



Winter, 2010 Volume 5, No 2

# St Michaels Museum News

## The 2010 Season

### May-July Exhibit

**“Antique Quilts  
1840 to 1950”**

**June 19 – A Forum on the  
History and Documentation  
of Quilts**

**July 10 – “The Joy of  
Collecting Quilts” with Pat  
Christ**

**\*\*\*July 4<sup>th</sup>\*\*\*  
Annual Town  
Celebration**

### August-October Exhibit **“Before the Bridge”**

**September 19 – “Black  
Cinders and Ashes”**

**A talk by Jay Bunting**

**October 17- “I remember  
when the Ferry came to  
Claiborne” - Local residents  
reminiscing about a by-gone  
era**

### Coming

**December 10-12 for  
Christmas in St Michaels**

**A special exhibit of toys and  
trains**



**4th of July Parade led by St Michaels Museum  
Fife and Drum Corps**

## *The 2010 Season at a glance*

We had a very successful year with museum attendance up 30% over 2009 following a gain of 30% for 2009 versus 2008. Our income from admissions was up 40% from 2009 and from memberships the income was equal to 2009. We had a significant decrease in grant support but with careful expense control we are on track to finish the year in the black. The Chaney House project is finished and we plan to debut our new resource center next spring.

We received many interesting donations including a painting from



Barbara Jablin that was in a house on W. Chestnut St. when she and her husband bought the house from her relatives, longtime residents of St. Michaels. The painter is unknown. It is thought that perhaps it was painted by local St. Michaels artist, Boaz Acquila Blades (1865-1942).

## **A Note from the President**

The town of Saint Michaels – rich in history, culture and community! And our museum presented that and more during the 2010 season through two wonderful exhibitions; one on historical quilts – the second on the trains and ferries of the past that brought tourists and residents across the bay and throughout the Delmarva peninsula.

Two talks accompanied the quilt exhibition; Susan McElvey and Julianne Hardy shared their expertise on the preservation of family quilts and a brief history on their origin and use through the centuries in June followed by Pat Crist in July who entertained us with stories on collecting quilts, highlighted by many pieces from her collection. The transportation exhibit began with excellent gallery talk by co-curator, Betty Seymour, and how the arrival of increasingly larger groups of visitors created a new industry in St. Michaels – tourism! The interest was so great she had to offer it in three sessions to accommodate the number of attendees! Both Reverend Jay Bunting's talk, "Black Cinders and Ash," about the ferries and trains and "I Remember When the Ferry....." with a round table conversation by local residents who rode, worked or were related to a ferry employee were very lively, most entertaining and historically interesting. In addition to the participants many members of the audience shared their experiences also. It was a true community event!

We gained additional docents this year and are grateful for their involvement with the museum and programs. Their continued volunteerism – keeping the doors open and sharing the town and Bay Hundred's history is always appreciated.

We look forward to seeing you all at the community supper in March when we will share our plans for the next season! Thank you all for the support and enthusiasm for the Saint Michaels Museum - your museum!

Marie

## **Docent Doings** **Support from our volunteers made it possible!**

The success of our 2010 season is due in large part to two factors, the creativeness of our curators and, very importantly, the efforts of our docents in covering the four weekly shifts. The docents provide a knowledgeable and friendly face to our visitors.

This year, as in the last three years, the Docent Corps has been led by George and Betty Seymour. They have excelled in both recruiting docents to serve regular monthly shifts and in providing their training. During 2010 we are very indebted to the following docents who made our museum operations possible: Jack Bockmiller, Ken Bridges, Chip & Donna Britt, Bob Caulk, Don Chlan, Christian Chute, Jack Chute, Donna Cole, Steve & Nancy Cossu, Frank Downing, Betsy Fisk, Kate Fones, Lynn Freeburger, Molly Gaylord, Rachel Gruenberg, Tim & Kassie Herbert, Jane Jansen, Bud & Anne Keiser, Meredith Kelly, Linda Maule, Kate O'Donnell, Peg Orem, Dick Peskin, Irene Preston, Lynda Ramsey-Bradshaw, George & Betty Seymour, Bob Shockley, Jo Storey, Tony & Jo' Anne Vaughn, Chris Whyman.

