



PAIG 2009 - Preserving Research and Cultural Heritage for NOAA/Cooperative Oxford Laboratory

A suite of dynamic activities was created and implemented to preserve historic heritage resources at the Cooperative Oxford Laboratory (COL) and to promote outreach and education in the community. These activities celebrated COL's scientific achievements on coastal ecosystem health issues in Chesapeake Bay, across the nation, and worldwide to commemorate the lab's 50th anniversary. Over 2500 historic and recent images (photographs, negatives, 35mm slides), news clippings, and important documents were consolidated, inventoried, and digitized using high resolution scanning. Some of these materials were found in library archives while others were lent or donated by staff and alumni. Exceptional images, such as an oyster mountain circa ~1900, were printed and mounted as extra-large format posters. Similarly, a wide array of vintage scientific tools and equipment including fisheries gear was gathered, inventoried, and secured in storage. Notably, when the last crab picking shed in the town of Oxford, MD was dismantled to clear the property, the family lent or donated unique crab and fishing implements to the project. Finally, several noteworthy videos were recorded to highlight research activities, dialogs with laboratory staff and alumni, and clips featuring watermen at work and rapidly disappearing "singing" crab picking operations.

The materials archived for the project were integrated into innovative displays to provide new opportunities for the public to learn about COL and NOAA at outreach events and other venues. These highly lauded exhibits showcased COL's research accomplishments over the past 50 years and were often tailored to address specific event themes, e.g. "OysterFest." Large format displays included a 10 x 12 ft stand-up unit for text and images presented along a 50 yr timeline, glass display cases for lab, field and fisheries tool, a light table for viewing film and glass lantern slides, and a TV/DVD player for interactive viewing of video-loops. Examples or images of tools, equipment, vessels, and research priorities comparing "Then" with "Now" were routinely incorporated into the exhibits. A major exhibit at the Historical Society of Talbot County included a replica of a 1960's working Histology Lab. Venues for the displays thus far have included:

- The Waterfowl Festival, Easton, MD, Nov 12-15, 2009 (~18,000 event visitors)
- OysterFest, Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, St. Michaels, MD, Nov 2009 (~1400 visitors)
- Oxford Museum, Oxford, MD, Apr-Oct 2010 (~300 visitors)
- Oxford Day, Oxford, MD, Apr 24, 2010 (~800 visitors)
- OysterFest, Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, St. Michaels, MD, Nov 2010 (~1400 visitors)
- Building Community Event, Oxford Community Center, Oxford, MD, Nov 6, 2010
- Historical Society of Talbot County, Easton, MD, Nov 2010-Apr 2011 (~1800 visitors; 400 sq ft)
- Oxford Day, Oxford, MD, Apr 28, 2011 (~400 visitors)
- Cooperative Oxford Laboratory, Oxford, MD, Apr 2010-present (permanent display)
http://www.dnr.state.md.us/fisheries/news/story.asp?story_id=16