

Friday, July 8, 1910

Very hot day - Papa & Lee over to canal
in Auto - I made the break into the Governor's
canal - connecting the two systems - after
dinner I took the route and swept the
cobwebs in attic & floors & mopped the girls
room to have it ready - if needed -
Mr Lee died at five this eve - Carrie
has been with them every night & most
of days - Had announcement of Lotta
Stedfeldt's marriage to Le Roland J. Lambert
June 30th - at Home 3811. Wheeler St. N. Side

Saturday July 8, 1911.

Hot day - but a happy one to me - to
be rid of Bertha & little girl and Geo.
seems so quiet in the house, but hope
never to be caught in the same net
again - people of ill repute, are
detestable. They went on morning boat
to Plover, Staid at Hermous last night.
Gen, and I have done the work easily
today. Brownie took dinner with me
is cleaning and m

Tuesday, May 28, 2002 rewrite 6/4/02 11:26 AM 6/4/02 5:57 PM

From the desk of Gloria Farrar, 539-8011, fax 537-3776

Proposed text for the Bethany Beach Historical Marker:

Bethany Beach Loop Canal

Completed July 8, 1910, The Loop Canal marked the end of a long journey for vacationers traveling to Bethany Beach in the town's early days.

Arriving in Rehoboth by railroad, travelers would continue their voyage by boat crossing Rehoboth Bay, Indian River Bay, and the U.S. Government (Assawoman) Canal. Originally the final leg of the arduous journey was completed in a two-horse drawn bus through deep sand to the town.

A promised railway never materialized. Between 1907-1910 the Bethany Beach Improvement Company, land developers of the day, and Mr. Addy, who headed up this project, dredged the 1½ mile-long Bethany Canal. This project enabled the visitors to board only one boat for the last phase of the trip.

Since the shallow-draft motorboat the "Allie May, could not back up, a loop was formed here at the First Street dock to allow the boat to turn around for the return trip.

Characters with spaces: 911

Bethany Beach
A Walk Through History

Published by the Bethany Beach Landowners Association as a public service to mark the 75th Anniversary of the Founding of the Town of Bethany Beach, Delaware on July 12, 1901, and in conjunction with the American Revolution Bicentennial. Sanctioned by the Bethany Beach Committee for the Bicentennial, Robert C. Maxwell, Chairman. Reprinted in 1991 by the BBLA, with updated Highlights of Bethany Beach History.



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Landowners Association

Editor

Val Montanari

Research and Narrative

Carolyn Hughes and Val Montanari

Chronology and Research Assistance

Mary Murphy, Branan & Odette May

Printing and Layout Coordination

Rudy G. Larson

Photos loaned by Miss Marjorie Errett, Mr. and

Mrs. C. E. Addy, Harold V. Lang, Clayton L.

Ringler, Sidney A. Bennett

Bethany
Beach 
Delaware.



A Walk
Through History
1901 - 1976

(Highlights Updated to 1991)

The Long Haul

In the old days the trip to Bethany Beach from Washington, D.C. or Pittsburgh, Pa. took fortitude, grit and patience in the face of up to two days of discomfort and even danger. The old Bethany Beach Canal, whose loop end (3) is off Pennsylvania Avenue opposite the foot of First Street, is a reminder of the days when the cottagers' journey to the beach was mostly by rail and waterway.

Once upon a time the canal's loop was the end of the long journey for new arrivals (3A) and for many years the site of the old Addy boat house (3B) where people could rent rowboats.



Today the "Loop Canal" is a pleasant place to crab and catch minnows from the shore or from a boat rowed under the dual highway - but duck your head there! - to the edge of the Salt Pond.

But before the Bethany Beach Canal - in the first few summers for the Addys and the Erretts and the other cottager First Families of the reorganized Improvement Company - the last part of the long journey was even more laborious. Then most came through Rehoboth, though later as highways were developed, some visitors came by rail through Frankford or Dagsboro.

Let Miss Marjorie Errett, earliest summer cottager still living in the area, tell about her first trips to the Beach from a Pittsburgh suburb.

"We came down right after school closed in June. Mother would not travel with six children on a sleeper, so we took the day trip to Baltimore. Without a horse and buggy, we had to walk to our little station. We sent a big trunk ahead but everybody had to carry something. It was a half hour's trip by the Pennsylvania Railroad into Pittsburgh where we got off and had to walk across the river to the B & O station. Father got us a pullman and we loved the all-day trip to

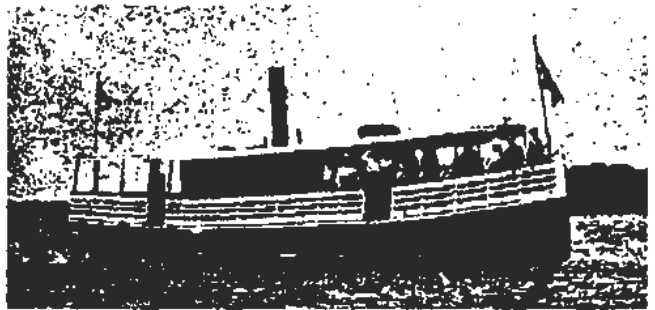
Baltimore. We stayed at a hotel down near the docks so that early in the morning we could walk to the landing to get the boat across the Chesapeake to Love Point."

On the dock at Baltimore, the Pennsylvania voyagers were joined by early cottagers from Washington, such as the families of Miss Katharine Wilfley, daughter of another Founding Father, the Rev. Earle Wilfley, and Mr. Ed Steele, grandson of Mr. Philip Steele who came in 1903. Both still summer in Bethany and Mr. Steele lives in Selbyville "off season."

The Washingtonians would have taken an early-morning train to Baltimore and then a horse-drawn bus to the Light Street docks, as Mr. Steele recalls.

At Love Point after the 3 or 4-hour trip across the Bay, Miss Wilfley reminisces, "we would board a narrow-gauge railroad train for another 3 or 4-hour trip through the Eastern Shore farming country to Rehoboth, right down the main street where the park is now, to the station." The old station building still stands, just off Rehoboth Avenue near the beach. The trip from Love Point on Kent Island to Rehoboth was made over the tracks of the Queen Anne Railroad.

Miss Errett recalls that the families from Pittsburgh and Washington waited at the station for another train bringing people on the main line from Philadelphia. "After they arrived we would get on a big horse drawn bus that would take us back on Rehoboth Avenue to the Lewes-Rehoboth Canal. In the earliest days, we got on a little wood-burning steamer, the Atlantic, which took us



THE STEAMER ATLANTIC ON REHOBOTH BAY.

down the canal, through Rehoboth and Indian River Bays, up White's Creek past where the Topside Restaurant is now, to Pennewell's Landing (37) - that was where the Assawoman Canal starts from White's Creek. There a two-horse bus would be waiting to take us the two miles through deep sand to our house on First

Street. Quite a trip, two full days and we didn't get there till the end of the second day."



Or, as Miss Wilfley puts it, "We had arrived! After a matter of 12 hours on leaving home in Washington, we were at Bethany Beach! No wonder, with trips like that in those days, even as late as 1913, when we went to Bethany Beach, we stayed!" Exhausted on arrival in the late afternoon, the families would promptly go to bed.

There was a different slant on the trip in the brochure of the Bethany Beach Improvement Company promoting the sale of stock and lots: "Passengers from Washington pay \$3.60 for a round-trip ticket good ten days, or \$5 unlimited. There could not be a more picturesque route or a shorter one to the ocean."

These are memories of those who were children then. And the parents? After long, smoky and dusty train rides, squall-tossed boat rides through the shallow inland waterways, and the wagons lurching through the sand and dust - or mud - to Bethany, and what with seasick children, plagues of sand flies and mosquitoes, it was little wonder that often on arrival the mothers - according to one of them - formed "a solid unit against imperiling their and their children's lives another season, no matter the spiritual significance of the summer in our lives." But most of them came back again and again.

One of the first accomplishments of the rejuvenated Bethany Beach Improvement Company before the 1903 summer was to build the boardwalk along the ocean front with three roofed pavilions, and from this walk another to the auditorium in the Church Assembly Grounds. Before that time, "there was no Boardwalk but a multitude of boardwalks," to quote the reminiscences of another brother of Miss Errett, the late Edwin R. Errett. The pavilions, destroyed and rebuilt several times in different locations throughout Bethany's history, have been used

both for family fun and for Town programs such as band concerts. At least once the central pavilion was the site of the annual Town election.

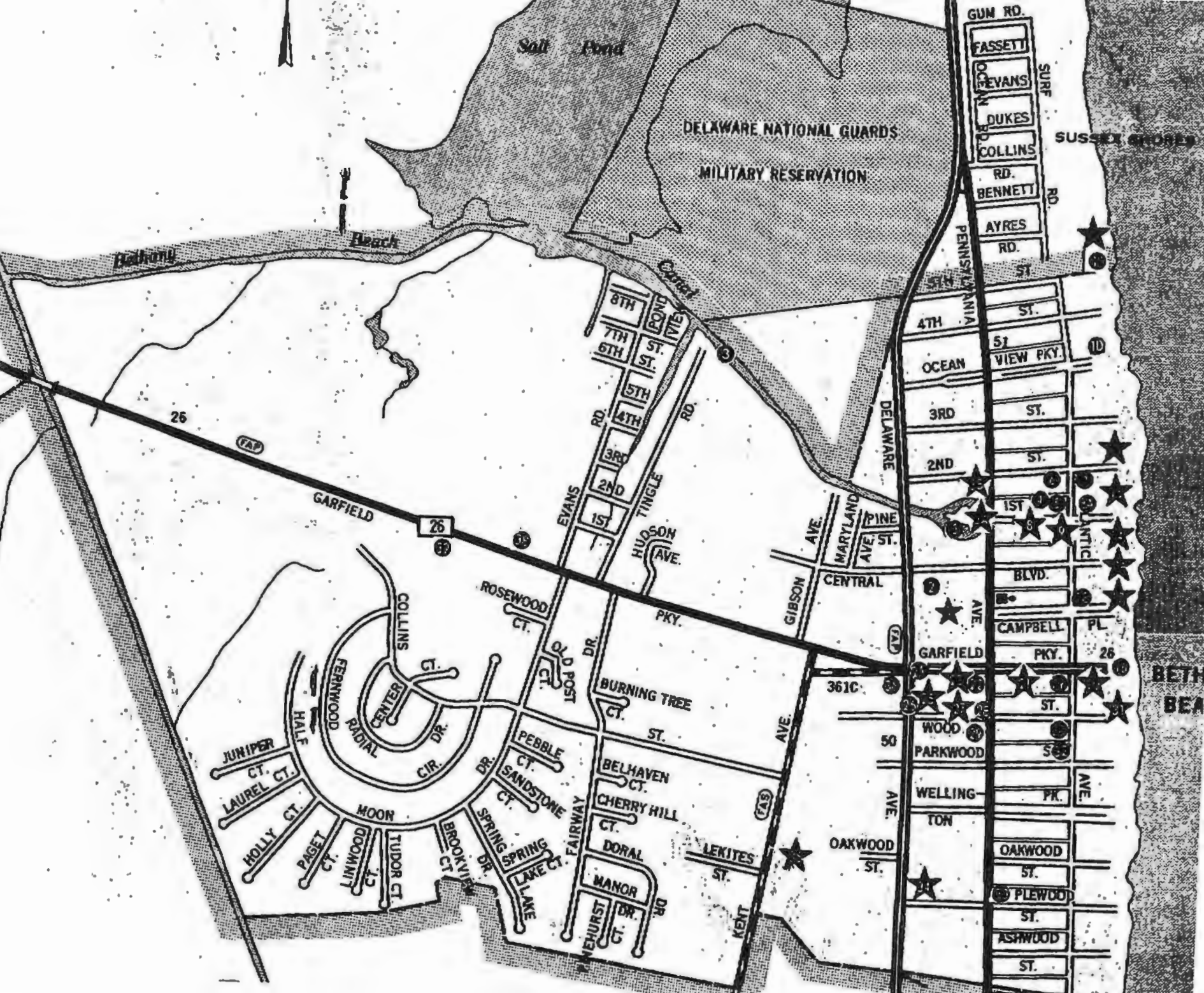
The promised railway never came, but in 1907 the Improvement Company, led by Mr. Addy dredged the Bethany Beach Canal to the Beach from the old Assawoman Canal (then called the U.S. Government Canal).



