

Waterfowling, Lighthouse, and Dodson House

by Bob Smith

This is the waterfowl building. It was designed by our director R. J. Holt and is a composite of several actual buildings. The room we are in, the small room on the end, the exterior is board and batten construction similar to an eastern shore kitchen wing. The exterior of the center room is copied from an old house at East New Market. The large room on the far end, is copied, complete with chimney, from a chapel that was used at Taylor's Island. It is somewhat enlarged. The entrance door is on the end of the small room, and when visitors come in, they will see on the right a map of the Bay and a good many stuffed goods showing some of the waterfowl that are found here on the Bay in their season. Some are really found on salt water or inland ponds, such as the Wood Duck and the Hooded Merganser. The map on the right-hand wall coming in the entrance door shows the Atlantic fly way. (big gap in tape - silence)..... to be used in hand making decoys.

Up above them on the wall are some of the old market guns. The top one, the largest of the collection, is about 9 feet long, has an inch and a half bore and was loaded with two pounds of number 6 duck shot and two pounds of black powder. Contrary to the legend, they did not load these guns with nuts and bolts and tacks and broken glass. They wanted to have something they were able to sell... not a bunch of shreds. The gun in the center, the one with the brown stock, was confiscated by the wardens and the action has been knocked out of it as you can see. The bottom gun with the white painted barrel was used for night hunting and it's claimed to be a shoulder gun. Well, how anybody ever fired it I do not know - if he was aiming it from his shoulder. In the market hunting days ducks were shot literally by the tens of thousands, barreled up and shipped to market in New York, Philadelphia, Washington, wherever. Canvasback was in special demand because it was considered the best of the wild ducks. Canvasback used to come to the Bay in uncounted millions and now they are so rare they are on the protected list.

On the left side of the center room near the doorway are several photographs showing sinkbox hunting, real bird hunting in the marshes, and a sneak boat with a three barrel battery in it. The battery is similar to the one resting behind the exit door. All barrels went off at once, hopefully, and sometimes these battery guns were made with as many as twelve barrels. Three was a

common number, so was four and seven. Dr. Walsh, who is an authority on such things, says he knows where there is a twelve barrel battery down on Smith Island.

In the photograph on the left of the sneak box hunting, all those ducks that you see are wooden decoys. When a hunter worked for one of these professional outfits that used to be established on the Susquehanna flats, sometimes the outfit would put out as many as 700 decoys. It was a fool-proof rig and the ducks would come all day to it, and Maryland banned the sink box in 1935 as unfair to the ducks.

Just to the left of the pictures, are three shot guns hanging on the wall. The top one is a muzzle loader. The two bottom guns have Damascus barrels and the center one is four-gauge. It must have been a rugged man who carried and fired that thing! Most of the decoys in this center room are factory made.... not all of them though because on the ledge near the floor just beyond the exit door are 5 Black Ducks. These is hobby work made by one of our volunteers, Joe Liener. The wood they are carved from is white cedar which one doesn't ordinarily think of as a carving wood. The 3 Canada Geese next to the Black Ducks are modern decoys - Styrofoam bodies with plastic heads. Leaning in back of them are a couple of profiles used in corn field hunting. They may not appear deceptive but they are, and many is the time I have stopped the car during a Christmas bird count and got out to count the geese in the field and found I was looking at a bunch of profiles. Beyond the Black Ducks is a swan with a box on its back. That is one of the most incredible forms of hunting known as "body booting". Now body booters are either insane or have polar bear blood! They put on fisherman's waders up to their shoulders, go out and stand in the water among the decoys... the swan with its box is simply to carry spare ammunition.

