



# The Chesapeake Dispatcher



Semi-Annual Newsletter of the Friends of the Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum, Inc.  
Museum Telephone (410) 257-3892

Volume 25, Issue 1, Number 48

May 2006

## Swimsuit Issue



Mildred Finlon and Joan Kilmon at the Waterpark in 2001

### Vintage Swimsuit Fashion Show



Mildred Finlon at  
Chesapeake Beach in 1921

The Friends of the Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum are extremely happy and proud to announce their first Fund-Raiser and Friend-Raiser. It will be held on July 1, 2006, noon to 2 p.m. This stunning event will be a Vintage Swimsuit Fashion Show & Picnic on the Beach. It will be held rain or shine at the Rod "N" Reel Restaurant. Tickets are \$25.00 each and are available for purchase at the Railway Museum now open daily, 1-4 p.m. during the spring and summer season.

What a busy and fun winter the Friends and Curator Harriet Stout have had collecting the swimsuits for this occasion. Vince Cipriani, special volunteer, made many bids for us on eBay, while Hilary Dailey made friends at Jantzen Apparel LLC. Thanks to Hilary, special programs volunteer, Jantzen is loaning us 18 suits, both old and new. Thanks to Vince, the Friends now own several suits from her personal collection as well.

Models for this event will be under the direction of Abigail Francisco of the Abigail Francisco Classical School of Ballet in North Beach. Music will be provided by the Garrett Music Academy. With Abigail and Nick Garrett involved, you know this will be an occasion not to be missed!

If you think about the history of Chesapeake Beach, from the 1890's to the present, swimming suits have always been part of the local color. For more than 100 years, changing fashions have been on parade by the Bay, by the salt water pool in the amusement park, and at the Waterpark. Come see what we have collected, hear the stories we have to tell, and enjoy a good old picnic on the beach, while supporting the Friends of the Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum.

ENJOY THE VINTAGE SWIMSUITS  
THROUGHOUT THIS ISSUE!!



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## Spring Family Fun Day—May 21st

This year's Spring Family Fun Day at the Museum will be Sunday, May 21<sup>st</sup> from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. At 1:00 p.m. **Speed & Thro** will entertain visitors on the porch for 45 minutes with their high energy magic show. This act will be followed by a dance troupe, pending final confirmation.

Children will have the chance to experience a fossil hunt at a table where they can try to find and identify local fossils hidden in a box of sand. They may also try their hands at making a toy which was popular with children 100 years ago, as well as playing old time games.

As always, anyone who would like to take a photo in period dress is welcome to do so. You can put your face through the cut-out holes of the Museum's painting of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century family and create a wonderful keepsake memory of our Spring Family Fun Day.

The Family Fun Day events are free of charge.



*A young lady enjoys balloon sculptures at a previous Family Fun Day*

## Founders' Day Celebration and Annual Meeting of the Friends of CBRM



*Baby's first day at the beach.*

This year we plan a small celebration on June 9 to honor the date when the Chesapeake Beach Resort welcomed the first visitors in 1900. We hope to make Founder's Day an annual event. Join us for the festivities. We plan games for the children since this will be the first day of summer vacation. There will also be refreshments and a sneak preview of the Swim Suit Collection. The activities take place during our regular open hours, 1:00 to 4:00 pm. This is a Friday, so plan to start your weekend with a pleasant afternoon at the Museum.

As part of our Founders' Day celebrations we will also have our Annual Meeting of the Friends of the CBRM. We will call the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. on the porch of the museum. Please join us for this meeting, we plan to honor our volunteers.

### The Chesapeake Dispatcher The Semi-Annual Newsletter of the Friends of the Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum, Inc.

