

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

(More details can be found on our [Website Events Calendar](#).)

#### August 6

Last day of our current exhibit, From Colonial Port to Present: Oxford in Business

#### August 12

Memories and Musings:  
"St. Paul's, An Oxford Treasure" 5-6:30 p.m.

#### August 18

Member's Preview Party  
*Duck, Duck, Goose* 5-7 p.m.

#### August 19 - November 12

*Duck, Duck, Goose: Celebrating Talbot County Decoys and Carver's*

#### September 9

Bruce Eppard: A Carver's Shop

#### September 16

Duck In for an Appraisal  
Matt Ozman: Waterfowling Around

#### October 5

George Meyer: Regional Carvers

#### October 7

Bruce Eppard: A Carver's Shop

#### October 15

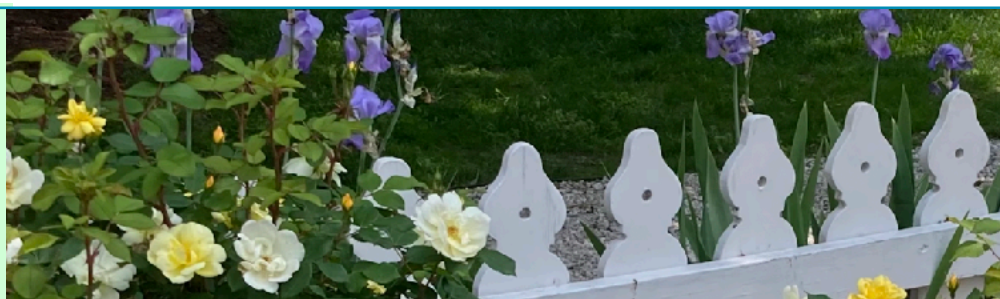
Henry Stansbury: Ed Parsons, Ship Chandler and Decoy Maker

#### October 20

Ernie Burns: The Art of Ed and Esther Burns, Waterfowl Carvers

### THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!

If you miss a Memories and Musings program, know that all of them are recorded and the video links will be available on our website. Here is the first one of the season: <https://vimeo.com/845787697>



## From The President ANTICIPATION

At the Museum we are always planning and looking ahead, and yet as a history museum we are the keepers of the past. This is the dichotomy we face and the dance we do! The *anticipation* of learning from a deep dive into historic records or from studying collected artifacts and the *anticipation* of an exhibit, a presentation or the attending audience, the *anticipation* of weather and its impact on a summer event ... you get the theme here!

After much worry over the weather, our Members' Annual Summer Party was great fun, featuring good food and fellowship, followed by the much anticipated presentation of the Douglas Hanks Jr. Preservation Award. It was with gratitude and joy that the committee selected Julie Wells for her service to the preservation of Oxford, in multiple arenas. We are especially grateful and celebrate Julie as she joins the ranks of great people before her who have made a significant difference in the growth and success of the Oxford Museum. Congratulations, Julie!

Our current exhibit *From Colonial Port to Present: Oxford in Business* has been enjoyed by over 1,500 people since it opened in April—no doubt the proximity of The Scottish Highland Creamery, in the Mews next door, has made an impact! Your last chance to see this exhibit is on August 6th. Our second exhibit this season, *Duck, Duck Goose: A Celebration of Talbot County Decoys and Carvers*, will open on August 19th and a Members' Preview Party is scheduled for the night before, August 18th. With the many companion programs scheduled, this promises a great fall in the Museum.

You may have heard a neighbor mention getting mail from the Museum, if they are not already members. We have engaged in a Membership Drive to encourage everyone in our 21654 zip code to join the Museum. Our exhibits and programs are varied and are designed to meet a wide audience, including children, and we hope all of Oxford will come together to support, learn and celebrate Oxford's unique heritage, through the Museum. Please encourage your neighbors and friends to join us, too.

Finally, I want to share the writings of Cathy Schmidt and thank her for sharing her family history, Oxford history, through the diaries of Sara Benson in the mid 1900s. If you have not already read the *Oxford Vignettes* in the [Attraction Magazine](#), please enjoy these links to six different diary entries:

[The Blizzard](#)  
[The Days of May](#)

[Oxford Day, Through the Decades](#)  
[Volunteer Fireman and a Visit to Smith Island](#)

[Shoot Out in Oxford](#)  
[Opossum and Log Canoes](#)

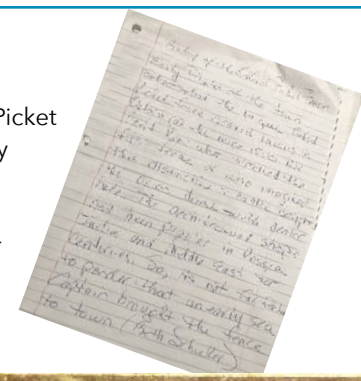
With great anticipation, read on members!