The new Bethany Beach Canal permitted travelers to come all the way to the Beach in one boat ride from Rehoboth. A shallow-draft motorboat, the Allie May, replaced the old steamer Atlantic for the last leg of the journey. "Often," Miss Wilfley remembers, "the boat was so heavily loaded, we youngsters could dip our hands and feet in the water as we chugged along across Rehoboth Bay, Indian River Bay and the canals."



They chugged up the 1 1/2-mile-long ditch, which still holds water though it's hardly navigable, to the loop at the foot of First Street, cut so the Allie May could turn around for the return voyage. It was a short walk for the cottagers between the boat landing at the end of the loop and their summer homes in the nearby streets.



Salt Pond

DELAWARE NATIONAL GUARDS
MILITARY RESERVATION

SUSSEX GROVES

Bathing Beach

26

GARFIELD

26

8TH ST.
7TH ST.
6TH ST.
5TH ST.
4TH ST.
3RD ST.
2ND ST.
1ST ST.
EVANS RD.
TINGLE RD.
HUDSON AVE.

ROSEWOOD CT.
1500 POST DR.
COLLINS CT.

JUNIPER CT.
LAUREL CT.
HOLLY CT.
PAGET CT.
MOON CT.
TUDOR CT.
LINWOOD CT.
BROOKVIEW CT.
SPRING DR.
FAIRWAY DR.
SANDSTONE CT.
PEBBLE CT.

BURNING TREE CT.
ST.

BELHAVEN CT.
CHERRY HILL CT.
DORAL CT.

LEKITES ST.

OAKWOOD ST.

GIBSON AVE.
MARYLAND AVE.
PINE AVE ST.
CENTRAL

3610
50
PARKWOOD ST.

WELLINGTON

OAKWOOD ST.

PLEWOOD ST.

ASHWOOD ST.

4TH ST.
5TH ST.
OCEAN VIEW PKY.
3RD ST.
2ND ST.
1ST ST.
BLVD.
CAMPBELL PL.
GARFIELD PKY.

FASSETT
EVANS
DUKES
COLLINS
RD.
BENNETT
RD.
AYRES
RD.

PENNSYLVANIA
DELAWARE



BETH BEA

KEY TO MAP

(Numbers as marked on map and also through narrative text in parentheses)

- Existing structures and other features.
- ★ Sites of former structures.

- 1 Site of auditorium known as the "Tabernacle" on the Christian Missionary Society's summer Assembly Grounds, focus of Bethany's beginning and a famous landmark for 60 years.
- 2 Assembly Grounds selected in 1900 by Missionary Society as permanent site for camp meetings.
- 3 Bethany Beach Canal, known as the "Loop Canal" which was built about 1907 so Bethany-bound travelers could come by boat from Rehoboth all the way to Pennsylvania Ave. at the foot of First St.
- 3A Site of landing where arriving and departing travelers disembarked and boarded the motorboat Allie May.
- 3B Site of Addy boat house where crabbers and fishermen could rent boats.
- 4-7 Still-existing cottages of "First Families": 4, Errett cottage (still in family); 5, Kidd cottage; 6, Addy cottage; 7, Latimer.
- 8-9 Sites of Dinker and Cramblett cottages. (See 36)
- 8A Second house built by Dinker family.
- 10 Addy Sea, a hostelry since 1935, built by one of First Families in 1905 as a summer home and used by three generations of that family until its recent sale.
- 11 Pilot House Apartments, former building of the Naval Radio Compass Station.
- 12 Site of U.S. Life Saving Station, later U.S. Coast Guard Station.
- 13 Site of old Seaside Inn, well known hostelry and landmark for 60 years until it was knocked out by the 1962 storm.
- 14-15 Sites of Steele cottage "Maryview," and of bowling alleys, both swept out by the 1962 storm.
- 16 New Bicentennial pavilion-bandstand in center of Boardwalk.
- 17-17A Sites of former Sen. Drexler house and of Graham James house on beach.
- 18 Former Drexler house in present location after three moves away from beach and 90-degree turn.
- 19 "The Clubhouse," formerly a private club near Delaware Ave. (34), moved to present location and now in private use.
- 20 Site of "Drug Store" of the old days.
- 21 Site of elegant "Log Cabin," residence of D.C. France, early Bethany Beach leader.
- 22 The "Wilfley Place," for many years the residence of the Rev. Earle Wilfley family.
- 23 Site of Hargadine house, which went back to Bethany's early days, later part of the property of Mr. W. P. Short and then of the Hargadine family, when it served as the Post Office; destroyed last year.
- 24 Site of first electric plant; present water plant.
- 25 Site of Town Office in pumping station.
- 26 Early cottage, still standing.
- 27 Site of early Dukes cottage.
- 28-29 Cottages of c. 1902 vintage, still surviving in modified form.
- 30 Speare cottage, built by Government official in early 1900's and still the summer residence of his daughter.
- 31 Site of old Sussex Hotel.
- 32 Journey's End, landmark hostelry; used to quarter soldiers serving in anti-aircraft defense in World War II.
- 33 St. Martha's Episcopal Church, established during World War II.
- 34 Original site of "The Clubhouse," now at (19).
- 35 Site or original old school house.
- 36 Present location of former Dinker house, originally at (8).
- 37 Site of Pennewell's Landing, used by early travelers to Bethany Beach to transfer from the steamer "Atlantic" to "The Bus," two-horse carryall which drew them the two miles across the sands to the Beach.
- 38-39 Houses built by Cornelius Hall (grandfather of Mrs. Sidney Bennett) before 1900. (38) is now the rectory of St. Ann's Catholic Church; (39) is a private residence and welding establishment.

Bethany Beach Memoirs



... a long look back

James D. Meehan



etting There Was Not Half the Fun

Nowadays, people motor across the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and, unless they're unfortunate enough to encounter a weekend traffic problem, take the trip pretty much in stride. For those who prefer air travel, there is frequent service to a convenient airport in Salisbury, Maryland.

In the early 1900s, though, getting to Bethany Beach was not a day at the beach — it was a day getting *to* the beach, from almost anywhere outside Delaware. From Pittsburgh, it was a full two-day trip.

For the Erretts, traveling from the Pittsburgh suburb of Carnegie, it took three trains, two boats and three horse-drawn carriages. It began with a half-hour train ride into downtown Pittsburgh to catch a train to Baltimore where they spent the night. The next day, they took a horse-drawn bus to the dock area, where a boat awaited. They then traveled by boat down the Chesapeake Bay to Love Point on the Eastern Shore. From there, it was another train ride across the Peninsula to Lewes, Delaware, where the train backed around and proceeded to the station in Rehoboth Beach. After a wait for the passengers arriving by train from Philadelphia, a carriage took the Erretts to the Lewes-Rehoboth Canal where they took a wood-burning steamer (the *Atlantic*) down the Canal to Pennewell's Landing in Ocean View. From there it was still one more horse-drawn bus ride to Bethany Beach. (This was actually a two-horse bus.)

In 1910, a loop canal was dredged from the Assa-woman Canal to the foot of First Street in Bethany Beach, which eliminated the last bus ride. It was looped because the *Allie May* — a motorboat designed to



traverse shallow waters — couldn't back up

The trip to the shore took the Erretts two full days and a night in Baltimore. It was described by the Erretts and others as completely exhausting. People usually went right to bed after arrival. Memories of the trip included smoky and dusty trains, squall-tossed boat rides through narrow waterways, wagons lurching through sand and dust, plagues of sand flies and mosquitoes, and seasick children.

But they kept coming back.

Note:

Dr. F. D. Power, the Washington religious leader who was the force behind the original settlement, described the trip from Washington in somewhat different terms. Writing for a promotional brochure, Dr. Powers rhapsodized:

"There could not be a more picturesque route or a shorter one to the ocean. By B&O to Baltimore; thence by the fine steamer Princess Anne across the Chesapeake for thirty miles... under the wooded shores of the Isle of Kent to lovely Queenstown, thence for sixty miles by Queen Anne Railroad... to the ancient city of Lewes and the county of Sussex in Delaware; thence through kaleidoscopic scenery of lovely waters, smiling shores, fertile fields, woods, streams, and lily starred lakes; and then the great ocean, with its splendid beach, its surf, its varied scenery, its manifold voices, its majesty and its healing and refreshment."

When the loop canal was built in 1910,
it was cause for celebration



After the loop canal was built, passengers traveled on the Allie May to their final destination. John Addy's son Will was in charge of the loop canal construction, which was completed on July 8, 1910. The tabernacle is visible behind the flag



On a return trip, the Allie May pulls away from the dock.

