

The Chesapeake Dispatcher



Bi-Annual Newsletter of the Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum

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Scandal at the Beach!

by Kris DeGrace, Collections Manager

Oh my! I recently found an article from The Washington Herald, May 26, 1912 with a headline reading: "SEMINARY GIRLS SHOCK BEACH CROWD." Apparently some "society belles" took the train from Washington DC to Chesapeake Beach and were the life of the party! They were with other students (apparently male) from local universities and a handful of midshipmen from the Naval Academy.

Upon arrival, this festive group immediately headed to the dance pavilion where the orchestra was in full swing. The dancing started out just fine with the appropriate and accepted dances. Then the chaperones turned their heads. That is when these young whippersnappers decided to attempt some new and apparently taboo dances, including the "Turkey Trot", the "Bunny Hug", the "Grizzly Bear", "Worm Squirm", "Squirrel Whirl" to name a few.

The superintendent of the amusement park got wind of this frivolity after hearing the ruckus of the crowd that was watching the girls and their partners. The superintendent ordered the orchestra to stop and brought the tomfoolery to an end. The young ladies were asked to "desist" and they agreed to "be good" for the rest of their stay. "Approved waltzes and two steps" were seen for the remainder of the day.

I fully enjoyed reading this article, but I ques-



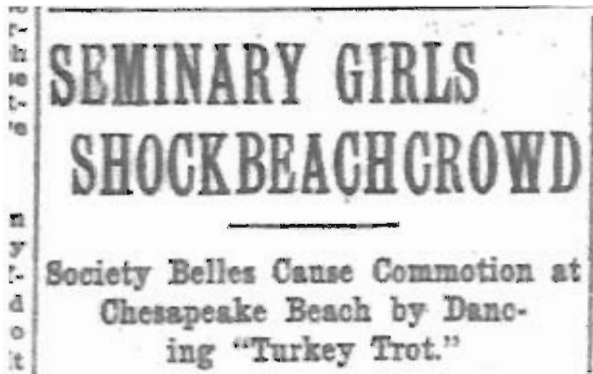
A couple dances "The Grizzly Bear."
photo credit: Animal Dances in Blues & Swing, Jered Morin

tioned the bigger picture. First, the dances themselves with the animal names...after doing some research on them, I learned that they were a response and a bit of rebellion to the inhibited and restrictive movements of the the conventional and approved dances. These new dances allowed a little self expression and personality to shine through. The couples danced closer together and clearly did not follow the proper steps and positions of acceptable dances. I found many articles where these undignified and offensive dances were banned across the United States, including here in Chesapeake Beach.

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Scandal on the Beach!

by Kris DeGrace, Collections Manager (cont'd)



Headline from The Washington Post, May 26, 1912

In a 1913 article about Chesapeake Beach, there is mention of the dance pavilion being patrolled by two "stalwart bluecoats" who reminded the forgetful ones that attempted these dances.

The scandal itself was interesting, but I wanted to mention a few other noteworthy things. I found it interesting that according to the article, the young women alone were asked to desist in their behavior and "be good," without mention of their male partners' behavior. It was these young women that were shocking, not the young men.

The push for women's rights in that time frame was on the rise and moving fast. More young women were receiving a higher education, they were pushing for the right to vote (which was right around the corner from when this article was written) and they were pushing the bounds of society. Not to mention the general changes in the U.S. at that time as well, industrial changes, worker's rights and societal changes. Change. Change. Change.

What I love about history, is that the shifts that occur, small or large, do not happen in an isolated bubble. They are interconnected and part of a much bigger picture. That being said and on a much lighter note, I wonder what the twerking dances of today will say about us 100 years from now!

Message from the Curator

by Harriet M. Stout

Life is a journey. The route one travels may be long or short, crooked or straight, exciting or dull. Along the way there may be many starts and stops, and side routes beckon with enticing adventures. Sometimes one may travel the through line, but the side track will frequently offer rest and respite on the journey.

For the most part, the route one takes is one's own choice, for better or worse. But life can surprise the traveler with unexpected byways that cannot be avoided. Trips along the branch lines may bring either happiness or sadness. Most importantly, the trip should be an adventure. It should be travelled with expectation and joy, tempered with a bit of caution. The traveler should be prepared for the unexpected; the unexpected experience is usually the most exciting, enlightening and rewarding.

