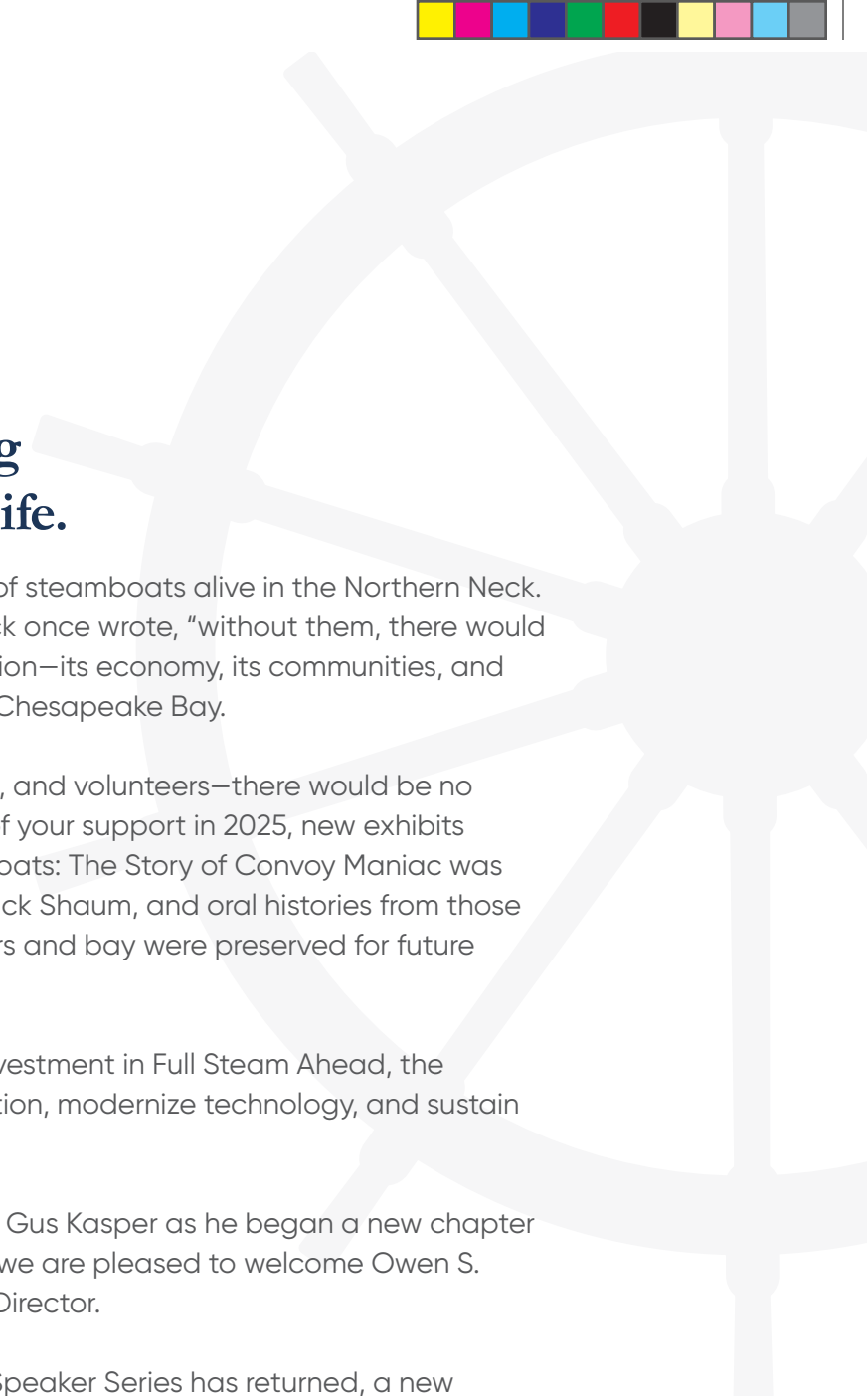


FULL STEAM AHEAD.



2025 Annual Report



Thank You for Bringing Steamboat History to Life.

Thank you for helping keep the history of steamboats alive in the Northern Neck. As a founding member, Anne McClintock once wrote, “without them, there would be no us.” Steamboats shaped this region—its economy, its communities, and the way people connected across the Chesapeake Bay.

And without you—our members, donors, and volunteers—there would be no museum to tell these stories. Because of your support in 2025, new exhibits welcomed visitors, *Steamboats vs. U-Boats: The Story of Convoy Maniac* was published in partnership with author Jack Shaum, and oral histories from those who remember steamboats on our rivers and bay were preserved for future generations.

