

Wildwood Historical Society, Inc.



George F. Boyer Museum

(609) 523-0277

WildwoodHistoricalMuseum.com

3907 Pacific Avenue
Wildwood, NJ 08260

Gathering, preserving and presenting the Wildwoods' history

2024 Museum Hours

April 4-May 25: Thursdays-Saturdays
10 am-3 pm

May 28-August 31: Mondays-Saturdays
10 am-3 pm; closed Sundays

September 5-October 26: Thursdays-Saturdays 10 am-3 pm

Closed for the winter every year from November to March.

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A Park Avenue Scavenger Hunt

by Rob Ascough, Treasurer

I don't consider myself old, but old enough to remember when there was no CVS on Park Boulevard between Bennett and Leaming Avenues. That weird collection of run-down industrial-looking buildings from which the red brick structure appears to sprout? Unbelievably, it was a weird collection of run-down industrial-looking buildings without a CVS. Even as a child, it seemed strange that something so close to a main thoroughfare on the island was so sad and uneventful.

There was always an Acme just to the south, though not the tropical-looking pastel blue and chrome box that currently stands on the site. Instead, it was a relic from the grocer's period of ambitious expansion in the mid-fifties — a truly modern facility at the time of its construction that, like countless others in Acme's regions of dominance, was itself a centralized replacement for smaller neighborhood stores that quickly became outmoded. (And for those that enjoy pondering such things, it's worth considering how development in The Wildwoods possibly drove up real estate values so much that the company opted to build its state-of-the-art facility in an industrial area, instead of close to Pacific Avenue where Acme had stores, including one that is now home to Atilis Gym.)

As a kid shopping there with my mother in the eighties, the store was comically compact — much more tight and basic than our Acme back home that was so sophisticated, it had a video rental department. It was so small, it often made sense for one family member to grab a shopping cart and get in the line for the registers that snaked around the perimeter of the interior while others were dispersed into the aisles on a grocery-themed scavenger hunt. But to think there was a time when the tired old store was something special! This was what was considered innovative in the realm of grocery stores in 1957:

- Dimensions of 115 feet by 140 feet, allowing for 16,100 square feet of space- 10,530 of which was dedicated to the display of merchandise with the remaining for stor-

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BIMCO: Beach Island Manufacturing Company

by Larry M. Lillo, Secretary, with David Neff

A few years back I found a model railroader book in one of the boxes of old trains that I bought from a customer at my shop the Holly Beach Train Depot.

I was glancing through the pages of the 1940's book and saw a add for HO trolleys for sale. Looking again, I saw that the manufacturer was in North Wildwood. To my surprise, I could not think who would be making trolleys in North Wildwood back in the 40's. After that I gave it no more thought.

Sometime in February of 2024, I got a call from one of my old bankers, David Neff from Union Trust Company, which was located on Pacific Avenue in downtown Wildwood. He called to tell me about BIMCO, a company that his father and a friend started to make HO scale trolleys.

David sent me information on the company, including ads and drawings of the trolleys. He also sent a bag full of the trolley parts so I could do this article. I will make a book up with the information and place it in our museum for people to read.

In the mid-1940s, longtime train enthusiasts Bill Graumann of North Wildwood and Charles Neff of Wildwood, decided to move forward on an idea they had for several years to manufacture and sell HO scale trolleys.

In 1947 HO scale trolley drawings were produced and the men formed a business called Beach Island Manufacturing Company, later to be called BIMCO. The men built a foundry in Bill's back yard garage at 224 West 10th

street in North Wildwood and started to produce the trolleys. Sales were booming through 1949, 1950 and into 1951.

The Korean War began in 1951 and the little motors, which came from Korea, were no longer obtainable. When the motors that they had in stock ran out, the company was done. Bill and Charlie worked nights and on weekends building the trolleys, as both had full time jobs during the day.

To see the complete story, drawings, ads, and blueprints, visit the George Boyer Museum, where the story will be viewable in a folder.

"The Old Timer"

NEW AND DIFFERENT IN DESIGN

FOR USE WITH HO GAUGE

Good Looking — Good Construction
Good Performance

Stamped and cast brass construction (no diecast). 12 volt D.C. Permag. Pittman Motor — Will operate on any 2-rail system or overhead wire. Min. Radius Curve 8 inches. Factory assembled and tested 4-wheel Power Truck.

Kit complete (less paint) \$ 14.95 Ppd.

Available only from

Beach Island Mfg. Co.
224 West 10th Avenue
NORTH WILDWOOD, N. J.

An ad from an early-1950s Wildwood city directory for Beach Island Manufacturing Company, a short-lived model train company that operated in North Wildwood. Courtest Wildwood Historical Society Collection.

WAITING FOR A TROLLEY?

Watch for our old timer
**HO GAUGE — ALL METAL
SINGLE TRUCK CITY CAR**

Cast brass truck, frame, roof. Stamped brass
sides and ends. 12 V. Motor — Worm drive.
Write for illustrated folder.

