



The Chesapeake Dispatcher



Semi-Annual Newsletter of the Friends of the Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum, Inc.
Museum Telephone (410) 257-3892

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May 2007

Mildred Garland Finlon

July 28, 1909-January 28, 2007

For those of you who did not know that Mildred passed away, it is with a heavy heart that I inform you.

For those of you who did not know Mildred, it is with great joy that I tell you what she meant to this Museum and to the Friends.

She was one of the original members back in 1979. She quickly became a co-leader with Bernie Loveless. Her incredible collection of photos and memorabilia were some of our first donations. We know what the Great Derby looked like, and what concessions were on the boardwalk, thanks to

Mildred. She encouraged friends, like Bernice Freedley, to donate their pictures and stories as well. She helped collect oral histories. A natural born storyteller, she had terrific stories to tell and she knew the value of preserving the stories for future generations. For years, she visited schools and

other groups to tell the story of the Chesapeake Beach Railway. A retired teacher and elementary supervisor, she parlayed her love of teaching and learning to the museum setting.

She leant her expertise to displays and to the diorama. Her memories of riding the train and her experiences in the Park, are captured on both of our historical DVD's. Mildred and family ran the sno balls and popcorn stand in the Park! It is Mildred's kangaroo hanging in the museum room which is dedicated to the amusements in Chesapeake Beach.

peake Beach. She loved carousel animals. Riding the Chesapeake Beach Merry-Go-Round at R. M. Watkins Park in Largo, was her birthday wish which was happily granted for several years!

Mildred attended every Bay Breeze Summer Concert and Holiday Open House that she

possibly could. We always considered her the "Mother" of the Museum - always there, always nurturing. Although her presence will be missed in the future, the presents she left behind will live forever - a well-founded Museum filled with her memories and the generations she represented, and a well-founded Friends of the Museum which will continue in her legacy.—Joan D. Kilmon, President of the Friends

Mildred attended the Vintage Swimsuit Fashion Show July 2006. -Photo by Susan Kilmon



Maceo Leatherwood painted this holiday window capturing Mildred and her carousel memories.

Message From the Curator

"celebrate, v. To observe (a day or event) with ceremonies of respect, festivity or rejoicing. To praise publicly: HONOR." (From Webster's Dictionary)

This is why we Celebrate Summer at our Museum. We are honoring the people and the places of our past as we show respect and rejoice in past events. We remember our community's history and remind others of shared experiences that make up our local history. And we find time for festivities to mark these special celebrations of our memories. Come. Celebrate with us.



Mildred's Popcorn and Sno Ball Stand, 1956. Left to right: Tommy St. John, Fred Donovan, Mildred, Allan Finlon, Finny Finlon, Harold Finlon.



The Search For Brownie

By Nancy Haley

After many years of hearing my father-in-law, Henry Haley, fondly reminisce about a little cottage his family owned at "Brownie's Beach", I decided to find some historical records to give him for his birthday last August. Little did I know this was only the beginning of in-depth investigation into the history of this beloved beach located at the south end of Chesapeake Beach.

My search began at the courthouse looking up land records. A helpful clerk showed me the system, which is quite simple, and within minutes I had not one but two deeds for the family cottage. She also was kind enough to print me a map that corresponded to the original deed. (I'm glad we live in such a wonderful county where people are still polite and helpful.)

After giving this gift to Harry, I was a little perplexed about the name "Brownie's Beach" and how it originated. Back to the courthouse with my three year old in tow, I quickly confirmed the name Wilbur Brown as a later owner, but I wondered what made him so special that a beach would be nicknamed for him. Next stop, The His-

torical Society, but after reading through all of the information they had on Chesapeake Beach, I found some interesting tidbits on other CB history but nothing about this particular beach area. Still baffled by the name, I was

Business card advertising Brownie's Bar. Other business cards found advertised Brownie's Bar and Hotel with rooms, beer, music, bathing and fishing.

more determined than ever to uncover the mystery.

A trip to the Chesapeake Beach Town Hall, uncovered more deeds, which actually confused the issue. Roy L. Brown and Associates had owned the area now designated for parking, walking and the wooded area of Bayfront Park. I was almost convinced this was the reason for the nickname "Brownies", until...