This progress reflects your continued investment in Full Steam Ahead, the museum’s campaign to expand education, modernize technology, and sustain the museum for the future.

We said goodbye to Executive Director Gus Kasper as he began a new chapter in Lexington, Virginia. As we start 2026, we are pleased to welcome Owen S. Lanier as the museum’s new Executive Director.

Looking ahead, the Second Saturday Speaker Series has returned, a new exhibit—*Amusements of the Bay*—is in development, and the 15th Irvington Crab Festival will bring the community together on September 19.

We look forward to welcoming you back to the museum in 2026 and gathering with you throughout the Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula.

Keith Kehlbeck
Board President
Steamboat Era Museum



Photo Credit: River City Media

WHAT YOU MADE POSSIBLE IN 2025.



A Stronger Foundation

You strengthened the people, systems, and stewardship that sustain the museum every day—work that ensures stability, accountability, and long-term sustainability.



History Brought to Life

Your support fueled new exhibits and hands-on learning for families, preserved oral histories, and enabled programs that connected the community with Chesapeake Bay history.



Preparing for the Future

Progress continued toward modern, accessible exhibit spaces and upgraded interpretive tools—so history can be experienced in ways that resonate today.

Campaign Impact

With your support, the Steamboat Era Museum is not only preserving the past—it is preparing for the future.

You're doing more than funding individual projects. You're building capacity—ensuring the museum remains a trusted, vibrant community resource for generations to come.

YOUR INVESTMENT. REAL PROGRESS.

A STRONGER FUTURE.



Full Steam Ahead Campaign (2023–2026)

Since 2023, your support has helped move the Steamboat Era Museum Full Steam Ahead—a multi-year campaign focused on strengthening the museum today while preparing it for the future.

In 2025, that investment delivered visible progress.



LOOKING AHEAD TO 2026.

As the campaign enters its final phase, your partnership continues to shape what comes next. Because of you, the Steamboat Era Museum moves forward stronger, more resilient, and ready to serve future generations and turning vision into lasting impact.

"This is long-term work.
Your support builds capacity, not just programs."

"Behind the scenes, your generosity strengthens the people and systems that make everything else possible."

2025 EXHIBITS

We hope you had a chance to see the 2025 exhibits, *Painting the Steamboat Era*, which captured the power and beauty of steamboats, and *Life on the Old Bay Line*, a window into life aboard Chesapeake Bay steamboats, from elegant dining and passenger accommodations to the captains and crew who sailed them.



Photo Credit: River City Media

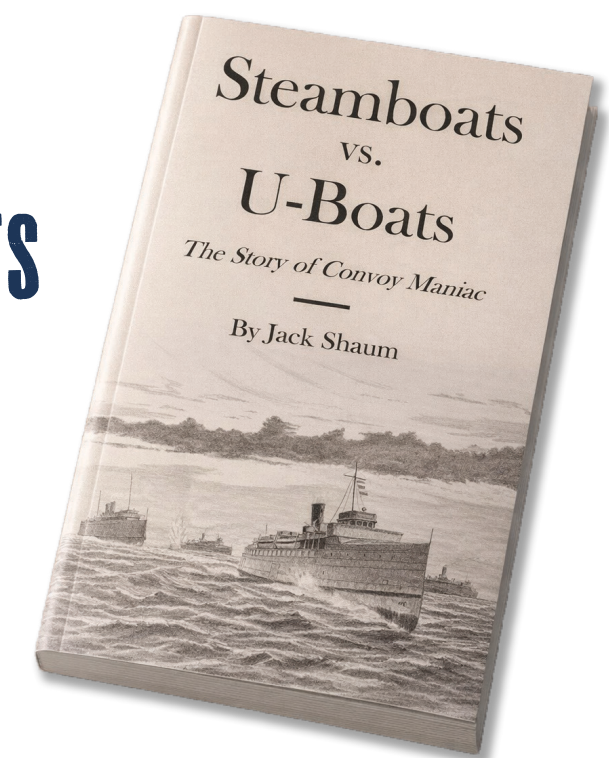


Photo Credit: Steamboat Era Museum



STEAMBOATS VS U-BOATS

We were honored to publish *Steamboats vs. U-Boats: The Story of Convoy Maniac* by maritime historian Jack Shaum. This remarkable book tells the story of eight American steamboats – built for the calmer waters of inland bays – drafted for convoy duty against the threat of German U-boats in the Atlantic Ocean during World War II.



Education meets FUN!

