

OXFORD TRIVIA NIGHT

Oh what a night it was! Keep your eyes and ears open, and start studying up; we hope we will have another round soon! Photos below are the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winning teams from our December Community Night dinner and trivia at Latitude. Thank you, Latitude, for hosting!



Tench's Table: Jane and Steve Selden, Pat Calvin and Tom Costigan, Terry Sullivan and Katy Smith, and Connie Vaught and David Poe took 1st place.



Oxford Owls: Suzie and John Hurley, Laura and Ed Cassidy, John and Dodi Sutton took 2nd place.



Buffleheads: Larry Myers and his teammates, Latitude visitors from Easton, met at the bar. They bonded and took third place!



President's Message HAPPY NEW YEAR

BRRR! It's cold outside. The new year certainly came in dressed for winter when 9-10 inches of snow fell in about eight hours on January 4, and another 3 inches of snow two days later! But this is winter and with it we have the Omicron variant of COVID-19. Please be careful and mask up, friends!

We did manage some indoor fun before Omicron hit with a vengeance. In December, Latitude 38 sponsored a Community Night benefitting the Oxford Museum. Gretchen Gordon (owner of Latitude) and I brainstormed and thought a game of Oxford trivia would excite folks and bring them together. Well, it sure did! 16 teams (over 50 people) came in armed with knowledge of Oxford history. Our Board came up with challenging questions for the game and in the end it took four more questions to break the tie for second place. Quite thrilling. We had three grand prize-winning teams. Thanks for coming out for this lively event and yes, there will be a rematch once the virus settles down again—so get ready.

The outdoor timeline is on display in the backyard. It was a herculean task to research and to effectively display, but it is ready for viewing. It may be chilly, but the information will warm up your brain! You can't help but notice the Mews construction adjacent to our Museum and how quickly it is going up and improving the space.

Did you hear? Smithsonian's Museum on Mainstreet is coming to Oxford again! This exhibit, *Crossroads: Change in Rural America*, is provided by a grant from Maryland Humanities and is a statewide tour of five towns in Maryland. Oxford was chosen as one of the locations. Jennifer Stanley has generously agreed to allow us to use St Paul's Church as the venue again. In 2019, over 3,000 visitors came to Oxford to see the Museum on Mainstreets Waterways exhibit and then visited our Museum as well. We had lots of volunteers to help with this exhibit and I hope you'll consider participating in this exciting event this fall.

Enjoy the season, watch your email for membership renewal reminders and don't forget the Annual Fund Drive for 2022 is still underway!

See you in the Spring.

Julie Wells
President

HISTORY RENEWED

The Yankee Pedler gets a facelift!

You may have been wondering where the Yankee Pedler went, as he was removed from his special place in front of the Community Center. John Tochko is leading the charge this winter as volunteers spend a few cold hours in the warmth of Campbell's boat shed, tending to repairs and refinishing our cherished Yankee Pedler. We can't wait to see her returned to her perch this spring! Thanks to Campbell's for their expertise and shelter as well as their generous donation of much needed repairs!



The strange bent pencil found inside the boat is an ingenious tool created to mark measurements underneath areas you can't get to!

RECENT GRANT

As part of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) received an additional \$135 million in supplemental funding to distribute as emergency relief to support economic recovery for cultural institutions adversely affected by the coronavirus pandemic. Through this effort, Maryland Humanities was allocated \$910,000 to distribute to non-profit organizations that provide opportunities for Maryland's communities to access and engage with public history, cultural heritage, and civic learning during this continued unprecedented time.

After reviewing over 140 applications, Maryland Humanities awarded \$10,000 grants to 91 organizations across the state of Maryland. Talbot County recipients included the Oxford Museum, Talbot Historical Society, Tilghman Waterman's Museum, and Waters Edge Museum.



Winter Windows LOOKING IN AND LOOKING BACK

The Museum windows always present a wonderful opportunity and challenge for the Museum's Exhibit Committee as we are constantly exploring ideas about how we can engage the community in the history of Oxford and its people, their homes, institutions, and traditions. What makes our town of Oxford special and interesting? What changes have we witnessed over time? What will engage both visitors and locals?