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*Please inform us of any corrections to your name or address.*

**ANNUAL MEETING**  
**OF THE**  
**FRIENDS OF THE CBRM**  
**ON THE PORCH OF THE MUSEUM**  
**JUNE 9, 2006**  
**3:00 P.M.—4:00 P.M.**



## The On-Again, Off-Again Railroad

By John Riedesel

But for the hesitancy of Anne Arundel officials in 1924, Calvert might be a very different place, with a railroad running down the middle of the county all the way to Drum Point.

As early as 1856, forward-looking people proposed the construction of a railroad from Baltimore to the southern tip of Calvert County. Such a line would provide an ice-free, deepwater harbor to export Western Maryland coal coming into Baltimore, as well as an avenue to tap the riches of Calvert's fertile fields and abundant waters for city markets.

In 1867, at the insistence of Gov. Oden Bowie, the Maryland legislature provided \$5000 for a route survey. A year later the Baltimore and Drum Point Railroad (B&DPRR) was chartered with the condition of having trains running in ten years. Funding was to come from the State of Maryland, Anne Arundel and Calvert Counties, Baltimore City, and private investors. Initial excitement about the project turned to ashes over the next several decades as enthusiasm and funding sources waxed and waned.

Work on the roadbed started about 1872 at Millersville, MD which lay on the Annapolis and Elkridge RR, but money soon ran out. The company was reorganized, and the next spurt of activity came in the late 1880s. By 1889, the entire 34-mile Calvert County section was ready for rail, with grading and culverts completed, and ties delivered. Large trestles spanned Hunting and St. Leonard's Creeks. The Hunting Creek trestle was 600 feet long and 50 feet high. But again the enterprise ran out of money before any rails were laid.

In 1911, the B&DPRR became the Baltimore & Virginia RR and another attempt was made to complete the line. It would interchange with the now-existing Chesapeake Beach Railway (CBRY) at Owings as well as the Washington, Baltimore & Annapolis interurban line in Anne Arundel County. When that attempt fizzled, a group of local businessmen proposed that CBRY complete and operate the Calvert County portion of the line. This time plans were thwarted by World War I. Steel was needed for the war effort and not for rails; and the Federal Government took over operation of all U.S. railroads for the duration of the war, thus curbing any speculative new construction.

In 1924, one last attempt to complete the line came down to Anne Arundel and Calvert Counties' willingness to provide \$500,000. Calvert agreed, but her neighbor to the north declined, and the dream of a railroad to Drum Point died for all time. Bits of B&DPRR right-of-way can still be identified at a handful of places in Calvert County.



Portion of the Drum Point Railroad right-of-way still visible off Rout 765 across from Middleham Chapel in Lusby.

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Sources of information: Gibb and Mask, "A Road Without Rails: The Baltimore and Drum Point Railroad, 1868-1891," in *The Calvert Historian*, Vol. 5, No.2; Merriken, *Every Hour On The Hour*, 1993; and Williams, *Otto Mears Goes East: The Chesapeake Beach Railway*, 1981

### Message from the Curator

Harriet M. Stout

The historical objects that the Museum holds are treasures to be cared for and protected in perpetuity. These things tell the stories of the past, and sometimes they provide the only tangible images of these former times. As trustees of these items we have a serious responsibility, and we must honor the trust placed in us as caretakers of our community's cultural heritage.



The items that make up the collection of the Museum are fragile and sensitive, and often they are rare or unique. This adds to the import of our role as caregivers. Special care is required of all who hold the objects of our past in their hands and the stories in their hearts.

## Recent Acquisitions

Purchase	- 10 postcards, scenes of early Chesapeake Beach & North Beach
Helen Ward Wheeler	- Book: <u>County Boy to Country Doctor: Memoirs of Hugh W. Ward, M. D. 1898-1978.</u>
Bayard Cutcliff	- Books: <u>Titan: The Life of John D. Rockefeller, Sr.</u> by Ron Chernow; and, <u>The Old Iron Road: An Epic of Rails, Roads, and the Urge to Go West</u> by David Haward Bain.
Francis Tosh	- Archival materials: Assorted photocopies of documents relating to the history of the CBR.
Laurence Hampton	- Archival materials: Assorted photocopies of documents relating to Otto Mears and related historic railroads.
Purchase	- Postcard: color tinted: "Along the Beach, Chesapeake Beach, Md."
Joseph Korczynski, Sr.	- Newspaper clippings: Railroad history and history of Museum.
Purchase	- Eighteen vintage swim suits, c. 1900 to 1960's; men's, women's, and children's.
Willard Entwisle	- Six slides of historic photographs of CBR engines and stations.