Urbanna Oyster Festival

Volunteers/board members **Mary Ann McKay** and **Edie Hemingway** represented the museum at the 2025 Urbanna Oyster Festival with a hands-on experience for children aged 2 to 12. The program grew from the previous year, with **34 wooden steamboats** built, up from 22.

Friday Fun Days

Summer 2025 featured Friday Fun Days, an opportunity for kids aged 4–10 to travel back in time and explore the world of the steamboats that ruled the Chesapeake Bay.



*Building steamboats at the Urbanna Oyster Festival.
Photo Credit: Edie Hemingway*

“This was our second year offering a children’s activity at the Urbanna Oyster Festival. After a quiet start, the tables quickly filled – by the second hour, **every seat was filled and families were waiting for a turn.** One family asked to take their project home to finish, because time ran out!”

– Edie Hemingway and Mary Ann McKay



Photo Credit: Steamboat Era Museum

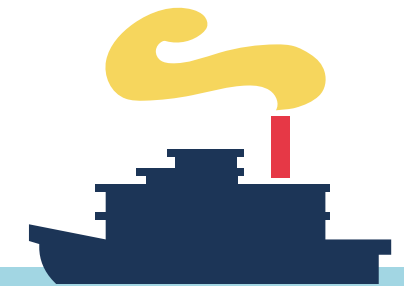


*Summer intern, Tanner Lipscomb
Photo Credit: Tanner Lipscomb*

Preserving Voices from the Steamboat Era

Summer intern **Tanner Lipscomb**, a history major at Brigham Young University–Idaho, helped organize and catalog the museum’s extensive collection of oral histories—preserving firsthand accounts of life along the Chesapeake Bay.

Recorded on DVDs, these stories capture memories of steamboat captains, watermen, dock workers, and families whose lives were shaped by the rivers and the Bay. Together, they bring to life a time when steamboats were the backbone of commerce and community on the bay.



“Steamboats brought life to towns and individuals. Hearing how much these people treasured their memories of day-to-day life on the water was a powerful reminder of how deeply people valued their daily lives on the water. Life depended on these vital ships—it’s a stark contrast to how we live now.”

— *Tanner Lipscomb*

INCREASING OUR VISABILITY

Diving into our archives, we introduced **Sunday on a Steamboat** and **Wharf Wednesday** on Facebook and Instagram. In this continuing series, Museum Manager **Candee Pevahouse** shares the backstories of the vessels that moved people and goods as well as the history of the wharves and communities that dotted our rivers.

Follow the Steamboat Era Museum!
 Facebook: steamboatermuseum
 Instagram: @steamboatermuseum