Immediately opposite these decoys on the far wall is a red stock gun. That is a homemade, outlaw gun made in the early 20s', manufactured by an outlaw gunner from boiler pipe. These pipe guns were exceedingly untrustworthy.... the gunner couldn't tell whether they would blow up the first time it was fired or it might last for a couple of years. These two were muzzle loaders, loaded with black powder and number 6 duck shot. Just below the red stock gun is a very crude eight barrel battery, not as well made as the three barrel beside the exit door. The firing mechanism there was very simple - little holes were bored in each chamber, loose powder was put in the trough(?), covered up with a leather or canvas flap, and when the right-hand barrel was

fired they're gonna hope that the powder train would ignite and touch off all the other barrels. It didn't always work that way. The large white stuffed bird near the red stock gun is a Whistling Swan. In season we will have several thousand of these in the area .. they are late coming and early going... Whistling Swan not showing up generally until about the first week in November and then leaving early in March. Canada Geese, on the other hand, will start drifting in the middle of September and stay sometimes until May, before the final flights disappear. Sometimes the Canada Geese decide they would like to summer here and succeed, generally on a golf course to the rage of the greens keepers. There are two lights near the red stock gun, one a kerosene lantern and another one an old automobile headlight. These were used for illegal hunting at night, former hunting known as "fire lighting". They would dazzle the birds with a lamp and have easy shots. These big market guns, by the way, were used at night when the ducks were all resting on the water. The gunner would sneak up in his little sneak boat within 30 yards and let drive into the ducks clustered on the surface.

Entering the main room, one sees on either side two gun cases with shotguns. The right-hand case on the top has a muzzle loading shotgun, 8 gauge, Baltimore Gun Company. Just below that is a muzzle loader, age uncertain - probably around 1870. Below that is another 8 gauge by Manton of London. This is a very interesting gun in that the hammers are made in the forms of stylized dolphins. Below that is a 10 gauge shotgun, Alexander McComas of Baltimore, still in shooting condition. Lying on the bottom of the case is a Tad Brothers and Dimmock(?sp) 8 gauge. In the other case the top one is not really a sporting arm, that is a military flintlock about 1790. The one below that is a Damascus barrel shotgun. The one below that is another muzzle loader, and on the bottom, the fourth one down, is a double barrel muzzle loader.

On the right, beyond the right-hand gun case, are several decoys. Taking them in order: the top right hand one on this shelf is a Canada Goose by Madison Mitchell, a carver in Havre de Grace. Immediately below it is a rather beat looking affair - which is of interest because the body is a natural shape cut from a tree root thus saving the carver all that effort. Center, is another way of saving time and effort, it's a so-called root headed decoy. It's a Brant(sp?), the head and neck were made from a tree root. Upper left, is a very valuable decoy made by Travis Ward, father of the famous Ward brothers of Crisfield. It was refinished by the sons. Immediately below that is an old looking thing like an Flat Iron with an s-curved neck. It is of no particular value, but it just

shows how strange a decoy can be... On the floor, are several other decoys. The right-hand one is (tape goes out) not a Chesapeake decoy, made in Massachusetts about 1890. The next one is a so-called Brant(?sp) which looks like it was designed by Pablo Picasso. It may be Indian, it comes from British Columbia, on the west coast. Next to that is an old Abercrombie and Finch decoy made of cloth stuffed with straw. Beyond that to the left on the floor is a Canvasback decoy used as a buoy foreign anchor. Why it is called a "John Goose" I do not know.

...wall the top decoy is a Ward Canada Goose. These are highly valued by collectors and a goose like this, with original paint, no dings or knocks, would probably sell for around \$1,500. The goose on the stump below it is another root head type made by Otis Bridges, a local man who lives in Wittman. The goose on the floor next to the anchor is another root head, this one made by P. T. Hambleton, another local man. The Canada Goose on the shelf, rather a small one, is a professionally made decoy from the Mason Company of Detroit.

Sitting on the hearth, in front of the fireplaces are some iron ducks. These were used as sinkbox weights to weight the box down until it just floated and no more. On the bricks of the fireplace is a very long barrel affair, concerning which not much is known except that it is a converted flintlock and is probably from pre-Revolutionary times. Above that is an English gun, a Webbley Richards(?sp) muzzle loading shotgun. The eagle head above that is not a Chesapeake figurehead, it came off the **Veronica** out of New Bedford built in 1870... but it's a nice wood carving and many of the Chesapeake boats had eagles for figureheads.

The small boat on the floor is a rail birder for hunting in the marshes. How old it is is not known but it was in use in 1909. The decoys that are on the shelves here have been made by several makers, both at Chincoteague and around the Bay. The little net in the boat was for picking up rail when they were shot down in the marshes and had to be reached for. Rails are quite small birds. On this other shelf, there are a couple of Mergansers - bottom shelf in the center- used for illegal spring hunting. I don't know why anybody would want to eat a Merganser I cannot say.