I contacted Mr. Hugh Ward, Jr., who had turned up in some of my records, and this is where I struck gold. Mr. Ward, a former mayor of CB and former owner of the Upper Bennett estate, told me the little cottage had been used as a watering hole and hamburger stand. Mr. Ward also directed me to the former residence of Mr. Wilbur Brown on

Bayside Road. The old home has been marked historical and has been restored by the current owner and what he found in his attic amazed me. Business cards confirming not only the "watering hole" but uncovering information about the old "Water Edge/Marinelli Hotel". From at least 1942 until October, 1952, Mr. Brown and his sister Edna Mae-Clum ran the bar and hotel as "Brownie's Bar".

The other papers in the attic were liquor & beer licenses, tax levy's with the Marinella name, indicating the hotel was leased to the Browns from the estate of G. Marinella. 8x10 photographs of dancing girls and an original autograph photo of the actor Dick Powell written to "Brownie". I wondered if these photographs were at sometime displayed at the bar or if they were collected from his service in the Coast Guard.

The Brown's acquired the cottage from Edward Haley in 1946. Edna Mae and her husband probably resided in the cottage or used it for weekends until October 1952 when a fire consumed the old hotel. It was sometime after this that the cottage was turned into a very small bar/hamburger stand until the mid to late 1950's.

All during my research, I was in contact with the great staff at the Twin Beach Library, headed up, by none other than Mrs. Joanie Kilmon. Joanie led me to some great information and was able to get Mildred Finlon to make some comments for the records and recall some special memories of her own. Harriet Stout also was great help with photos, historical information and helpful input.

My research was summarized to a three page article, published in the February 2007 issue of The Calvert Life magazine. A very rewarding ending to a very rewarding experience. But perhaps not the end at all.

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The Semi-Annual Newsletter of the
Friends of the Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum, Inc.

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The Railroad Lantern: Shining the Light on Volunteers

By Kristen Scott

On a hot July summer day in 1930, a woman and her five year old granddaughter disembarked from the train that had just arrived in Chesapeake Beach. Dawa, as the grandmother was called had her beach chair and the granddaughter had her pretty cardboard suitcase. A new cottage had just been purchased in North Beach Park and they were going to spend the summer. Unfortunately the jitney was out of service "as it often was", and it was a long walk for a little girl with her suitcase in the hot summer sun.

That little girl was Janet Bates, one of our most active volunteers and a part of the Museum family since before the Museum opened. She has many memories of the Beach area, and now lives in the cottage that her grandparents purchased as a summer place. She remembers the train ride with the windows open and the cinders coming in. She remembers the first Fourth of July spent down here, and "friendly little boys walking down the alley with tin pans and flags." She remembers be-



Janet Bates with her grandmothers' beach chair from their first trip to Chesapeake Beach

ing a little girl seeing the roller coaster "The Comet" at night, so big and pretty with all the lights. She remembers being a teenager and seeing movies in the Ballroom at Chesapeake Beach Park during World War II.

Janet has been an active volunteer since before the Museum opened. Bernie Loveless, a founding member of the Museum, was Janet's neighbor. He was the driving force to getting Janet and her husband, Butch involved. Butch was an active volunteer and also treasurer for a number of

years. When teams of volunteers would go to the East Washington Railway office and bring cartons of artifacts back, it was Janet who would spend her weekends cataloging them. When Ames Williams "wrote his wonderful book", Janet catalogued all the photos used, putting them in a binder, positioning them exactly how they are in the book. All the early cataloging Janet has done has been a lifesaver for all those doing research later.

Since those early years, Janet has been an all-around help, including being Vice-President of the Board of the Friends of the Museum for the last two years. For the last 14 years, she has been the membership chair for the Friends of the Museum. She loves attending the Holiday Open House and meeting all the people whose membership cards she has signed over the years.

She was there on the first day the Museum opened and you can still find her there as Station Master on the first Sunday of every month, so come and visit her and let her share her knowledge and enthusiasm with you.

Carried on a Bay Breeze

By Betty MacDonald

Our Concert Coordinator, Betty MacDonald, with the assistance of Larry Brown and Corrine Moore, has arranged a varied and innovative group of performers for the 2007 Bay Breeze Summer Concerts.

On Thursday, June 14th, the concerts kick off with Janie Meneely and her folk group "Calico Jack". They will celebrate with music and song about the people and places on the Chesapeake Bay. As Janie says, "There's so much to sing about!"

