

Bay Head Historical Society

Serving Bay Head, Mantoloking, and Lovelandtown

P. O. Box 127, Bay Head, New Jersey

Spring 2024

Dear Members and Friends of the Bay Head Historical Society,

As we look forward to the Historical Society's 2024 season, we still see new changes to our town's appearance. These changes, to some degree, resulted from the great storm that attacked the shores of Bay Head in 2012. Homes are larger and higher. Along the beach, massive dunes have been built with sand dredged from offshore in an attempt to keep the ocean out of our streets and homes. Oceanfront homeowners have complained that the dunes obstruct their view.



SAND DUNES AT BAYHEAD, NEW JERSEY. 1908

The people who built the first oceanfront cottages had the same complaint, so the powers that be removed those dunes and transported the sand westward to fill in the wetlands. This made the construction of more homes possible. The loss of the dunes increased the damage from other great storms over the last 100+ years.

We are delighted to invite you to our Annual General Membership Meeting, which will be held on Saturday, June 15th, at 10:00 a.m. at Bay Head Borough Hall. After a brief meeting, Scott Mazzella, an educator, award-winning author, and weather buff, will present **Before Sandy ~ Great Storms of the Past**. The presentation highlights New Jersey's most impactful storms: the Hurricane of 1944, the '62 Nor-easter, and Sandy. He will explain the weather-behind-the-weather to illustrate why these storms did what they did.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Doris Czarnecki, President

Bay Head Historical Society, Board of Trustees

*Doris Czarnecki ~ President, Robert Klein ~ Vice President, David Kellogg ~ Treasurer
Catharine Coleman ~ Curator, Tom Van Nostrand, Toms Royal, Patricia Burke*

WHAT'S IN A NAME? SCOW DITCH

Have you ever wondered about the origins of Scow Ditch, the natural waterway between Twilight Lake and Barnegat Bay? Perhaps you've crabbed there, canoed or kayaked on it, or even crossed it multiple times on one of its four bridges. But why is it called Scow Ditch?

It all goes back to the early 18th century and the ecology of Barnegat Bay, which was brackish or salt water. Salt hay grows abundantly in marshy or low-lying areas. Until the early 20th century, baymen harvested salt hay from these areas in the summer months.

Fighting off flies and mosquitoes, the baymen would go to the boggy areas and sedge islands to harvest the salt hay. It was then loaded onto scows, which are large, flat-bottomed boats with square ends. Sailboats towed the scows to warehouses or the railroad depot to be shipped. Thus, the name Scow Ditch.

Salt hay was used as mulch and insulation in commercial buildings like icehouses. In Bay Head, salt hay was also used to fill in the marshy land along the edges of Barnegat Bay.

Public bridges cross the ditch at several locations. The earliest was the Bridge Avenue bridge, which is the lowest, followed by the Howe Street and Mount Street bridges.

William Schoettle's book, *Bay Head 1879-1911*, recounts a wonderful story: on Halloween of 1899, "The belfry of All Saints would give the children more fun—for they would tie long cords to the bell and scurry over the scow ditch bridge, hide in the fields and pull to their heart's content."

Can you use your imagination to go back over 125 years and picture a heavily laden Scow towed by a sailboat up the Ditch to the railroad station?



Scow Ditch in the mid-1950s, looking north to Bridge Avenue and the Lorraine Theater

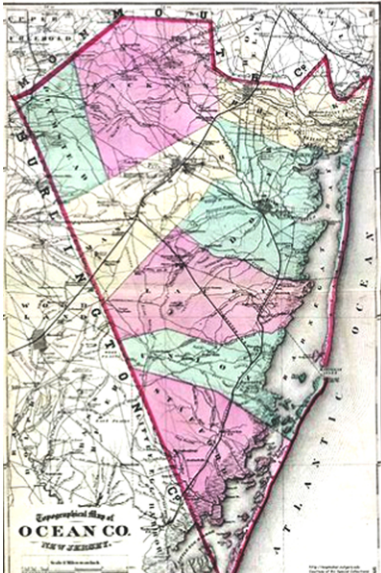
Sources: Gretchen F. Coyle, Judy L. Crisman, *Bay Head 1879-1911*, by William Schoettle

Curators Notes:

We are excited to open a new exhibit with a concept that is also new. For many years we have mounted two or sometimes three exhibits.

MAPS -A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME is designed as the foundation for an exhibition that will remain and grow.

As long as man has inhabited this continent, they have traveled in search of land to cultivate, to hunt and to establish communities. Native Americans were the first inhabitants of the of New Jerseys coast. Through maps and artifacts we will follow the deveolpement of the Barnegat Bay area. A time line will be our guide; beautiful, large maps will be displayed. The current exhibit will bring us to the founding of Bay Head in 1866.



This is a small image of a topographical map of Ocean County, NJ. The north west corner of the map is Brick, NJ as it was in 1872. It was based on recent and actual surveys. Some rural buildings and householder's names as well as local business directories are noted in inset maps. The map was printed by Beers, Comstock and Cline, New York, NY

Our copy is large and easily read.

There are a dozens of similaly sized maps.

Emma C. Berry Tender to be Restored



Jake Millar, a local boat builder and restorer, will be working on the restoration of the Emma C. Berry tender, a boat of significant historical value that is usually displayed in front of the Dale Building. Mr. Millar will be working under a tent behind the building, and he warmly welcomes anyone interested in observing his work on Mondays, Wednesdays, also Saturdays, and Sundays when the Museum is open.

Time On Your Hands?

Are you interested in your community? Do you like History? Would you like to earn some extra money? If you answered yes to any of the questions, we will have some opportunities available this season. Our season runs from June to December; we are open from 1 to 4 pm on Saturdays and Sundays. We are looking for guides to help



our guests fully understand and enjoy all that our museum offers. Training and support and a \$15 per hour payment are provided with flexible scheduling. High School students over 17 will be considered, If interested, please contact us through our website (Constant Contact) at www.bayheadhistoricalsociety.org.

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2024 or donate. Your contribution will help maintain our collections and our buildings and grounds. This income allows us to present exhibits and programs that are interesting and educational. Your donation is tax-deductible; your check is your receipt. BHHS is a tax-exempt corporation (22-3219135). Mail your check to BHHS, PO Box 127, Bay Head, New Jersey 08742.

Individual Membership \$40

Family Annual Membership \$50_____

Individual LIFE Membership \$400

Family Life Membership \$500_____

Benefactor \$5000 You may decide if your donation goes to the general fund or is to be allocated to a mutually agreed upon project.

Business or Association \$150

Other Donation \$_____

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