The map on the wall should not be taken as a guide to the museum. It was a 1975 projection for the future and it has been decided that some of the building will not be in the locations shown or won't even be built the way they are shown.

Among the swan collection is a decoy of a feeding swan with a curved neck and no head. This is probably the rarest decoy there is, not another one like it is known. Beyond it a house swan is a so-called "tip-up". It is weighted with lead so it will float in that position like a swan feeding on the bottom. The two keeled swans on (tape intelligible) water are by Madison Mitchell of Havre de Grace. The bottom swan in the center is made of canvas and it was made by a life-saver down at Kill Devil Hills, Carolina -- the outer banks. Above that is a great rarity, a Sam Bonds swan. Bonds may have made as many as a dozen back in the 80s' and 90s'. He numbered each one and we can show you the number if we unscrewed the screws and took the neck off. The roman numeral one is in the body and in the neck. Five of these swans are known to exist. The last one to be sold, the number 2 swan, sold at auction something over a year ago brought \$7,000.

To pick out some other decoys here that are a little bit amusing. On the end wall, the shelf furthest to the left, there is a very flat looking Canvasback duck. That is very rare, not many of them were made, they were made to add to the wings of a sink box... it is known as either a wing duck or a half duck.

Over on the side wall, near the oil painting, a couple of Pintails by John Glenn. Glenn had a horror of power tools and the bodies were chopped out with a hatchet. He wouldn't use a band saw the way many of the others would.

Outside the building there is a large iron statue of a Newfoundland dog. The reason we have a Newfoundland here is because way back in 1807 two puppy dogs were rescued from a shipwreck, the ship being bound to England, and the rescuing ship came back into the Bay. One of the dogs, who was named Sailor, was given to Colonel Lloyd who lived near here on the Wye River, the other to a man in Patapsco - that dog was named Canton. Well, Sailor and Canton bred with other dogs and by 1877 there was kind of a true breed resulting - cinnamon colored but just as water proof and freeze proof, although somewhat smaller than the great, great grandfather Newfoundlands. They were given a name - the Chesapeake Bay Retriever.

This is the Hoopers Strait lighthouse. It came from 60 miles away by water. There used to be over 30 of these cottage type lights in the Bay. They stood on screw piles which were not driven

but had big screw feet. An arrested remnant of one of these pilings is underneath the lighthouse. They were turned down into the mud and it was a satisfactory way of doing business because some of the old foundations have been in well over a hundred years, unless the foundation was smashed by ice which frequently happened. The lights were automated over the years and the maintenance of the old wooden buildings became too much of an expense for the Coast Guard, so one by one the buildings were demolished. Hoopers Strait light was due for demolition but the Museum was fortunate enough to be able to buy it from a contractor before he could smash it up. An Anne Arundel corporation moved it here to the point where the pilings on which it now stands were readied. A big steam crane picked up the two pieces, the lighthouse having been severed just below the eaves, the lower floor put upon the foundation and then the upper floor molded together as you see it now.

The light in its day when it was attended had a crew of two men. It was a week's leave ashore out of every month, leaving one man alone on the light for that week. The heating in the lighthouse was pretty primitive. The little pot-bellied stove that stands in the living room/office is original with the light. The only other original furnishings are the water tanks and the lens up in the lantern.

The first room that one enters is the kitchen. The stove is, I'm sorry to say, not original with the light. That came from Catlena Tawes (?sp) summer kitchen where after he retired from the sea, he sat writing his memoirs with a coffee pot always boiling on the stove beside him.

The two bedrooms had no heat of any description and it was somewhat more than cool in the winter. The spiral stairway goes up to the watch room and the spare room. This is where the light stays, in the spare room. The watch room has a thing that looks kind of like a low bed. That was a stand for the oil that was used in the lantern of the lens immediately above. Also the fog bell ringer stood there. The ringer ran by weights, like a great clock and had to be cranked up about every hour and a half when it would ring the fog bell automatically. The big lens in the spare room comes from an unknown lighthouse, even the Coast Guard didn't know what light it came from. It was a flashing light rotating so that it put out search light beams you might say.