The "Tempered Brass", consisting of 5 musicians, will also be appearing for the first time on Thursday July 12th. They will take us on a train ride across country by music and stories. You do not want to miss this one.

The Dixie Ramblers

The ever-popular bluegrass band, the "Dixie Ramblers", will return once again in their regular time spot on Thursday, August 9th. This group is under direction of Mike Phipps and never fails to attract a large crowd of enthusiastic fans.

The series concludes on Thursday, September 13th with the "Cocuzzi Quartet" featuring tenor sax, keyboard, drums, bass and more. Whether it's swinging jazz, the blues, or jazz standards expect an entertaining, exciting and refreshing evening from an outstanding group of musicians.

All concerts are outdoors on the museum porch starting at 7:30 PM and are free to the public.

This series of concerts is made possible



with the cooperation of the Calvert County Commissioners and the financial assistance from The Arts Council of Calvert County, the Bates Grant and our generous membership. We are grateful to all for their strong support. Thanks also to the Rod 'N' Reel Restaurant for providing us with chairs and refreshments at intermissions.

Mark your calendars now and plan to join us for an enjoyable summer evening of music.

A Noble Calling

By Hilary Dailey

Look in the dictionary under "Volunteerism" and you will find, "a willingness of a person to work on behalf of others without the expectation of pay or other tangible gain." I find this to be a very noble and honorable definition of an individual, and am proud to say that I now fall under this definition. There is nothing more rewarding than finding ways to devote your time and energy in giving back to your community.

I moved to Chesapeake Beach in early 2005 from outside Calvert County, fresh out of grad school, and eager to know my neighbors and get involved in my new community. As I flipped my complimentary Chesapeake Beach calendar to the month of March, I smiled at the beautiful picture of our town, and then looked at the dates below, my eyes stopping on a museum volunteer workshop occurring later that month. Having worked at the Smithsonian in the past, I had always been interested in museums, so I decided to attend. Thus began my involvement in the Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum, and through it, my community.

On the day of the workshop, I entered the museum and was greeted by about 30 volunteers. I was encouraged by the

amount of people who were willing to give a few hours of their time to this small, local museum. As the day began, the curator, Ms. Harriet Stout, talked about the different ways one could volunteer. Having just received my graduate degree in tourism, I knew I would be able to help out in one way or another. As it turned out, the best way for me to help was to work on getting the local community more aware of the museum, its mission and events. I be-

...you have your own strengths and skills that could benefit the museum community greatly, be it gardening, or organizing, or researching...

gan attending the local business group's meetings on behalf of the Museum, did arts and crafts with neighborhood children at the Museum's Family Fun Day events, and designed a tour of the Twin Beaches for people in the tourism business, so they could come and see what our area had to offer and pass it on to others. Of course, the Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum was our first stop every time.

The year seemed to fly by and before I knew it, it was March 2006, and time for another volunteer workshop. As I

entered the workshop this time, I was now greeted by friends and was surprised to see that out of all the people that were there, there was only one new volunteer. As 2006 progressed, I started in on new projects with the museum community including helping to coordinate our first friend-raising/fund-raising event, a lively Vintage Swimsuit Fashion Show. I continued to attend the local business group meetings, and at the end of the year, was asked by the President of the Friends of the museum to consider sitting on the board of directors. Naturally, I was flattered to be asked, and willingly agreed to show my commitment to the Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum and its mission by participating on the board.

Once again, the year flew by, and 2007 arrived. March came, I went to the workshop, and once again, though surrounded by smiling faces, only one of them was of a new volunteer. We went through the workshop and finished up with the always lovely "Thank You" lunch, provided by the Friends of the museum. As I swallowed the last bit of my delicious meal, I looked around the room and noticed that there were only about half the number of folks joining

(Continued on page 6)

Important Information about Membership Dues

By Joan D. Kilmon

There are some changes in store for our Friends' membership dues. Ever since we began sending out 2 newsletters a year, we included a reminder notice to pay your dues. We asked twice, and sometimes we paid twice! We asked twice, and sometimes, we forgot twice! We are now only going to ask once. Beginning with the next newsletter, an envelope will be included in each Fall newsletter. However, you may still send contributions to the Friends anytime you want! And, we may still ask for contributions each time we see you at events!

This is the first increase of dues in our 28 year existence.

- Individual dues will be \$10.00.
- Family dues will be \$15.00.
- Lifetime Memberships will still be a great bargain at \$100.00.