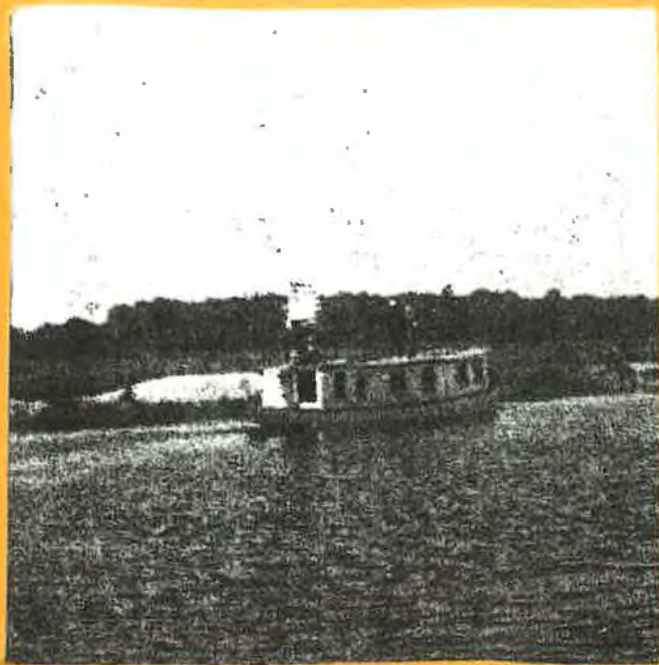
The journey was difficult...but the prospect of
a summer at Bethany Beach made it worthwhile



A crowd of people traverse the boardwalk from First Street to the boat landing.



The crowd awaits the daily boat.



**LOOP CANAL
CENTENNIAL PARK
JULY 11, 2002**

**You are cordially invited to attend the
Closing Ceremonies
of the
Bethany Beach Centennial Year
Thursday, July 11, 2002,
4:00 PM
Loop Canal Centennial Park
Pennsylvania and First Street**

**Reception and Light Refreshments
immediately following in
Town Hall
Invitation only**

**In case of inclement weather the
ceremonies will be held in Town Hall**

RSVP

539-2740

**Penn. Ave. will be closed to vehicle traffic between
First St. & Second St.**

BETHANY BEACH

A BRIEF HISTORY



MICHAEL MORGAN

DELAWARE PUBLIC ARCHIVES

Charleston  London
THE
History
PRESS

BETHANY BEACH

as little as \$10 down with payments of only \$1 per week. In addition to the residential lots, the Christian Church reserved a large area near the center of town to serve as the "Assembly Grounds," where they erected a distinctive auditorium, known as the "Tabernacle" or "the Auditorium."

The octagon-shaped wooden structure was designed with sides that could be opened to allow the sea breeze to cool the audience. Looming over an open field several blocks from the beach, the brown-shingled Tabernacle would become a symbol of Bethany for more than half a century. On Sundays, the building was used for church services; during the rest of the week, the Auditorium hosted Chautauqua lectures, political meetings, musical presentations and other events. In 1905, Power commented on the programs held in the Tabernacle that year:

E. Cramblet, of Bethany, and his illustrated lectures on the Holy Land. The service rendered by President Cramblet was of a high order and gave eminent satisfaction...Mrs. Princess Long come on July 21-26 with her splendid concerts and solos. Her evenings were largely attended and she received the unstinted praise which everywhere and always comes to this sweet singer in Israel. Wallace Tharp was with us the second week and that sermon "The Withered Hand" and lecture on "Babylon" will long



Princess Long's concerts in the Auditorium were well received by the people of Bethany. *Courtesy of the Town of Bethany Beach.*

Bethany Blossoms at the Beach

linger in the memories of our visitors. The Doctor is not only a skillful fisher of men, but knows how to throw a line in the briny deep and play an ocean trout, or write a sonnet with equal dexterity and beauty.

Some of the lectures held in the Tabernacle were illustrated with lantern slides. Power noted, "A.E. Zeigler, of Wheeling, made his debut at the beach as a stereopticon entertainer, and his pictures and descriptions were full of interest."

In addition to these lectures, slide shows and other entertainment, the Auditorium was used to show some of the first motion pictures at the beach. Movies as a form of mass entertainment were in their infancy, and most films were only about ten minutes long. Power, however, reported, "Nothing takes quite so well with our rural patronage and with the youngsters as the moving pictures."

THE LONG, LONG ROAD TO BETHANY BEACH

Bethany Beach may have opened with a bang, but the resort was perched on an isolated stretch of the Delaware coast. The dirt road that followed the



After a long journey to Bethany, some vacationers enjoyed riding on the beach. *Courtesy of the Town of Bethany Beach.*

BETHANY BEACH

old Native American trails to the beach was bone-jarringly bumpy in dry weather and a muddy quagmire in the rain. Getting to Bethany was difficult for residents of Dagsboro, Frankfort and other southern Delaware towns; for vacationers who lived in more distant cities, reaching the new resort to enjoy the surf, sea breezes and speeches at the Tabernacle required a major expedition. Not only did vacationers come from Washington, Baltimore and Philadelphia, but Bethany also attracted many visitors from Pittsburgh, Johnstown and other midwestern cities.

In the early twentieth century, when many vacationers at Bethany came from the Pittsburgh area, they began their journey to the beach by packing an assortment of trunks and suitcases with enough clothes, hats and shoes for an extended visit. In addition to the necessities, there were also books, toys and an occasional pet. In the early days of the resort, the proportion of people who stayed for the season was very high. After the luggage was packed, many families boarded a horse and carriage for a ride to the train station. At the beginning of the twentieth century, many cities were served by electric streetcars, and the Bethany-bound vacationers may have hoisted their luggage onto a streetcar bound to a railroad station. Others began their journey by packing their luggage aboard a horse-drawn carriage to ride to the railroad station, where they boarded a train for the first leg of their trek.

The train chugged eastward out of the mountains to Baltimore, where the travelers stayed overnight. In the morning, the vacationers from Pennsylvania joined others from Washington and Baltimore in Baltimore's Inner Harbor, where they boarded a steamer. As they sailed down the Patapsco River and the steamboat reached the Chesapeake Bay, it turned south, crossed the bay and landed at Love Point on the northern tip of Kent Island.

After the two-and-a-half-hour boat ride, all of the luggage, suitcases and other paraphernalia needed for a stay at the beach was unloaded from the steamer and hoisted aboard a train for the trip across the Delmarva Peninsula. Aboard the train, passengers rode in spacious cars that featured comfortable upholstered seats. Open windows allowed for a constant flow of fresh air, which was usually peppered with cinders and ashes that spewed from the engine's smokestack. The passenger cars had no air conditioning, and train passengers had to ride with the windows opened, allowing the smoky debris to infiltrate the cars. At the end of the train ride, vacationers took a few minutes to beat the soot and ashes from their clothes.

The train ride across the Delmarva Peninsula ended at Rehoboth Beach, where the vacationers again loaded their trunks, suitcases and other bags onto a horse-drawn bus that took them to a landing on the Lewes and Rehoboth

Bethany Blossoms at the Beach



Pennewell's Landing at Ocean View was one stop on the way to Bethany. *Courtesy of the Town of Bethany Beach.*



The bus carried vacationers to Bethany beach. *Courtesy of the Town of Bethany Beach.*

Canal. There they boarded a small boat for the trip southward across Rehoboth and Indian River Bays to Pennewell's Landing in Ocean View.

After the boat reached Ocean View, the luggage and vacationers were again transferred to another horse-drawn bus for the ride into Bethany

BETHANY BEACH



Visitors to Bethany on their way to meet the boat at the Loop Canal. *Courtesy of the Town of Bethany Beach.*

Beach. By 1910, the "Loop Canal" was dug so that boats could steam directly into the center of the resort. From the landing at the foot of First Street at Pennsylvania Avenue, vacationers made the last, short leg of their trip across the sandy streets to their accommodations for the summer.

Dr. Power did not exaggerate when he wrote of these determined visitors: "Out of the dust and grime they come, and lead themselves to the waves for a thorough washing, and off comes the soot and soil from the bodies and down come the cobwebs from the brains and we send them back born again."

At that time, Rehoboth, Delaware, Ocean City, Maryland and Atlantic City, New Jersey, had excellent rail connections with the big cities, and trains carried thousands of vacationers to the beach every summer. Bethany Beach had no rail connection, and there was little prospect that it would ever have one. About 1904, the *Bethany Herald* proudly published a little ditty:

*Ocean City has one railroad,
Rehoboth two can claim;
Bethany Beach has none at all,
But we get there just the same.*

Bethany Blossoms at the Beach

BETHANY BUILDS

The trip to Bethany Beach may have been cumbersome, but vacationers continued to make their way to the resort. Some of these visitors liked the area so much that they decided to call Bethany their home. In 1910, the U.S. census put the town's population at fifty-six permanent residents, many



In the early years, there were wide tracts of sand between the houses. *Courtesy of the Town of Bethany Beach.*



William Errett, enjoying the porch of his home. *Courtesy of the Town of Bethany Beach.*

BETHANY BEACH



One of the most popular boats was the *Allie May*, a small steamboat that could navigate some of the shallows found in the coastal bays. *Courtesy of the Town of Bethany Beach.*

As picturesque as the small steamers that carried vacationers down the Loop Canal into town were, their capacity was limited, and they were being challenged by the growing popularity of cars. Although horseless carriages had been around for over a decade and were constantly being improved, driving to Bethany meant negotiating miles of deeply rutted, unpaved roads. To rectify the sorry state of Delaware roads, wealthy Delaware businessman T. Colman du Pont, proposed building a modern, hard-surfaced highway from Selbyville to Wilmington and presented it to the state as his gift. When the state law authorizing the acceptance of this generous offer was challenged in court, it appeared that Delaware roads might remain in their medieval condition. In 1913, however, the *Bethany Beach Booster* was able to report:

The Supreme Court of Delaware has decided that the DuPont Boulevard law is constitutional. Go ahead, Boulevard! Everything leads toward Bethany Beach, the leading Christian seaside resort in the country.

Bethany Blossoms at the Beach



Early Ocean View motorists ready for a Sunday drive. *Courtesy of the Ocean View Historical Society.*

The news of this decision was happily received at the Breakers, where former state senator Drexler and his family usually had a house full of people. Drexler delighted in taking his guests boating and fishing, but his passion was driving visitors around the sandy coastal roads in his car. In August 1913, a meeting was convened in Rehoboth Beach to organize the Sussex County Automobile Association, and Drexler was eager to attend; however, the wild dunes between Rehoboth and Bethany were too formidable for any car to navigate. Drexler was forced to attend the car conference by boat.

In some Delaware communities, cars were becoming common. By 1910, there were so many cars in Lewes that the town council imposed a speed limit of eight miles per hour for all cars operating on the town's streets. In addition, the town council mandated that all cars had to be equipped with a light for night driving and that drivers were required to blow their horns at every intersection.

Although the leaders of Lewes had to contend with the growing number of automobiles on the town's streets, Bethany Beach had no such problem. As Senator Drexler (who was from Pittsburgh) was well aware, it took an intrepid traveler to reach Bethany. Construction on the Du Pont Highway had barely begun in 1913 when Drexler and other automobile owners met in Rehoboth. Drexler's inability to travel from Bethany to Rehoboth by car highlighted the need for a road that linked the two seaside resorts,

and whatever embarrassment his arrival by boat may have generated was dispelled by the growing popularity of cars. One day, Drexler believed, there would be a road across the dunes linking Bethany and Rehoboth.