Storage for the lighthouse was provided on a platform immediately below the flooring. A coal bin and an oil tank and other supplies were kept there. The oil for the lantern was drained into small

cans which were carried upstairs and placed on rest in the launch room. This was the second lighthouse to stand at Hoopers Strait. The first one was overthrown by ice. Several lighthouses went down when ice floes would come down the Bay, snap off the pilings. As far as I know nobody was lost, it was a slow process when the lights went over. The light at Sharp's Island - that was destroyed by ice, James Island and several others whose names I can't remember right off hand.

Toilet accommodations, as you can see, were pretty primitive. There was a small convenience out on the catwalk and that brings to mind a rather ancient story told to us by an old Coast Guard man who used to go around making repairs to various lights. He visited the Hoopers Strait light and told the keeper he was getting on in years and had a little plumbing problem and had to get up in the night, and couldn't he move the bed down out of the spare room into the living room office. The keeper said, "no, regulations say visitors must stay in the spare room. If you have to get up in the middle of the night here is an old lard can, use that." Well, the water supply for drinking and cooking was rain water collected off the roof in one of the big tanks. While he was there it came on and rained rather heavily so the keeper was allowing the rain water to run into one of these wooden tanks. The Coast Guardsman thought he would get good and level so he smuggled up a pail of fresh water in the middle of the night when the rain had ceased, he knew the keeper would hear it, he dumped the water bucket on the roof and it promptly ran into the water tank with a loud gurgling and the keeper was up the spiral stairway screaming, "did you dump that lard can on the roof?" The Coast Guardsman said, "I had to, it was full." Well, he was allowed to move the bed downstairs after that.

The Museum has several boats in floating and sailing condition. The big boat is the **Rosie Parks**. She is a skipjack, she was one of the last to be built in 1955. Bronza Parks built 3 and Herman Krenz (?sp) built 1 and since then no commercial skipjack has been built. The **Rosie** was named for Captain Orville Park's mother. Captain Orville went oystering when he was 11 years old, and when he was 16 he was captain of his own boat. He was still at it at age 79, when he had a heart attack and the doctors warned him he better quit. So he retired and offered the **Rosie** for sale and the Museum bought her. Captain Orville won practically every workboat race that he entered with the **Rosie**. In fact, other people wouldn't race against him - they said they weren't going to go

in any race where they didn't have a chance of first place. So it was arranged he would have a match race with the winner of the previous year's workboat race.

Other boats in the floating fleet are the **W. A. Johns**. She is a bug-eyed rigged Poquoson canoe. She was given to us by Mr. John's father in memory of his son. Young Johns having restored her with loving care and put the rig on her, along with a little engine and a cutty cabin - the cabin has been removed. She is taken out for sail every now and then.

Next here is **Ma Pilot**, the diesel launch. This was a boat used by the Maryland pilots off the mouth of the Bay in taking pilots from the pilot ship out to incoming vessels.... picking them up and bringing them back when the ships left. She was built by Maynard Lawry(?sp) down at Tilghman Island and is a workboat, towboat, and anything else we need a launch for.

The Museum also has a couple of small sailing boats which members of the staff are allowed to take out. Small cat boat and some others, they vary from time to time. The question of what the pilots are can be answered by saying the association is not a public facility, it is a private facility. By law, all incoming ships, unless an officer on board possesses pilot papers for the Chesapeake Bay, must take on a pilot to come up the Bay. The Maryland pilots, of course, bring vessels up from the mouth of the Bay to Baltimore or other Maryland ports. The Virginia Association takes vessels into Norfolk, or Newport News, or any of the Virginian ports. Both associations maintain rather large diesel boats which stay at anchor off the mouth of the Bay. When an incoming ship signals that they want a pilot, one of the pilots goes out and proceeds to guide the ship to wherever it is going. Once the pilot is on board the ship he gives all commands to the steersmen. The captain has nothing to say about it until the ship is off the dock, and then the captain takes over to bring the ship into the pier.

