



MUSEUM NEWS

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Celebrating the history and community of Cape Charles & Lower Eastern Shore

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NEW ACQUISITIONS AND MORE

We continue to be honored by our community's trust. 2019 has been a very big year for our museum and its collection. We are highlighting two of these donations this month - Savage's Drug artifacts, and the local Railroad photography and documentation of Ed Sharpe.

SAVAGE'S DRUG STORE

Savage's Drug Store began as a co-owned pharmacy called **Savage and Blasingame Drug Store** sometime around 1924. It was located on the corner of Strawberry Street and Mason Avenue, with partners George J. Savage Sr. and William G. Blasingame. Mr. Blasingame died in 1945, at which point it became known as **Savage's Drug Store**.

George J. Savage Jr. graduated Pharmacy school and returned to Cape Charles in 1949 to continue in the family business, and his brother J. Tomas "Tommy" Savage joined them in 1952. The store had a very popular soda fountain which was frequented by Cape Charles High School students after their games. George J. Savage Sr., known locally as Old George, died in 1971, and the drug store was remodeled. The two sons operated the store until it was sold in 1997. The building now houses **The Lemon Tree Gallery**. The compounding pestle and RX symbol can still be seen in the store's mosaic entryway tiles!



Savage and Blasingame Drug Store, circa 1924. Photo courtesy of esva.net. Photo provided by Bill Blasingame

When George and Virginia Savage sold the building, many items from the store were placed into storage above the retail space. When they decided to clear out the storage space, the Museum was lucky enough to be invited to collect items of historical interest. We acquired over a hundred artifacts, including a Savage and Blasingame compounding bottle.

THE RAILROAD PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION OF ED SHARPE

Over the course of his career, Ed Sharpe took thousands of photographs of the local railroad, equipment, the yards and stations, and the people who worked there. He has shared with us an invaluable documentary treasure of Cape Charles and the Eastern Shore's transportation history.

One subject we have found of particular interest as we've been digitizing the collection is the railroad passenger stations. Ed managed to document many of the local stations in place, when they were still standing.

One of these images particularly caught the eye of Laura Smith, our Collections Manager. It was the Bloxom Station!

Bloxom Passenger Station was originally located in the town of Bloxom in Accomack County. The earliest mention found is in the October 6, 1888 issue of the Peninsula Enterprise. It served the railroad until the 1950s. Thirty years later, in the 1980s, it was scheduled

for demolition. Local rescue and restoration enthusiasts, Tom and Jan Noonan, bought the station and dismantled it, saving key elements.

In 1999, the Noonans donated the pieces to the Cape Charles Historical Society. Reconstruction was completed in 2006 with the help of two T-21 grants from VDOT. The original roof brackets, beams, rafters, windows and some flooring were used. The building is very close to the original, thanks to the Noonans, and the work of local architect Leon Parham.



Bloxom Passenger Station, circa 1980. Photo courtesy of Ed Sharpe

Amazon Smile Donations

Do you shop online with amazon.com?

LOG INTO SMILE.AMAZON.COM INSTEAD AND DESIGNATE THE CAPE CHARLES HISTORICAL SOCIETY, AMAZON WILL DONATE 0.5% OF YOUR PURCHASE TO CCHS, AT NO ADDITIONAL COST TO YOU!

A GRAND BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION!

Mary Morris has served as our weekday museum attendant for over 12 years. Ever reliable, friendly, and patient with visitors who leave testimony to that effect in the visitor register, she turned 86 in August. Mary loves working at the museum, so her family asked if they could hold her birthday celebration there. Of course we were happy to oblige. The party defied expectations – packed with friends, family, and great food – and Mary was totally surprised and very pleased. We wish Mary many more years of good life and presence at the museum.

SPECIAL VISITS

Representative Elaine Luria is making a point of familiarizing herself with her Eastern Shore constituents and stopped by the museum a few weeks ago with her husband Robert and their daughter. They found the Rosenwald school exhibit most interesting and, like most visitors, enjoyed the ship models, trains and running of the power plant diesel engine. Their daughter was most drawn to the crater. We also had a recent visit from 40 members of the Lancaster Historical Society, who were most enthusiastic about the exhibits.

