

Bay Head Historical Society

*Serving Bay Head, Mantoloking and Lovelandtown
P. O. Box 127, Bay Head, NJ 08742*

Newsletter ~ Summer 2015

Greetings Members, Friends and Neighbors,

After a long cold winter, we are all relieved and happy to see summer arriving here in Bay Head. The beaches are pristine, the flowers are beautiful, and there is building, raising and renovating to be seen on almost every block!

I am sure that you are wondering, as we are, how all this new construction will affect the ambiance of our unique town. This is a topic that we hope to address at our Annual General Membership Meeting. Watch your email, *The Ocean Star*, and posters around town for this upcoming event.

This summer we will be having one blockbuster show, *THE BEST OF THE BAY*, featuring decoys and decorative bird carvings by the foremost carvers of the head of the bay, augmented by the paintings of Gerard R. Hardenbergh. The show opens on Sunday, June 7, 2015, 3-6 pm with a gallery talk by local historian, Patricia H. Burke at 4:30. The exhibit will continue through the summer, closing after Labor Day, September 7, 2015.

In September, repairs to the Loveland Homestead Museum will finally begin. The north-west corner of the house needs to be repaired because the piers supporting the building were compromised by Superstorm Sandy. Once the building has been raised, some windows must be replaced, plaster must be repaired, etc. The heating and air conditioning system was replaced this spring. Local architect Jeff Schneider is guiding us through the process and a builder has been secured. These repairs will be costly. Stay tuned to hear about our future fund raising plans.



Last summer the Sweetgrass Questers ran a 50/50, which brought in \$1800 that they contributed to the Historical Society for our renovation/restoration project. A very grateful THANK YOU to Linda Clarke and her fund raising Questers.

Come see us at the Museum this summer. The exhibit is interesting and informative, the grounds are beautiful, the gardens will provide much produce, and our Emma C. Berry tender is restored. See you there.

Doris Czarnecki, President

A BIT OF HISTORY

In a letter to his brother in Scotland dated the twelfth of December 1684, James Johnston of East Jersey wrote, “But I resolve to see a place called “Barnagate’ ...where there is a good River and Harbour, the best Fishing and Gunning in any place in America...”

Transportation to the Barnegat Bay area was arduous in the early days. Gunners traveled to the bay by boat or stagecoach to take advantage of the excellent hunting grounds. By 1870 the railroad connected the Barnegat Bay area to New York and Philadelphia. It opened up new marketplaces for the commercial hunter and made it easier for wealthy city businessmen to reach their private gunning clubs. There were boarding houses, hotels and inns that were in operation in the early 1800s. In Point Pleasant, hunters would lodge at Uncle Tommy Cook’s House or at Uncle Jakey’s Tavern in Mantoloking. One of the most celebrated retreats for sportsmen was the Chadwick House located in Chadwick Beach just south of Mantoloking. It could accommodate about fifty persons. Ulysses S. Grant stayed at Chadwick’s in 1878. Another favorite gunning spot was Michael Ortley’s House, located directly south of Chadwick Beach.

The abundance and variety of bird life in the Barnegat Bay area attracted not only gunners but artists and ornithologists as well. Gerard Rutgers Hardenbergh settled in Bay Head where he pursued his ornithological research and painting. He worked in both watercolors and oils and his paintings of quail, woodcock, ducks and grouse were made into color lithographs. For Scribner’s he did an educational chart on American bird life which had the endorsement of the American Ornithologists’ Union. Louis Agassiz Fuertes studied and painted on Long Beach Island. A.B. Frost, known as the sportsman’s artist, went duck hunting and snipe shooting on Long Beach Island.

Barnegat Bay decoy carvers are divided into four “schools” of carving: Head of the Bay, Barnegat, Parkertown and Tuckerton. The divisions are not only geographical but are also characterized by distinctions in the decoy carving. The “Head of the Bay” school includes carvers from the towns of Bay Head, Point Pleasant, and a section of Point Pleasant known as Lovelandtown. Most of the carvers from the Head of the Bay used a rectangular lead pad for ballast. Their decoys usually have a high tail with a small knob on the tail.



The bottom of the decoy is generally round and the head of the decoy has a tight eye groove sometimes referred to as a head with a figure-8 shape when viewed from the front.

The early carvers included Eugene Nathan Birdsall, Nathan Eugene Birdsall, Jonathan Taylor Johnson, John Edward Loveland, Banks Loveland, Clarence Loveland, Lester “Dipper” Ortley, Captain John Lott Dorsett, Benjamin F. Hance, Ezra Blake Hankins, Sam Forsyth, Albert Forsyth, and Lloyd Johnson.



The heyday of gunning ended with the passage of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 which banned the commercial hunting of wildfowl and placed strict limitations on recreational hunting. Many of the old decoys were then used as firewood and the carvers began making more decorative decoys that we see today.