Louisa Zendt, President



## HISTORY OR MYSTERY The Oxford Picket Fence Origins

This continues to be the #1 question docents are asked at the Museum, "When and where did the Oxford Picket come from?" Since we last wrote about the Oxford picket, a note was left at the Museum that was written by Beth Schucker, a past board member who passed away in 2017, her note is transcribed here:



*The History of the Oxford Picket Fences. Early photos of the town show that the unique Oxford Picket fence graced lawns in Oxford in the mid 1800s. We don't know who installed the first fence or who imagined this distinctive and exotic design—the onion dome with center hole. The architectural shape had been popular in Russia, India and the Middle East for centuries. So, it's not far fetched to ponder that an early sea captain brought the fence to town.*



Recently, we did another deep dive into our archives and studied these two photos from the late 1800s and early 1900s. The top right photo is Sarah Lamdin Seth, Martha Haddaway Seth, and Mary Impey Sherwood Seth on the lawn of the William H. Seth house on N. Morris at Tilghman Street. In addition to the unique Oxford picket, notice the great skirts, hats and a croquet mallet!

The bottom right photo is of two young men in front of the Postmistresses house on Morris Street. Finally, another relic from the Academy House attic—a single picket with a square peg nail, dating it to the same period of the mid to late 1800s.



## A SPECIAL VOLUNTEER Ray Stevens

Sometimes you ask for a special volunteer, at other times a volunteer appears and takes on a special task. Earlier this summer we were delighted to hear from Ray Stevens, that he wanted to tend to our teak benches in the Museum's side garden. "Would we mind?" he asked. Thank you, Ray. The benches look so much more inviting and continue to welcome guests, to sit and stay a while, in our beautiful cottage garden! And if you didn't know, our side cottage garden is maintained by the Oxford Garden Club and has received many awards. The fountain was added as a donation from the Oxford Garden Club in memory of Bonnie Stevens. She was a member of the Garden Club and original designer of the Museum cottage garden. Thank you, also, to the many Garden Club volunteers!

## HONORING PAT JESSUP Director Emeritus

Pat Jessup has served on the Oxford Museum board since 2001, rolling off for a year after each term ended, and returning with great energy and ideas in each new term. Pat has served as president of the Museum twice and has been wise council on the exhibits and collection committees for the past few years, since retiring from the board. At a recent board meeting Pat was nominated, unanimously voted in, and thankfully accepted the honor of becoming a Director Emeritus!

Thank you Pat for your many years of service to the growth of the Museum and for making exhibits come alive! We are lucky to have your continued interest, service and expertise.





## The Douglas Hanks Jr. Preservation Award

At the June Member's party the Museum proudly presented The Douglas Hanks Jr. Preservation Award to Julie Wells. Julie is a museum board member, serves as board secretary and is a past president. She was offered the paid position of Executive Director when the position became vacant. She accepted these duties, but declined the salary, making the Oxford Museum an all-volunteer organization. Under her leadership the museum has published a book, *Oxford, Images of America*; created an audio walking tour of Oxford; expanded and enhanced the museum gardens into a serene spot to rest and a welcoming event space with an outdoor timeline of historic Oxford events, and a 'dependency' for storage.

Julie is also a 13-year member of the Oxford Fire Department Auxiliary, a regular volunteer at the Oxford Community Center, helps with Christmas on the Creek dock trees, and for several years was on the Oxford Day Committee.

Julie and her husband, Brian, fell in love with Oxford on their first visit in 2008 and soon purchased an 1880's waterman's cottage that had been ravaged by a fire in 2005 and had been sitting vacant for 3 years. Doing much of the research and renovation work themselves, they brought it back to a charming cottage and won the 2011 This Old House Best Exterior Makeover award. In 2017 Julie and Brian moved to an 1888 boarding house on the Strand and began the research and restoration once again. In 2020 they did the same to the 1847 Academy House on Morris Street which had been the home of the Maryland Military Academy's supervisor. Thanks to Julie and Brian, 3 historic homes in Oxford have been lovingly brought back with historic integrity.



## AN INTERN'S PERSPECTIVE Mathijs Doyens-Harvey

While working at the front desk of the Museum, I love to answer any questions I can to help the visitors learn about the area's history. However, I have found that it is often me who learns from the visitors. It is not uncommon for the museum-goers to be local long-time residents of Oxford. They attach names and stories to the people stuck in time in the pictures in our exhibit. They tell me firsthand how connected the people in Oxford were and how their personal and professional lives led them to this quaint, attractive town. One local



resident came in and glanced at a display of Oxford's late well-known Paul Kunde, the shoemaker, who the visitor said was "the best shoemaker you'll ever meet." Furthermore, I have met historians and researchers who tell me in-depth and niche history of places near and far. One such visitor shared with me that one of our display pieces, which no one had attached any information about its function, was used as a juicer to crush fruits. Soon after the display was edited to reflect this new information from the visitor. Some visitors simply ask great questions. Often, they are unique questions that I do not have a complete answer for, thus, I am forced to find an answer or at least a little more information. For example, I learned about the famous Calvert family legacy within Maryland's flag, with its square of gold and black, which was the coat of arms for the Calvert Family. Over the past two months, the visitor's expertise, wisdom, stories, and questions have helped me understand the town of Oxford's history just a little bit more, and have helped me grasp just how much history there is, and just how much I still have to learn.