## Special Group Programs

The Museum has offered a number of interesting and fun programs over the past few months. We have enjoyed sharing some of the Museum's special stories with these groups. Most of these have been outreach programs, but we have also hosted several tours of the museum.

March 3	Read Across America (Storytime) – Deale Elementary School
March 15/20	Summer Camp Fair – Calvert County Schools
March 16	Grandmother's Trunk for Adults – Calvert Marine Museum
April 3	History of the Amusement Park - Prince Frederick Rotary Club
April 5	100 Years of Swimsuits – P G County Adult Education (Local History Class – Vince Cipriani)
April 6	Tour of Museum – Cornell Nurses Reunion
April 7	Tour of Museum – Calvert High, Functional Living Class
April 21	Tour of Museum – Local Southern Baptist Adult Group
April 22	Railroad Heritage Hike – Freestate Happy Wanderer
May 7	Tour of Museum - Potomac Region Cadillac LaSalle Club
May 10	Tour of Museum – Rotary Club with Norwegians Rotarians
May 12	Tour of Museum – Mt. Harmony School, Functional Living Class

## Right of Way Hike

The Right of Way Hike was on April 1 this year, and in spite of the date we had a wonderful day. This year we explored the Chesapeake Beach end of the route of the Railway. We tried a something new this year; the Friends sponsored a bus to take us as a group instead of using private vehicles to go from point to point. Fortunately, the turnout was exactly the number of seats on the bus; twenty nine participants attended.

First we drove to Bay Front Park and took a look at the old and never-used Southern Extension of the CBR as it crosses the marsh. From there we stopped at Beach Elementary School and took the Nature Trail down the hill toward Fishing Creek. We were able to look out over Fishing Creek Marsh and see the route of the Railway as it came into Chesapeake Beach. At the bottom of the hill we explored the impressive stone remains of the old power plant; this plant provided power for the resort in the early days. We then followed the power plant spur to the location of the Y; here the CBR engines turned around so that they could head back to Washington in a forward direction.

After this interesting bit of exploring, we re-boarded the bus and drove to Loch Less Farms. There we debarked and hiked the short stretched of right of way through the woods to the location Mt. Harmony Station. This is a splendid stretch of well-preserved right of way that clearly shows the incredible efforts of the builders of the railroad; a deep cut through a hill is followed by a length of high fill. The walking was very easy with little underbrush to hinder our enjoyment. We came out of the woods onto Stephens Road, and crossed the Mt. Harmony Road Bridge, looking north and south to view the old route of the railroad. North is now Route 260.

From this stop the bus took us to Route 4 to where we turned around. As we crossed over Route 4 on the new overpass, we were able to take a look at the pillars that supported the CBR trestle over Lyons Creek from 1930 to 1935.

It was a very interesting day with fine weather and a good turnout. A nice article about the hike appeared the next week in The Calvert Recorder. We hope to continue the hikes in the future, but we need volunteers to help with the organization of the event. If you are interested in working on this program, please contact the Curator at 410-257-3892.



## Welcome to Correine E. Moore

A new staff member has joined the Museum over the winter. Correine Moore has taken the job of Office Assistant to our Curator, but she is more than that. She is working hard to make the business operations of the Museum run more smoothly. Correine has already made a great contribution to the day to day activities as well as long-range projects. On top of all that, she has already received glowing praise from the visitors she has served. Her lively personality, friendliness, and good common sense are greatly appreciated by all who have worked with her. Welcome aboard, Correine!

