

CELEBRATE A CENTURY

OCRACOKE'S COMMUNITY SQUARE 1918 - 2018

Your Help Is Needed - Join the Restoration and Endowment Campaign



Saving The Community Square Means

Preserving 5 historic buildings and the two docks
 Water access for local maritime businesses and the public

Creation of a Community Fund & Grants Program using lease income

Shoreline restoration

Space for locally owned small businesses

Protective covenants to ensure community ownership in perpetuity

Will Willis Fish House & Store throughout the years: Clockwise: Advertisement Ocracoke Island Beacon 1941; Watermen's Exhibit 2012; crab pot floats; waiting for the Aleta late 1940's; view of Willis dock coming into harbor 1950; earliest photo of Willis building; side of Watermen's Exhibit 2012; Jack's Store mid 1970's; waiting for supplies late 1940's to early 1950. Credits clockwise: Newspaper journals from the North Carolina room Ocracoke Library; Bill Birkemeier 2013; Ocracoke Preservation Society (OPS); OPS; Unknown; Ocracoke Foundation; OPS; OPS.

PRESERVING OUR MARITIME HERITAGE ✦ ENDOWING OUR COMMUNITY'S FUTURE

The Community Square sits on the shore of Silver Lake in the heart of Ocracoke village directly across from the lighthouse, built in 1823. Early island photographs depict how life was centered around the iconic Community Store, the Will Willis Store & Fish house, the Ice Plant and the island's first generator plant.

In 1918, Amasa "Mace" Fulcher's

grocery faced the harbor, appropriate for a business whose freight arrived by boat. Island men gathered on the porch to share stories, whittle birds, and ponder the ways of fish and women. In the winter, they'd gather inside near the potbellied stove.

The daily arrival of the mail boat 'Aleta,' drew most islanders from their homes. Today, the Community

Square is still a daily gathering space - stories are still shared, common goods are still sold, and community celebrations are still held. These are important to the heart and soul of any community.

Help Save this irreplaceable community asset by making a donation.

ANNUAL COMMUNITY EVENTS

- Ocracoke Festival Dances
- Homegrown-Handmade Markets
- Square Dancing
- July 4th Celebrations
- Pirate Jamboree
- Fig Festival & Fig Cake Bake-Off
- OWWA Oyster Roast - Desserts
- Community Dances

The Community Square, a local heritage site nestled in the heart of the historic village, is the perfect spot to gather - watch the sunset from the docks, visit the Watermen's Exhibit, and feel the harbor the way history intended!



HISTORY OF COMMUNITY SQUARE

1918 Amasa “Mace” Fulcher builds the Community Store, #25 on the National Register of Historic Places. Mace also built a dock for freight boats, fuel, fishermen and the mailboat ‘Aleta.’

1930 Will G. Willis builds the Willis’ Fish House and Dock, #23 on the National Register of Historic Places.

1936 The Ocracoke Power and Light Company was formed, bringing electricity to the island. A generator plant and office were built next to the Community Store, along with an Ice Plant where ice was produced and sold, #21 on the National Register of Historic Places.

1936 A group of cisterns were built behind the Dixon-Williams House to pipe water, across what is now Highway 12, to the Ice Plant.

1936 A small commercial structure was built at the edge of the Willis Dock, where Ocracoke residents could pay their electric bills, and after a public water system was introduced in 1970, their water bills. #22 National Register of Historic Places.

1939 Cockle Creek is dredged by the Army Corps of Engineers and named ‘Silver Lake.’

1944 ca. A storm-ravaged Community Store is torn down and the present one is built in the same location.

1983 The William Ellis Williams House ca. 1900 is moved to the Community Square. #24 National Register of Historic Places.

1990 Ocracoke Historic District, including the Community Square, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



The Community Store entrance from the harbor, before the storage room moved to this end. (Photo by Martha McMillan Roberts, 1955, Standard Oil Collection, University of Louisville.)

GOALS FOR 2017 and 2018

REPAY ACQUISITION LOAN & SAVE THE STRUCTURES

The Community Square was listed for sale in 2009. Concerned to lose the Square, the heart of the island’s maritime heritage, to private development, we sought to take this valuable island asset, restore and preserve it, and put it to work for the community. After working closely with the seller, The Ocracoke Foundation was able to access two interim loans for the \$1.6M purchase in November 2013. The Conservation Fund and a Private Donor each put up \$800,000.

Debt free ownership will allow lease income to directly benefit the Ocracoke community through a Community Fund & Grants Program and enable the restoration of the iconic historic structures and docks.

We are more than half-way to this goal, with \$800,000 being forgiven by the Private Donor. In partnership with TowneBank, and contributions from donors, large and small, the \$800,000 interim loan from The Conservation Fund is being repaid in 2017.

