

REEDVILLE FISHERMEN'S MUSEUM

STARRY BANNER

www.rfmuseum.org

Thank you for the BEST year yet!

Happy Holidays!

Truly Grateful for you.

thanks
for your
support

*Appreciative of your
Time and Dedication*

*Grateful for the
Annual Appeal*

"Operated like a Fine Swiss Watch"

-John Chichester



*Donations!
It's not too late!*

**Team work
makes the dream Work.**

thank  **you**

It takes A Fishing Village~

**Wishing you a NEW YEAR of
calm winds and smooth sailing~**

Reedville Fisherman's Museum

I just wanted to reach out to you and the guys in the shop who built our skiff we purchased back in August of this year. Even though we picked up our skiff later in the season we were still able to get it outfitted and get some time on the Chester River.

I wanted to share some photos of why I purchased this skiff. Simply just to introduce my granddaughter "Layla Rose" to boating. I thought this would be the best and safest way to accomplish that. Well it certainly was. She loves the boat which just makes me very happy. I started with a wooden skiff when I was young. Larger boats are great however there's nothing like being a fingertip away from the water. It's just awesome watching her facial expressions and being so excited to go boating!!

We actually put more hours on the skiff than we did on my 28 Regulator. Now that's a statement in itself. We here in Chestertown have the Down Rigging Festival every year at the end of October. They say it's the largest gathering of tall ships in the US. If you guys have never been, which some of you probably have made the trip being boat builders you really need to join us next year. They have a parade of tall ships with many other boats. I have to say I received so many compliments all weekend on my little skiff. That's a compliment to you guys.

I sure wish I lived closer as I'd love to join your boatbuilding daycare center. Please let me know if you build just a bit bigger skiff because I may be interested as Layla Rose is growing fast. You've / we've made her one happy little girl. Sorry I can't give you all the credit. 🍷

Happy Boat Building!! I look forward to working with you again!!



THE CLAUD REFIT

In the first step toward a total refit of the historic skipjack Claud W. Somers, volunteer crew members removed the mainsail and jib Saturday, Nov. 8. The vessel, built in 1911, has been owned by the Reedville Fishermen's Museum for 25 years.

Sails are a skipjack's only means of self-propulsion. In early December the skipjack's push boat, which has an engine, will guide the Somers to Jennings Boatyard in Fairport. The skipjack will be put "on the hard" until the spring for examination and refitting from stem to stern.

New Dacron sails will be made by Evolution Sails by Latell and Ailsworth in Deltaville. The museum was awarded two grants totaling \$100,000 (\$75,000 from the Va. Department of Historic Resources and National Park Service and \$25,000 from the Colonial Market Colonial Farm) for the refit.



CAPTAINS CORNER

The Claud W. Somers finished her season this year on a high note having sailed for crew training and with passengers at least twice per month from March through October of this year. In February, the crew had decided they were going to get her back on the water as a USCG passenger vessel and they accomplished that and more! Over one hundred and fifty passengers sailed on the Somers this year, visitors that came to Reedville and the Museum to experience something special. Additionally, fourteen crew managed to rack up fifteen hundred volunteer hours for the year.

As the season comes to an end, the crew has begun down-rigging to prepare the boat for the move to Jennings Boatyard for work related to our heritage grant and for our next USCG inspection. You'll notice that she looks a little forlorn with her sails off, but it's only temporary. The heritage grant is paying for new sails, running rigging, centerboard and rudder among other things. The crew will be working on her over the winter and she'll be back sailing again next year!

We look forward to seeing you all out on the water.

Captain Tom Briggs

(one of two Captains), Claud W. Somers



P is for Pea Crab.

"You may find a small crab inside of an oyster. They are called pea crabs, which may live inside an oyster for their whole life. A pea crab gets food from the oyster and can be eaten with the oyster. It is considered good luck to find and eat a pea crab!"

That is one of 26 fascinating factoids that readers of the new book "ABCs of Oystering on the Chesapeake Bay" will learn. The book by two local educators is set for publication Dec. 9. The book's author, Susan Swift, said that the letter P is her favorite description.

The book's artist, Heather Cockrell, said her favorite illustration is for "O is for Oystermen." Her artwork shows a waterman and their basset hound, Fred. Her husband, Nick, is an engineer on one of Ocean Harvester's fish boats.