As an after thought about the trophy case - the small goblet that was given for the first log canoe race on the Miles River was brought in several years ago by a sweet, little old lady who said she had no close relatives and she treasured the little cup and was afraid nobody would care about it and she really thought the Museum should have it. I didn't quite snatch it out of her hands but I pretty nearly did! Laura Jump Vance(?sp) was her name. Concerning the Bartlett trophy, a rather interesting little feature is that when we got it, we didn't quite know what to do with it... because

few people knew who Commodore Bartlett was. It was presented to him back in 1905. We made into the trophy by adding a mahogany base and silver band. When we got it our Director, Jim Holt, took it up to Kirk Silverware who had made it to get an appraisal for insurance purposes, and they said they couldn't give him a price on it, it would be worth anything anyone wanted to pay. So he asked how about making a new one then, how much would that cost. They did some head scratching and they said that they couldn't do it because no one would want to buy it. They probably would have to charge as much as \$20,000 to make it today.

(side 2) This is the Dodson House where most of the smaller artifacts belonging to the Museum are on exhibit. The large room just to the left of the entrance doorway has too many artifacts to describe in detail. Just to skim over them - the little model in the case, just to the left of door, is of the **M. McKim(?)**, claimed by some to be the first clipper ship. Actually she wasn't, she was a Baltimore clipper with ship-rig, and a very fast little boat, but not large enough to be profitable in cargo carrying. Moving on a little bit is the fossil case. Fossils picked up in and around the Bay area. Most of them from the Miocene era, 2 to 10 million years ago. Immediately above us some photographs of log canoe sailing. On the wall, just beyond the fossil case, is a picture of tongs operating from a log canoe. You'll note that the mast had been taken down so that they won't be in the way of the tong handles. Immediately above the fireplace is a large oil painting of the **J. T. Leonard**. She was an oyster sloop, the last active oyster sloop on the bay and at one time was a Museum exhibit. However, she got in such bad shape that she had to be scrapped, much to our regret. Just below it is a small oil painting showing Navy Point sometime prior to 1891, because it shows the steamer **Olive**, which was owned and operated by the Dodson family. If you look closely, just beyond the bow of the **Olive** is Dodson house but without its porches and without the raised roofline that faces the water. Just when the roof was raised and the porches added is uncertain, probably sometime in the 1890s'.

You'll see just beyond Dodson House, the Higgins House and off the stern of the **Olive** is our gift shop house. Eagle House does not show. Eagle House was built sometime after the **Olive** ceased sailing here. Next between the windows is our trophy case which contains some interesting cups - a small goblet was the first trophy ever given for a log canoe race on the Miles River, 1859. The large bowl is the Bartlett trophy, which the Museum offers as a perpetual trophy for a log canoe race held in the fall. The small goblet that was given for the first log canoe race on

the Miles River was brought in several years by a sweet, little old lady who said she had no close relatives and she treasured the little cup and was afraid nobody would care about it. She really thought the Museum should have it. I didn't quite snatch it out of her hands but I pretty nearly did.

Laura Jump Vance was her name. Concerning the Barlett trophy, rather interesting little feature is that when we got it we didn't quite know what to do with it... because few people knew who Commodore Bartlett was, it was presented to him back in 1905. We made it into the trophy by adding the mahogany base and silver band. When we got it our director, Jim Holt, took it up to Kirk Silverware who had made it to get an appraisal for insurance purposes, and they said they couldn't give him a price on it, it would be worth anything anybody wanted to pay. So he asked how about making a new one then, how much would that cost.¹ They did some head scratching and they said they couldn't do it because nobody would want to buy it. They probably would have to charge as much as \$20,000 to make it today.

The oil painting over the fireplace to the right of the trophy case, shows a blockage runner during the Civil War being probably futilely pursued by a Union war ship. Just to the right of the painting, is our yachting corner. The bell came from the steam yacht **Comfort**, which is a side-wheeler shown there in a photograph. Commodore Bartlett, who is memorialized in the Bartlett trophy, was her owner.

The large model of a three-sailed bateau on top of a case containing various documents and books was owned by Samuel Tawes. He died quite young after coming home from a trip on his father's schooner, the City of Baltimore, he became ill. He died after getting home, his mother kept the boat as a memento of the boy. The sails are not original but everything else is. The rig is used in the racing canoes, the so-called Tilghman rig, with the curious goose wing sails which look awkward but actually are rather easily handled.

