





SALUTE TO OCEAN COUNTY

A CELEBRATION OF ARTS & CULTURE

The Ocean County Cultural and Heritage Commission's awards celebration, the 13th annual *Salute to Ocean County*, was held on May 16th at the Grunin Center at Ocean County College in Toms River. The 2024 awardees include some of Ocean County's leaders in the humanities – individuals and organizations dedicated to preserving history, culture, and the arts in their communities and regions. Each of the awardees received a short documentary produced by local high school students.

To submit nominations for Salute awards, please complete a nomination form and submit to thart@co.ocean.nj.us or mail to 1198 Bandon Road, Toms River, NJ, 08753
co.ocean.nj.us/OC/ch/frmAwards.aspx

2024 AWARDEES

John C. Bartlett, Jr. Government Leadership Award:
Michael T. Mangum - youtube.com/watch?v=r_xoNrghUdU

Ocean County Lifetime Achievement in the Arts:
Malcolm Robinson - youtube.com/watch?v=kHKTboETV1s

Pauline S. Miller Lifetime Achievement Award for Ocean County History:
Thomas P. Farner - youtube.com/watch?v=b2i36P9CmdA&t=1s

Special Award of Merit:
Cheryl Kirby: Echoes of LBI - youtube.com/watch?v=gihzUQHBQ7c

Virginia E. Haines Historic Advocate Award:
Kathryn D. Conrad - youtube.com/watch?v=uXz97r9rFO8
W. Grove Conrad - youtube.com/watch?v=uXz97r9rFO8

Historic Preservation Award:
Seaside Heights - Dr. Floyd Moreland Carousel - youtube.com/watch?v=4YvsN3ER3Go

Malcolm Robinson: Lifetime Achievement in the Arts

By Pat Johnson



Malcolm Robinson painting a shorebird decoy. Photo credit: Tuckerton Seaport.

Malcolm Robinson is the recipient of the Ocean County Lifetime Achievement in the Arts Award not only for his fine traditional Barnegat Bay decoys, but for his kindness and patience in teaching young and emerging decoy folk artists. In his capacity as a volunteer with the Tuckerton Seaport & Baymen's Museum, he founded their Youth Carving program and at 79-years young he is a guest teacher occasionally at the Seaport to students aged 11 to 17.

"In the late '90s, a group of us carvers started teaching adult classes and then in 2004, we organized the youth carving class. I ran it for 15 to 16 years until COVID put a stop to it," said Robinson. "At first it was all local kids like Andrew Tonnesen (who continues to carve as an adult) but then they came from farther away—a kid from Shamong is now a doctor and another girl, Sarah Myers came from the other side of Trenton. Her parents drove her twice a month. She started when she was 11 and she never missed a class until she graduated. She and Andrew are my prized students. Andrew has won a lot of first prizes. His first year [competing] he won first, second and third ribbons for contemporary antique decoys in the World Championship against the best carvers in the world. He still comes to the class to help instruct the younger students."

Robinson taught kids to carve for 16 years until the pandemic hit and person-to-person teaching was impossible. In 2022, Robinson helped restart the Youth Carving workshops and he continues to be a guest carver. He enlivens his teaching with stories of hunting and history of decoy carving.

Robinson is a 5th generation carver in his family, descended from Barnegat Bay's most prolific carver, Harry V. Shourds of Tuckerton.

Editor's Note: In 2023, carvers Mark Ford and Gene Marshall began volunteering as the regular instructors of the revitalized Youth Carving Club. They have a full club of 7 students and meet monthly. Robinson is always around to lend a helping hand.

"My grandmother was [Harry V. Shourds'] granddaughter, so he was my great, great grandfather. My grandmother raised my brother and me, and she would talk about him. He used scrap wood and house paint to make decoys and would charge fifty cents apiece for them."

Harry V.'s son, Harry M. Shourds carved decoys and all three of his sons, Alvin, Raymond and Harry carved. "My Uncle Lewis Rossell, Jr. carved so I'm the 5th generation in my family," explained Robinson.

Robinson was born and raised on Long Beach Island in a bayman's home in the Brick Row that is still standing on Bay Avenue. He attended Beach Haven Elementary School. "As soon as school was over, all the kids ran home, got their fishing poles and went fishing off the dock at Morrisons." His other favorite

pastimes were racing bicycles, swimming in the ocean and clamming in the bay.

"I started clamming with my Uncle Lewis Rossell when I was 10 years old. He was a true bayman—clammed and scalloped his entire life from the time he came out of the service. He loved the solitude out on the bay and the fact he was his own boss." Those early lessons were impressed on Robinson who later started a surveying business.

"I first started carving in woodshop class in Southern Regional High School in 1958. The decoy was made of ¾ inch pine and it looked like I put the head on the bottom," joked Robinson. "I didn't carve again until 1980, by that time my oldest son and the twin boys were born. I took night classes at Southern Regional, but I learned more sitting in the local barbershop in Beach Haven from Bill Schimmer. Also, by this time we were renting an apartment in Ship Bottom from Herb Miller who was the Chief of Police in Ship Bottom. Miller carved and set up a shop in a spare bedroom downstairs. I also took classes with Gary Giberson (of Swan Bay Folklife Center) who had a shop in Smithville selling decoys."