## Volunteer Training

The Volunteer Training Workshop fell on March 11 this year. We had several new volunteers attend and a number of old friends joined us to share their expertise. This year we arranged to hold the morning session in the Chesapeake Beach Hotel. This provided a very pleasant atmosphere for the morning. After the work session we had a short tour of the Museum and then lunch at the Rod N' Reel Restaurant.

Later in the year we hope to have a couple of field trips as a group; this is a good way to share ideas and stories and to build a stronger volunteer force. A picnic to Watkins Regional Park and a ride on the old Chesapeake Beach Carousel has been proposed, and a visit to the B & O Museum in Baltimore is another possibility. Let us know if you are interested in these special activities.

We continue to recruit new volunteers. If you have any friends who would like to join our group of dedicated workers, please bring them by the museum or suggest they visit on their own. Even if a volunteer can give only a few hours a month, we have a job for them. No contribution is too small!



*"The weekly bathing beauty contest continues to draw throngs of spectators and a flock of bathing beauties who compete for the weekly prize and therefore become eligible to compete on Labor Day for the title 'Miss Seaside.'" - 1938  
(Unidentified bathing beauty c. 1930's from the CBRM photo collections)*

## Spring Clean Up

In spite of the rainy weather on April 22, Kristen and Kathy Scott did a great job of outdoor spring cleaning around the Museum. The collection of dry grass, leave, and blowing winter trash was raked up, and we look quite tidy now. Many thanks to Kris and Kathy for their hard work.



Betty Quigley

## Freestate Happy Wanderers

The Volunteer Coordinator, Betty Quigley, was pleased that the museum was a check point for the Freestate Happy Wanderers walking club on Saturday, April 22. The event was sanctioned by the American Volkssport Association and the Maryland Volkssport Association, members of the International Federation of Popular Sports. The trails were measured at 10KM and 5 KM and were mapped out on roads, sidewalks and boardwalks with bay views for most of the walk. Despite the rain that day, a good time was had by all involved. If this event intrigues you, find out more info at: <http://www.ava.org/clubs/freestate>



Girls: Diane, Louisa, Mary, Bobbi, Karen circa 1960  
At the Chesapeake Beach Amusement Park pool.

## Garden Delights

The Chesapeake Beach Garden Club is once again beautifying the grounds of the Museum. Charlotte Allison



planted lots of tulips last fall, and we have been enjoying the blooms all spring. Charlotte also planted the annuals for our summer garden; these will provide attractive flowers until fall. Other members of the Chesapeake Beach Garden Club will provide ongoing care throughout the summer, watering and weeding as needed.

The Museum porch was once again the location for the Garden Club's spring plant sale on May 6. We are happy to share our space with this group. The funds raised by this sale help the club brighten up the Museum's landscape as well as many other spots in our community.

We thank all the members of the Chesapeake Beach Garden Club for their work around the Museum and all the other gardens in town under their care.

## Fireside Chats – A Success Story



This winter the Museum hosted our first series of Fireside Chats in the Club Room of the Chesapeake Beach Hotel. The two programs were very successful. Visitors gathered on Saturday afternoons to listen to informative talks by two very interesting speakers. The only problem was that the programs were so popular that

there was standing room only; more than 50 people attended each lecture.

The first Fireside Chat was presented by Helen Ward Wheeler on January 21. She shared stories from her recently published book of memoirs from her father's life. Many in the audience remembered Dr. Hugh W. Ward, and everyone enjoyed the wonderful anecdotes of this interesting man and his times.

Lee Rogers was the speaker for our second Fireside Chat on March 25. He engaged the audience in his lifelong passion in railroad history and shared his slides of the history of Chesapeake Beach Railway. Many of these pictures had never been seen by members of the audience. The lively presentation was very well received

## Summer Fun Days

Thursdays 10am to 11:45am  
Free Admission

### *The Good Old Days Today*

Learn all about the games, songs and stories children enjoyed during the early 1900's.