Our Christmas window was a look at Christmas past, with items that might have been around 50 to 100 years ago, in your grandparents or childhood homes, and a look out into a snowy window at an early blizzard being plowed on what was "High Street". We wanted it to look cheery for the holidays and we also delighted in this opportunity to show a **Taylor Fur** from our collection that hung loosely over the back of an old chair, with its inside lining exposed proudly showing the label *TAYLOR, Oxford, Maryland*. "Who was Taylor?" You might have asked. And the story continues.



From Leo Noelmeyer, our expert Oxford tour guide and museum archivist:

"Tom Taylor was not only the town furrier but he was also the principal of the Oxford schools and manager of all the sports teams. When the schools were closed and everyone went to an Easton school he moved to Easton High as a science teacher. In fact, he was the teacher of the science course that I took at Easton High. I believe I passed science only because we were both from Oxford and he took pity on me. He was an interesting man with many talents. You could give him any animal skin and he would make you something beautiful.

Hard to imagine Oxford's own furrier right here in town! This beautiful coat is made of muskrat and is extremely heavy. It was given to the Museum by Carroll Brinsfield III whose mother purchased it from the maker, Thomas Taylor of Oxford. The Museum owns a second Taylor fur, a stole, that was found on eBay by Museum member and former Oxford resident Pat Wheaton."

Bucking Tradition THE YANKEE PEDLER

For many years the Yankee Pedler spent the Christmas holidays anchored off the causeway bedecked with Christmas lights. More recently it greets visitors from the front lawn of the Oxford Community Center as they come into town.

To know the history of the Pedler you must first be introduced to Curtis Applegarth, his designer and builder. Originally from Cambridge, Applegarth bought a boatyard here in Oxford in 1951. While his clients were mostly commercial watermen, he did design and build miniature skipjacks. The Yankee Pedler was one of those. He built it for Alice and Steve Zalike, then residents of Delaware. As told by the Star Democrat in an article on October 14, 2009, the story began in 1966. "When this story began... the Zaliks were newlyweds living in Wilmington, Del. 'We had no money, no furniture, we didn't know how to sail but we knew we wanted a boat,' Steve said. A friend suggested they visit Oxford. Passing by the Applegarth Marine Yard, they were drawn to Little Jack which was out front and up on rails. 'I knew immediately I had to have one,' Alice said."



THE MUSEUM STORE

Are you a late night shopper? You can visit the store online and make purchases through the Museum website anytime. And Oxford residents enjoy free shipping, as we deliver to your door! <https://oxfordmuseummd.square.site/s/shop>



New books and other items of interest are added all the time. Most recently we have added Salisbury Pewter to our collection. We hope the Museum Store is a convenient source of information and gifts.

OXFORD AUDIO TOURS

Are always available to you on your own time, using your smartphone! Access 35+ places of interest in Oxford to know about. Just use the QR code here to purchase a \$5 link or email the Museum to get your FREE Members's pass! The link is good for seven days. theoxfordmuseum@gmail.com



THE ANNUAL FUND DRIVE

The annual fund drive is ongoing and supports the operational costs of our all-volunteer, board-led small museum. We hope you are able to participate. <https://oxfordmuseummd.square.site/membership-donation>

THE MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

The membership drive is ongoing and your membership renewal email will arrive when your membership expires.

VOLUNTEERS

We seek new volunteers and welcome your interest, anytime, especially for the Fall 2022 Museum on Mainstreet exhibit. Please send us an email if you are interested and we will be in touch. theoxfordmuseum@gmail.com

(THE YANKEE PEDLER STORY continued)

Famous for building skipjacks for pleasure boating, Applegarth impressed them. The threesome bonded and a deal was made for \$4,000. Applegarth modeled their boat after Little Jack, which he had built in 1959 for his daughter, Cheri, and which was later given to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum. On July 4, 1967, they launched Yankee Peddler.

Steve chose the name Yankee Peddler simply because he liked it. But Alice worried because boats have been endowed with feminine gender for centuries. Would linking a lady to peddling suggest disrepute? Steve finessed Pedler would buck tradition and be a "he." Meanwhile as Applegarth painted the name on the bow sprit, he ran out of room, so he left a "d" out of Peddler, a clever solution he thought. For the Zaliks, it personified 'Applegarth's endearing sense of Eastern Shore practicality.' They kept the name, giving Yankee Pedler the distinction of being mis-gendered and mis-spelled for 42 years.