Robinson is one of the founding members of the Tuckerton Seaport, served on the board at its inception and has volunteered there ever since. "My wife Helen was very supportive. When the Tuckerton Seaport opened I was over there every weekend demonstrating decoy carving. My oldest son asked his mother if it bothered her and she said ' Nope,' that was my relaxation time because at that time I had my own surveying business."

In 1998, Robinson offered his first decoy class for adults along with carvers Joe Walton, George Murry, Dick Jessen and Young Harry Shourds. Robinson also contributes his time to the Old Time Barnegat Bay Decoy and Gunning show, serving on the show committee. His decoys won in the Traditional Shorebird category in 2007 and Traditional Shorebird rig in 2015. Youth Carving Club members were encouraged each year to enter their own shorebirds and/or working decoys into the Decoy Show's youth contests. In 2009, Robinson received the Hurley Conklin Award at the Decoy Show. The award is presented to people who have lived in the Barnegat Bay tradition. The award is named in honor of the last of the Great Old Time Barnegat Bay Carvers, Hurley Conklin (1913-1998). The award is presented to people who have lived in the Barnegat Bay tradition and is named in honor of one of the great old time Barnegat Bay carvers, Hurley Conklin (1913-1998).

Carving instructor Nancee Jo Luciani, former youth carver Sarah Myers, and Malcolm Robinson. Photo credit: Tuckerton Seaport.



In 2012, Malcolm Robinson was recognized with the South Jersey Cultural Alliance's Paul Aiken Encore Award. The purpose of the award is to honor the generosity of individuals, corporations, foundations and government agencies for their support of Southern New Jersey's nonprofit arts, history, and cultural organizations and artists.

Robinson has earned the Ocean County Lifetime Achievement in the Arts by enriching the cultural fabric of Ocean County through his dedication to the Folk Arts in Barnegat Bay sharing that knowledge with the people of Ocean County. In particular, he is being honored for decades of work for the Tuckerton Seaport & Baymen's Museum and passing on the living tradition of decoy carving to the youth of our region."

Michael T. Mangum - John C. Bartlett Government Leadership Award

By Pat Johnson

Long-time Ocean County Parks and Recreation employee and director, Michael T. Mangum is the 2024 recipient of the John C. Bartlett, Jr. Government Leadership Award. Mangum retired April 1 of this year with the distinction of being the longest tenured Ocean County Parks Director at 20 years and 8 months. Altogether Mangum worked in the Parks department for over 46 years, starting as an entry-level parks naturalist.

He is most proud of the part he has played in the preservation and stewardship of almost 30,000 acres of wild lands for both passive recreation and conservation through the Ocean County's Natural Lands Trust; the 4,500 acres preserved in the county's twenty-seven parks and two golf courses. "Ocean County is the number one county in the state in terms of preserving land," said Mangum. "The Commissioners deserve a lot of credit."

Mangum has a unique understanding of the interconnection of art, history, and environment in public programming. He is the Ocean County employee that, in partnership with other organizations, kick-started the Old Time Barnegat Bay Decoy and Gunning Show, now in its 42nd year.

As the liaison to the Ocean County Board of Commissioners for the Cultural and Heritage Commission, Mangum advocated for the preservation and interpretation of Ocean County's historic resources. Highlights of that work includes the Civil War, WWI and WWII anniversary commemorations, and the 10-year celebration planned for America 250.



John C. Bartlett (L) with Michael T. Mangum (R). Photo Credit: Ocean County Parks.

Mangum also saw to the historic preservation of Cedar Bridge Tavern in Barnegat (the site of the last documented land engagement of the American Revolution), Cloverdale Farm; the ongoing restoration of the Mary Etta Cox House; and the preservation plans for Wells Mills' Cedarview Lodge and Ocean County Park in Lakewood. Ocean County Park was once the estate of John D. Rockefeller. The Rockefeller's donated the land in 1940 and it became the first County Park in Ocean County. It has many specimen trees from all over the country. "That is a man-made landscape, history is totally tied into that landscape," said Mangum.

"Historical Preservation and environment are all interconnected -that to me is really important- to educate the public on how they are interrelated."

Mangum is also President of the Colonel Richard Somers Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution and Vice President of the State SAR. Through his association with the SAR he has led Ocean County in a fruitful partnership including annual commemorations of the American Revolution in Ocean County and marking every cemetery with a Revolutionary War patriot buried there.

Mangum grew up in Toms River where his mother's family had a farm. "Toms River was all farms when I was a kid and we were always outside. My mom never knew where we were and that was okay as long as we were home for dinner." Mangum's mother Matilda was a professional artist and his father Thomas instilled in him love for nature. "He was the outdoorsman, he taught me hunting, fishing and camping." And, he could build just about anything- "furniture, houses, canoes; all my carpentry skills come from my dad. I've made rustic furniture and Garveys—biggest one was 26-feet built in my backyard in Parkertown. I won a prize one year for a smaller garvey."