Ages 3-6

June 15, 2006  
July 13, 2006  
August 3, 2006

Ages 6-9

June 22, 2006  
July 20, 2006  
August 10, 2006

### *Grandmother's Trunk*

Look at the clothes grandmother and grandfather may have worn 100 years ago.

Ages 6-99

July 27, 2006  
August 17, 2006

### *Treasure Trip*

Discover all the treasures a museum holds.

Ages 8-12

June 29, 2006

Every program is different with stories, crafts, refreshments and take-home activities.

Age groups are approximate—younger or older children may join.

Groups with more than 5 must call ahead

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## Charles C. Bates Memorial Golf Shootout

Mark your calendars now for the 5<sup>th</sup> annual golf shootout in memory of past Friends Treasurer, Charles C. Bates. Friday, October 6, 2006 is the big day. Friends and family of Butch and Janet Bates gather together at Twin Shields Golf Club for a great day. Rain or shine, it always proves to be a great day. The family's generosity benefits the Museum in many ways. Please call 301-855-8915 for more information.



Janet Bates In 1941, current Vice-President of the Friends



## Bay Breeze Summer Concert Series

*Our Concert Coordinator, Betty MacDonald, has arranged entertaining and varied groups for the 2006 Bay Breeze Summer Concerts.*

On Thursday, June 8th, the concerts kick off with a performance by the "The Not So Modern Jazz Quartet". A combo playing in the club venue of the 20's to 40's made up of clarinet, bass, piano and drums. Bill Rowe of Chesapeake Beach directs the group.

"2-4-U Band" will be appearing on Thursday July 13<sup>th</sup>. Ralph and Janet are an energetic duo featuring one of the area's premier female vocalists who perform a wide variety of musical styles from the 40's thru today.

The ever popular bluegrass band, the "Dixie Ramblers", will return once again in their regular time spot on Thursday, August 10th. This group is under direction of Mike Phipps and never fails to attract a large crowd of enthusiastic blue grass fans.

The series will conclude on Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup> with the "Rockfish" directed by Gary Pendleton with special fiddler Bill Marquess. They are sure to entertain with their blend of rock, folk, bluegrass and blues.

In summary:

June 8 – Not So Modern Jazz Quartet  
 July 13 – 2-4-U Band  
 August 10 – Dixie Ramblers  
 September 14– Rockfish

*All concerts are on the second Thursday of the month. Concerts are outdoors on the museum porch starting at 7:30 PM and are free to the public.*

*Concerts are made possible with the cooperation of the Calvert County Commissioners and the financial assistance from The Arts Council of Calvert County, the Maryland State Arts Council, the Bates Grant and our generous membership. We are grateful to all for their strong support. Thanks also to the Rod 'n' Reel Restaurant for providing the chairs and refreshments at intermissions.*



Rockfish

*Plan to join us for an enjoyable summer evening of music.*

## Expanded Museum Hours in 2006

As the Museum expands the staff, we are also able to expand the hours that we are open to the public. Last year we were able to add quite a number of hours to the schedule. The Museum was open to the public a total of 254 days in 2005, and we hope to increase that this year. Make a note of the following schedule for 2006.

### REGULARLY SCHEDULED OPEN HOURS (AS PRINTED IN BROCHURE)

May through September – Open Daily - 1:00 to 4:00 pm  
 April and October – Open Saturdays and Sundays – 1:00 to 4:00 pm

### EXPANDED HOURS IN 2006

Last half of March – Saturdays and Sundays – 1:00 to 4:00 pm  
 April – Open daily – 1:00 to 4:00 (As staffing allows)  
 July and August – Saturdays and Sundays – 11:00 am to 5:00 pm.  
 October – Open Daily – 1:00 to 4:00 pm  
 November – Open Saturdays and Sundays – 1:00 to 4:00 pm.