So climb aboard! Be brave enough to take the journey, no matter where it takes you or how long it lasts! All Aboard!!

TREASURER WANTED

Friends of the
Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum

Chuck MacDonald, our long time and most efficient Treasurer, has decided to retire. Chuck's wizardry with financial matters has left us in great fiscal shape, and we are looking for someone to carry on his good work.

So we are recruiting for a replacement. Anyone with an interest in financial matters is welcome to apply. We guarantee that whoever gets the job will make many friends, especially if they need money!

***Interested? Contact Friends President,
Mike Sweeney at 410-440-6499***

Message from the President by Mike Sweeney

Since becoming President in June 2015, I have been very busy learning more about our programs, our mission and our relationships with those in the community who we interact with. This is to ensure that the good work of those who came before me continues on into the future. From where I sit, I see the Friends of the Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum as a great organization with great people who care deeply about the community and our beloved Museum, and I am looking forward to the challenges of the future.

We have just completed a wonderful trip to New Freedom, PA to ride the historic train there, something that had been planned for many months. The committee did a masterful job of planning, as demonstrated by the entire event going off without a hitch and leaving all of the attendees with smiles on their faces. It would be very nice for Friends' members to have the opportunity to take more trips like this throughout the year, the Board of Directors and I believe they should, so our planning and budgeting for the next year will reflect those wishes.

We have had an eventful past year, with very successful Family Fun Days, outreach programs, concerts and community events in which we participated to not only showcase our museum, but to contribute to the community. A question that arises quite often about our participation in these events is "How does this help the Museum?" While sometimes it seemed like events would come one right after another, the work would never end and we were spending funds unwisely, we must remember that they are vitally important to the survival and growth of our Museum. From these events, we gain Friends members, receive donations, see increased sales from the gift shop and increase our exposure to the public. The upcoming year will see some fiscal constraints coming



Railway Museum Volunteer, Kristen Scott, and Friends President, Mike Sweeney, at the Railway Bed Trail at Jug Bay.

from the town of Chesapeake Beach that will limit community events, so we will need to adjust accordingly. In any case, I am sure, given your help, we will respond with the same enthusiasm and "can-do" attitude we have in the past to make our community a better place to live. That's what we do.



Friends of the Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum trip "Steam Into History" to New Freedom, PA. Hanover Junction Depot in the background.

2015 Accessions (as of 9/28/2015)

Purchases

- (27) Postcards, color
- (21) Postcards, b&w
- (10) Photographs, b&w, [Al Gore Sr. Pic (fishing off NB pier), family at beach, Engines, Eugenie Rail Car, steamship]
- (5) 35mm slides, EWRV Engines
- (5) Matchbook Covers, local businesses
- (1) Postcard, leather
- (1) Builder's Card, CBRY Engine #4

Donations

Joy Edwards: (5) Early CB Postcards, B&W

James W. McConnell: (3) Matchbook covers, Cruise lines

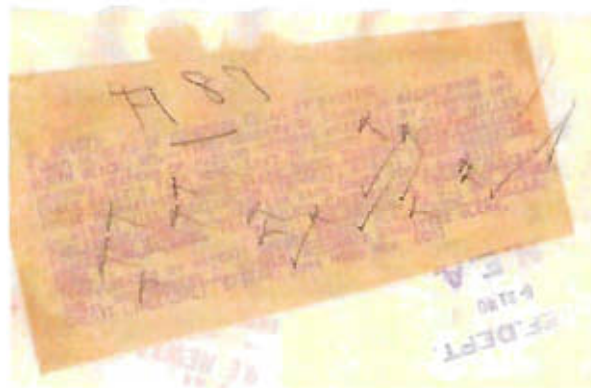
Margaret (Meg) Oliff: (2) Toy trains



Matchbook cover acquired by the Railway Museum
Do you remember Emmett & Thelma's?



Photograph acquired by the Railway Museum: Congressmen fishing off of Uncle Billie's North Beach Pier (1940)
Can you guess which one is Al Gore, Sr.?