His garvey was entered in a contest during the Old Time Barnegat Bay Decoy and Gunning Show, a premier outdoor festival held yearly in Tuckerton at Tip Seaman County Park—a festival Mangum started with the Ocean County Freeholders' backing. He explains the genesis of the show: "The New Jersey Decoy Collectors Association was just starting to get underway and they wanted to have a tailgate picnic to buy, swap and sell decoys at Tip Seaman Park. Jimmy Allen and Bud Seaman reached out to the county and I suggested that instead of a tailgate, do a real show to showcase real skills and craftsmanship –with all the facets of waterfowling included in the show —boat building, shooting skills, carving, and also to get the kids involved.

"We also decided there would be no cash awards; keep it a friendly show - give out ribbons and plaques and they have bragging rights. We named it the Old Time Barnegat Bay Decoy and Gunning Show because Barnegat Bay was known worldwide. If you talked about duck hunting in the 1800s and you were a waterfowler, you knew Barnegat Bay. We had people come from all over the world not just the U.S. and that name brought them. And traditionally, we always called it 'gunning'—not hunting."



Sara Cureton, NJ Historical Commission, Mangum, and students at the Ocean County WWI Commemoration.
Photo credit: Ocean County Parks.

Another intention for the show was to honor the old-timers in the region—Hurley Conklin, Tip Seaman, Sammy Hunt, etc said Mangum. "We tried to add new facets to the show every year—that's what John Holloway would say, that's how you grow it."

"We had and have lots of help—volunteers – some of them for over 40 years."

Once the show was established, the Barnegat Bay Decoy Museum came out of that. "It was built by volunteers but the county was a part of it because we bought the Mouse Factory (Antique store) building. It was a good spot, with good foot traffic during the show. Tom and John Gormley, George Kurtz, Jimmy Allen, Malcolm Robinson, Jeff Daum and so many other people were part of that but Tom and John were the driving force."

"I'm most proud of that decoy show becoming the largest in the country for many years," said Mangum. The show grew from 35 exhibitors and 10 contests in 1989 to 500 exhibitors and 64 contests.

Mangum is also proud of the partnership the county has forged with the New Jersey Forest Fire Service and the prescribed burning it has been doing over the last 35 years to lessen the threat of uncontrolled wildfires. "We have developed a Forest Stewardship Plan for Wells Mills and are working on one for Forked River Mountains among others."

Some people don't understand forest management, said Mangum because they feel the forests should be untouched. "But when we look at the history of the forest, it was first was managed by Native Americans with fire. Burning the forest leaves trees much farther

apart and adds grasslands. For over 100 years the idea was to keep fire out of the environment—but now we are coming back to try to manage the forest—an overstocked forest is not a healthy forest and an unhealthy forest is more susceptible to pests and major wildfires.

"I've been lucky to work for two very supportive Commissioners, (Freeholder) John Bartlett and Commissioner Virginia Haines.

"We have an obligation to educate the public on our history and our environment. The biggest thing is to do right by the public as best you can—and to provide services to the public in a cost effective manner. We have a lot of good people working in the parks department."

And after so many years of hard work with Ocean County Parks and Recreation, Mangum is ready to enjoy the fruits of his labor along with a grateful public —fishing canoeing, hunting and traveling in the parks and natural lands he helped acquire and preserve.



Stanley H. "Tip" Seaman County Park
& Tuckerton Seaport
Saturday, September 28, 7am-5pm
Sunday, September 29, 7am-4pm
FREE ADMISSION ~ RAIN or SHINE







CONTESTS:
Decoy Carving
Boat Building
Model Boats
Calling Contests
Skeet Shooting
Retriever Contests

FEATURING:
New and Antique
Decoys,
Duck Boats,
Boat Rides,
Hunting & Fishing
Guides

LIVE MUSIC
FOOD

FREE Shuttle Buses at:
Pinelands Regional High School
Tuckerton Seaport
Freedom Fields County Park

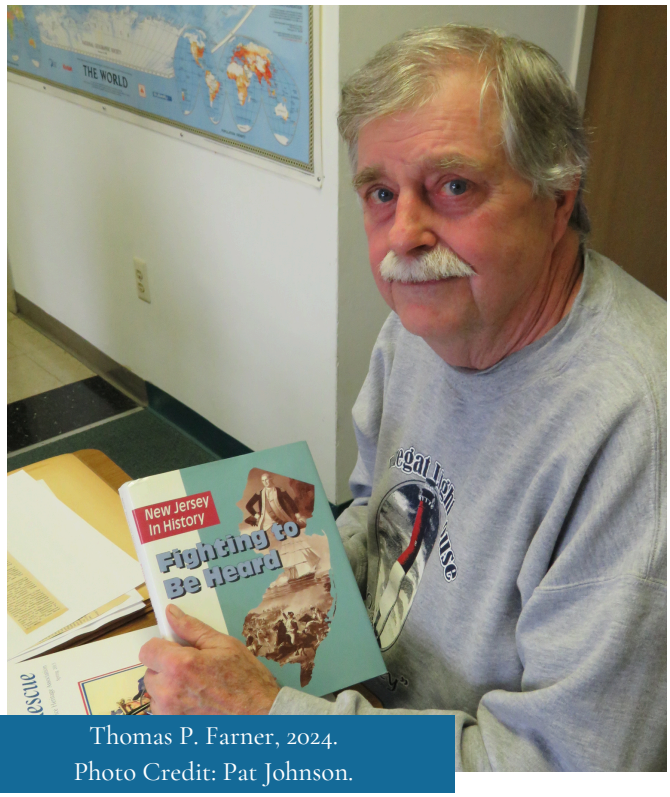
For more information:
Call (609) 971-3085
www.oceancountyparks.org