VOLUNTEERS, MEMBERSHIPS, AND DONATIONS

Over the years we've been lucky to have a faithful core of volunteers doing small maintenance jobs, tree and gardening work, and serving as Sunday afternoon docents. But people get older as time passes, and we need new people willing to serve as docents and/or do some handyman work. Docents take one Sunday afternoon a month, switching with other docents when other commitments come up. The exhibits are self guided, so depth of historical knowledge is in no way a requirement. Turns out, many visitors want to relate their own life experiences, rather than vice versa! Docents are also asked about other spots in the area, sell some shop

items, and run the engine in demo mode if they wish. Stop by and spend some time with Mary during the week (10-2) or on a Saturday, and see what is involved. Please let us know if you are interested. We would love to have you!

In good news, this year has seen a record number of memberships, both in number and amount; the same members who provided most of the donations to the railroad fund. Additional special donations by Board members, Town of Cape Charles, United Way and other individuals have helped to cover costs of the \$54,500 museum exterior renovations last January. However, looking into the future, much more is needed to bring our finances to a level where we can afford adequate professional staff and cover the inevitable building and maintenance needs. So, if you are not already a member please become one at any level you choose, and renew for 2019 if you haven't already. You may also make an 'undesigned' contribution at any time and it will be applied as needed. We will continue to seek grants to cover large projects, but generous local financial support is essential to providing funds for basic operational needs.

OYSTER ROAST NOVEMBER 30TH

Preparations have begun for this important fundraiser and popular event. 4 - 8 pm. The Mike Proffitt Band is playing, and we will provide all you can eat local oysters, fried chicken, potato salad, brown dog ice cream and the many extras. Beer selections will include local varieties from Cape Charles Distillery. Because we are now renting tents, which adds flexibility and safety to the outdoor layout, tickets will be \$50, but current CCHS members can purchase 2 tickets at \$40. Please plan to attend! Funds raised provide a large component of our operating needs. And it's a really great event! If you want to be on the list for event reminders, please email capecharlesmuseum@gmail.com.

MEMBERSHIPS, AND MEETINGS

Our bylaws specify board elections every other year at the special 'annual' meeting. 2019 is an election year, and elections will take place at the November 20 meeting. This is a critical time for the Cape Charles Historical Society. This past year we have acquired a very significant piece of Cape Charles transportation history; we continue to perform important maintenance on our buildings and grounds. A dedicated diverse board is critical to the sustainability of the organization. Of the 16 current board members, most have served for many years. They include people from Virginia Beach and Maryland, from Cape Charles and nearby areas, but none from Bay Creek. In the past we have had a town councilman on the board, which was very helpful.

What are the qualifications and duties of a director? Interest in Cape Charles and Eastern Shore history, and a willingness to participate in the activities of the museum and welcome center in any way that interests you. That's it! Monthly open board meetings review all ongoing projects, finances and other business. Making large donations and soliciting them, while very welcome, is not a requirement to be a director.

New board members will give a tremendous boost. Without them, the outlook for the historical society and our mission is not healthy. Plan to attend the November 20 annual meeting – or speak to any board member. See the web page for names of current board members. Be in touch by phone or email (capecharlesmuseum@gmail.com) with Kimb Denny or Marion Naar to be added to the slate or learn more.

NEED TO UNSUBSCRIBE?

If you no longer wish to receive our newsletters, just send a quick email or call the museum 757-331-1008 and let us know. Thank you!

Sunday Historical by Laura Smith

FOLLOW OUR COLLECTION MANAGER LAURA SMITH'S BRILLIANT LOCAL HISTORY BLOG "SUNDAY HISTORICAL". YOU'LL FIND IT LINKED AT THE TOP OF OUR WEBSITE HOMEPAGE. RECENT ENTRIES HAVE INCLUDED "LUCY HOLWAY DIXON, CAREER RAILROAD AGENT", "SANDY ISLAND, CAPE CHARLES' LITTLE ATLANTIS", AND MORE. IT'S ALWAYS AN INTERESTING AND INFORMATIVE READ. CATCH UP WITH CAPE CHARLES HISTORY!