The bronze gun on the floor beside the case containing the documents is a combination saluting cannon and line firing gun. To the right of the document case, is a lens from the Fort Carroll lighthouse. It has a 25 watt bulb and when lighted shows how the feeble rays from an oil lamp were magnified by the Snell(?) catadioptrics system of lens. Above the lens is one of the old cross bay ferries, the **John M. Dennis**, frozen in during the winter of 1936. The only ferry left operating out of several boats that crossed the Bay between Claiborne and Kent Island is the **B. Frank**

Sherman, now renamed the **Chesapeake II**, operating across the James River between Jamestown and Scotland.

Near the lighthouse lens, the case containing various glassware, the artifacts in there come from various places/ The oyster and clam shell bottle are from a time when life-like objects were cast in glass. They are reputed to be 150 years old, but research showed that the _____ (patent?) was issued in the early '90s, so they are not that ancient. The large brown jug was retrieved from waters off Oxford. It is a Bellarmine jug and if you look closely you will see the cardinal's face imprinted near the neck of the jug. Cardinal Bellarmine was a prelate who slapped a tax on wine in the Netherlands when Spain had control of that area. The irreverent Dutchmen put the Cardinal's face on jugs, drinking mugs, and other less worthy utensils so they could insult him. This custom was kept up over three hundred years so there is no telling how old the jug is.

If you are wondering what Gary Cooper's pictures are doing here on the wall next to the china case, his first starring movie was filmed here in St. Michaels in 1928 with Fay Wray as his costar. Fay Wray was married to the script writer, John McSaunders, while the film was being made here in St. Michaels. No copy apparently of The First Kiss, which was derived from a short story named Four Brothers, written by Tristan Tupper(?sp), who lived out at Maple Hall in Claiborne, is known to exist. We have searched everywhere, written to everybody we could think of, but there is just isn't any copy. The movie was a flop, a rather costly one for that time, having cost \$200,000. Apparently when sound came in shortly thereafter the film was not thought worth preserving and was let go to pieces in the storage vault.

Above the photographs of the movie is a little half model that is the trophy which was awarded to skipjacks in Class 2 during the wooden boat races at Sandy Point across the Bay. The model is of the **Ester F.** which was owned and operated by Wendell Bradley. He was a writer who went bridge(?) boat happy, unfortunately he died in a car wreck. As a memorial to him, the trophy was made up.

Among the pictures on the wall is a photograph of the old hotel which stood on Sharp's Island. It was a much bigger building than the photograph indicates. This is a narrow end that is photographed. The hotel had a very short career. At the time it was built, the builders were

warned that the way the island was eroding pretty soon the steamship channel would be silted in and nobody could get there to stay at the hotel. That is just what happened and it had to be abandoned. Now of course there is no trace of Sharp's Island at all, it has been completely washed away.

In a small case below the photographs and artifacts on the wall are two little models, one of a Baltimore clipper and one of a Bermudian sloop. The little sloop is said to be the ancestor of the clipper, although how the connection is made I don't quite understand myself. How that long bow spread was ever stayed and kept in place is a mystery.

The next case has several of the log canoes. The one with the sails up shows what the working rig was like. It was easily handled by two men and it didn't require spring boards to keep the boat on its feet. Racing rigs, twice, sometimes three times the size of what the old working rigs used to be. The racing rigs on the log canoes are required to be the Tilghman type, the goose-wing sail with the "spread"(sp?) as it is called, holding out a club on the end of the sail. The racers are also allowed extra sails - a little triangular sail on the fore mast, sometimes a sunfish sail, is called a "kite". They are also permitted to set "squasails"(?sp) or square sails and in between the mast, although very few do it, they can set a staysail, a fisherman's staysail it is called. One racer tried using a spinnaker and won handily, but the other racers made a big scream about that and that's not allowed anymore.

Fastened to the center beam of the room are the trail boards off the **Gladys Melba**. Over the first doorway is a trail board from the **Maude M. Robbins**. These trail boards are a typical Chesapeake feature, most of the skipjacks carried them. Sometimes they are very ornately carved and painted with the vessel's name. They are called trail boards because they trailed aft from a little figure head. Little figure heads seem to have vanished completely, but they trailed in back of them, hence the name.

