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SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2025

SCHEDULED EVENTS

Additional events and details can be found on the Calendar Page on the [Museum Website](#).

THE FABRIC OF HISTORY:
ANTIQUE AMERICAN QUILTS
April 24 - Sept. 21

MEMBERS PREVIEW PARTY
OXFORD VETERANS' EXHIBIT
October 3, 5 - 7 pm

OXFORD SALUTES ITS VETERANS
October 4 - November 11

HOLIDAY EXHIBIT
PASSANO FAMILY TRAINS
November 22 - December 14

THE MUSEUM SHOP Always Open, Online!

Find Oxford books, Oxford Mugs and explore our Salisbury Pewter Gifts in the Museum Shop or on our website.

THE OXFORD AUDIO TOUR
Scan this QR Code for
FREE ACCESS to the audio tour.



Photo Credit: Sandaway Beach and Suites

FROM THE PRESIDENT:

As you will see from the following photos and articles, the Oxford Museum continues to research and share an amazing range of material relevant to the history of our little village. We continue to dig into our past with the help of these future patrons and our historians. Our interns and student volunteers are proof that knowledge of the past will guide us into the future. Their enthusiasm has brought new energy to our mission and we are grateful to our members who have been mentoring them.
Liz Koprowski

OUR NEWEST PUBLICATION: Every Oxford Home Should Have a Copy, or Two!

Over 100 pages of photos of Oxford trees with Latin names and other plant information. Photos are indexed by tree or shrub, by address, for easy identification. A bud and bloom calendar is included.



Add this to your collection of Oxford books for you and your houseguests to enjoy, or pick up a copy for your neighbor.

Available in the Museum Store or through this [link on our website](#).

CONGRATULATIONS to Nancy Todd Ruark for winning the quilt raffle!





Our Quilt Experts, Kay Butler and Catherine Spence, assessing Kae Dakin's quilt.



The overflow exhibit and Quilt Turning Event at St. Paul's Church.



The Raffle Quilt Donated by Kay Butler and Catherine Spence



THE FABRIC OF HISTORY: Part Two

The Oxford Museum renews its latest exhibit, *The Fabric of History*, with a second display of unique antique quilts. Quilters and non-quilters alike will love the 30 new patterns at the Museum. *The Fabric of History* offers a chance to not just learn about the intricate process of stitching, but also about the history behind these quilts.

The museum offers everything from a 1929 quilt commemorating Charles Lindbergh to a local 1850s quilt, complete with Talbot County signatures. All of these vibrant quilts are from the collections of Kay Butler and Catherine Spence, members of the Fiber Arts Center of the Eastern Shore in Denton.

As guest curators at the Oxford Museum, Butler and Spence's quilt collection is rich in both history and beauty. The Oxford Museum and Shop will be open to visitors from 10-4 PM, Friday through Monday. *The Fabric of History* exhibit will run through September 21.

The photo on the left is a section of 'The Lone Eagle' c. 1929, a quilt by Emma Tyrell commemorating Charles Lindbergh's flight across the Atlantic. Come visit and find the plane flying the wrong direction, and the upside-down eagle!

OXFORD SALUTES ITS VETERANS

Did you or a family member serve in WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, or any other military conflict? The Oxford Museum wants to honor our veterans by telling their stories and sharing your mementos, such as letters, photos, uniforms or service awards that help shape our understanding of the tremendous service and sacrifice of so many. The exhibit will run from October 4th to November 11th, with a Members Preview Party on October 3rd, 5 - 7 PM. On November 11th there will be a service honoring Veterans at the Blue Star Memorial site at the Town Park at 11 AM, followed by a reception at the Museum. We hope to see you there!

Please contact us at theoxfordmuseum@gmail.com or 410-226-0191 as soon as possible if you are able to contribute mementos to this special exhibit.



The Oxford Museum needs you!

THE DOUGLAS HANKS Jr. PRESERVATION AWARD

The Douglas Hanks Jr. Preservation Award honors Oxford's dedication to keeping history alive and recognizes extraordinary efforts by individuals, organizations and others in preserving the unique history and heritage of Oxford, Maryland and the surrounding area. Douglas Hanks Jr., a prominent figure of Oxford with deep ancestral roots in the town, is the legend behind this award. Almost two decades ago, the award was created by Hanks' wife, Alexandra "Xan" Hanks, in partnership with the Oxford Museum.

On July 19th, at the Museum's Annual Members' Party, two awards were presented. The first, for restoration of a historic structure or landscape to its original form or detail, was presented to Tim Boyle and Anne Ruecktenwald, for a monumental restoration of their historic home. It is a standout on Morris Street with its original façade and full front porch, matching every detail from a historic photo. Their efforts to preserve the original structure and look of the house is indicative of the genuine love for Oxford history that the Doug Hanks Jr. Preservation Award commemorates.



Award Recipients: Tim Boyle, Anne Ruecktenwald and Gordon Fronk

The second presentation was in recognition of extraordinary contribution to the town and was presented to Gordon Fronk for his significant efforts to preserve Oxford's heritage. Since moving to Oxford in 2008 he has been an integral part of the town and has been committed to keeping Oxford history alive. He was instrumental in The Mews restoration, volunteers at the Oxford Community Center and was a former OCC Trustee, served on the Vestry at Holy Trinity Church and worked to maintain the church's historic integrity and he served as a town Commissioner - just to name a few ways Fronk has filled his time in Oxford. Few have given as much to preserving Oxford's past while preparing for the future. His dedication to the stewardship of Oxford's historic institutions highlights his lifelong commitment to the community.

Congratulations to all three of these outstanding Oxfordians! For more information on the award and past recipients, visit The Oxford Museum website at <https://oxfordmuseummd.org/>.