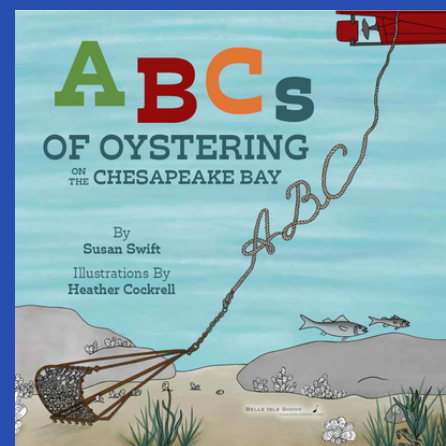
This is the second book in a series by the two friends and educators. The first was "ABCs of Crabbing on the Chesapeake Bay," published in July 2024. A third book, "ABCs of Menhaden Fishing on the Chesapeake Bay," is planned. Swift is librarian at Northumberland Elementary School. Cockrell is art teacher at Northumberland Middle School. The two are active in Alpha Delta Kappa, an altruistic sorority for women in education. They also are members of the Reedville Fishermen's Museum. Shauna McCranie, the museum's executive director, wrote as part of an intro to the new book: "As a board member of the Virginia Oyster Trail, I am certainly an advocate for oysters ... I know children and parents alike will learn something new about everyone's favorite mollusk." Swift said, "It started as a children's book but became a book for anybody. We market it for any age." Cockrell and Swift have a deep appreciation for the heritage of watermen on the bay. Swift has lived on the Northern Neck for 36 years. Her husband, Keith, is a fourth-generation waterman. In season he works for Reedville Bait Co., catching menhaden fish used for bait. He crabs in the spring and oysters in the winter. Their son, Zach, worked the water in summers and college breaks. Cockrell's husband, Nick, is engineer on an Omega fish boat. Both she and her husband were born and raised on the Northern Neck. "It feels really good to publish something that represents our community that hopefully will be around for along time," said Cockrell.

The women fronted the investment for their first book. This one is sponsored by W.E. Kellum Seafood in Weems, a family-owned business since 1948, which has local seafood outlets and ships seafood across the United States. Both books are published by Belle Isle Books, an imprint of Brandylane Publishers Inc. Cover price is \$26.95 for hardback and \$15.95 for soft cover. Among the local outlets are: the Reedville Fishermen's Museum gift shop and Fawn's in Reedville; Lilian's She Shed in Burgess; Pink Lemon and Miss Mary's Seafood in White Stone; Tides Inn and Kellum's in Irvington; River Birch in Middlesex; and The Bookshelf on Church in Kilmarnock. It will be on amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com. Their book is one of two featured at a book talk and signing held by the museum at 6:30 p.m. Feb. 2 at the Fairfield's Volunteer Fire Department. They are available for other book signings, and can be reached by e-mail: sswift@nucps.net and hcockrell@nucps.net.



Susan Swift, *right*, author and
Heather Cockrell, *left*, illustrator of
"ABCs of Oystering on the Chesapeake
Bay,"

Photo and Story by Tina McCloud



Community Outreach

-Michael Fontaine

Proceeds of \$6,220 will be donated to a Gloucester waterman's family after a raffle sponsored by the Reedville Fishermen's Museum came to a close. Mike Fontaine donated a large framed copy of his oyster-dredging photograph, "Pot Of Gold," to get the raffle under way about a month ago. He was moved by the story of Taylor Mason. After her husband Peyton's passing in June, she took on all aspects of running the couple's young business, the Virginia Oyster Company. She has been working on their oyster boat as well as overseeing the land-side processing facility, all while raising their two young daughters. Mason spoke from the heart to the hundreds of people at the museum's annual Oyster Roast Saturday, where the winning tickets were drawn. "My husband loved the waterman community," said Mason, adding he was always available to help others in the trade. She thanked everyone for their support and asked them to continue to appreciate the sound of a workboat leaving a creek in the early morning. "He lives on through the beauty of working the water," she said. "If you're a waterman, keep doing it. If not, keep supporting all of us," she said. First place won the photograph and \$500, which was donated back to the family. Second place won a smaller version of the print and \$200, donated back to the family. Third place won \$100 and a smaller version of the photograph. Tickets were sold by the museum, the photographer and Miss Mary's Seafood in White Stone and at the Oyster Roast. "The watermen's community is a tight knit group of people," Shauna McCranie, executive director of the museum, said after the event. "Supporting each other is extremely important to them. I am so proud of this community and how they rallied to raise this money for Taylor, her young daughters and her business. "Taylor is a humble and brave young woman, and the next hard-working generation keeping the watermen's and women's dreams alive. They are doing a hard occupation because they love the water, and as a watermen's museum we are here to support them." McCranie, who introduced Mason to the crowd, thanked the 143 adult volunteers and the student volunteers, the Northumberland County Sheriff's Office, the Virginia Waterman's Association and Oyster Roast chairwoman Kim Hampton for helping make the 36th annual Oyster Roast a success. As usual, all 1,000 tickets were sold out several weeks before the event. Oyster Roast proceeds go toward the insurance on the museum's on-land and in-water classic boats.