At a special Docent Thank You Party on November 7, Penny Rhine entertained our docents at the St. Michaels Community Center with tales from the Claiborne boarding house, Maple Hall where you could get room and board in the old days for \$7.00 a week. Penny and her ancestors owned and operated Maple Hall from the 1890's until recently. With good food and drink everyone celebrated the finish of another exceptional season for our museum.

### **The Chaney House Project**

Final renovations of the Chaney House interior were completed over the Summer. The second floor is already in use as a curatorial office and archive. We anticipate a Spring 2011 opening of the first floor as a St. Michaels' history and resource library open to the public. The new resource center will be a repository where residents can donate photos, documents and other historical data for public use to research the history of the Bay Hundred area. The project is possible due to generous support from Christmas in St Michaels, Historic St Michaels-Bay Hundred, Questors, private donors and last year's Wye House fundraiser.

**St Michaels  
Museum  
at St Mary's Square**

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**[www.stmichaels  
museum.org](http://www.stmichaelsmuseum.org)**

**[stmichaelsmuseum@  
atlanticbb.net](mailto:stmichaelsmuseum@atlanticbb.net)**

**PO Box 714,  
St Michaels 21663**

**Antique Quilts 1840-1950**

Opening on May 8, our Spring Exhibit featured 8 rarely seen antique quilts from our collection plus additional quilts obtained from private collections. Various types and styles were included along with quilting tools. Highlighting this exhibit were two events at the Woman's Club: "A Forum on the History and Documentation of Quilts" with Susan McElvey and Julianne Hardy and a lecture by Pat Christ on "The Joy of Collecting Quilts". The documentation event involved a lecture on Signature Quilts and the documentation of several unusual quilts brought in by audience members. Of particular interest in Pat Christ's presentation was the "Captain James Andrew Quilt" which was originally labeled as "Cora Spencer, St Michaels, MD". Research showed it had a much richer history as discovered by the Christs in their research.



**Before the Bridge**

Our fall exhibit told the story of transportation in the Bay Hundred Area from 1886 to 1952 in pictures and words. It was one of the most popular exhibits and special events that we have ever presented. The Bay Hundred area and the Eastern Shore have been summer tourist destinations from the late 1800s. In 1890 Steamship service was established from Baltimore to Claiborne with connecting rail service to Ocean City. In 1919 with the advent of the automobile a competing auto ferry began service between Claiborne and Annapolis. In his talk Jay Bunting told of the history of the BC&A RR (aka Black Cinders and Ashes) and of railroads on the Eastern Shore (see photo). In our second event many old time residents told of their or their parents' involvement in the Annapolis -Claiborne Ferry and of the boarding houses that thrived in the region with tourists escaping the heat in Western Shore Cities. The discussions of life in an earlier slower period were fascinating.



## St Michaels Museum at St Mary's Square

PO Box 714

St Michaels, MD 21663

[www.stmichaelsmuseum.org](http://www.stmichaelsmuseum.org)

### Year End Giving

This past year has been difficult for the Museum financially. We will finish in the black but important things have been put off and our reserves are low. In early 2011 we will plan a final layout for the new entry. We have about \$5000 committed so far to this project and would like to see this fund grow additionally.

Please remember us in your end of year tax deductible contributions. We are tax deductible non-profit 501c3 corporation operated exclusively by volunteers.

**Mail contributions to:  
St Michaels Museum  
PO Box 714  
St Michaels MD 21663**

### Frederick Douglass Day

We were very pleased to participate in Frederick Douglass Day at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum on October 23. This event was a fundraiser for the Frederick Douglass Honor Society and their project to erect a memorial statue to Frederick Douglass on the Court House lawn in Easton. We highlighted Frederick's boyhood in St Michaels and Easton, our walking tour of Douglass sites in St Michaels and our new Frederick Douglass Walking

Tour Booklet. We were pleased with the interest in our museum and made many new contacts during the event.