How are your dollars used? You get this beautiful, colorful newsletter in the Spring and Fall. We sponsor our Bay Breeze Summer Concerts, bringing you free, quality entertainment during the summer. Your dues and donations help stock our Gift Shop and help pay for

outreach programs.

Family members of deceased Friends have often asked that Memorial Funds be created. These funds go toward special projects, such as the Loveless and Finlon Education Center. Many, many people have remembered Bernie Loveless and Mildred Finlon through contributions. These funds will one day fulfill the long held dream of our museum founders, to use the parlor car, Dolores, to teach all who enter, what life was like when Bernie and Mildred rode the train to Chesapeake Beach!

Recent Acquisitions

We have added a few more items to our collection in the last few months. Each of these things is special and adds to the wealth of our resources. Of special interest to our visitors is the old trunk added to the exhibit in the baggage room. If you haven't seen it yet, it is waiting on a handcart for loading on the next train, complete with its American Railway Express Co. sticker.

John & Beth Luskey	Old Trunk
Robin Adams	Manuscript of Family Genealogy of Sam Williams
Robert Alley	Brass Christmas Ornament
Kristen Scott	Christmas Ornament: Carousel Lion, Hallmark Collector's Series
Lawrence Hampton	Assorted documents (internet sources) relating to CBR history
Joan Kilmon	Photograph: Station building with five people, 1954
Chris Dickon	Book: <u>Chesapeake Bay Steamers</u> ; by Chris Dickon; Arcadia Publishing, 2006.
Lee Rogers	Assorted documents (internet sources) relating to Boy Scouts and local history
Phyllis Campbell	Books: <u>The Rainbow Route: An Illustrated History</u> , Robert E. Sloan & Carl A. Skowlonki, Sundance Limited, Denver, 1975; <u>Otto Mears: His Life & Times</u> , Ervin Kushner, The Platte Press, Frederick, CO, 1979; Magazine: <u>Reminisce</u> , August 1998, (Photos of four ladies at Chesapeake Beach)
Janet Bates	Photographs (digital printouts from internet) from Library of Congress; topics of early Chesapeake Beach history

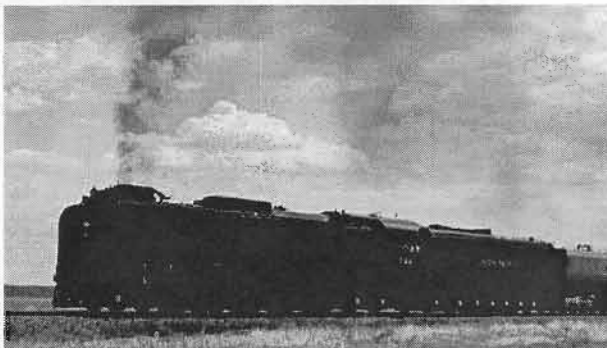
Journey to the Past - Part I

By Larry Brown

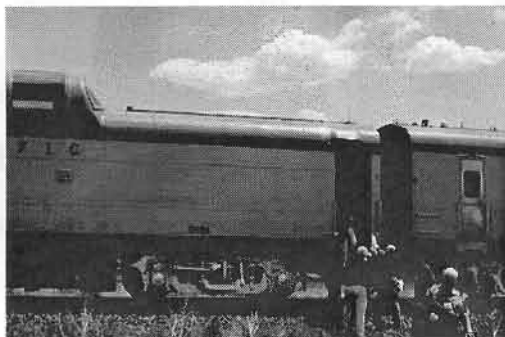
As a youngster I went down to the railroad yard with my friends to watch trains. We were very excited when the beautiful Crescent Limited passenger train passed with its big black puffing steam locomotive and gleaming green and white cars headed for New Orleans. I wanted to ride.

This summer my wife and I headed for Denver to relive those days. The Lionel Collectors Club of America (LCCA) held its annual convention August 24-29, 2006.

The first day was my dream, a ride on the Union Pacific's Heritage fleet passenger train. Arriving at Denver's Restored Railroad Station to travel to Cheyenne, we found 25 vintage cars painted old Union Pacific colors of Leaf Brown and Armour Yellow, with scarlet striping and lettering from the 1930-1950s, including the first Vista dome passenger cars ever used. The train was pulled by locomotive No. 844, the



Locomotive No. 844, was the last steam locomotive built for the Union Pacific and is hailed as a "Living Legend."