Brought to you by the Ocean County Board of Commissioners
Virginia E. Haines - Chairwoman of Parks and Recreation
Barbara Jo Crea, Virginia E. Haines, John P. Kelly, Gary Quinn, Frank Sadeghi

Ocean County Department of Parks & Recreation

Thomas P. Farner: Lifetime Achievement in History

By Pat Johnson



Thomas P. Farner, 2024.
Photo Credit: Pat Johnson.

The 2024 Pauline S. Miller Lifetime Achievement Award for Ocean County History goes to Thomas P. Farner, author of the book *New Jersey in History: Fighting to be Heard* and writer of *200-Plus*, a weekly history column appearing in *The Sandpaper*, a newsmagazine on Long Beach Island. Because of his publicity in recognizing that the last Revolutionary War skirmish was fought at Cedar Bridge Tavern in Barnegat, Farner is noted for his impact on the preservation of the site—now an Ocean County Parks Historic Site. He also was the author of the booklet *The Forgotten Years: From Yorktown to Paris 1781-1783* for the 225th anniversary of the American Revolution.

Farner continued....

Farner was born in Mount Holly in 1947, his family moved to Ship Bottom in 1958. He taught history in the Pemberton School District, retiring in 2003 after 33 years. During that time he was recognized twice in *Who's Who Among American Teachers*. Being a young teacher however was even less lucrative in the 1970s so he looked for summer employment. Farner also had a desire to have his name in print.

"One of the things that influenced my writing, we had to take two years of Pennsylvania history in college and I realized I knew nothing about New Jersey- it was a new experience."

"This is how I got started - in 1974 CBS started something called *Bicentennial Minutes* as a prelude to the 1976 Bicentennial. It would tell what happened on that day 200 years ago. I came up with the idea, 'What the heck—why not do that with what happened in New Jersey?' I took the idea to the Daily Observer (newspaper) and the publisher supported me. I started the column on Oct. 1974. The plan was to go through the Revolutionary War. But right before the Bicentennial the state was putting out something similar for free (to the newspapers) so I got laid off."

"In 1975, my wife Carol was working for Zachariah Realtor and a couple of college kids came in asking for them to buy an ad because they were going to start a newspaper called *The Sandpaper*. That was Curt and Gail Travers. So I went to see them –their first issue was in June 1976. So now I worked for *The Sandpaper*."

During his years writing history columns for *The SandPaper*, Farner and his wife Carol had many adventures. "My column has become the springboard for everything," he said. From his articles on the writing of the Constitution, Farner was asked to be a judge of the National Bicentennial Competition for High Schools, first for Burlington County, then statewide and then in Washington, D.C. "I have a signed document from Chief Justice Warren Burger." It's a thank-you for his 'invaluable assistance' in the competition.

Farner is known for his attention to detail and research using primary sources from the Library of Congress, Ocean County Library's newspaper collection and military records. From his articles on the airships based out of Lakehurst, Farner became friendly with the Director of the Air and Space Museum at the Smithsonian.

By 1995, Farner had written hundreds of columns and the decision was made to collect his best for the book, *New Jersey in History, Fighting to Be Heard* published by Down the Shore Publishing in 1996. In his preface he wrote, "I recognized how often the role of the little state of New Jersey has been very much underestimated … The purpose of this book is to fill in the holes in the fabric of American history." The book is full of amazing, little-known facts about our state—for instance one chapter explains there was a Tea Party complete with men disguised as Native Americans in



Affair at Cedar Bridge commemoration, n historic site preserved in part thanks to Thomas P. Farner's work. Photo credit: Ocean County.

Farner continued....

Gloucester County on December 18, 1774—one year after the Boston Tea Party. Instead of tossing the tea into a harbor, the tea was set ablaze in the town square to send a message to those who would try to circumvent the self-imposed embargo of tea by the colonists. And why does Mount Holly celebrate Halloween with so much attention to witches? In pre-Revolutionary Mount Holly two people were tried as witches and Benjamin Franklin reported on the incident in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. Upon publication of his book, Farner received official recognition from the New Jersey state legislature during their 1998 session.