FROM OUR SUMMER INTERNS

MAXINE POE-JENSEN: This summer, I have learned so much about Oxford, its deep-rooted history, and quilting! From training to be a docent in May to, more recently, working with artifacts from the early twentieth century, this internship has taught me many new skills. My favorite task has been sorting and reading the letters from Seth Kirby, an Oxford resident, who wrote home to his mother from 1911-1922. Not only did I get to read a firsthand account of WWI, but I was also able to read about a college student who lived almost 100 years ago.

From behind the old Bringman's counter, I have met countless people from all over Maryland and from all over the world. I've also learned that the quilting community is stronger and larger than I could have ever imagined- with many quilters coming in to admire the beautiful exhibit. The Oxford Museum internship has allowed me to learn about history, people, and feel more connected to this amazing town!

ISABEL OREM: During my internship at the Oxford Museum, I have had the opportunity to build upon the experience I gained during my previous summer at the Museum. My responsibilities have included welcoming and engaging with visitors, supporting daily museum operations, and conducting research for upcoming exhibitions. It has been especially meaningful to contribute to preserving and promoting Oxford's rich history—a place that has held personal significance to me since childhood.

Throughout the internship, I have interacted with visitors from across the country, learning how far many have traveled to explore this small yet historically significant town on Maryland's Eastern Shore. I've been able to share insights into Oxford's past while also guiding guests to other local points of interest. As part of the museum's curatorial efforts, I've conducted

research on Lt. Colonel Tench Tilghman and his contributions to Oxford and the American Revolutionary War. I have also investigated how Oxford's history is reflected in national publications to support future exhibition planning.

I am excited that I was able to return to the Oxford Museum this summer but also bittersweet that I am leaving this quaint and charming town. The Museum has given me the opportunity to build important professional skills, while also teaching me the significance of Oxford.

MORE FROM OUR SUMMER VOLUNTEERS: Our Junior Curators!

Hello, my name is **Dawson Cooper** and I go to the Boys Latin School of Maryland in Baltimore. This summer I had the wonderful opportunity to volunteer at the Oxford Museum. My main focus was helping Mr. Parnes document and inventory items in the collection.



Although I go to school in Baltimore, I am from Royal Oak, just across the river. I grew up sailing at the Tred Avon Yacht Club, where my father is Commodore this year. I have always been fascinated by Oxford's history.

I was one of five students at Boys Latin that helped to run and maintain the Military History Museum that we have on campus. This furthered my passion for archiving and preserving artifacts so that future generations can see history first hand. I reached out to the Oxford Museum so I could

continue that work this summer.

Working at the museum has been an incredibly rewarding experience. Not only have I learned more about the history of this great town, but I also have continued to develop my passion for museum work and curatorship. I have really enjoyed working with Mr. Parnes and the other amazing volunteers.

Summer intern **Maxine Poe-Jensen** has not only served as museum docent this season she also assisted our Curator in sorting and describing a fascinating new addition to the collection. Here is her report: Nowadays, it seems that the only way we communicate with each other is through screens. But hand-written letters were the only form of correspondence in the early 1900s. The Museum recently received a shoebox of treasures -- letters, photographs, and miscellaneous documents-- that belonged to the Kirby family of Oxford in the early 20th century. Mr. & Mrs. Robert W. Kirby and their family lived on Morris Street. The letters reveal a remarkably close relationship between their son Seth and his mother.

For locals Seth Kirby and his mother, writing letters was a way of communication, entertainment, and bonding. Lots of information about Seth's life and his time at college, and later in France, during 1919 can be gleaned from these letters.

The Kirbys sent Seth to Lehigh University in the fall of 1911 and despite the challenges of college, he never ceased to write to his mother. Seth's letters are filled with candid updates on campus life. Like any other college student, Seth also politely asked his mother for money to pay for his pricey textbooks and a nice suit, even though he admitted to flunking his physics exam!

After graduation, Seth volunteered for the Army but continued to write home regularly. He trained at Camp Devens in Massachusetts and then was shipped overseas to France in 1919, where he was stationed at the end of World War I.



Seth Kirby

Thanks to **Nancy Todd Ruark** for donating these letters. Her parents owned the Oxford home after the Kirbys moved away and fortunately preserved the letters rather than throwing them away.

MORE THAN JUST A CRIBBAGE BOARD

In 1993-94, Oxford resident and woodworker **Thomas Collier, Jr.** decided to build a special coffee table in the shop behind his house at 203 Banks Street. He was a cribbage player and designed the table so that the top would slide open to reveal a hidden cribbage board. Collier had a friend in town named **Howard Lapp**, and he cajoled Howard into participating in the project.

The result was an exceptional collaboration. Slide the top one way to reveal an aerial view of the Colliers home and a winning cribbage hand. Slide it the other way to expose the cribbage board, shaped to follow a map around the Oxford peninsula.

Catherine Spencer of Concord, Massachusetts, recently brought her family to visit Oxford where she had spent many summers with her grandfather Tom on Banks Street. She also brought the table back as a donation to the Oxford Museum. The combination of beautifully finished cherry wood and two hidden paintings by **Howard Lapp** make this a unique and wonderful addition to the Museum's collection. Mr. Collier died in 2008, but Howard remembers him and young Catherine well and was delighted to see the piece back home again.



The special table designed by Thomas Collier with hidden cribbage drawers painted by Howard Lapp.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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The Oxford Museum is sustained by memberships and annual fund gifts and is stewarded by an all-volunteer team of board members, docents, a volunteer executive director and many other volunteers.

To update your membership or make your annual gift please go to the [Museum website](#). THANK YOU

If you are interested in becoming more engaged in the Museum, please ask any Board member about volunteer opportunities and committee work.

And we always need docents to welcome guests at the Museum!

For more information, contact
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