*The Museum is open by appointment at other times. Groups are encouraged to schedule visits during the non-public season.*

**FRIENDS OF THE CHESAPEAKE BEACH RAILWAY MUSEUM**

**present**

**Vintage Swimsuit Fashion Show & Picnic on the Beach**  
 Food, Raffle & Entertainment  
 July 1, 2006  
 1pm-2pm  
 Rod 'N' Reel Restaurant  
 Chesapeake Beach, MD

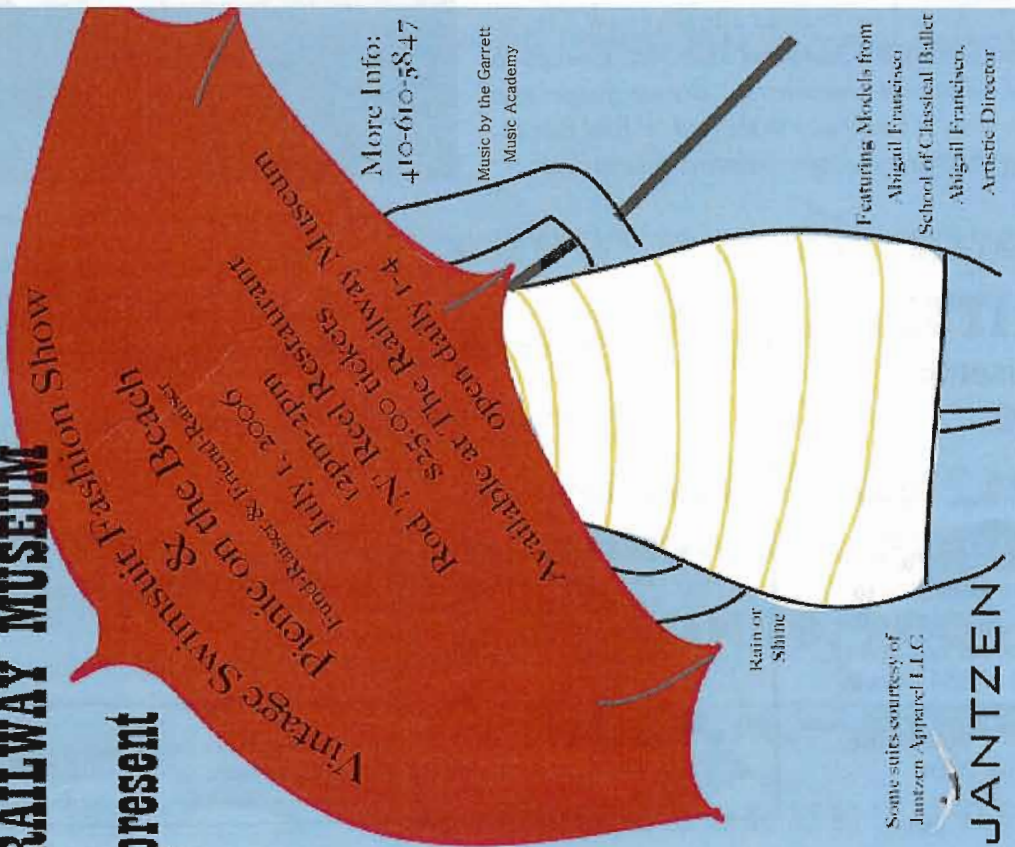
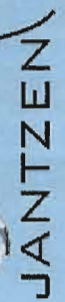
More Info:  
 410-610-5847

Music by the Garrett  
 Music Academy

Featuring Models from  
 Abigail Francisco  
 School of Classical Ballet  
 Abigail Francisco,  
 Artistic Director

Rain or  
 Shine

Some suits courtesy of  
 Jantzen Apparel LLC



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