death of her husband in 2012, Dawn retired to residence in Stuart, Florida where most of her family now resides. Dawn spends about five months of the year here in Cape Charles and communicates with us regularly from Florida by phone and email.

## 2022 Festive Fridays & Seafood Sale

Festive Fridays, sponsored by Main Street, has become a Cape Charles tradition, drawing many people to the town during evening hours in the weeks before Christmas. Local businesses were open from 5 until 9 on Nov 25 and the following three Fridays in December, their premises enhanced with new lighting, festive music, activities, and decorations. The CCHS board welcomed this opportunity to familiarize residents and out of town visitors with the museum and town history by holding a Festive Fridays Holiday Open House and Seafood sale. A dedicated group beautifully decorated the museum, installed new lights on both buildings, served refreshments, and greeted a steady stream of visitors of all ages. On three nights Andy Dunton did a reading of his 'Eastern Shore Night Before Christmas'. Kids could mail letters to Santa, make Christmas tree ornaments, and enjoy a visit from Santa. We were impressed by the people who took the time to visit and appreciate the history we offer, and especially pleased by the number of local residents who came. We hope to see them again when the museum opens in May.

Again for the third year, board secretary Brittany Cannon organized a seafood sale of local clams, oysters, and chowder. Orders were taken for \$25 bags of 100 clams and/or 50 oysters and also \$10 containers of the famous Neville clam chowder. Although not quite as popular as in 2021, it was well appreciated by those who purchased, and we made a nice profit thanks to generous pricing by New Inlet, Inc. of Cheriton who supplied the clams and oysters.

## The Country Store

If you lived in or visited Cape Charles up to the early 2000s, you would remember the Charmar Antiques shop at the lower end of Mason Ave. Charlie and Margaret Carlson opened the shop in the 1970s when Charlie retired from the railroad which had brought him here. Margaret came from a longtime Eastern Shore family. The shop was packed with fascinating objects from furniture, ship models, artwork, post cards, venerable antiques, and an array of pendulum driven clocks whose sonorous ticking and chiming filled the air as you strolled around. Charlie kept the clocks in good working order and repaired yours if you brought it to him. If you seemed interested and took to chatting, Charlie might invite you to tour the Country Store, their private museum adjoining Charmars. There, over 1,600 items were on display as would be found in country stores of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and earlier. Kitchen utensils and appliances, garden tools, toys, signs, garments and shoes, lamps, lottery and board games, medical instruments and bottles, were lovingly arranged to resemble a Country Store.

Charlie passed away in 2001, and a few years later Margaret put the collection and its small building up for sale. In 2005 with generous contributions from the Town of Cape Charles, other organizations and individuals, CCHS purchased the collection for \$75,000. At that time the understanding was that a suitable space in the town would be made available to display the collection. For a couple of

summers the little museum was kept open by volunteers, but when its building was sold the more than 1,650 items in the collection were packed up and eventually moved to the Bloxom Station. There it was accessioned and stored on shelves and in more than 100 boxes, a project led by Melinda McPeck with the help of numerous volunteers. Over the years, groups of items have been displayed at the museum and in town and loaned to other institutions, but sadly never realized as a full country store.

Last fall the board decided the time had come to make a long-term plan for the collection. In addition to the size and storage requirements of the collection, most items are not Cape Charles related. Many items came to us in poor condition and continue to deteriorate. Thus the board decided to initiate deaccessioning part of the collection. Cape Charles related items will of course be retained, items with other local provenance will be offered and donated to other museums and institutions, selected high value items with no local provenance will be sold, and deteriorated items disposed of. The deaccession process itself is specified in our Collections Policy which follows standard museum practice. For example deaccessioned objects must be documented and cannot be purchased by board members; proceeds from sale of objects are to be used for acquisition and care of other collections. The process will be carried out by Laura Smith who is experienced in valuation and sale of such items.

## 2022 Docents & Museum Visitors

During the past museum season docent volunteers kept the museum open daily from 10 to 4 greeting, guiding, and conversing with visitors from near and far. There were nearly 4,000 visitors during the regular museum season, including attendees at December Festive Fridays and the April shrimp boil. The donations and sales from museum visitors make a very significant contribution to our bottom line. As always, our statistics indicate that the vast majority are attracted by the museum itself and its combination with visitor information. They find the museum in various ways: passing by, internet sites, family & friends, etc. The museum looks forward to a new neighbor this year: a mini-golf course! Thanks go to 2022 docents Jennifer and Mike Ash, Jim and Carol Carnegie, Regina Davis, Jerry Doughty, Andy Dunton, Damion Geist, John Griffith, Lenora Mitchell, Barbara O'Hare, Carolyn Spencer, Terry & Mike Strub, and Peg Volk. This year Carol Carnegie will serve as docent coordinator. She would welcome your interest in being a docent. She can be reached by phone or text at 757-641-0846 or [carcarnegie@gmail.com](mailto:carcarnegie@gmail.com). Being a museum docent is fun, easy, and air-conditioned! Training is provided to all new docents.

### Books

Books related to Eastern Shore continue to be our best sellers. Purchase of these books is now possible over the website, [capecharlesmuseum.org](http://capecharlesmuseum.org). You might be interested in *Cape Charles: A Railroad Town* (soft cover \$40; hard cover \$60), *True Tales of the Eastern Shore* by Kirk Mariner, and *Northampton County* by Tom & Curtis Badger. Of course, shipping and sales tax must be added to online orders.