The impact of Tropical Storm Hermine in September 2016, followed by the record-setting flood waters of Hurricane Matthew one month later, make it clear that the 5 National Register Historic structures and docks require repairs, flood mitigation, and restoration work. A century of storms has taken its toll on structures 80-116 years old.

Help us reach our goals in time to
Celebrate the 100 year Anniversary.
Share our story with your friends and family.

www.ocracokefoundation.org



William Ellis Williams House, ca. 1900



Electric Office, ca. 1936



Will Willis Store & Fish House, 1930



Generator Plant, ca. 1936



Community Store: Rebuilt in 1950 after storm of '44.

“OFI’s multi-faceted approach to the preservation of special places like the Community Square serves as a sustainable model for other rural communities, where the potential is great but the funding is limited.

We’re honored to provide quick financial assistance for the purchase and revitalization of this beloved community hub and excited to see its transformation.”

*Reggie Hall, Director, The Conservation Fund
Land Conservation Loan Program*

THE COMMUNITY SQUARE PROJECT

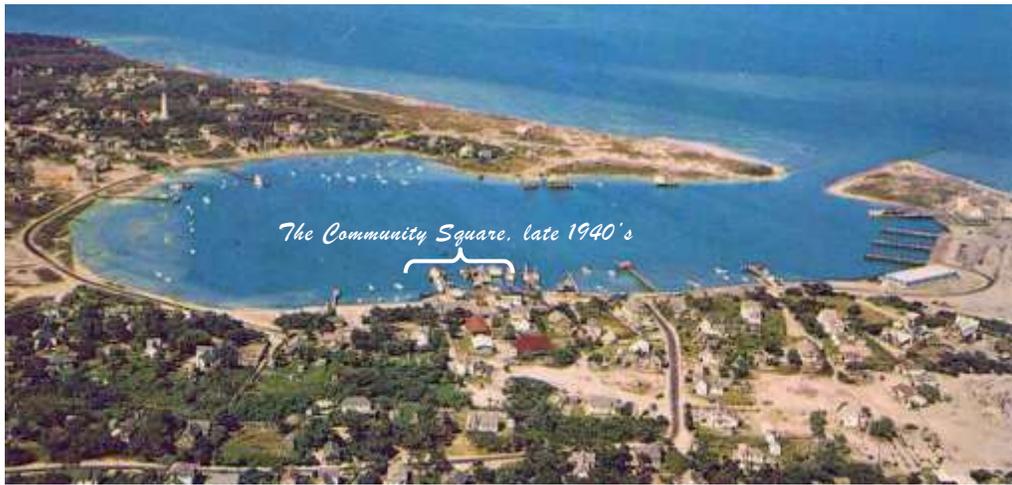


Photo from Earl W. O'Neal, Jr. collection, Courtesy of the Ocracoke Preservation Society

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 launch ramp 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 are necessary. In 2017, with help from a Golden LEAF Grant, we will install wastewater upgrades and repave the parking lot with water-absorbing *pervious* concrete. This costlier, environmentally significant option 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. In partnership with the NC Coastal Federation, a “living shoreline” of wetland grasses and a rock wash wall of oyster bags will be designed as a demonstration project to aid in storm water management. Enlarged shoreline platforms will enhance OFI’s 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 will be restored to a setting typical of historic Ocracoke circa 1950’s. The purpose/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 a Harbor Front Garden 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.)

“LIKE” The Ocracoke Foundation on FACEBOOK



DONATION FORM

Donor Information (Your tax receipt will be issued in this name. Please print clearly.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone(s): _____ Email: _____

Donor Options:

Option #1: I/We donate at this time the sum of \$ _____.

Option # 2: I/We pledge/donate the sum of \$ _____ made as follows:

Year: 2017 Month: \$

Year: 2018 Month: \$

Other: _____

Please use our donation: for Acquisition for Restoration as Needed

You may list my name at the Waterfront Garden, in print and on the website.

You may announce the value of my gift.

I/We wish to remain anonymous.

If you are paying special tribute to someone with your donation, please indicate: in memory of in honor of

Please send a letter informing the following of this gift [amount will not be included]:

To: Name/Address _____

Gift will be matched by Corporate/Company: _____ [Please attach matching gift form]

Payment Details:

Check—Please make payable to The Ocracoke Foundation—CSRP On-Line www.ocracokefoundation.org

Please call or email to inquire about “adopting” a Historic Structure and Naming Opportunities.

All gifts are tax deductible to the extent allowed under the current Federal and State tax codes.

Visit [YouTube](#) to watch - “**Stories from the Square**”, featuring island locals reminiscing about times spent at The Community Square and the docks!



Part 1: Melissa, Trudy and Mandy



Part 2: Kris Cahoon Noble



Part 3: John Ivey Wells & Vince Rockel

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