Excerpted from “Barnegat Bay Decoys and Gunning Clubs”
By Patricia H. Burke



WHO KNOWS WHERE OR WHEN? One of the oldest houses constructed in Bay Head continues to be an occupied residence. Do you know the history? See the back page for interesting information.

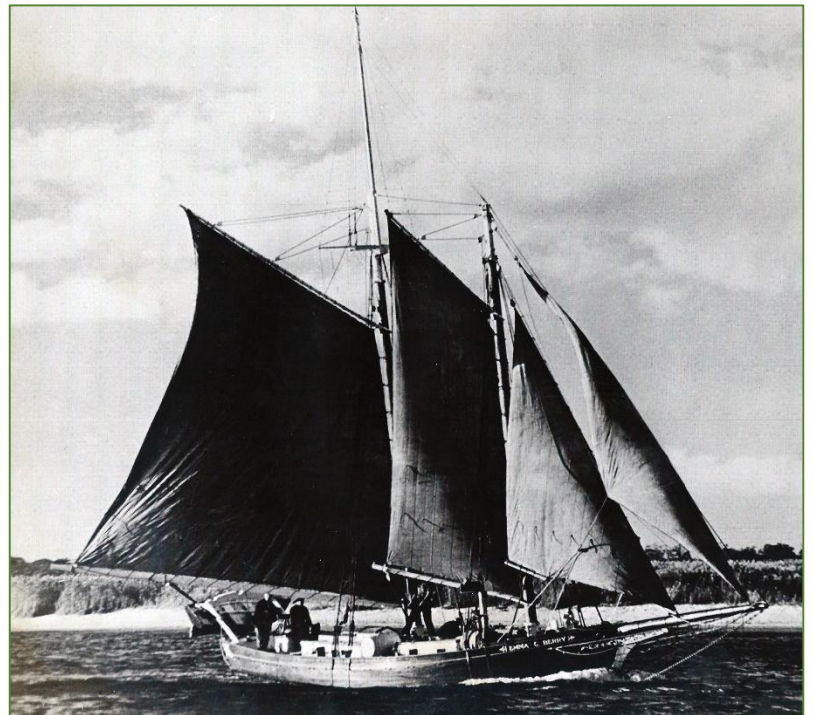
EMMA C. BERRY TENDER HAS BEEN RESTORED

Marty Unfried, a Lavalette resident, friend of the museum and lover of old boats spent many days this past winter perfectly restoring the Emma C. Berry's tender. It rests in front of the Dale Building at the Loveland Homestead Museum. A job well done!

The Emma C. Berry reputed to be the oldest registered American ship was built in Noank, Connecticut in 1886 as a fishing smack. Her rigging was changed from sloop to topmast schooner in 1895. The Emma C. Berry sailed the ocean waters for nearly 46 years before Slade Dale found the derelict boat in Jonesport, Maine in 1931. He brought the boat to Bay Head. From 1934-35 the ship was rebuilt at Morton Johnson's Boat Yard.

In 1940 when the Dale Yacht Basin was beginning construction, the Emma C. Berry with Slade Dale at the helm, transported an eight-ton cargo of railroad ties from Virginia through extremely bad weather to the construction site. The ties were used for a railroad siding which would come off the Pennsylvania Railroad mainline running through Bay Head. What history the great old ship has seen.

After 100 years at sea and with great celebration, the ship was sailed up the Connecticut and Mystic Rivers to its present home at Mystic Seaport. In 1987-88 the Emma C. Berry was re-rigged to the original sloop design. She is in the water and can be visited there.



The history of the tender is not so clear. All that is known for sure is that the tender is clearly seen in photographs of the ship from the 1930's. Mr. Unfried is working to establish the tender as a New Jersey Historic Landmark. If you have any information that would further this endeavor, please drop us a note at Bay Head Historical Society, PO Box 127, Bay Head, New Jersey or through our website www.bayheadhistoricalsociety.com.



The Bay Head Historical Society cannot express our gratitude enough to Marty Unfried for his tireless effort

ONE OF THE OLDEST HOUSES STILL STANDS

The Captain Elijah House was constructed c. 1874 and once stood at 684 Main Avenue before being moved from its original location to 627 Lake Avenue. This move reversed the building's orientation to the street, turning the rear of the house into the front entrance, with added porches. Other alterations have been made over time. This is a contributing building to the National Register of Historic Places, Bay Head.



Renew your membership, make a donation: Your contributions help restore and maintain our valuable collections, as well as our buildings and grounds. Income allows us to continue to present exhibits and programs which are interesting and educational. Your donation is tax deductible; your check is your receipt. BHHS is a tax-exempt corporation (223219135). Mail your check to BHHS, P.O. Box 127, Bay Head, N.J. 08742

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May 2015