Although highway construction in Delaware was slowed by the American entry into World War I, by the 1920s cars had become commonplace on Delaware roads; however, there was still no link between the seaside resorts. In the 1920s, the completion of the Du Pont Highway allowed more vacationers to drive to the beach, and Drexler continued to push for the construction of a hard-surfaced road along the coast. Twenty years later, that dream became a reality, and the *Delaware Coast News* reported:

It was Senator Drexler's own dream, and regardless of what personal interest he may have had in the project, it was a far-sighted glimpse which looked into many tomorrows when suitable ocean sites will be at a premium. About thirteen miles of Senator Drexler's dream has come true.

The *Bethany Beach Booster* had recognized his tenacity in 1913:

Former Senator Drexler, the Bull Moose leader of Delaware, is still at the beach. The Bosses have not driven him away yet. The young Napoleon from Muddy Neck at the next election should be sent back to Dover by all manner of means. He, while there before, showed the people that no boss, corporation, or railroad could control his action when the best interests of the people were at stake. Independence in our representative is what is wanted and needed. Drexler has lately proven a godsend to Bethany Beach people.

It would take many years, but as the roads improved, visitors to Bethany Beach would not have to contend with trains, boats and carriages to reach the resort. The shift in transportation would mean that Bethany would one day become a thriving resort for hundreds of thousands of vacationers.

Although that transformation would be slow in coming, the *Booster* announced another pending change in 1913 that would take a steady hand from the community:

Capt. and Mrs. Vickers are still at the Life-Saving Station. Their house, lately built in Georgetown, Del., has been furnished and is ready for occupancy when the Captain concludes to leave the Government service.

Keeper Vickers belonged to a generation of lifesavers who braved wind and weather to assist those on ships in distress. By the time Drexler was driving on the sands of Bethany Beach, Guglielmo Marconi had invented a rudimentary radio system that was the forerunner of a variety of changes that would alter life in the coastal communities. Marconi's early wireless system was capable of transmitting only the dots and dashes of Morse code, and it seemed best suited to improve shipboard communication. By the first decade of the twentieth century, many large ships had been equipped with wireless telegraph equipment, and a series of wireless stations had been established along the Atlantic coast—including one at Bethany Beach.

The wireless station in the resort was part of a radio navigation system that enabled captains to ascertain their positions as they made their way along the coast. When a captain nearing the entrance to Delaware Bay would broadcast his call sign, it was picked up by the stations at Bethany, Cape Henlopen and Cape May. At each station, the wireless crew noted the compass heading of the incoming signal. The three headings were relayed to the Cape Henlopen station, where the crew used a map and pieces of string to plot the direction of each signal. The three strings intersected at the vessel's location, which could be relayed to the captain of the ship.

The wireless station at Bethany remained part of the radio compass system for a number of years. During that time, the reception of "dot dot dot, dash dash dash, dot dot dot" of an SOS caused the wireless operators to spring into action to save a ship in distress. Eventually, the development of more sophisticated equipment made the wireless station obsolete, and it was abandoned. As the demands of the modern world grew, the old Life-Saving Service became part of the Coast Guard, and many surfmen and keepers, such as Washington Vickers, retired to a more leisurely life.

DEDICATION



Val Montanari



Carolyn Hughes

This book is dedicated to the memory of Valerio Riccardo Montanari (1912–1998) to honor his many years of service to Bethany Beach and the Bethany Beach Landowners Association. After serving in the Navy in World War II, Val worked for *The Washington Post* and then, from 1950 to 1975, with the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Foreign Service.

As a homeowner in Bethany Beach, he devoted his time and talents to the Bethany Beach Landowners Association and to the history of Bethany Beach. He edited the first edition of this booklet, *A Walk Through History*, in 1976, and, along with Carolyn Hughes, developed the booklet's text and narrative. He was instrumental in founding Bethany's first museum and served as the official town historian.

During his time in Bethany, Val served as president of the landowners association and editor/writer for its newsletter. His abundant service to this organization, and to the community BBLA has served so well over its forty-five years, continues to be an inspiration to all of us who believe in the value of an independently well-informed citizenry.

When Val's daughters, Susan and Wendy, learned that BBLA was reissuing this booklet after thirteen years, they made a very generous donation to BBLA, in memory of their father, which has enabled us to modernize its format while keeping faith with Val's love of Bethany, its history, and its future.

While preparing this edition of the booklet, we learned of the death of Carolyn Bell Hughes, who had worked with Val on the first three editions of *A Walk Through History*. Another veteran of *The Washington Post*, Carolyn had a historian's natural love of this town and served on BBLA's board of directors, helped form Bethany's original historical association, and served on the town's Cultural and Historical Affairs Committee. She had married into the Hughes family, owners of Journey's End, a very special place and an important part of Bethany's history, built by Bess Christian of Arlington, Virginia, in 1927.

Bethany Beach, Delaware

A WALK THROUGH HISTORY 1901–2014



Fourth Edition

A Publication of the Bethany Beach Landowners Association

TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES AND *Solutions*

IN THE BEGINNING, the trip to Bethany Beach from the Nation's Capital or Pittsburgh took fortitude, grit, and patience in the face of up to two days of discomfort and even danger. The cottagers' journey to the beach was mostly by rail and waterway.

The writers of the first *Walk Through History* were fortunate in that they were able to obtain the recollections of people who had made the trip as youngsters in the first summers. Here's how Miss Marjorie Errett remembered the journey from near Pittsburgh. "We came down right after school closed in June. Mother would not travel with six children on a sleeper, so we took the day trip to Baltimore. Without a horse and buggy, we had to walk to our little station. We sent a big trunk ahead, but everybody had to carry something. It was a half hour's trip by the Pennsylvania Railroad into Pittsburgh where we got off and had to walk across the river to the B & O station. Father got us a Pullman, and we loved the all-day trip to Baltimore. We stayed at a hotel down near the docks so that early in the morning we could walk to the landing to get the boat across the Chesapeake to Love Point."



Rehoboth Station

On the dock at Baltimore, the Pennsylvania voyagers were joined by early cottagers from Washington, such as the families of Miss Katherine Wilfrey, daughter of Rev. Earle Wilfrey, and Ed Steele, grandson of Philip Steele, who came to Bethany in 1903. The Washingtonians had taken an early-morning train to Baltimore and then a horse-drawn bus to the Light Street docks.

At Love Point after the three- or four-hour trip down and across the Bay, Miss Wilfrey reminisced, "We would board a narrow-gauge railroad train for another three- or four-hour trip through the Eastern Shore farming country, to Rehoboth, right down Main Street, where the park is now, to the station." Visitors to Rehoboth today can find the little station near the icehouse a mile or so back from its earlier location near the Rehoboth boardwalk.

Families from Pittsburgh and Washington waited at the Rehoboth station for another train bringing people on the main line from Philadelphia. Miss Errett continues, "After they arrived we would get on a big horse-drawn bus that would take us back on Rehoboth Avenue to the Lewes-Rehoboth Canal. In the earliest days we got on a little wood-burning steamer, the *Atlantic*, which took us down the canal, through Rehoboth and Indian River Bays up White's Creek to Pennewell's Landing—that was where the Assawoman Canal starts from White's Creek. There a two-horse bus would be waiting to take us the two miles through deep sand to our house on First Street. Quite a trip, two full days and we didn't get there till the end of the second day."

At least one of the mothers of these first families had a franker opinion of the trip. After long smoky and dusty train rides, squall-tossed boat rides through the shallow inland waterways, and the

THE LOOP CANAL

One of the key improvements made by the new leadership was the digging of the Bethany Beach Loop Canal, a four-year project that greatly improved the last leg of arduous travel. The Bethany Beach Improvement Company dug a waterway, a ditch one and one-half miles long, from the Assawoman Canal (at a spot behind the present Lake Bethany community) to First Street in Bethany, a block from the beach to the east and the Assembly Grounds to the south. The new Bethany Beach Canal permitted travelers to come all the way to town in one boat ride from Rehoboth. John Addy and his colleagues opened the canal in 1910.

A shallow-draft motorboat, the *Allie May*, replaced the old steamer *Atlantic* for the last leg of the journey. The loop feature of the canal was added because the *Allie May's* engine did not permit it to back up. "Often," Miss Wilfrey remembered, "the boat was so heavily loaded, we youngsters could dip our hand and feet in the water as we chugged along across Rehoboth Bay, Indian River Bay and the canals." The canal fell into disuse when Route 26 was extended by the State of Delaware all the way to the Atlantic in the 1920s. In 2010 the National Register of Historic Places honored the Loop Canal by making it Bethany Beach's first place so recognized.



REMINISCENCES OF EARLY SUMMERS IN *Bethany Beach*

WHILE THE PIONEERING FAMILIES had their share of what some would consider inconveniences, hard work, or even hardships, there were also simple pleasures and fun for the finding. Of course, there was the beach (what else?), but wary of the strong sun, they did not sunbathe as now, and the women, fully covered, often carried black umbrellas there or took a dip early before the sun became too strong. For the youngest, the ocean was for "bathing" once a day at noontime, followed by the main meal of the day in the early afternoon because it was easier to cook, serve, and eat by daylight than by the light of candles and oil lamps that served for years.

"We lived very simply, really, but well," said Miss Errett, who first came to Bethany at age six when the family cottage was being completed. "My mother was a good cook, with one of those three-burner oil stoves put out by Standard Oil. We had good vegetables, fruit, chickens, and eggs brought by farmers in wagons over the sand from Ocean View." With no roads for many of those early years, salt hay was spread over the sands on the wagon routes to keep the wheels from sinking.