Off the main room in the Dodson house is the Navy Room. As you will see, most of the little models here are Baltimore clippers. Some authorities claim that St. Michaels was where the clipper originated. They were ferociously fast little boats and during the War of 1812 many of them served as privateers. One of the models is of the **Surprise**, built here in St. Michaels. She

took 43 British ships and the British didn't care for that very much, therefore they tried to raid the town and burn it back on August 10, 1813. Hence, the famous Battle of St. Michaels. Most of the models were built by R. Hammond Gibson with the exception of the **Constellation** which was the model built by Dr. Jamison(?sp).

Over the fireplace in the Navy Room is an imaginary scene of the building of the **Enterprise**. This was a Navy ship and we are about 90 percent sure she was built here in St. Michaels. The yards to it is where Higgins Marine now exists at the head of the slip. The pink house in the upper left corner of the picture is the Cannonball House, one of the few buildings to be damaged during the Battle of St. Michaels when a cannon ball went through the roof and came bouncing down the stairway leaving gouge marks that are still there.

On one side of the case in the center of the room is an exhibit showing the development of the sextant from the first type up to the bubble sextants used in aircraft.

The small room at the end of the Navy Room is the Peggy Stewart room. For the bicentennial we thought we were going to be able to build a replica of the **Peggy** but after having all the plans and the models and so forth made up, plans fell through and we never did do it. The **Peggy Stewart** was the Annapolis tea party ship. They weren't polite in Annapolis the way they were in Boston and merely threw the tea overboard. They made poor Mr. Stewart come down and set fire to his own ship with his own hands and burn up tea and ship!

Over the model of the **Enterprise** there is a steel engraving showing Perry at the Battle of Lake Erie. One of his officers was Samuel Hamilton who lived next door to the Museum. He named his farm Perry Cabin in honor of his commander, Oliver Hazzard Perry. In the files, the Museum has a letter written by Hamilton describing how he was wounded during the Battle of Lake Erie. It was Hamilton who named the land where the Museum stands, Navy Point. As I said before, the prime reason for the British trying to burn the town was numerous shipyards were in the area. There were 8 at that time. all turning out these dreadful little and deadly clipper ships. The **Enterprise** was considered the "lucky little" **Enterprise** because she never met up with a foe that she couldn't outrun or defeat. Her first battle was before the War of 1812 when she encountered

a Tripolitan pirate, got into a battle and at the end of the fight, the Tripolitan had 20 men dead and 20 wounded and not a man on the **Enterprise** got a scratch!

If you recall Longfellow, you remember in My Lost Youth: " I remember the sea fight, fire away, how it thundered all the time". That was the **Enterprise** fighting the British **Boxer** which it defeated. The **Enterprise** was lucky to the last, even when she was wrecked on Little Curse Isle in the West Indies. Nobody was lost. The Museum, by the way, has the search rights at the southeast point of Little Curse Isle. There are cannon down there, possibly from the **Enterprise**, and someday when we have the finances to do it, we might be able to arrange a salvage expedition and possibly have some material that came from her. ¹

On the second floor, the first room on the right is the Bay Boat Room. Here we have some almost priceless watercolors, oils, and crayon(or cram?) drawing of the various types of bay boats. These paintings and watercolors were made by Lewis Hoyta(?Sp) who is considered best artist ever to portray the various bay craft.

In the big cases there are a couple of models of bay crafts, an oyster sloop and a bug eye. Between the two windows on the water side is a little crab skiff, dead-rise type. Howard Chapelle, the Naval architect and Naval historian, was a very good friend of the Museum and in his will he left us a great deal of his material. When our new exhibit building is completed, the other side of the road down on Navy Point, this building will be turned into our library and will be named the Howard Chapelle Memorial Library. You can see some of his drawing tools and his numerous pipes and other artifacts that he used.

In the hall is the original hard-luck barometer hanging up there. This barometer was on the first American ship to be sunk during World War I, the **Frey** (?sp?). The barometer was rescued and later was used on board the **Robin Moore**, which was the first American vessel to be sunk in World War II! The barometer was again salvaged and here it is.

