

# Avalon History Center Director's Report – September 2015

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	# Visitors On-site	# Reached Digitally	# Objects Catalogued	# Objects Digitized
August 2015	249	7,733	15	8 (78 total pages)
Sept 2015	129	5,050	67	67

## Administration

- Earned two honoraria: \$50 from First United Methodist Church of Avalon, \$150 from Stockton University. These were transferred to the Avalon Historical Society.
- Finance Committee indicated to proceed with front door project.
- Attended AFPL's strategic plan in-service day; currently crafting History Center goal(s), strategies, and action items for inclusion in Library's plan.
- Pursuing proactive surge-protection solutions, including possibility of installing surge-protected wall outlets.

## Marketing & PR

- Distributed press release, flyers, Constant Contact e-mail, and boosted Facebook post for Berkey Historic Preservation program.
- Met with website developer and team to finalize structure and set timeline for completion.

## Programs & Outreach

- Joan Berkey presented on Avalon Cottage and "Preserving Your Historic Home or Building." Twenty-two people attended.
- Met with Pastor Dave Montanye regarding the possibility of partnering on 2016 Chautauqua program.
- Attended meeting regarding Festive Friday/Snowfest Saturday; considering ways to be involved.

## Ongoing Major Initiatives

- Conducted Oral History interview with Carter Winterbottom.
- Photographed the exterior of 375 22<sup>nd</sup> St., scheduled to be demolished.

## Collections

- Viewed Jamie McDermott's postcard collection, and photographed some.
- Jim McCann provided digital images of the demolition of the Avalon Hotel.

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- Took Joseph Wells painting, donated by Dee Phillips, to be assessed by an art conservator. Collections Committee recommends treatments listed in separate section, below.
- Joe Hoffman offers for donation 11 reels of 8mm film, totaling about 1200', depicting unspecified Avalon scenes in 1930s-1950s. Collections Committee recommends transfer to digital/DVD format.
- Collections Committee recommends the following for acquisition:
  - John Walsh
    - 1983 Maris Stella dedication book.
    - "Post-Storm Planning for Avalon, NJ" study by Stewart Farrell and John Sinton, circa 1982.
  - Wilda Richardson
    - Avalon Beach Patrol patch.
    - Avalon Theatre pass.
    - "Colonial Corner" postcard.
    - Resolution of respect from Daughters of America Council in memory of Emma Batts, DOD 10/4/1931.
    - Sympathy acknowledgement card from Miriam Batts to Elijah Batts, 1933. Postmarked from Peermont, NJ.
    - Sacred Heart Roman Catholic church postcard.
    - 1947 Avalon sand dunes postcard written in Italian.
    - Wells Memorial Presbyterian Church postcard.
  - Caroline S. Helmuth
    - 1953 Avalon Yacht Club Magazine.
  - Louise Thomas (Spencer Windle's daughter)
    - Photo (includes Spencer Windle) of Avalon's Coast Guard Mounted Beach Patrol, 1946.
    - 1946 list of Avalon's Coast Guard Mounted Beach Patrol members.
    - Coast Guard patch belonging to Spencer Windle with symbol indicating "dog handler."
    - Spencer Windle's Coast Guard pins.
  - Rose Marie Chew
    - *Atlantic City Press*
      - Moon Happenings, 1969
      - Robert Kennedy, 1968
      - Nixon, 1969
      - Eisenhower death, 1969
    - *Avalon Herald*
      - August 1967 – December 1967

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- January 1968 – June 7, 1968
- *Cape May County Herald*
  - August 7, 1970 and December 16, 1970
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*
  - March 7, 1954 (“Flags of the World”)
- Terry Dignazio
  - Five photographs of 22<sup>nd</sup> St across to 24<sup>th</sup> St.



# AVALON HISTORY CENTER

## Object Assessment: Painting by Joseph Wells

Submitted October 7, 2015 to the Avalon Free Public Library Board of Trustees



**Donor:** Dee Phillips

**Artist:** Joseph Wells

**Object Date:** 1889

**Material:** Oil on canvas

**Significance:** The painting depicts a landscape of the north end of Avalon including the Avalon Hotel, an iconic landmark for the 100 years it stood, as well as several residential homes, some of which are still standing. The artist Joseph Wells, an original member of the Seven Mile Beach Development Company, is considered one of the founders of Avalon and significantly influenced the development of the island as a seashore resort. This is likely the first painting done in Avalon.

**Interpretive themes:** 1) Early Avalon history; 2) Artist biography; 3) Avalon hotel; 4) Avalon's geography.

**Condition:** Fair. Some loose paint, small flake losses, significant paint cupping, stretchers visible at all four corners, and dirt/blanching causing discoloration. Unvarnished with no prior conservation or restoration. Frame is likely not original, and is not appropriate for the period of the piece.

### Recommended Treatments

Consulted with Steven B. Erisoty, conservator of paintings, who has been in private practice serving private and institutional clients in the Philadelphia area and throughout the nation since 1985. BA in Art History and Chemistry from the University of Delaware. M.F.A. in Paintings Conservation, with a Certificate of Advanced Study, from the Cooperstown Graduate Programs.

- 1) Apply adhesive resin to loose paint areas. Will not change appearance but will prevent further paint losses.
- 2) Clean to remove dirt and grime. Will reverse discoloration.
- 3) Fill flake losses to approximate original appearance.
- 4) Coast with varnish. Will reduce blanching (increasing contrast) and help prevent future discoloration.
- 5) Remove canvas, add a layer under holes that reveal stretchers. Prevents further damage at corners and reduces unsightly appearance of exposed stretchers.
- 6) Humidify painting to reduce appearance of cupping, and add a full lining layer to help prevent further cupping. This step is optional but recommended for best results.
- 7) Reapply canvas to stretchers and add backing board.

### Cost Estimate

Initial assessment	\$0
Treatments 1-5, & 7	\$3,500
Treatment 6	\$1,000
Allowance for framing	\$2,000
Contingency	\$975
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,475</b>

The Collections Committee recommends to proceed with the above-listed treatments.