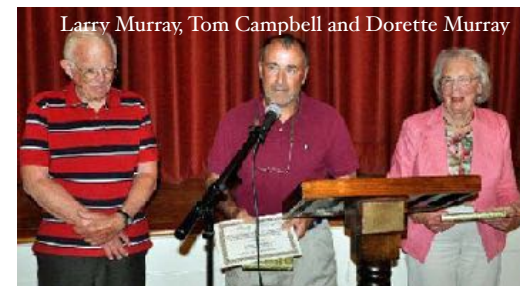
Curtis Applegarth

Alice became a D.C. lawyer and Steve pursued corporate management in Delaware, rendezvousing with Yankee Pedler in Oxford on weekends, going out for day sails and occasional overnight adventures, but always in the Tred Avon with one exception. In 1987, Pedler needed rebuilding from the hull up. Applegarth had retired so Jim Wagner, who had worked on the Pride of Baltimore, did the repairs and Pedler won the Maritime Museum's "Best Restoration Award." The Zaliks sailed him home from St. Michaels. 'Oh, what excitement,' Steve recalls. 'Imagine the 18 foot Pedler outracing a storm in the Poplar Straits.' Asked about Yankee Pedler's long-time Christmas stardom, the Zaliks chortle. 'We weren't around off-season and it was 14 years before we knew anything about it,' Alice said. 'That was typical Applegarth,' Steve said. 'He didn't tell us because he always maintained some sense of ownership in his boats, even after he sold them.' "

Using the boat less and less of late, the Zaliks donated Yankee Pedler to the Oxford Museum. The fact that Applegarth had been a founder and two-time president of the Museum, made it a most fitting gift. But where would the Museum put him? The community rallied, starting with the Oxford Community Center. With a perfect spot on its front lawn, which coincidentally is across the street from Curtis Applegarth's old family home, the OCC's Board invited Yankee Pedler to be a year-round resident. The next question was maintenance. Henry Hale, former Museum Board member, knew that Diane Flagler of Oxford was searching for a memorial for her late husband, Dr. Nick Flagler, a beloved obstetrician in Talbot County and an avid sailor. "I was thrilled about the opportunity because Nick loved wooden boats, skipjacks and Oxford," said Diane Flagler. She established a fund that will care for Yankee Pedler with the Museum. .

The last hurrah required brawn and Pedler's buddies showed plenty of that. Tom Campbell, owner of Campbell's Boat Yards and in charge of Pedler since 1995, oversaw dry dock planning. Larry Murray, sailor and neighbor, led the sanding, varnishing and painting team. Having dabbled in sign-making during retirement, Steve Zalik, did the name without the "d." Campbell donated labor and materials for Pedler's cradle and stairs so that kids can climb aboard.

"We used pretreated lumber and galvanized bolts. This will last a long time," he said. "It's been a great community effort. So things are still pretty much the same. Yankee Pedler has moved down the street and greets people coming into town and bids farewell to those leaving ... and he'll still be lighted at Christmas."

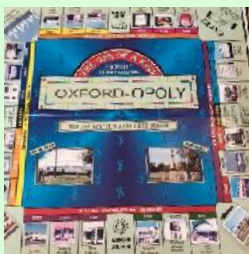


Larry Murray, Tom Campbell and Dorette Murray

Peddler was dedicated on Saturday, Oct. 17, 2009 at the Oxford Community Center's Fall Festival. Curtis Applegarth's daughter, Cheri Fisher, attended, as well as others who have been involved in the project. Since then the Pedler has been lovingly maintained by Dorette and (now late) Larry Murray along with Tommy and Susan Campbell. They were recognized for their efforts with the Museum's Douglas Hanks Preservation Award for Stewardship in 2015.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

A mock-up of OXFORD-OPOLY, that was never published, was recently donated by Talbot Historical Society to the Museum! The game was created by Trudy Guthrie.