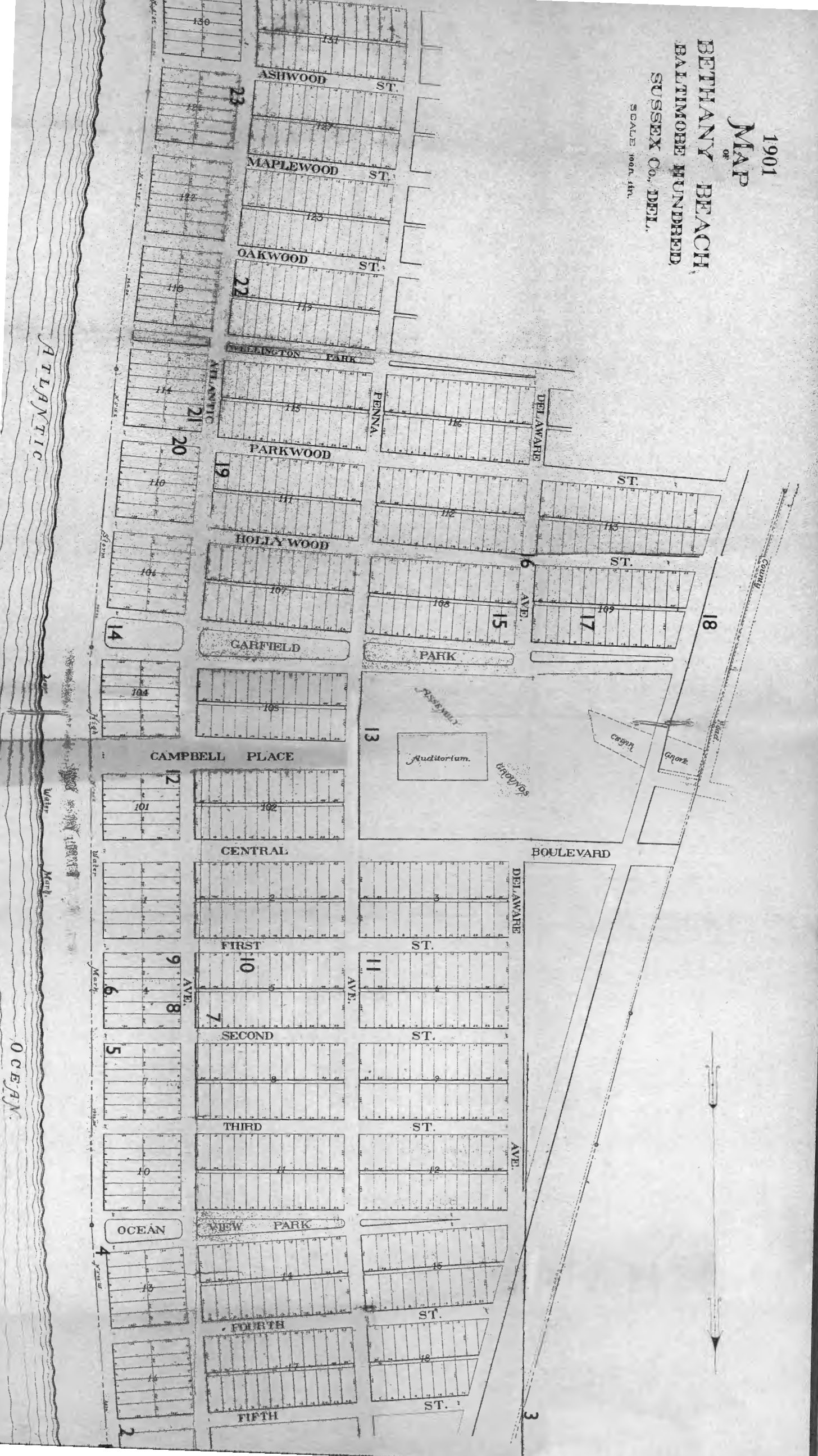
"If the farm people didn't have what we wanted one day, they would take orders and come back with it the next day. There were two little grocers who came down by horse and buggy from Ocean View who did the same thing. The mothers knew them all. The farmers also collected our garbage.



1901
MAP

BETHANY BEACH
BALTIMORE HUNDRED
SUSSEX CO., DEL.

SCALE 100 ft. = 1 in.



Bethany Beach Memoirs

... a long look back



by

JAMES D. MEEHAN



published by

HAROLD E. DUKES, JR.



Getting There Was Not Half the Fun



Nowadays, people motor across the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and, unless they're unfortunate enough to encounter a weekend traffic problem, take the trip pretty much in stride. For those who prefer air travel, there is frequent service to a convenient airport in Salisbury, Maryland.

In the early 1900s, though, getting to Bethany Beach was not a day at the beach — it was a day getting *to* the beach, from almost anywhere outside Delaware. From Pittsburgh, it was a full two-day trip.

For the Erretts, traveling from the Pittsburgh suburb of Carnegie, it took three trains, two boats and three horse-drawn carriages. It began with a half-hour train ride into downtown Pittsburgh to catch a train to Baltimore where they spent the night. The next day, they took a horse-drawn bus to the dock area, where a boat awaited. They then traveled by boat down the Chesapeake Bay to Love Point on the Eastern Shore. From there, it was another train ride across the Peninsula to Lewes, Delaware, where the train backed around and proceeded to the station in Rehoboth Beach. After a wait for the passengers arriving by train from Philadelphia, a carriage took the Erretts to the Lewes-Rehoboth Canal where they took a wood-burning steamer (the *Atlantic*) down the Canal to Pennewell's Landing in Ocean View. From there it was still one more horse-drawn bus ride to Bethany Beach. (This was actually a two-horse bus.)

In 1910, a loop canal was dredged from the Assawoman Canal to the foot of First Street in Bethany Beach, which eliminated the last bus ride. It was looped because the *Allie May* — a motorboat designed to



traverse shallow waters — couldn't back up.

The trip to the shore took the Erretts two full days and a night in Baltimore. It was described by the Erretts and others as completely exhausting. People usually went right to bed after arrival. Memories of the trip included smoky and dusty trains, squall-tossed boat rides through narrow waterways, wagons lurching through sand and dust, plagues of sand flies and mosquitoes, and seasick children.

But they kept coming back.

Note:

Dr. F. D. Power, the Washington religious leader who was the force behind the original settlement, described the trip from Washington in somewhat different terms.

Writing for a promotional brochure, Dr. Powers rhapsodized:

"There could not be a more picturesque route or a shorter one to the ocean. By B&O to Baltimore: thence by the fine steamer Princess Anne across the Chesapeake for thirty miles...under the wooded shores of the Isle of Kent to lovely Queenstown, thence for sixty miles by Queen Anne Railroad... to the ancient city of Lewes and the county of Sussex in Delaware; thence through kaleidoscopic scenery of lovely waters, smiling shores, fertile fields, woods, streams, and lily starred lakes; and then the great ocean, with its splendid beach, its surf, its varied scenery, its manifold voices, its majesty and its healing and refreshment."

“...smoky and dusty trains, squall-tossed
boat rides...sand and dust, plagues of sand
flies and mosquitoes...seasick children”

from Errett memoirs



*Another view of the
Rehoboth train station
showing the various
carriages and the
crowd, which had to
wait for the train to
Philadelphia.*



*The Atlantic, a wood-burning steamer, took its passengers from
Rehoboth to Pennewell's Landing in Ocean View.*



*The Atlantic, arrives at Pennewell's Landing...
not a particularly picturesque spot.*



Scene inside the Atlantic, crossing Rehoboth Bay



The arrival of the bus at the Errett cottage

When the loop canal was built in 1910,
it was cause for celebration



After the loop canal was built, passengers traveled on the Allie May to their final destination. John Addy's son Will was in charge of the loop canal construction, which was completed on July 8, 1910. The tabernacle is visible behind the flag.



On a return trip, the Allie May pulls away from the dock.

☺☺

Note. Everything written previously about the Loop Canal refers to 1907 as the date of completion. Thanks to Martha Jean Addy, who was able to locate Mrs. John W. Addy's diary, and correspondence between John Addy and his son, William, there is indisputable evidence that the year was, in fact, 1910

☺☺



The Allie May wasn't fancy but she was a thing of beauty to Bethany Beachers.

In 1912, the Helen Marie II replaced the Allie May. It was probably a sad day for many.

The journey was difficult...but the prospect of a summer at Bethany Beach made it worthwhile



A crowd of people traverse the boardwalk from First Street to the boat landing.



The crowd awaits the daily boat.



Waving goodbye to friends departing on the Allie May.



Different boats began to appear at the boat landing. In the background is the Bellevue-Atlantic Hotel, soon to become the Seaside Inn.

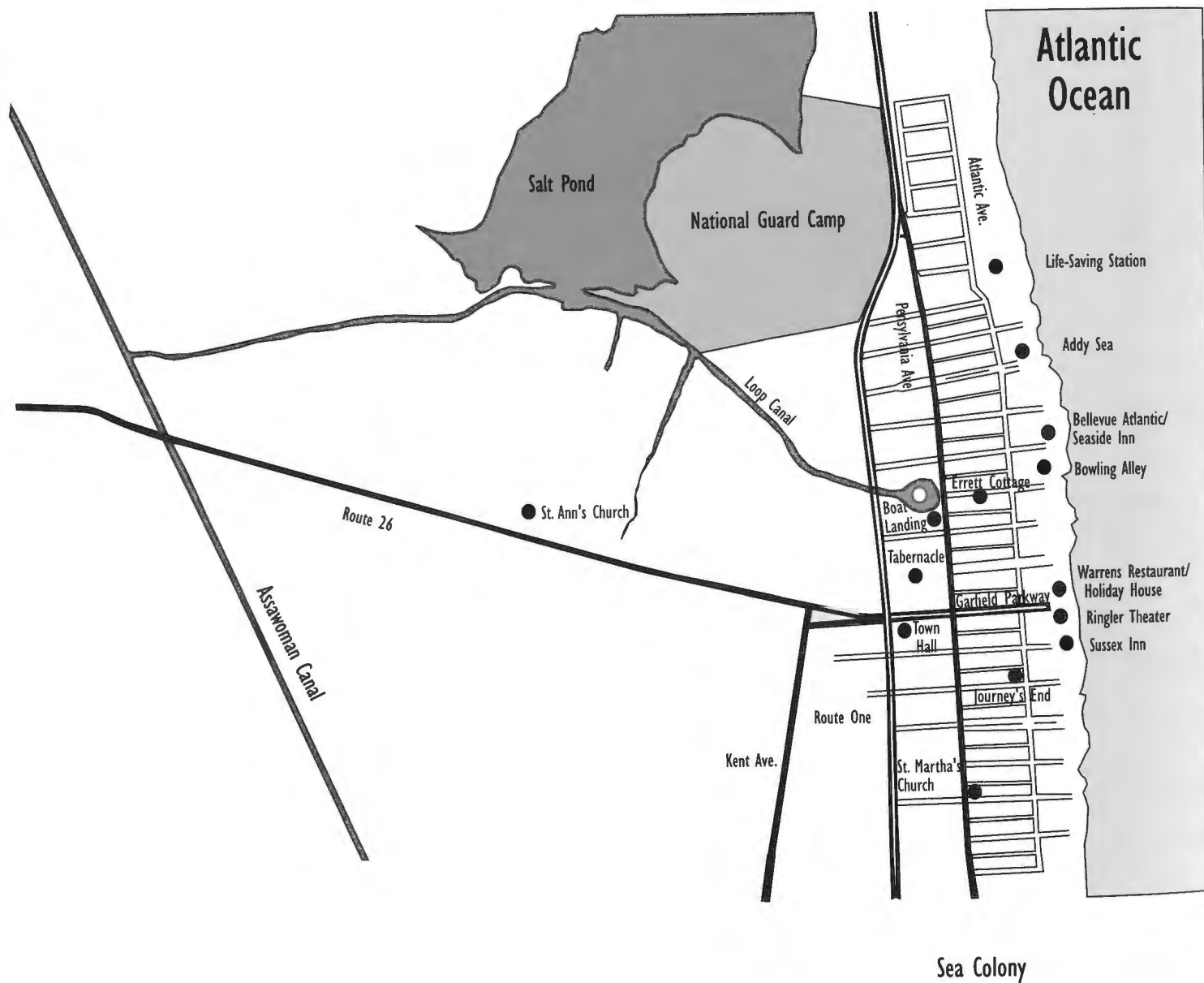
This crowd looks unusually somber. Friends must be going home.