Photo and Story by Tina McCloud



Holiday Train Schedule

Dec 6th: 11am-4pm

Dec 13th: 11am-4pm

Dec 20th: 11am-4pm

Dec 27th: 11am-4pm





JOIN US FOR A

CHRISTMAS IN REEDVILLE

RFM IN PARTNERSHIP WITH BETHANY
CHURCH

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2025
EVENTS BEGIN AT 3PM ON THE
LOWER DECK OF THE MUSEUM

3 PM- SANTA ARRIVES ON THE ELVA-C
3:15 PM- VISIT THE MODEL TRAINS WITH THE
CONDUCTOR AND BUDDY THE ELF
3:30 PM- COOKIES AND MILK WITH SANTA AT
BETHANY CHURCH-PHOTO OPPORTUNITY WITH
SANTA, BUDDY, AND CONDUCTOR

5 PM- BASKET TREE LIGHTING AT WATERMEN'S
PARK

5:30PM- COCKTAILS ON THE CREEK IN THE
WATERMEN'S GALLERY

Christmas Card Workshop



Create 4 Christmas Cards
Thursday, Dec. 11 from 6-8pm.
Watermen's Gallery
\$12.00 to attend

RSVP TO OFFICE@RFMUSEUM.ORG OR CALL THE OFFICE AT 804-453-6529

Heritage Society Spotlight:

Smart ways to give back to RFM

Meaningful giving options that can benefit you and the Reedville Fishermen's Museum.

As the year draws to a close, many members look for meaningful ways to support the Museum. Here are two simple, tax-wise ways to make a lasting difference for RFM:

Appreciated Stock Gifts

-You can donate appreciated stocks and **avoid capital gains tax.**

-The Museum sells the shares and uses the proceeds to support operations.

Ask your financial advisor for details and to begin the process.

Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs)

If you're 73 or older, you can make a gift **directly from your IRA** to RFM

This helps meet your **Required Minimum Distribution (RMD)** and **reduces taxable income** – one of the most **tax-efficient** ways to give!

How to Make a QCD:

1. Contact your **IRA administrator** and direct them to make the check out to **Greater Reedville Association dba Reedville Fishermen's Museum** P.O. Box 306, Reedville, VA 22539 (Tax ID available upon request)
2. Specify your gift amount.
3. Notify the Museum so we can properly thank you.

"Your generosity helps the Reedville Fishermen's Museum preserve the history of our watermen and serve our community. We couldn't do it without you!"



VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND CULTURE

CELEBRATE AMERICA'S 250TH ANNIVERSARY – EXPLORE VIRGINIA'S HISTORY

In 2026, the United States marks **250 years of independence** – a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to reflect on our shared past and look toward A More Perfect Union.

The Virginia 250 Passport is your free guide to Virginia's revolutionary story and invites you to journey through history and discover the people and places that shaped our nation.

Use Your Passport

- Enjoy discounted admission at 70 participating sites
- Collect unique stamps as you explore
- Earn prizes after visiting at least five sites

GET YOUR PASSPORT FREE

WHILE SUPPLIES LAST AT:

- Colonial Williamsburg
- Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation
- Monticello
- Mount Vernon
- VMHC
- VA250 Mobile Museum
- Virginia Welcome Centers (12 locations)

Available November 11, 2025 – December 31, 2026
Discover. Learn. Celebrate.
Be part of Virginia's story in America's 250th year.



Christmas Reminders

Looking for the perfect Christmas Gift?

Surprise someone you love with an RFM membership! It's meaningful, local, and lasts far beyond the holidays—offering year round benefits and opportunities to be part of preserving our maritime history!

Holiday Decor Needed!

We're gathering items to dress our Watermen's Park for next years holiday season! As you sort through holiday décor, clean out closets, or spot great Christmas sales, please consider passing it along to RFM—we'd love to give your gently used decorations a new holiday home!

DECEMBER 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6 3p - Santa arrives 5p- Tree Lighting 5p - Cocktails 
7	8	9 Gentle Flow Yoga 9:30a - 10:30a	10 OFFICE CLOSED TO MEMBERS AND PUBLIC BY APPOINTMENT ONLY	11 Gentle Flow Yoga 9:30a - 10:30a	12	13
14 3pm Festival Chorale Concert @ Bethany Church	15	16 Gentle Flow Yoga 9:30a - 10:30a	17 OFFICE CLOSED TO MEMBERS AND PUBLIC BY APPOINTMENT ONLY	18 Gentle Flow Yoga 9:30a - 10:30a	19	20
21	22 Holiday Office Closed	23 Gentle Flow Yoga 9:30a - 10:30a Holiday Office Closed	24 Holiday Office Closed	25  Holiday Office Closed	26 Holiday Office Closed	27
28	29 Holiday Office Closed	30 Holiday Office Closed	31  Holiday Office Closed	1  Holiday Office Closed	2 Holiday Office Closed	