In the early years of his column *200-Plus* Farner would travel to Washington, D.C., Toms River and other locations to do research but the explosion of the Internet in the early 90s made research easier. To find some of the obscure bits of history Farner goes to virtual libraries and searches for our local towns.

"I prefer to use primary sources though—for the (stories on the) Revolution I found so much! In 1835 Congress passed a law to award pensions to anyone who was enlisted and served in the Revolution—they had to tell their story and have others testify to it and these are all in the national archives."

Farner's series of articles on the final land skirmish of the Revolutionary War is credited in resurrecting interest in Cedar Bridge Tavern—now an Ocean County Parks Historic Site in Barnegat. Farner said his interest was peaked when rereading Charles Beck's *Forgotten Towns* newspaper columns and book written in the 1950s. "I read about it and I wrote about it for *The SandPaper* in 1982."

Farner and Carol visited the owner of the tavern at the time, Rudy Koenig, and got a tour of the tavern. Farner conducted more research on the December 27, 1782 skirmish between Patriots and Captain John Bacon's loyalists known as the 'Pine Robbers', in order to bolster the location of the skirmish. Some other local historian claim the battle took place at another Cedar Bridge in Forked River.

"I found a case in Admiralty Court that said Bacon was in Tuckerton on December 15. Shortly after that, the Burlington County militia is looking for Bacon. They left from around Trenton. There was a direct road from Springfield to Tuckerton that goes right through Cedar Bridge (in Barnegat). To get to the other Cedar Bridge you have to go all the way to Toms River and take the Shore Road south. And why would the Burlington County militia go (to find Bacon)? If the battle occurred in Forked River, the Toms River militia would have been assigned. "

Farner also points to the 1930s Works Project Administration project that came to Cedar Bridge Tavern to take photos and document the site. "If it wasn't so important, why did the WPA spend all that time there?"

On a late winter's day that felt like spring, Farner was at the Cedar Bridge Tavern Ocean County Historic Site being interviewed by students from Lacey High School for their Digital Media Production class. The resulting video will be part of the Ocean County Cultural and Heritage Commission's video library. Farner and his wife Carol told their stories and Farner went on to tour the tavern with the crew in tow, explaining the finer points of the battle and early Colonial life. His gifted, animated teaching kept the students spell bound. Farner the historian was equally enjoying himself.

Thomas Farner at Cedar Bridge Tavern, 2024. Photo credit: Pat Johnson.



Kathryn D. Conrad & W. Grove Conrad: Virginia E. Haines Historic Advocate Award

The 2024 Virginia E. Haines Historic Advocate Award is presented to W. Grove and Kathryn D. Conrad. The award honors those promoting and developing significant contributions to the overall understanding of the importance of Ocean County history.

The Conrads have spent over a half-century as armchair historians living in opposite ends of the world and throughout the United States. In recent decades they have promoted and served various Ocean County history-based organizations including the Tuckerton Seaport & Baymen's Museum, The Barnegat Historical Society, New Jersey Decoy Collectors Association and Ocean County's Wells Mills preservation efforts – not forgetting the Wells Mills Environmental Society with Mr. Conrad as President.

The Conrad family has over two centuries of New Jersey history with the last 150 years of prominence in Barnegat, Long Beach Island, Wells Mills and nearby bay and pineland towns. Grove's great-great grandfather began and grew a Barnegat lumber, coal and hardware business that began before 1870; the family also built and successfully operated several sawmills. Conrad Brothers became a principal supplier of building materials for fast developing Long Beach Island in the decades before and after World War Two. This first Grove Conrad built the Life Saving Station in Harvey Cedars (now a fishing club) and was a principal shipper of the Tuckerton Railroad with his son David serving as the last president of that railroad.

Another great grandfather, a Predmore, was a Barnegat sea captain, leaving the sea to become the captain of the Loveladies Life Saving Station and in his later years a historically prominent maker of what is today known as the classic Barnegat decoy. The world of old decoys has been a mainstream focus of Grove and Kathy for fifty years including a six-year stint for Grove as the President of the New Jersey Decoy Collectors Association.

Kathy, too, has not only a Philadelphia/New Jersey multi-generational history but has twenty plus years of teaching students' geography and history and in recent years becoming a go-to person for local genealogical work. She explains that each of us owns a legacy and if we can assist in or get below the obvious, each legacy is something to be proud of – it cannot be taken away.



Grove and Kathy Conrad, 2024.
Photo credit: Pat Johnson.

Kathy's volunteer work with Tuckerton Seaport is exemplary of her spirit and a testament to this award. Kathy cataloged the loosely documented decoy collection. She designed and oversaw the restoration

of the Hester Sedge gunning club that included the documentation and exhibit of Barnegat Bay duck hunting clubs and she established with Linda Salmons the Surf Museum. In the midst of these accomplishments, she organized three Seaport juried art shows as well as coordinated changing exhibits most notably Tuckerton Railroad and the New Jersey 350 year celebration.

