

## President's Letter

Shorter daylight, fresh cooler breezes off the Bay and the comings of the fall and winter and a New Year bring me pause for reflection on our Maritime Museum. In the face of personnel loss, a recovering economy and tight money, your museum board, our volunteers, our funding governments, foundations, corporations, members, visitors and individual donors are helping us to realize many of the dreams and aspirations of the founders and first supporters of the museum.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I thank you for your faith in our ability to inform the public about our maritime heritage, and to present innovative educational and entertainment programs.

We now have our main gallery sporting several new exhibits, including :

- The navigation / ship's bridge, an extraordinary collection of equipment used to ply the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and our coastal waters;
- Our restored circa 1917 "bushwhack boat," as part of our "Working Boats of the Bay" and "Depopulation of Waterfowl" exhibits, presents a stark reminder of how the activities of the past have indelibly marked the present-day environment; and
- The Kid's Corner, which brings a restored fishing skiff and the beach to life for kids of all ages and was the center of our weekly summer story time hosted by volunteer Sue Capp.

An inventory of our collections identified about one hundred items available that ought to be exhibited in our galleries and outside on our grounds. Our volunteers and donors are eager to help. Our current major project is the renovation of our early 20<sup>th</sup> century Boyer shad shack. Volunteer Ron Hendrickson and John Haug are replacing decayed structural wood, broken windows, and rusted sheet metal. Renovations will be finished in the spring of 2014. Funding was provided by donations from several of our members; we are looking for additional funding to complete the renovation and to erect a shelter to house the shad shack.

In the last two years, we invested over \$46,000 for repairs and upgrades to our main gallery, fire safety systems and our building's facade, including new gutters and a fresh coat of paint.

We are on track to host over 6,000 visitors this year. We will offer a number of lectures and presentations on a wide a variety of topics, hold "Story Time" in our new Kids' Corner, and present a world class concert series of maritime and folk musicians. We also will host bass fishing classes, and Coast Guard safe boating classes.

We are also moving forward on an unfulfilled goal of our founders—the establishment of a regional environmental center. Currently, we are working with the community, several foundations and interested local companies for funding and expertise. We have received initial funding and developed a preliminary plan. A job search has already begun for a professional who can take the helm and further develop and implement the plan, and run the museum and new environmental center.

Again, please remember that none of this could have happened without the hard work and financial support of our membership. Thank you! We look forward to seeing you soon.

Bruce Russell