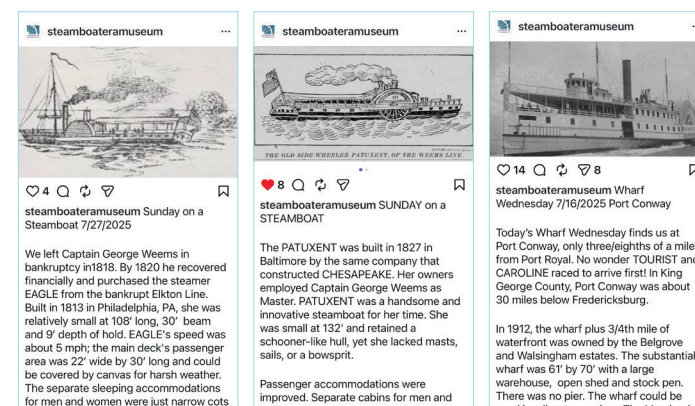
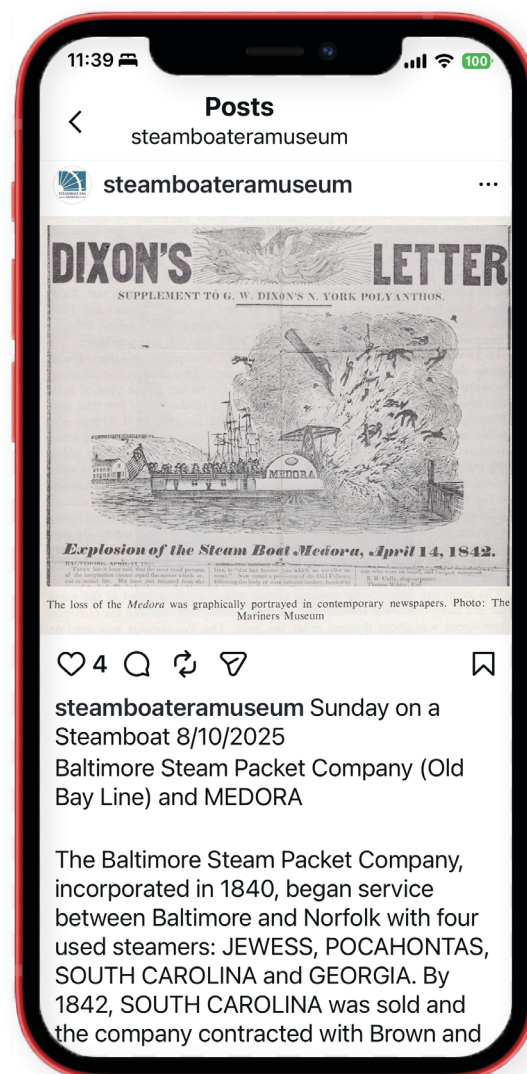
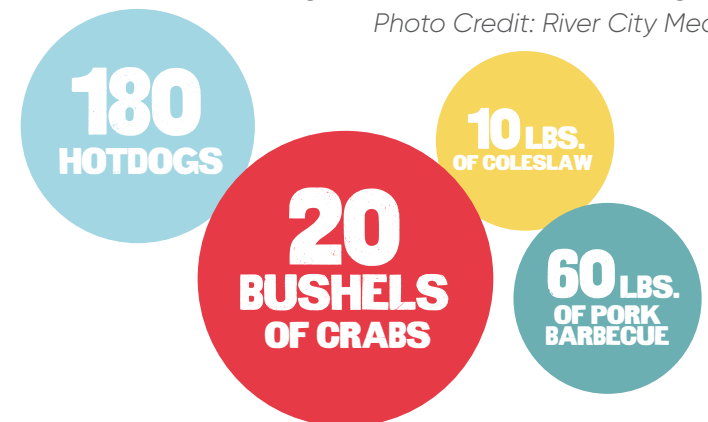
2025 CRAB FESTIVAL: A SIGNATURE EVENT AND A GREAT TIME!

Your support of the **Irvington Crab Festival** made this beloved community event a smashing success, continuing the tradition of snapping up all 375 available tickets and creating cherished memories.

Most importantly, your support netted **\$21,148** for the museum. Proceeds from the Crab Festival support the **Full Steam Ahead Campaign**, strengthening the museum's financial sustainability while investing in the staff, programs, and infrastructure needed to preserve and share Chesapeake Bay steamboat history for generations to come.

Mark your calendar for the 15th Irvington Crab Festival: **Saturday, September 19, 2026.**

Irvington Crab Festival: sold out (again!)
 Photo Credit: River City Media



THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 CRAB FESTIVAL SPONSORS

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Photo Credit: Michael Schmidt

PHILANTHROPIC CONTRIBUTIONS: \$136,223

- Unrestricted Donations: \$73,350
- Grants: \$21,100
- Program & Event Revenue: \$26,819
- Memberships: \$15,054



THE REACH OF YOUR SUPPORT IN 2025

Because of your generosity, the Steamboat Era Museum reached people where they live, learn, and gather – inside the museum and throughout the Northern Neck.

You made it possible for staff and volunteers to:

- Deliver special tours and presentations, deepening understanding of Chesapeake Bay history
- Share museum stories with the wider community through local radio outreach
- Welcome new audiences by offering free admission during the Irvington Farmers Markets
- Spark curiosity and creativity as children built their own steamboats
- Bring science and history together by demonstrating the Stirling Engine

And you brought the museum to life:

- 1,814 visitors walked through our doors
- 123 children and teens experienced hands-on learning, from toddlers to young adults
- 65 groups engaged with the museum through tours, programs, and special visits

Together, these moments—large and small—reflect the impact of your support: history shared, curiosity sparked, and community strengthened.



Photo Credit: River City Media



Cover Photo Credit: River City Media



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Looking Ahead to 2026

Thanks to you, the Steamboat Era Museum continues to bring history, learning, and community together throughout the year.

WINTER & SPRING

Second Saturday Speaker Series

February 14 • March 14 • April 11 • May 9

SPRING

Member & Donor Exhibit Preview – April 24

Opening Day – May 1

SUMMER

Irvington Farmers Market – May through

November 1st Saturday

Hometown July 4th Parade & Market – July 4

FALL

15th Annual Crab Festival – September 19

Irvington Turkey Trot – November 26

WINTER HOLIDAYS

Illuminate Irvington – December (Date TBD)

Christmas Carols under the Tree – December 24

Full event details at

steamboateramuseum.org/events

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