Back of "Congressmen" photo

* Chesapeake Beach Railway Newsletter * Fall 2015 *

Editor: Hilary Dailey

Contributors: Hilary Dailey, Kris DeGrace, Corrine E. Moore, John Riedesel, Harriet M. Stout, Mike Sweeney
Mailing: Janet Bates, Betty MacDonald, Chuck MacDonald, Nancy Young

Summer Exhibits 2015 and 2016 by Harriet M. Stout

This year's summer exhibit, *THE FACES AND PLACES OF MEMORIES AT THE BEACH*, has been very well received. Visitors have especially enjoyed the *then and now* photos, as well as the photos picturing many of the faces of the folks that made the railroad, resort, and the museum what it was and what it is today. The 3-dimensional artifacts on display also provided a lot of interest.

The Curator is already working on the special exhibit that will be installed next summer in 2016. The theme will be *A Day at the Beach*. This topic will allow the Museum to tell the stories of transportation, as well as stories of the Beach and the Resort.

If you have any items that help to illustrate these topics and that you would like to share with the Museum, please let the Curator know: 410-257-3892



Railway Museum Volunteers: Janet Bates and Hilary Dailey

Mrs. Janet Bates Celebrates her 90th! by Hilary Dailey

Long-time Museum Volunteer, Mrs. Janet Bates, celebrated her 90th birthday in the summer of 2015! Mrs. Bates prides herself on continuing to volunteer at the Museum as well as serving on the Board of the Friends of the Museum! *Happy Birthday Janet!*

Special Summer Visitors by Harriet M. Stout

Throughout the summer the Museum had a number of interesting visitors from around the country and the world.

A number of older visitors related personal stories of visits to the Beach and rides on the train.

The Museum also received visits from several descendants of folks who worked in the Park or on the Railway in the early days, and these visitors shared family stories with us.

The great granddaughter of Arnold Freedley, early Chesapeake Beach photographer, visited in early June. She shared memories of her relatives, as well as her own childhood in Chesapeake Beach.

Another visitor was the granddaughter of Luther Ward, a brakeman on the CBR. She shared photographs of her grandfather along with photocopies of pages from a journal he kept to record his work for the company.

The grandson of Richard Stotler, who worked on the Jahn carousel on the boardwalk (the carousel that burned in 1926), also visited during the summer and shared several family stories.

A member of the Selke family also paid a visit. He was related to Ted Selke, who was an early supporter of and donor to the Museum, as well as David Selke, who worked for the CBR in an earlier time.

These visitors prove the curator's belief that history often walks into the Museum on two feet and brings life to the stories that we tell.

Editor's Note: to hear more about these people's stories of the beach, please contact Curator, Harriet Stout: 410-257-3892

Last Train to Boston

by John Riedesel

What does an old train-nut do when he fears his train riding days may be limited? He goes on a train ride, of course! At age 77, I planned a gargantuan 8000 mile train trip for April/May, 2015.

I made reservations in summer, 2014. You can reserve on Amtrak eleven months ahead to be sure of getting what you want, plus cheaper fares. My target cities were New Orleans, Los Angeles, Seattle and Boston. I planned to take the *Crescent* from Washington to New Orleans, *Sunset Limited* from there to L.A., *Coast Starlight* north to Seattle, *Empire Builder* and *Lake Shore Limited* eastward through Chicago to Boston, and finally, *Northeast Regional Train 67* back to D.C. I reserved a sleeper on every segment except the overnight train from Boston.

I spent two or three days in each of my four cities, reserving hotel rooms by internet. You may be thinking, this sounds prohibitively expensive. The train portion was about \$2000, and the hotels \$1000. For 2½ weeks of travel and sightseeing around the whole country, this did not seem exorbitant to me. There were other expenses incurred while touring in the target cities.

What do you do sitting on a train day after day? Doesn't it get boring? Two joys of long-distance train travel are sleeping in a comfortable bed and having meals in the diner. For sleeper passengers, meals are included in the ticket price. The food is good, and table companions interesting. You meet someone new at every meal, and everyone has a story. When not engaged with people, you can view the varied faces of this incredible country from your compartment or the lounge car, or just sit and read. I read three complete books during my journey.