JANUARY 2026

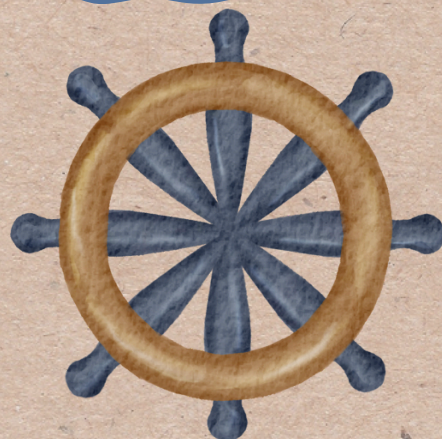
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5 Movie Showing The Sinking of the Fenwick Island	6 Gentle Flow Yoga 9:30a - 10:30a	7 OFFICE CLOSED TO MEMBERS AND PUBLIC BY APPOINTMENT ONLY	8 Gentle Flow Yoga 9:30a - 10:30a	9 Cocktails on the Creek 	10
11	12	13 Gentle Flow Yoga 9:30a - 10:30a	14 OFFICE CLOSED TO MEMBERS AND PUBLIC BY APPOINTMENT ONLY	15 Gentle Flow Yoga 9:30a - 10:30a	16	17
18	19	20 Gentle Flow Yoga 9:30a - 10:30a	21 OFFICE CLOSED TO MEMBERS AND PUBLIC BY APPOINTMENT ONLY	22 Gentle Flow Yoga 9:30a - 10:30a	23	24
25	26	27 Gentle Flow Yoga 9:30a - 10:30a	28	29 Gentle Flow Yoga 9:30a - 10:30a	30	31

SMALLER CATCHES

SAVE THE DATES

Please visit our website for All Events!
WWW.RFMUSEUM.ORG

- December 6th-Christmas in Reedville
 - 3pm - Santa arrives on Elva-C
 - 5pm - Tree Lighting
 - 5:30pm - Cocktails
- December 14th - 3pm Festival Chorale Concert at Bethany Church
- Christmas in Reedville will include the Walker House decorated with festive greenery and a focus on vintage toys and ornaments. We will embrace a classic holiday style from the 19th century. Please visit during normal museum hours.



NOW ACCEPTING, CAR DONATIONS!

The majority of the museum's operating budget comes from the sale of donated boats and other items. This year we have expanded our program to include cars! Our inventory is low. Please consider the museum when deciding how to dispose of a boat or vehicle that you no longer need. We can pick up the vessel or car and provide the necessary paperwork for tax purposes. Your contributions greatly help the local community and our beloved museum. Please email us at donations@rfmuseum.org for more information on how to donate or to inquire about our current inventory!

SALE



*See the website
for full inventory*

SALE



donations@rfmuseum.org

CURRENT INVENTORY
WWW.RFMUSEUM.ORG

DECEMBER RFM'S NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

Cathy & Frank Adams
Cathy & Dan Althouse
Robert Bannach
Jennifer & Jeff Bramblet
Lila & William Brent
Betsy & Bruce Byford
John Carmack
Clay & Chad Dameron
Dawn & Pat Darr
Donna & Al Davis
Emily Fisher
Catherine Foster
Sharon & Ken Freude
Mary Beth & Lawson Heggie
Brian & Michelle Henry
Joanne & Joe Hunt
Robin & Joe Jackson
Susan & Greg Kirkbride

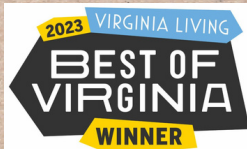
Darryl Krolicki
Valandra Leister
John Lohman
Cathy Manke
Bob Matthews
Sandra Maynard
Mariam & Will Meyer
Alice & Angus Murdoch
Jane Neal
Kitty & Vic Ramoneda
Mike Rancourt
Anna & Brooklyn Ranson-Williams
Linda & Mark Sanders
Jimmy Scott
Tori Talbot
Gayle & Wes Werling
Sylvia & Ken Williams
Egli & Dale Wittler

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Facebook: facebook.com/ReedvilleFishermensMuseum

instagram: [@reedvillefishermensmuseum](https://instagram.com/@reedvillefishermensmuseum)

www.rfmuseum.org



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS
and BLUE STAR FAMILIES present
arts.gov/bluestarmuseums
BLUE STAR MUSEUMS

CAMM