The Conrads' most recent "advocacy" has been leading the revitalization of the Barnegat Historical Society. That 60-year Society was on the brink of folding; Grove's love of his younger years in Barnegat and Kathy's history ethic set them on a course to help bring the Barnegat Historical Society back to being important towards helping those "from away" in knowing of and having pride in their new-found roots.

"The participation of Ocean County has been an important part of this revitalization" says Grove. "The county's Cultural and Heritage Commission and its Department of Parks and Recreation have provided us with meeting venues, lecture leaders, special grant funds as well as guidance for our future and continued revival".

Two of the presentations include: 'Ol Tales of Barnegat presented at Cloverdale Farm County Park on June 15, 2pm and Salt Hay Farms & Farming at Cedar Bridge Tavern County Historic Site on July 27 at 3pm.

Grove Conrad, 2024.
Photo Credit: Pat Johnson.





Kathy Conrad holds a 1920 quilt, the subject of one of her latest research projects.
Photo credit: Pat Johnson.

When asked why the all-consuming interest in Jersey history Mr. and Mrs. Conrad explain:

"We are romantics – we love life. In the 57 years of our marriage we have lived in foreign countries and throughout the Unted States; in every place we loved the history and lives of the people. Kathy calls it the great unending adventure. This past quarter-century we have become romantics of the history and people of here, where we live, and where our people are from.... of our roots. We are humbled with this Virginia E. Haines Historic Advocate Award."

They explain this romanticism of South Jersey people and places with an Andrew Wyeth quotation – both having an admiration for the art works and thoughts of Wyeth:

"I've seen so many things that go unrecorded... These subtle things that go by. People I know. I don't know why I record them; I just want to get these things out. You can be in a place for years and years and not see something and then when it dawns, all sorts of nuggets of richness start popping all over the place, you've gotten below the obvious."

And so, in selecting W. Grove and Kathryn Conrad for this Virginia E. Haines Award, Ocean County has selected two who have "gotten below the obvious," they are nuggets of richness – congratulations.

Special Award of Merit: Cheryl Kirby & Echoes of LBI

By Pat Johnson

Cheryl Kirby was awarded the 2024 Special Merit Award for "enriching the cultural fabric of Ocean County" through her publication of *Echoes of LBI*. Kirby was raised on LBI, owns Things Adrift, a store specializing in exotic shells, and lives in Ship Bottom. The magazine is dedicated to retelling the memories of those who lived, vacationed and love LBI and publishing poetry about LBI, as well as, artwork by local artists and photographers. It is also a rarity itself, a beautiful example of a "slick" magazine, which means it is printed on the best paper with high photographic resolution and for all it's costliness to print, the magazine is free to the public. The covers always feature one or more shells and the issues have become collector's items.



Cheryl Kirby, 2024.
Photo Credit: Pat Johnson.

Last year was the 15th Anniversary of the magazine and the cover was a colorful collage of favorite shells from contributors, staff and readers.

"I started *Echoes* to keep the history of LBI alive and to promote local artists, poets and authors," said Kirby. "As the name says, *Echoes* is the reverberation of the people, places and arts that have shaped LBI over the years."

Keeping a lively LBI is foremost in Kirby's intentions, not just in publishing *Echoes* but in the festivals she has either started or helps sustain. She was instrumental in founding the Lighthouse International Film Festival now in its 15th year and the Sea Glass Festival held September 29 and 30. The Sea Glass Festival rounds out the tourist year with a Best Sea Glass contest, Best Found Fossil, lectures and a Wrack line Sculpture Contest wherein contestants make sculptures from beach-found flotsam and jetsam. The festival still hold the Guinness World Book of Records for the amount of people blowing a conch at one time.

"I was born and raised in Harvey Cedars and am a third generation Islander," said Kirby. "My father, Robert Van Meter was the Chief of Police while I was growing up. We lived on Essex Avenue. Before the March 1962 storm, in my neighborhood there were many long tracts of land that ran perpendicular from the Boulevard to the ocean with a single house on the oceanfront. Stands of small cedars, bayberry bushes and beach plums grew throughout that area. It was our favorite place to play. On the ocean side were the woods and on the bayside were meadows and marshes. Everyday was a thrilling, nature adventure."

Kirby's grandparents, Raymond and Edith Van Meter lived on Kinsey Cove.

"There we played, fished, crabbed and learned about boating. We learned about life, love of family, fair play and respect for the natural world around us."

"We went ice skating in winter. In those days there were a lot more children—enough to fill a school bus." Kirby attended the LBI grade school in Ship Bottom and she dedicates a special page or two in *Echoes* to the 4th graders every year—publishing their poems.

Kirby opened her store 'Things Adrift' at 406 Long Beach Boulevard in Ship Bottom in 1974. People are stunned by the beautiful and rare shells she has for sale. Some of the specimens could be in a museum and some of the larger shells are one of a kind. She owns the largest giant clam in the United States and every year people are encouraged to take a selfie sitting in the 'jaws' of the clam. Her favorite shell is called the Precious Wentletrap. "The Emperor of Japan would pay a fortune for them –when they became rare they were made of rice paper to sell to the Emperor. Today there are easier ways to harvest the shells and the rice paper ones are more valuable now."