In cities, I hit the typical tourist sites, getting



Author, John Riedesel, with the St. Charles Avenue Streetcar in New Orleans, Louisiana

around by light rail, bus, and a lot of walking. Two musts for me in New Orleans were the St. Charles Avenue Streetcar, and beignets and coffee at the Café du Monde on Jackson Square. In L.A., the main event was a day trip by local bus to Santa Monica Pier. Seattle has many attractions; I rode the Sounder light rail and the monorail, visited the Space Needle, Pike Place Market, and Uwajimaya Village. I love downtown Boston (but I'd never drive in it!). On my one full day I took a bus tour, harbor tour, rode the "T", lunched at Quincy Market, and walked the Freedom Trail, Boston Common, and Public Gardens, finally ending at South Station for the night train back to Washington. After a full and tiring day, I slept surprisingly well, even in that coach seat!

You might be thinking that a glaring omission on this trip was a visit to San Francisco, since the *Coast Starlight* serves that city. Being one of my favorite spots to visit, the City by the Bay will be the destination of my next long train trip!

Family Fun at the Railway Museum by Corrine E. Moore

2015 Family Fun Days both spring and fall, proved to be, yet again, huge successes.

Each year, families express their gratitude to staff and volunteers for bringing these wonderful, FREE programs and events to the community.

The two Family Fun Days this year brought in 850 participants and visitors. The generosity of the families donating non-perishable items to the End Hunger in Calvert County campaign or the cash donations supporting the Museum's efforts, were marks of community spirit. The family atmosphere these events provide, whether playing bingo, enjoying the attractions, making crafts or watching the entertainment, is reason enough to express "Well done, you" to all who made this happen!

The 2015 Summer Children's Programs were equally successful as we received higher participation with each event. The programs provided educational themes that gave the children hands on experience with crafts and activities with their parents or guardians participating. This year's themes explored transportation as well as plant life, fossils and the world of train hoboes.

Each summer program opened with a story, read by John Riedesel or Harriet Stout, much to the children's delight. The crafts revolved around the theme to provide the visual of the topic at hand. The five one-hour programs had a cumulative total of 241 participants.

All of these events together brought in over 1000 visitors to our Museum along with several cash donations.

Thank you to all who assisted, created, volunteered and supported these efforts!

Summer Bay Breeze Concert Series 2015 by Corrine E. Moore

Our 2015 Bay Breeze Concert Series was 50/50 with the weather. The first concert featuring **The Blue Rhythm Boys** and the last concert featuring **The Dixie Power Trio with the New Line Brass**, both lucked out with the weather and were able to perform on the porch of the Museum. The other two concerts with **The Dixie Ramblers** and **The Dave Chappell band** found us enjoying their music at the NECC. New memberships and donations were brought in with each concert.

Author's Note: Eleven new memberships and an increase in donations were received this year as a direct result of these programs.



Museum Volunteer, "Engineer" John Riedesel, teaches children about how traveling has changed through the years at a Summer Children's Program



The Blue Rhythm Boys got the crowd's toes tapping in June!



Friends of the Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum
PO Box 1227
Chesapeake Beach, MD 20732

Upcoming Special Events

Sweet Treat Express: Saturday, November 21st from 2:00-3:30pm

Northeast Community Center, Chesapeake Beach

* FREE * Drop-in * Families work together to build Train Engines out of candies and sweets!

North Beach Holiday Parade: Saturday, December 5th from 12:00-1:00pm

North Beach Boardwalk

* FREE * We are in need of children to be in our "Parade Train!"

Contact Hilary: 301-855-4028 for more information!

**Members Only Holiday Party & Volunteer Appreciation: Sunday, December 6th
2:00-4:00pm**

Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum

* If you are receiving this Newsletter, you are invited to our Members Only Holiday Party! *

Please bring a treat to share!

Reading of the Polar Express: Friday, December 18th

Three sessions at 5:30pm, 6:30pm and 7:30pm

Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum

* FREE * Drop-in * Join us for a reading of this Classic Tale & stay for crafts, songs and refreshments! *
Sorry, there will be no Christmas light bus tour this year!