Appendix

Bethany Beach Locater Map



Important Dates

- 1898 • Missionary Society adopts suggestion of Dr. F. D. Power, Washington minister, to seek permanent assembly site on the Delmarva coast.
- 1898 • Fire Station built on Hollywood Street.
- 1900 • Missionary Society selects site near Ocean View; Bethany Beach named; Bethany Beach Improvement Company is formed, buys land, lays out streets and sells 150 lots.
- 1901 • Town is founded with temporary government.
- 1902 • Improvement Company inaction causes church leaders and lot holders to effect reorganization of Improvement Company through purchase by six Pittsburgh businessmen.
- 1902 • March storm knocks out boardwalk, pavilion, Seaside Hotel, bowling alley and many homes, causes tremendous destruction.
- 1903 • Improvement Company improves transportation, builds boardwalk and completes auditorium known as "The Tabernacle."
- 1903 • New Bethany Beach post office dedicated.
- 1904 • Branch post office established by Ocean View postmaster.
- 1904 • Branch of Baltimore Trust Company is opened...Bethany Beach's first bank.
- 1907 • Life-saving Station built.
- 1909 • Town of Bethany Beach incorporated. Life-saving Station becomes Coast Guard Station.
- 1909 • Sewer system installed, streets repaved.
- 1923 • Ringler's Theatre built on boardwalk.
- 1924 • First lighting plant built by W. P. Short to light town hall and two street lamps.
- 1924 • The second span of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge opens.
- 1926 • Electric plant bought by Town for \$635. Garbage now being collected.
- 1926 • Parking meters installed downtown and in beach areas.
- 1931 • Bowling alley built on boardwalk between First and Second Streets.
- 1931 • Sculptor Peter Toth's Indian statue dedicated on December 22.
- 1933 • August hurricane causes considerable damage.
- 1934 • First road, dirt-surfaced, opened between Rehoboth Beach and Bethany Beach.
- 1934 • Bandstand constructed on boardwalk for musical and cultural events.
- 1940 • Government paves highway from Rehoboth Beach to south of Bethany Beach.
- 1944 • Mid-September storm destroys boardwalk, theatre and pavilion.
- 1946 • Water service extended to all Bethany Beach residents.
- 1948 • Volunteer Fire Company organized, First engine purchased for \$350.
- 1952 • Chesapeake Bay Bridge opened.
- 1956 • Fire Station built on Hollywood Street.
- 1962 • March storm knocks out boardwalk, pavilion, Seaside Hotel, bowling alley and many homes, causes tremendous destruction.
- 1965 • New Bethany Beach post office dedicated.
- 1966 • Branch of Baltimore Trust Company is opened...Bethany Beach's first bank.
- 1970 • New town hall and police station dedicated.
- 1973 • The second span of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge opens.
- 1974 • Parking meters installed downtown and in beach areas.
- 1975 • Sewer system installed, streets repaved.
- 1976 • Bethany-Fenwick Area Chamber of Commerce organized; 33 members attend first meeting.
- 1976 • Sculptor Peter Toth's Indian statue dedicated on December 22.
- 1976 • Bandstand constructed on boardwalk for musical and cultural events.
- 1982 • Holiday House gets ABC license; town & landowners file suit.
- 1986 • Hurricane Gloria wrecks northern part of boardwalk, causes other damage in town.
- 1988 • Historical exhibition opens.
- 1989 • Replenishment project raises beach level 2-10 feet, widens beach by 100 feet.
- 1992 • Devastating wind storm hits beach, ripping boardwalk from its piling.
- 1994 • South Coastal Library opens January 17 on Kent Avenue.
- 1995 • "Concerts at the Beach" programs inaugurated.
- 1996 • Groundbreaking ceremony for new municipal building and community center (town hall) on September 11.
- 1997 • New town hall dedicated on May 24.
- 1997 • Declared the warmest year on record.
- 1997 • Bethany Beach Historical Association established on October 24.
- 1998 • Back-to-back nor'easters - on January 28 and February 4 cause tremendous damage to beach areas.



Foreword

For over ninety years, the Town of Bethany Beach has provided a tranquil and wholesome atmosphere for its full-time residents and for families who visit each summer for recreation and relaxation. Generations of families have been returning to Bethany Beach for years to enjoy the family-oriented ambience and seasonal amenities.

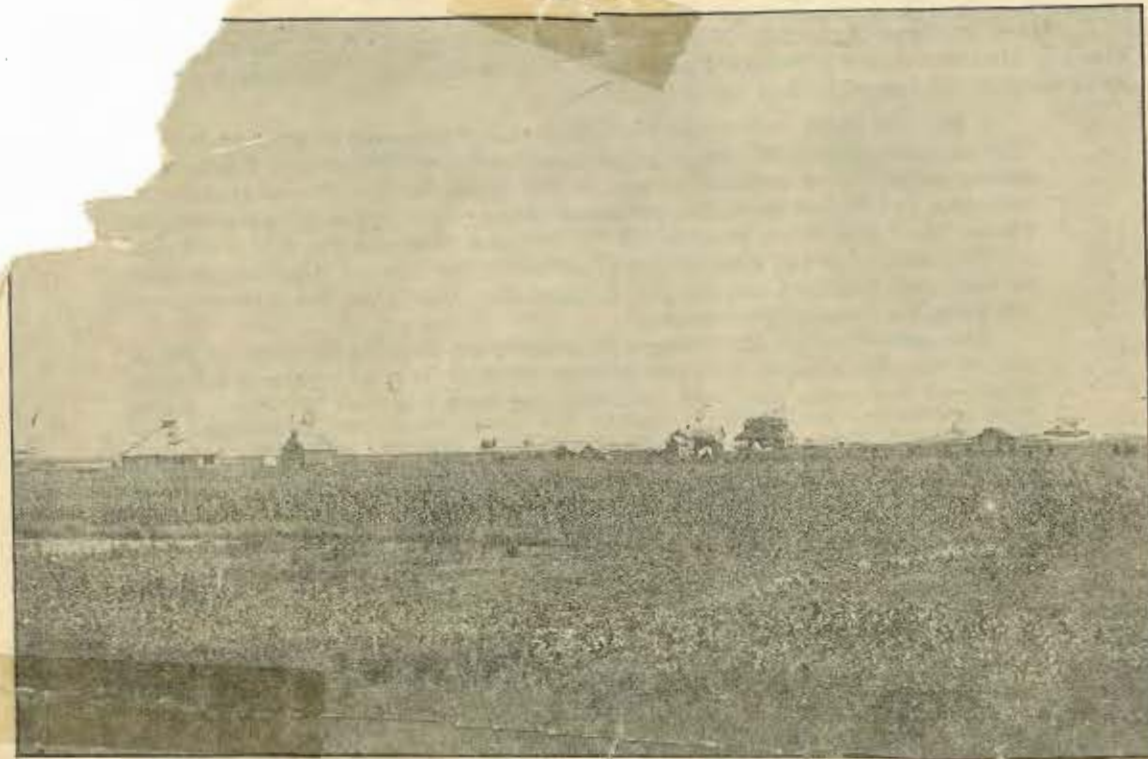
In serving the people as elected officials for the past several years, we have had the opportunity to see what it is that really makes Bethany Beach a special place. We have discovered that this sort of place just doesn't happen by accident. It takes a lot of nurturing by people who care about community and family values. Through the years, despite the pressures stemming from the extensive growth and development in nearby areas, the people of Bethany Beach have worked diligently to preserve the quality of life established by the town's founders. Their efforts have been rewarded with a community that has retained its friendly, family-oriented character over the years.

One of the reasons for this success is that every person who is elected to an office in Bethany Beach knows that his or her primary responsibility is to preserve Bethany's special quality of life. We are proud to be a part of this process and we are pleased to be a part of this book, which chronicles the history of Bethany Beach, a story well worth telling.

Finally, we want to give special thanks and recognition to Mr. Harold E. Dukes for originating the idea of this book and to Mr. James D. Meehan for his thorough investigatory efforts in compiling the information contained herein.

Joseph F. McHugh
Mayor 1997-Present

Charles J. Bartlett
Mayor 1991-1997



BETHANY BEACH--LOOKING TOWARD THE OCEAN.

BETHANY BEACH.

C. L. THURGOOD, PITTSBURG, PA.

Come, Muse of the Ocean, and teach me to sing
 Whence from Bethany Beach its beauties do spring;
 For thousands of others would woo thy white shore
 If the blessings of Bethany could be laid at their door.
 So, Muse of the Ocean, triumphantly ride
 In thy white-crested chariot, with me by thy side,
 Now enchant me to tell in words that will woo
 The thousands from cities thy Kingdom to view.
 O, Bay of Rehoboth, thy width is thy charm,
 Whilst thy depth lacks a fathom thou'rt free from alarm,
 Thou kissest the river where the Indian of yore,
 The Delaware warrior beached his bark on its shore.
 Now into the stream that has White for a name,
 Lands the steamer Atlantic (yet humble her frame),
 Away in the wagon we pass Ocean View,

A village poetic, with inhabitants few.
 Hooray for the sight of that dear octagon
 Where disciples do meet and lost souls are won.
 Sweet is the air from oak, cedar and pine,
 When the wind blows seaward on days that are fine.

Now soon to the beach and dunes on the shore,
 We greet the Atlantic, ne'er ending its roar:
 So, with a hip and hooray, we hurry to greet
 Old Neptune's white horses: we him run to meet,
 Our feet touch the sands, on velvet we tread
 And "The bathing's delicious", 'tis all that was said.
 The timid and trembling, the child and the babe
 Can bow to the billows and not be afraid.

Away to the North and away to the South
 The breezes are sweethearts that e'er tick your mouth,
 The sky and the land in conspiracy meet
 In joy so abounding as to lighten your feet,
 And best of all comforts, with dear friends and true,
 New Bethany, Beach Bethany invites yours and you.

Have You a Spare Dollar?

Invest! Invest! Invest!

NOTHING BETTER IN THE MARKET—A chance for every Man, Woman and Child to
 Make a Good Investment.

Stock in Bethany Beach Improvement Company

ONLY ONE DOLLAR PER SHARE

You can invest \$1.00, \$10.00, \$20.00 or \$100.00 in a splendid enterprise.

The Bethany Beach Improvement Company offers a limited number of shares of their
 Capital Stock at One Dollar per share, full paid and non-assessable.