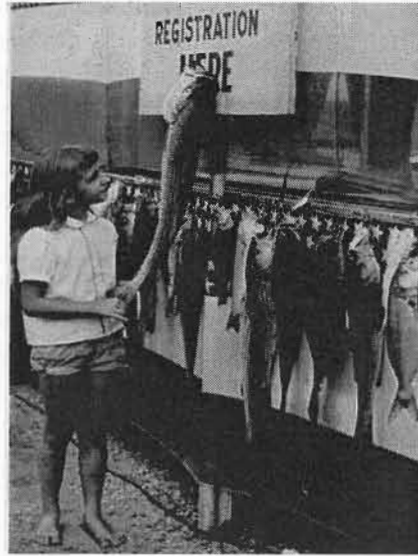
last steam locomotive built for Union Pacific (1944). It is a Northern class high-speed passenger engine, with a wheel arrangement of 4-8-4. It pulled such widely known trains as the *Los Angeles Limited* and the *City of San Francisco*. The engineer and firemen were LCCA members. The highlight was a stop in the Wyoming plains to photograph the train as it passed back and forth several times. The 844 is 114 feet long and weighs 420 tons. As it passes we note the distinctive smoke deflectors, called "elephant ears," on the front of the boiler. These help lift the smoke above the engine so the engineer's visibility isn't impaired.

I didn't lose my wife. She is just getting off Vista Dome, City of San Francisco. It was pulled by Locomotive 844.

Celebrate Summer 2007 Exhibit : "A Fish Story: The Last 100 Years"

Plan to visit the Museum sometime this summer to enjoy the special *Celebrate Summer Exhibit*. This year we are going to explore in depth the history of fishing from the Twin Beaches. The title of the exhibit is "A Fish Story: The LAST 100 Years". We will be exhibiting documents, photographs, and artifacts that are not normally on display, as well as sharing artifacts loaned to the museum for this special exhibit.

Fishing has always been an important part of the history of our community. Today it continues to draw visitors and locals to the waters of the Chesapeake. While other sites around the Bay are exploring the discovery of our maritime



treasures by John Smith and his company of adventurers, we will focus on the recent history of the bounty of the Bay.

*******PLEASE HELP*******

If you have any artifacts, photographs, or documents that might be of interest to the subject of this exhibit, please contact the curator at the Museum. Call Harriet Stout at 410-257-3892 weekdays from 9:00 to 4:30. The Museum will accept items of interest until May 15.

A girl checks out the contenders at the 1957 Fishing Fair. From the Pete Grover Collection.

A Noble Calling (cont.)

By Hilary Dailey

us as when I had started volunteering with the museum, only two years before. It was, to put it bluntly, rather discouraging.

A few days later, at the first board meeting of the year, the President of the Friends, Joan Kilmon, and asked if anyone would be willing to chair a "volunteer committee." As you probably guessed, I enthusiastically raised my hand.

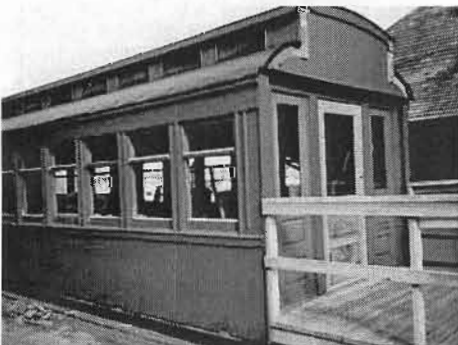
As I sit here today writing to you as the chair of the volunteer committee for the Friends of the museum, I call upon you, as a member of the museum, to pick up the phone or stop by our beloved

museum to see how you might be able to help out. There are many ways that you could support our mission with only a few moments of your time. I think that the main "job" people think of when they think about volunteering for the museum is to be a Station Master, greeting the public on weekends. However, as a busy mom of a very active one-year old, I have only been able to do Station Master duties one time in the entire 2 ½ years I have been with the museum. What I did was find other ways to contribute that drew on my strengths and interests, by working on special events and community outreach. I am positive that you have your

own strengths and skills that could benefit the museum community greatly, be it gardening, or organizing, or researching or...you tell me!