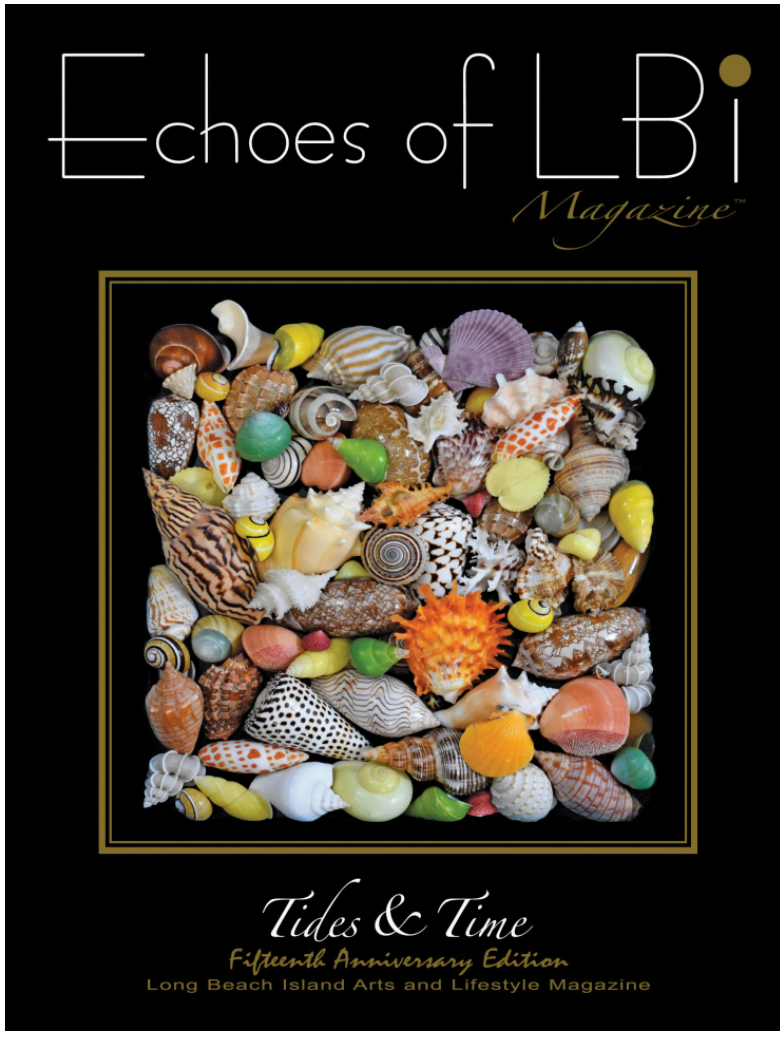
Kirby studied and knows all the scientific or Latin names of the shells and although children's passions for collecting exotic shells have gone the way of stamp collecting, adults are very interested in decorating with natural objects like shells, said Kirby. She also sells paintings by local artists: Carol Freas, Nancy Edwards, Pat Morgan, and still has some pieces by the late watercolor artist Robert Sakson.

Kiby's own passion for collecting started when just a child, beachcombing with her sisters and brothers and her mother. Now she has turned her passion to collecting stories of the place she knows best and loves.

In her anniversary issue there were stories about beachcombing, horseshoe crabs, Barnegat Lighthouse, Southern Ocean Medical Center, LBI Garden Club, a memory of a teacher at the LBI Grade School, a tribute to writer Margaret 'Poochy' Thomas, Barnegat Yacht Club, a reunion of kids who grew up in Harvey Cedars, a story of Beach Haven West, The Lucy Evelyn, Boris Blai and more poetry and photographs than any other magazine has the nerve to publish.

"We'll never run out of stories about LBI. All my writers love to do these stories," said Kirby.

Kirby can be found at Things Adrift most days when the store is open. Starting in May, the store will be open everyday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. If you have a unique story or anecdote, she'll want to hear it.
https://echoesoflbi.com/



Seaside Heights & the Moreland Carousel: Historic Preservation Award

By Pat Johnson

Seaside Heights has been awarded the Historic Preservation Award for the restoration of the Dr. Floyd L. Moreland Carousel and returning it to the public to enjoy.

The Carousel offers 58 wooden animals, 35 jumping horses that go up and down on poles, 18 standing horses, 2 camels, a lion, tiger and donkey plus two chariots—one of which has been modified to allow for wheelchair use. The ride also sports the original Wurlitzer player organ that has dozens of selections that can fill the air with holiday music, old time or pop tunes. It's estimated the carousel was built in early 1910 and first located on Burlington Island Park in the Delaware River. The best estimate on when it was moved to the Seaside Heights boardwalk is between 1932 and 1936.