For the purpose of further developing Bethany Beach and to give all members of the
Christian Church and their friends an opportunity to become partners in this enterprise the
original owners of Bethany Beach have decided to issue shares at one dollar each. This in-
 vestment will give you a direct interest in all their holdings, which include a vast stretch of
 valuable ocean front, 500 lots in the immediate vicinity of the Assembly grounds, 300 acres of
 farm land which sooner or later can be laid out into lots, and their steam boat route.

Another reason why shares are offered is to further improve Bethany Beach by laying
 sidewalks on the ocean front, pavilions, constructing a pier and erecting a handsome hotel.
 See page 7, this circular.

You can buy as many shares as you wish. Our only advice is to do so without delay.
 Don't despise the day of small beginnings.

All money should be sent by Check, Post Office Order or Express Money Order. Make
 it payable to J. K. JOHLER, and mail to

Delaware Office:

Bethany Beach,
 Ocean View, Delaware.

R. R. BULGIN, Secretary,

1715 Sanderson Avenue,
 SCRANTON, PENNA.

Here is what REV. DR. F. D. POWER, of Washington, D. C., wrote Beach in his letter to the *Christian Standard*, of August 3d, 1901. We cannot quote the full article in full but will cite a few paragraphs.

Bethany Beach, near Ocean View, Delaware, was opened formally on July 1st. The excellent auditorium, though not quite completed, was dedicated. There was a goodly gathering of people interested in the enterprise from Washington, D. C., Scranton and Philadelphia, Pa., and other points. The local attendance was also large. Mr. Jacob Jöhler, president of the company, presented the deed which conveys the auditorium and sixteen acres of ground to the Christian Missionary Society of Maryland, Delaware and District of Columbia. Hon. John Hunn, Governor of the State, sent his congratulations.

The auditorium is a fine structure for its purpose, designed by Edwin G. Davis, one of the elders of the Vermont Avenue Church. It is an octagonal building, ninety-six feet across each way, and about the same height at the center, seated with comfortable chairs, with a capacity for one thousand, and so arranged that several thousand may hear. A more commodious, graceful, substantial and well arranged and adapted tabernacle I have not seen anywhere. The company deserve great credit for the satisfactory way in which they have fulfilled their contract with our Society, and for the admirable progress they have made in the development of the property. Several good boarding-houses are in operation. It is a most auspicious opening for the enterprise, and **the future is big with promise.**

This work was first suggested to the Christian Missionary Society of Maryland, Delaware and the District of Columbia in the fall of 1898. A committee was appointed to select a site, and after visiting a number of points on the coast, this was unanimously chosen. It is located in Baltimore Hundred, Sussex County, Delaware, about fifteen miles south of Rehoboth Beach. Several brethren from Scranton, Pa., agreed to purchase the land and develop it, to provide means of transportation to the railroad, and deed free of cost an auditorium worth \$3,000, and support and purchase not less than one hundred cottages. The conditions were accepted and duly met, and the result has been stated. In view of the fact that the work of development was only begun this spring, the company has done exceedingly well. The meetings begun on the 12th, will continue several weeks. The first convert, our Lydia in this case, was Myrtle Henderson. J. A. Hopkins, E. B. Bagby, S. T. Willis and Earle Wilfley are on the program. Carey Morgan was to be with us, but is unfortunately disabled by an attack of fever. G. P. Rutledge rendered first-class service. We have but one church in Delaware. That is located near this point, and its membership forms our local support. The pastors of all the churches within reach have shown a brotherly kindness and spoken words of Godspeed. Another year the Assembly will be in good working order, and the whole institution will be thoroughly on its feet.

The following is from the pen of Rev. G. B. Townsend, pastor of the River Street Church of Christ, Troy, N. Y.:

It is with pleasure that I have learned of the proposed opening of a summer resort near Ocean View, Del., to be known as "Bethany Beach." I was reared within four miles of the place and feel that I know nearly every foot of land. I know of no location on the coast better fitted for a summer resort, and I have visited a number of the popular resorts. The beach is unsurpassed for bathing. There are no swampy places near the proposed site. Fish are caught both on the coast and in Indian river, which is nearby, in great abundance, also crabs and clams are plentiful in the river. I shall expect to see it become one of the great watering places of the Atlantic coast in a few years.

Bethany Beach.

READER: If you are shiftless and a spendthrift then this article will be of no interest to you. If you are a person of wisdom, ambition and determined to succeed in the field of investment, then you will read the following with eagerness.

Before proceeding you will agree with us when we say, it is better to invest your money wisely than to spend it foolishly with no thought of tomorrow. What enabled Vanderbilt and Gould and Rothschild and Morgan to become rich? The question is easily answered:— They invested their money wisely: In other words, they had the keen foresight to see the value of a moral support behind a good thing. Vanderbilt made money in real estate, so did Gould and Morgan.

All hail! Ye Mighty One an' from hills of lovely sand,
Where the rollers keep a tumbling upon the promised land,
Beautiful Bethany, white sands galore,
Everything lovely of the sea shore. Dr. H. J. PENROD.



The opportunity of a wise investment comes to you. You know the strength of the Christian Church; it is very strong today but tomorrow it will be stronger. The number of communicants in the U. S. is 1,105,160. Think of the possibilities of an Ocean Resort with the moral influence and support of such a vast army! The other day we heard a man remark "It is always wise to become associated with successful ventures;" Bethany Beach is a successful venture. It has behind it the moral support of a great people and will be known better as the days go by. We know of no better investment than the purchase of a lot at Bethany Beach or some shares of the Bethany Beach Improvement Company Stock. This company made Bethany Beach possible.

How do we get to Bethany Beach? Dr. Power wrote:

Over both Pennsylvania and B. & O. lines to Rehoboth, and thence by a small steamer over the beautiful Rehoboth Bay. This is the present arrangement. Passengers from Washington pay \$3.60 for a round-trip ticket good ten days, or \$5 unlimited. There could not be a more picturesque route or a shorter one to the ocean. By B. & O. to Baltimore; thence by the fine steamer "Princess Anne" across theapeake for thirty miles, past historic Forts McHenry and Carroll, the new fortifications at the mouth of the Patapsco, and the works at Sparrows Point, where they are building the torpedo boats that make thirty miles an hour, under the wooded shores of the Isle of Kent to lovely Queenstown, thence for sixty miles by Queen Anne Railroad through the counties of Queen Anne, Talbot and Carolina on the Eastern Shore of Maryland to the ancient city of Lewes and county of Sussex in Delaware; thence through kaleidoscopic scenery of lovely waters, smiling shores, fertile fields, woods, streams, and lily-starred lakes; and then the great ocean, with its splendid beach, its surf, its varied scenery, its manifold voices, its majesty and its healing and refreshment.



The U. S. Canal partially completed, connecting Rehoboth and Chincoteague Bays. View from Bridge leading to Bethany Beach from Ocean View.

Bethany Beach, "The Beautiful," as Mr. C. Thurgood, of Pittsburg, exclaimed—is going to grow into a great resort. Do you not wish to enjoy some of its prosperity? Do you not wish to prepare for a rainy day? Then buy a lot. *It surely will* increase in value rapidly, and will pay better dividends than money in the bank at 3 per cent. Besides one doesn't like to put only one dollar in the bank. Wait, says one, until I get \$100 then I'll place it in the bank—and it's never done. Here you can place one dollar per week to good advantage. You will never miss it, whilst some day you will discover you have invested it wisely as good returns will surely result.

Look at Our Splendid Terms So Easy.

It has been suggested that we give every person an opportunity to purchase a lot. After much consideration we have determined to place over 200 lots on the market with the most liberal terms possible. We take particular pleasure in stating the prices and payments:

- Lots at \$75.00—\$10.00 down, \$1.00 per week.
- Lots at \$100.00—\$15.00 down, \$1.00 per week.
- Lots at \$125.00—\$20.00 down, \$1.25 per week.
- Lots at \$150.00—\$20.00 down, \$1.50 per week.
- Lots at \$200.00—\$25.00 down, \$1.50 per week.

These Lots are 40 x 125 feet in size, and are within 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 Minutes Walk of the Ocean and the Auditorium.

Over \$20,000 worth of lots were sold the first year. It is confidently expected that many thousands will be sold this coming year. This company owns all the land surrounding the vast assembly grounds.



THE GLADMORE.—Proposed Hotel for Bethany Beach.

Now is the time to buy. Best bargains are often lost through delay. Lots at Atlantic Ocean City, Ocean Grove, and other ocean resorts, cost very little in the early beginnings of these places. Now they are sold at fabulous sums. Bethany Beach, with its magnificent shore, splendid natural facilities and glorious beginning, promises well for the lot purchaser.

Write for plan and descriptive catalogue. Address,

R. R. BULGIN, Secretary,

Delaware Office: Bethany Beach,
Ocean View, Delaware.

1715 Sanderson Avenue,
Scranton, Penna.

You have heard of Rev. E. B. Bagby, ex-chaplain of the House of Representatives. Here is what he says in the *Christian Evangelist* of August 29, 1901:

"The visitors at Bethany Beach are saying many encouraging things of the auspicious opening of this new ocean resort. The nine persons who confessed Christ there this year are, we trust, the first fruits of a great harvest to be reaped the years to come. The baptism of the candidates in the ocean was a sight will never be forgotten by those who witnessed it. The presentation of a purse of money by the visitors to Jacob Walters in recognition of his self-sacrificing labors as evangelist and pastor in that section was one of the pleasant features of the assembly."



THE STEAMER ATLANTIC, ON REHOBOTH BAY.

Mr. C. L. Thurgood, Mrs. C. L. Thurgood and R. R. Bulgin at the bow.

Photo by Rev. Earle Wilfery, New Castle, Pa.

And with the spirit of prophecy for 1902 the editor of the *Standard* says in that paper's issue of October 26, 1901:

"The promoters of Bethany Beach have showed laudable enterprise in keeping their cause before the brethren. Last week a whole page of the *Standard* was taken up in setting forth the attractions of the beach and the Assembly, while some of the attractive scenes appear in the present issue. We predict that a great company of the brethren will enjoy the fellowship of the beach next summer."

Descriptive List of Lots Sold and Unsold. Names of Purchasers are also Given as an Aid to the Intending Investors.

BLOCK 1.

1. J. Gearhart, Scranton, Pa.
3. J. Gearhart, Scranton, Pa.
5. William Matthews, Cameron, Va.
7. J. K. Jöhler, Scranton, Pa.
9. Stephen Evans, Millville, Del.
11. J. O. Dimmick, Scranton, Pa.
2. J. Gearhart, Scranton, Pa.
4. J. Gearhart, Scranton, Pa.
6. Geo. Townsend, Millville, Del.
8. Geo. Townsend, Millville, Del.
10. J. O. Dimmick, Scranton, Pa.
12. J. O. Dimmick, Scranton, Pa.

