

ANNUAL COMMUNITY EVENTS

Ocracoke Festival Dances
Homegrown-Handmade Markets
Square Dancing
July 4th Celebrations
Pirate Jamboree
Fig Festival Events
Latino Festival- Food Sales
OWWA Oyster Roast - Desserts
Community Dances, and more...

Photo By Candice Cobb



THE COMMUNITY SQUARE PROJECT BENEFITS

WATERFRONT ACCESS & PUBLIC USE Ocracoke is a historic maritime community. Access to the water is crucial for water-based businesses, and the enjoyment of residents and visitors. With the exception of the National Park Service property, Silver Lake is completely surrounded by private property – both commercial and residential. Our focus is ensuring that access will be available in perpetuity. The repair of the docks, piers, platforms and kayak/SUP launch will continue to provide a base for maritime business, local watermen and recreational boaters. Future generations of watermen will be assured of a base for their livelihood.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP Storm water and wastewater improvements were essential to our stewardship. In 2018, with help from a Golden LEAF Grant, we completed wastewater upgrades and repaved the parking lot using water-absorbing *pervious* pavers. These costly, environmentally significant changes will vastly reduce run-off into Silver Lake to improve water quality, as well as enhance waterfront access and greenspace that is so welcoming to our residents and visitors. Enlarged shoreline platforms will enhance Outdoor Environmental Education summer classes and provide space for other events.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION Architecture is a historic community's best advertisement, a testament to the strength of its past. It keeps locals and visitors alike connected to the community, both presently and historically. This cluster of 5 National Register structures, the docks, and the shoreline are being restored and revitalized. The purpose and uses of The Community Square are the same today as they were in 1918 – goods were bought and sold, fishermen came and went, boats brought visitors and cargo, and people visited with one another. The historic town square atmosphere with its festive gatherings bring vitality and promotes a hometown feel, which is one of reasons vacationers continue to come to Ocracoke.

PRESERVED IN PERPETUITY The historic, environmental and maritime importance of the Community Square will be preserved with easements and other legal protections. The creation of an area featuring benches, picnic tables and native plants will honor those who have worked to preserve the Community Square over past decades.

ENDOWMENT FOR OCRACOKE ISLAND Since 2008, when the Ocracoke Foundation began to focus on acquiring the Community Square, the core goals were to protect, preserve and put this valuable asset to work for the community. Rather than paying \$50,000+ a year for 20 years in bank payments, once the interim loans are retired, OFI will ensure that the income from the Community Square becomes a permanent endowment for the Ocracoke community by directing rental income into a Community Fund. This can be a model for rural communities to harness their local assets for social entrepreneurship to benefit their community.



Top: The Community Store; The mail boat 'Aleta'; Hauling ice at the generator plant; 'The Bessie Virginia' freight boat. (Photos by Martha McMillan Roberts, 1955, Standard Oil Collection, University of Louisville.)

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