If you are already a Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum volunteer, I applaud you! If you are not currently a volunteer, I encourage you to devote even a little time to giving back to your community by becoming a volunteer. Even if you do not have a lot of time to share with us, there are so many ways to volunteer and reinforce the community spirit that will help us build our museum a bright and strong future. Please give Harriet a call at 410-257-3892 or email her at cbrailway@co.cal.md.us

Grants for 2007



- *Maryland Heritage Area Authority—\$400—Support for Spring Family Fun Day.
- *Calvert County Cultural Arts Council—Support for the Bay Breeze Summer Concert Series.
- *Maryland Heritage Area Authority—\$31,500—Dolores Project—Phase One: Prepare and stabilize the landscape.
- *Maryland Historic Trust Museum Advancement Grant Program—\$5,000— Strategic and long range planning.

Founders' Day

On June 9 the Museum will once again remember the builders of the Railway and Resort, as well as the founders of the Railway Museum, with Founders' Day festivities. The main event of the day will be the opening of the *Celebrate Summer* Exhibit. The Annual Meeting of the Friends of the CBRM will also be held on this day at 3pm. We will honor the wonderful volunteers who help us throughout the year at the meeting.

Come and enjoy a pleasant afternoon with other Friends of the Museum. The Museum will offer cookies and lemonade; we expect a nice day filled with good conversation and conviviality.

Bayside Chats: A Continuing Success

This past winter the Museum continued our adult lecture series with two more Bayside Chats. In January we hosted a presentation by Grace and Tom Rymer on the history of the Boy Scout Camp at Camp Roosevelt. It was an outstanding and fun program with lots of wonderful stories shared by the Rymers. Past campers as well as some of the locals who grew up with the campers as neighbors also participated with stories of their youthful escapades. We had a large audience for this event; a total of 87 folks turned out to learn about Camp Roosevelt history.

In late March the Curator, Harriet Stout, presented a program on early 20th century children's clothing from Grandmother's Trunk. She shared her personal collection of clothing, paper dolls, sewing patterns, and pictures, as well as some museum pieces, with a small gathering of interested folks.

We hope to offer a special Chat this summer in connection with the *Celebrate Summer* Exhibit. Watch for further announcements of date and time.

Garden Delights

The Chesapeake Beach Garden Club is helping to beautify the grounds of the Museum again this year. Spring bulbs that were planted in the fall have been adding color to the landscape during the early part of the year. Summer flowers will be planted in early May so that we can enjoy flowers throughout the coming year. Charlotte Allison of the Garden Club is heading up the work force that is doing the planting. Many thanks to Charlotte and her Garden Club helpers for taking such good care of us!



Tulips blooming in front of the Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum Sign. These flowers and others are courtesy of the Garden Club.

Don't forget the Garden Club Plant Sale on the porch of the Museum on May 12th. The funds raised in this sale help support the Garden Club activities all around town.

Also, a big thank you goes to Kristen and Kathy Scott, our good neighbors, who volunteer each year to organize the Spring Clean Up of the grounds.

Snow In April?

The hike through Jug Bay Sanctuary was perfect. It was neither too sunny, too cloudy, too warm or too cool. After canceling the hike on April 7th due to snow, we were worried about the possible nor'easter. Thankfully, it held off and all who came had an enjoyable time.

Annual Golf Tournament

The sixth annual Charles E. Bates Memorial Golf Tournament will be held at Twin Shields G.C., Friday, Oct. 5th, 2007. A part of the proceeds from the tournament is committed for our Summer Concerts at the museum. If you are interested in playing or attending the event, please call Janet Bates at 301-855-8915 for more information. We'll be glad to see you!

Spring Family Fun Day

The Museum's Spring Family Fun Day will be Sunday, May 20th from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Shirley Johannesen-Levine will entertain visitors on the porch at 1 p.m. with her puppet show, **Colorful Characters Come Alive With Puppets and Poems**. The show includes a seven-and-a-half-foot Chinese Imperial dragon, large Sesame Street-size muppets and marionette puppets.

At 2 p.m., students from the Badd Company Dance Studio of Owings will take center stage performing a variety of dances. There will be face painting throughout the event, as well as, arts and crafts and games popular with children during the early 1900's. Both the museum and the Dolores will be open for touring and children will have the opportunity to find some of the treasures the museum holds.



The brave souls that came on the Heritage Tour to hike the CBR right-of-way through Jug Bay Sanctuary on April 14th.