BLOCK 2.

This block, so centrally located, is well adapted for business sites. Being on the line of travel between the assembly grounds and the ocean front one can readily see how, in time, these lots will be in demand. And it's the demand and situation of lots that make high values. We offer lots in this block on Central Boulevard for \$200.00. Each inside lot is 40x125. Terms: \$20.00 down and \$1.50 per week. Those on First avenue are \$150.00 each. Terms, \$15.00 down and \$1.50 weekly.

- Lots Mrs. Jennie Holt, Millville, Del.
- Lots 2. Wm. Schell, Washington, D. C.
- Lots 5. Miss H. E. Burdick, Scranton, Pa.
- Lots 7. W. P. Bentley, Shanghai, China.
- Lots 21. C. Century, Chicago, Ill.
- Lots 23. F. A. Wolfinger, Washington, D. C.

BLOCK 3.

Very few lots are for sale in this block. Those fronting on First avenue are reserved. Prices of those on Central are \$150.00 each.

- Terms, \$15.00 down and balance payable \$5.00 monthly.
- Lot 1. Chas. Henwood, Scranton, Pa.
- Lot 3. J. V. Jarrett, Washington, D. C.
- Lot 5. J. V. Jarrett, Washington, D. C.
- Lot 7. Miss Jean McElhany, Johnstown, Pa.
- Lot 15. Emily C. Stumph, Indiana, Pa.
- Lot 21. J. Deatrlick, Scranton, Pa.

Lot 23. J. Deatrlick, Scranton, Pa. Lots 9, 11, 13, are for sale.

BLOCK 4.

We have just placed on the market four 30 "foot lots." These make splendid cottage sites, as they are practically ocean front lots. Number 12, 14, 16, are worth \$150 each. Terms \$15.00 down, \$5.00 monthly. No. 1 is worth \$200.00.

- Purchasers of lots in this block are:
- Lot 1. John E. Johns, Scranton, Pa.
- Lot 3. John E. Johns, Scranton, Pa.
- Lot 5. Mrs. A. Rouzie, Hampton Va.
- Lot 7. Rev. W. J. Wright, Washington, D. C.
- Lot 9. E. J. Small, Braddock, Pa.
- Lot 11. E. J. Small, Braddock, Pa.
- Lot 2. W. P. White, Alleghany, Pa.
- Lot 4. W. P. White Alleghany, Pa.

This block is admirably situated. As Bethany Beach grows these lots will become more and more valuable. The nearness to the assembly grounds and to the ocean will in time bring them into demand. A splendid place to put a little money for future increase. We offer the following lots facing First avenue for \$150.00 each: No. 5, 7, 13, 15, 17. These are level and dry. Lots 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, facing Second avenue are each 40x125 and price \$150.00. Terms \$15.00 down, balance \$5.00 monthly. We advise an early selection. Lot 1 is also on the market for \$200.00. Size 50x125. Being a corner makes it a choice site.

- Lot W. Stase, Washington, D. C.
- Lot 4. E. H. Bon Durant, Washington, D. C.

BLOCK 6.

This entire block is reserved.

BLOCK 7.

Here is a splendid opportunity to secure a choice site for a cottage. We have just placed upon the market lots 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16. These lots are 30x115. The inside lots viz: 4, 6, 8, 12, 14, 16, are each \$150.00. The corners \$200. Terms 10 per cent. down and balance payable monthly. We give this advice from experience. Select at once and remit by return mail. These lots will go rapidly.

- Purchasers of lots in this block are:
- Lots 1, 3. Mrs. Laura Wheeler, Baltimore, Md.
- Lot 5. R. R. Bulgin, Scranton, Pa.
- Lot 7. Rev. F. D. Power, Washington, D. C.
- Lot 9. Jas. Pickens, Washington, D. C.
- Lot 11. C. W. Shelton, Washington, D. C.

V.F. Co. - Bethany Beach

Bethany Beach

Delaware.



A Walk
Through History
1901 - 1976

The Long Haul

In the old days the trip to Bethany Beach from Washington, D.C. or Pittsburgh, Pa. took fortitude, grit and patience in the face of up to two days of discomfort and even danger. The old Bethany Beach Canal, whose loop end (3) is off Pennsylvania Avenue opposite the foot of First Street, is a reminder of the days when the cottagers' journey to the beach was mostly by rail and waterway.

Once upon a time the canal's loop was the end of the long journey for new arrivals (3A) and for many years the site of the old Addy boat house (3B) where people could rent rowboats.



Today the "Loop Canal" is a pleasant place to crab and catch minnows from the shore or from a boat rowed under the dual highway -- but duck your head there! -- to the edge of the Salt Pond.

But before the Bethany Beach Canal -- in the first few summers for the Addys and the Erretts and the other cottager First Families of the reorganized Improvement Company -- the last part of the long journey was even more laborious. Then most came through Rehoboth, though later as highways were developed, some visitors came by rail through Frankford or Dagsboro.

Let Miss Marjorie Errett, earliest summer cottager still living in the area, tell about her first trips to the Beach from a Pittsburgh suburb.

"We came down right after school closed in June. Mother would not travel with six children on a sleeper, so we took the day trip to Baltimore. Without a horse and buggy, we had to walk to our little station. We sent a big trunk ahead but everybody had to carry something. It was a half hour's trip by the Pennsylvania Railroad into Pittsburgh where we got off and had to walk across the river to the B & O station. Father got us a pullman and we loved the all-day trip to

Baltimore. We stayed at a hotel down near the docks so that early in the morning we could walk to the landing to get the boat across the Chesapeake to Love Point."

On the dock at Baltimore, the Pennsylvania voyagers were joined by early cottagers from Washington, such as the families of Miss Katharine Wilfley, daughter of another Founding Father, the Rev. Earle Wilfley, and Mr. Ed Steele, grandson of Mr. Philip Steele who came in 1903. Both still summer in Bethany and Mr. Steele lives in Selbyville "off season."

The Washingtonians would have taken an early-morning train to Baltimore and then a horse-drawn bus to the Light Street docks, as Mr. Steele recalls.

At Love Point after the 3 or 4-hour trip across the Bay, Miss Wilfley reminisces, "we would board a narrow-gauge railroad train for another 3 or 4-hour trip through the Eastern Shore farming country to Rehoboth, right down the main street where the park is now, to the station." The old station building still stands, just off Rehoboth Avenue near the beach. The trip from Love Point on Kent Island to Rehoboth was made over the tracks of the Queen Anne Railroad.

Miss Errett recalls that the families from Pittsburgh and Washington waited at the station for another train bringing people on the main line from Philadelphia. "After they arrived we would get on a big horse drawn bus that would take us back on Rehoboth Avenue to the Lewes-Rehoboth Canal. In the earliest days, we got on a little wood-burning steamer, the Atlantic, which took us



THE STEAMER ATLANTIC, ON REHOBOTH BAY.

down the canal, through Rehoboth and Indian River Bays, up White's Creek past where the Topside Restaurant is now, to Pennewell's Landing (37) -- that was where the Assawoman Canal starts from White's Creek. There a two-horse bus would be waiting to take us the two miles through deep sand to our house on First

Street. Quite a trip, two full days and we didn't get there till the end of the second day."



Or, as Miss Wilfley puts it, "We had arrived! After a matter of 12 hours on leaving home in Washington, we were at Bethany Beach! No wonder, with trips like that in those days, even as late as 1913, when we went to Bethany Beach, we stayed!" Exhausted on arrival in the late afternoon, the families would promptly go to bed.

There was a different slant on the trip in the brochure of the Bethany Beach Improvement Company promoting the sale of stock and lots: "Passengers from Washington pay \$3.60 for a round-trip ticket good ten days, or \$5 unlimited. There could not be a more picturesque route or a shorter one to the ocean."

These are memories of those who were children then. And the parents? After long, smoky and dusty train rides, squall-tossed boat rides through the shallow inland waterways, and the wagons lurching through the sand and dust -- or mud -- to Bethany, and what with seasick children, plagues of sand flies and mosquitoes, it was little wonder that often on arrival the mothers -- according to one of them -- formed "a solid unit against imperiling their and their children's lives another season, no matter the spiritual significance of the summer in our lives." But most of them came back again and again.

One of the first accomplishments of the rejuvenated Bethany Beach Improvement Company before the 1903 summer was to build the boardwalk along the ocean front with three roofed pavilions, and from this walk another to the auditorium in the Church Assembly Grounds. Before that time, "there was no Boardwalk but a multitude of boardwalks," to quote the reminiscences of another brother of Miss Errett, the late Edwin R. Errett. The pavilions, destroyed and rebuilt several times in different locations throughout Bethany's history, have been used

both for family fun and for Town programs such as band concerts. At least once the central pavilion was the site of the annual Town election.

The promised railway never came, but in 1907 the Improvement Company, led by Mr. Addy dredged the Bethany Beach Canal to the Beach from the old Assawoman Canal (then called the U.S. Government Canal).



The new Bethany Beach Canal permitted travelers to come all the way to the Beach in one boat ride from Rehoboth. A shallow-draft motorboat, the Allie May, replaced the old steamer Atlantic for the last leg of the journey. "Often," Miss Wilfley remembers, "the boat was so heavily loaded, we youngsters could dip our hands and feet in the water as we chugged along across Rehoboth Bay, Indian River Bay and the canals."



They chugged up the 1½-mile-long ditch, which still holds water though it's hardly navigable, to the loop at the foot of First Street, cut so the Allie May could turn around for the return voyage. It was a short walk for the cottagers between the boat landing at the end of the loop and their summer homes in the nearby streets.



The Assawoman Canal is the western boundary of Bethany Beach, while the northern line follows the Bethany Beach Canal from the Assawoman east almost to the dual highway, then to Fifth Street and east on that street to the beachfront.

As they breathed new life into the "suspended animation" of 1901 Bethany Beach, the six businessmen -- church lay leaders who founded the abiding summer settlement of the Beach, put their families and their cottages where their promotions were. Built in 1902-03, five of these six sturdy cottages still stand -- one in another part of town, moved because of a cloud on the land title.

The four houses still to be seen are those of the Erretts (still in the family) and, next door, of the Kidd Family (4, 5) on the north side of First Street (the 3rd and 2nd houses west of Atlantic Avenue); the Addy house (6), behind the Kidd house on the south side of Second Street, and the Latimer house (7) on Second, east of Atlantic.

The two that are gone were the Dinkers' house (8), which was moved across the highway (36) and the Cramblets' (9), which was storm-damaged and pulled down. A second Dinker cottage, built a little later at Atlantic and First, survives (8A).



Orlote, Bethany Beach, Del.

Map of
Bethany Beach
and
Key to Map



37

Salt Pond

DELAWARE NATIONAL GUARDS
MILITARY RESERVATION

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