In 2012 the Carousel miraculously survived Superstorm Sandy but in 2014, the owners of Casino Pier were looking to sell it and it would probably have been lost to the borough. That's when the Borough stepped in and offered to purchase it, said Seaside Heights Administrator Chris Vaz. This began a two-year odyssey to facilitate a land swap between the borough and the owners of Casino Pier. The borough had to clear state hurdles to allow it to swap a section of borough-owned beach for a vacant parcel of land on the boardwalk further north at Cateret and Sampson Avenues. The Pier had sustained damage during Sandy and wanted to rebuild on land, not over the sea. The Pier has since rebuilt their amusement rides, adding a Ferris wheel and roller coaster and



Carousel horses prior to renovation.
Photo Credit: Brian Crockett.

contributing to Seaside Heights' tourist attractions, said the administrator.

"When the owners floated the idea of selling it away from Seaside Heights, the publicity was so great and so many people wanted to preserve it that we worked out the deal." As part of the settlement, a 67-acre parcel of land along the Toms River was also preserved through the Green Acres program.

The Carousel needed lots of work even through it had been restored once in the 1980s under the prompting of Doctor Floyd L. Moreland. "He loved carousels and after sprucing it up, became the operator," said Vaz. The carousel is named for him.

As Seaside Heights administrator, Vaz worked diligently to secure a $750,000 grant from the New Jersey Historic Trust in 2019.

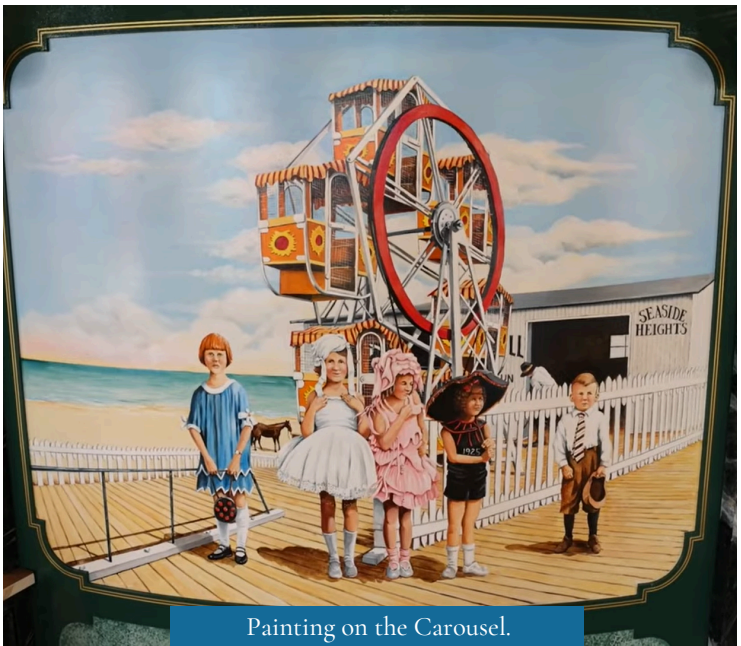
Carousel continued....

The borough also formed the Seaside Heights Historical Society. "The nonprofit Historical Society was necessary to be able to serve as the fundraising arm," Vaz explained. The Carousel and the pavilion belong to the borough in perpetuity.

In order to restore the attraction, the entire carousel was dismantled and sent to "Carousels and Carvings" in Marion, Ohio - the only business in the US that completely restores carousels.

"They meticulously de-assembled the carousel, put it on trucks and drove it to their workshop where they reassembled it. Then once it was done, they de-assembled it again and brought it to the pavilion and reassembled it," said Vaz. Vaz made three trips during the process to check on progress and was duly impressed. "Once you see it fully restored, it's unbelievable how beautiful [it is]," he said.

Although already a shining example of a disappearing piece of Americana, (only 4 wooden carousels are left in New Jersey and only 200 in all of the country) restoration on the Carousel will continue. The wooden horses and animals are awaiting full restoration. Every year, starting this fall, three or four horses or animals will be sent to the company in Ohio to be completely taken down to the original wood and repainted.



Painting on the Carousel.
Photo credit: NJ.com.

The Carousel is sure to boost tourism especially at the north end of the boardwalk that had previously been less traveled. "Our hope is that people will walk to see and ride the carousel," said Vaz.

Starting last July, the pavilion was open to allow visitors to see the restoration in progress and on New Year's Eve, 300 people came to see it.

Vaz grew up in Seaside Heights, is also the borough historian and is dedicated to preserving the history of his hometown. He has been collecting Seaside Heights memorabilia for a number of years. The center panels of the carousel were repainted with scenes taken from old post cards that Vaz had collected. "I started collecting post cards and stories about Seaside Heights in the 1990s. In the back of my mind, I thought they would be part of a local museum." He recently donated his ephemera to the historical society. "Now we have two rooms in the back of the pavilion, two galleries where we tell Seaside Heights history." Vaz also lent his postcard collection for a book on Seaside Heights by Arcadia publishing in 2010.

This summer, the sounds of the Wurlitzer organ will again mingle with the laughter of children on the Carousel, adding to a lineage of memories of Seaside Heights.

Carousel building exterior, Seaside Heights.
Photo Credit: NJ.com.