## DUCK, DUCK, GOOSE: Celebrating Talbot County Decoys and Carvers

Our next exhibit will open on August 19, with a preview party the night before. The show will provide an overview of the business and sport that has been central to Chesapeake Bay culture over 150 years. Wooden decoys were originally utilitarian objects produced by the thousands to attract migrating waterfowl to hunters' awaiting guns. Today, they are recognized as genuine works of folk art, actively collected and highly valued. Well-known decoy makers worked all along the Bay during the first half of the 20th century, but this exhibit will be the first devoted solely to the carvers of Talbot County. The Oxford Museum will bring together rare examples of waterfowl decoys and decorative carvings from important private and museum collections around the area, as well as fowling guns, gear, historic photographs and documents, videos and even an outdoor hunting blind with rig of decoys. Stuart Parnes, past museum president and volunteer curator said, "We hope that the show will offer a fascinating introduction to the world of decoy carving for anyone visiting the museum, while providing history buffs and carving connoisseurs with a new perspective on Talbot County's contributions to this traditional art form."



"Duck, Duck, Goose" will run through November 12th. Programs, classes, and demonstrations will be scheduled during the run of the show.

## SUMMER SNAPSHOTS



Museum visitors on a hot summer day just can't resist taking a turn at our Museum jigsaw puzzle! (Meg Grasberger from Providence College and Thomas Ward from West Point.)



The Members' Annual Summer Party held at Holy Trinity Parrish Hall. Catching up with friends and enjoying the "Board's Buffet" while waiting for the announcement of the winner of The Douglas Hanks Award.

## NOTES FROM THE DOCENT DIARIES



Julie Wells, April 24 : "Some great life-time visitors stopped by today! (Paul and Susan Haddaway, in the middle, Virginia Haddaway-Tyler, on the right, and Janice Haddaway, on the left.) They really enjoyed the exhibit and I loved hearing their stories."

Dodi Sutton, June 19: "Two women came in today (Virginia Haddaway-Tyler and Shirley Retallack-Blades) who were childhood friends and attended the Oxford School on the current site of the Oxford Community Center. They remembered two sisters who taught at the Oxford School, Miss Alice and Miss Ella Haddaway, yet no one is certain if they are related. The ladies remember one of the teachers putting a poem up on the blackboard and all the students had to memorize this poem. Shirley thinks she remembers the first three or four sentences. It began, "Oxford is not a city, Oxford is just a town, Oxford is near the Chesapeake, A jewel within its crown..." The ladies are on a mission to find that poem. They have been to the Oxford Library and the Oxford Museum and cannot find the poem written anywhere, but they feel someone must have a copy of it stashed away! Do you remember the poem? It was on the blackboard every day! Please let us know!"

Shirley grew up on World Farm where her dad was a sharecropper. Her grandparents owned East Otwell Farm, but they had passed away when she was just a year old. She shared her unsettling remembrance of exploring the vacated Combsberry Manor with childhood friends and seeing what looked like jail cells with shackles in the basement.

Virginia grew up on High Street, where the lot is currently vacant. She shared fond memories of Thompson's Confectionery, its counter and stools as we have them and as shown in the photo hanging in the museum. She said in the back of the store through the archway (seen in the same photo) there was a jute box. "The older Oxford girls would play songs on the jute box and jitterbug! And boy could those girls jitterbug!" She told me about the store on the corner of Tilghman and N. Morris, Miss Louise Valliant's Store, where she said you could buy anything you needed! She remembers buying handkerchiefs that Miss Louise would put in a little box then wrap up "so pretty in paper and tied with a bow, she would even stick a little sachet inside the box with the handkerchief."

The two friends went to Easton High School after the Oxford School where they met Leo Nollmeyer and they are friends to this day. They married and went on to raise families of their own after graduating from High School. But they kept in touch with each other over the years and then eventually moved back this way. Shirley now lives near Cordova and Virginia lives near Centerville. They are very close and walk at least a mile together on a regular basis. Mrs. Tyler's sister, Janice Haddaway's sister lives on E. Pier Street where the train would dump its loads of coal.

Virginia and Shirley watched the exhibit slideshow, the photos from the new Oxford book, *OXFORD*, with such focus and expressed such excitement when they recognized certain Oxford sites. Listening to their comments and excitement was just priceless!"

**THANK YOU for your generous support of The Oxford Museum.**

We appreciate your membership renewal and your thoughtful annual fund gifts.

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