The room to the left at the head of the stairs was supposed to be the Pilot Boat Room and most of the models, photographs, and paintings do have to do with the pilot vessels but there is a bit of miscellany also. The big schooner model was too large to get into the adjoining room which is

supposed to be the Schooner Room. In the walled-in glass closet are a couple of models supposedly of the **Ark and Dove** that brought the first settlers to Maryland. However, they are highly imaginative and the **Ark and Dove** probably looked more like the pencil drawing by R. Hammond Gibson, which is just to the right of the model. Most of the models in the Museum were donated by the makers, such as R. Hammond Gibson, Dr. Jamison; others came from a good many sources such as the Maryland Historical Society.

The adjoining room to the Pilot Boat Room is called the Schooner Room. Here we have some of the Bay schooners portrayed. The model in the center there is of the **Robert McClintock**. She had a long and illustrious career. She was at one time the biggest two-masted schooner sailing on the Bay. The only artifact we have of her is the chain plate and deadeye fastened on the wall. The model and the display on the **Robert McClintock** were given to us by the family of the man who captained her for so long, Captain Joseph White.

Just to the right of the doorway is a model of the **Lark**. She was a Baltimore clipper and after the War of 1812 the clippers were used in the infamous slave trade. You will notice on the deck that the hatches are covered with gratings that was supposed to provide ventilation for the human cargo below, but didn't succeed any too well.

The watercolor high up on the wall is of the **Colonel Purnell T. White**. She was one of the big coasting schooners that once plied the Bay. Just beyond is another glassed-in closet with a model of the schooner yacht **America** and some mementos of the last pungee(?sp) to sail the Bay, the **Amanda Lewis**.

The oil painting on the wall next to the porch door is a scene at St. Michaels, a Bolton Jones painting and highly treasured by collectors of waterfront art. The piece of rope work just under the Bolton Jones painting is a gypsy pendant(?). You can see them on the model of the **McClintock**, very heavily roped there so it wouldn't wear because it had to pass over a stay and the roping, the marlin, is simply to prevent chafe.

The very small room at the end of the hall has a exhibit on various navigating devices, compasses, ____ (port?) protractor, lanterns, marine barometer, and leadline and other such

things. One of the compasses has a small mirror below it - that is a telltale. It was probably installed just over the captain's bunk. The helmsman had to look through a window to see the compass and the captain lying in his bunk could look up at the underside and see whether the guy was on the job or not.

The shell on the upper shelf is a conch shell with its end cut off so that it can be blown like a bugle. It makes a gruesome roar, the advantage of the thing is that of course, it doesn't corrode. In the hallway are several old charts. It is rather interesting to see how place names have changed over the years. Elston's Point(?) for instance is today called Nelson's Point, although there never was a Nelson who lived there. You will also see on the oldest chart, 1832, a village called Frenchtown. That no longer exists, but that used to be the terminal for the steam ferry that went out of Baltimore. Passengers would debark at Frenchtown, take a stagecoach across to the Delaware River where they would pick up another steamboat that took them to Philadelphia.

When Dodson House was first acquired by the Museum it hadn't been lived in for 10 years and it was in very bad condition. As far as the inside was concerned, the plaster was down and so forth. When the downstairs was restored, somebody had the bright idea of using the timber from the siding of the carriage house that used to stand out in the yard for paneling. This worked out so well that when it came time to restore the upper floors, we used the timber from an old oyster shed that used to stand down on the Point. Nothing has been done to the wood. It is just the way it came off the buildings, no stain or paint has been applied. It's finish is just the result of many, many years of exposure to sun and salt air.

Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum could not have existed without its large gathering of long tier workers. You will see in the entrance hall a little plaque with the names of some volunteers who have put in over 1,000 hours. Our volunteers act as custodians of Dodson House and the Waterfowl House, as guides to school groups, and as workers in our gift shop. Plus a good many other things, anything that a volunteer can be called in, we make use of their services.

The narrator of this tape is Bob Smith. I am a former associate curator here, theoretically retired but I couldn't drop the Museum completely.... I wouldn't want to do that, so I put in some time here, generally on weekends.