VIEWS FROM THE BACKYARD

Even during these cold winter months, while the Museum is normally closed, there is much to see and learn in our newly created backyard at the Museum. If you have not recently explored the area, please do come by and enjoy the new exhibit panels (both sides) that display a timeline of Oxford's History. You will also see three beautiful new benches where you can relax and meet friends (on a warmer day!) At the moment, we are also enjoying the daily progress of the Mews next door.

Their backyard building extension and courtyard are looking really great!



BEQUESTS

We were surprised and are grateful to be named, along with eight other non-profits, in Kenny Anderson's (of Anderton's) Will. Bequests can be made at anytime, please consider the Museum in your estate planning.

STAYING IN TOUCH . . .

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Oxford's Remarkable Woman MOLLY STEWART

Molly Stewart was born in Oxford in 1859 and at the tender age of 18, became the town's new postmistress, succeeding her father who was appointed by President Lincoln. Molly held this position for a total of 63 years, a remarkable achievement. The post office was in her home on Morris Street and people gathered there twice daily to exchange gossip, discuss the weather and collect their mail.

But the job was not without its challenges and its notoriety. As told by Dickson Preston in his book *Oxford: The First Three Centuries*, "In 1929 and 1930 Miss Molly achieved national celebrity when the Republicans tried to oust her from the position she had already held for more than fifty years. With precedent, they considered the postmastership a federal patronage plum to be dispensed to faithful workers for the party in power, so when her last term expired on March 9, 1929, the Talbot County Republican Committee decided to replace her with George H. Dobson, a loyal party man. Miss Molly would be out of a job, and without a pension, at the age of seventy.

Normally such a change would have been routine. Herbert Hoover had just taken office as President; Phillips Lee Goldsborough, a Republican, was U.S. senator from Maryland. Under the procedure in effect since Benjamin Franklin's Day, Goldsborough would simply pass Dobson's name on to the White House, which would send it to the Senate, which would approve it, and that would be that. But Miss Molly fought back. She pointed out that she had originally been appointed by a Republican, President Rutherford B. Hayes. And anyhow, she said, she was non-political; she had never voted in her life. Women did not even have the vote until 1920, and since then she had carefully refrained from taking sides. At her request, a civil service examination was held for the postmastership. Miss Molly passed with the highest score of any applicant; Dobson flunked the test.

A year passed with no appointment. Miss Molly served as interim postmaster; ninety-five per cent of the residents of Oxford, regardless of party affiliation, signed a petition asking that she be retained. But the Republicans were still determined to get her out and Dobson in. Another civil service examination was held, and again Miss Molly topped the field with an even higher score than before; but this time Dobson succeeded in getting a passing grade, and it appeared that his name would go to the White House.

Senate Democrats, led by Maryland's other senator, Millard Tydings, sensed political capital in the situation. They fed the story to friendly reporters, and sympathetic articles appeared in Democratic papers nationwide about a lone woman's fight against the evil Republican political machine. Suddenly Miss Molly was a national figure. Tydings announced that if Dobson's name came up in the Senate, he would lead a floor battle against confirmation. Eventually, the frustrated Republicans gave in... In November, 1931, Senator Goldsborough announced that he would recommend Miss Molly's reappointment. The nomination sailed through the Senate without a hitch, and Miss Molly stayed on for another nine years. When she finally retired in June 1940, she had been in office longer than any other postmaster in U.S. history."

In October 1939, Molly went to Washington to attend the National Association of Postmasters' Convention. She was the guest of honor. According to Time magazine, she also went to the White House to tea, dressed in a new plum-colored dress. She was so overwhelmed by meeting Mrs. Roosevelt that she could not remember what the First Lady had said to her, besides, "Why, I read about you in the paper this morning. . . ."

A bouquet of roses was presented to her at the banquet...., and a waltz with an unknown postmaster. "Our badges were our introduction," she explained. "I love to dance—the waltz glide, not this hopping around." Then she returned to Oxford for bi-monthly stocktaking.

In the museum's collection is a pistol that was given to Miss Molly to protect the post office during WWII. We doubt it was ever fired.

Source: *Oxford: The First Three Centuries* by Dickson Preston