BEACH ISLAND MFG. CO.
224 W. 10th Ave. North Wildwood, N. J.

North Wildwood's own BIMCO was advertised in model railroad trade magazines. See story on page 1. Courtesy Larry M. Lillo collection.

A Park Avenue Scavenger Hunt

(continued from page 1)

age space and service facilities.

- A parking lot surfaced with black-top material lined to accommodate 107 cars.
- Magic Carpet doors that swing open “in a gesture of welcome as they are approached, admitting the patron to an air-conditioned, color-styled, modernly equipped food display room.”
- Frozen food cabinets with 97 feet of display space.
- A meat department featuring a full line of fresh and smoked meats in refrigerated cases and a separate Fresh Fish and Poultry department featuring a rotisseries that which barbequed broiling chickens that could be purchased cooked and ready to serve.
- A live lobster tank.
- Ten conveyor type check-out lanes and a check chasing office to expedite the process for customers wishing to pay by check.
- A parcel-pick-up station near the store exit allows customers to leave their purchases while they get their cars from the parking lot and have them loaded by attendants free of charge.

Take that, slackers at A&P.

Years later, Park Boulevard would become a little more interesting with the construction of an entertainment facility called Shipwreck island, which featured an arcade, ice cream counter, and a concrete mountain with caves and waterfalls that hosted two 18-hole miniature golf courses (which was not to be confused with a similar-but-tidier facility in North Wildwood called Shipwreck Shoals, if my memory serves me well). This was at a time when the island was covered with arcades, ice cream counters, and miniature golf courses, and we loved them all. No knock against Duffer's (which will always occupy a special place in my heart) but the difference between the two was unimaginable — compared to its competition just down the street, Shipwreck Island was like a full-fledged PGA-style course. Talk about a scavenger hunt — it proved wise to carefully plan putts if avoiding the sinking of a ball in one of the 2000 Flushes-blue waterways was a goal. To use an already-overused term, it felt epic.

It's too bad that its era was a short one, and as if CVS weren't itself epic enough to satisfy all of the area's pharmaceutical and beauty item needs, the owners of the golf course decided to change course (pun partially intended) and Shipwreck Island gave way to a Walgreen's that operates on the site to this day. It's definitely more functional if one finds themselves needing toothpaste or deodorant at 10 o'clock at night, but hardly more fun. Come to think of it, shopping in the new, even-more-modern Acme isn't as much fun, either. Why shouldn't grocery shopping be like a scavenger hunt?

Inaugural Castle Dracula Weekend in The Wildwoods to Celebrate the Memory of Wildwood's Largest and Most Beloved Haunted Attraction

The Inaugural Castle Dracula Weekend will be held August 9-10, 2024 in The Wildwoods, presented by the Wildwood Historical Society and CastleDraculaofWildwood.com. Celebrate the memory of Wildwood's largest and most beloved haunted attraction with a host of thrilling activities and entertainment for locals and visitors alike.

This two-day event will take place from 4 p.m. – 10 p.m. at Fox Park and Amphitheater, located at 4500 Ocean Avenue in Wildwood. Enjoy vendors, artists, Q&As with former employees, an exhibit of surviving artifacts, a costume contest, special Dark In The Park documentary screening, and much more! Relive the feeling of the great hall with a special photo op of the Castle Fireplace, redesigned by Castle Social Media Admin & Webmaster, Michael Yannette.

Constructed in 1976, and opening Memorial Day Weekend 1977, Castle Dracula was on the Wildwoods Boardwalk for more than 25 years, located at Cedar Avenue and the Boardwalk. The three-story structure provided a combination walk-through and boat ride attraction and was built on top of a pre-existing Mill Ride. Protecting the castle was a moat that ventured beneath the castle.

On the morning of January 16, 2002, Castle Dracula was destroyed in a fire. More than 100 firefighters from the region were on hand to fight the blaze; however, the structure became engulfed in flames. The back wall gave way at around 2 p.m. and by Thursday the entire structure had been destroyed.

Castle Dracula continues to live in the memories of all those who worked and visited the haunted attraction. Some have decided to document the history and memories shared in the beloved haunted attraction at www.CastleDraculaof-Wildwood.com. They are asking attendees to Castle Dracula Weekend to bring personal photos or videos of the castle to be scanned and added into the archive.

Celebrate the memory of Wildwood's Castle Dracula with vendors, an exhibit of artifacts, Q&As with former employees and much more on August 9-10. Courtesy Greater Wildwood Hotel/Motel Association.



Obituary: Robert Scully, Former Historical Society President

Robert J. (Bob) Scully, Sr., 90, of North Wildwood, NJ, died on March 1, 2024, surrounded by his loving family. Scully was born in Somers Point, NJ, son of the late Joseph and Helen (Corr) Scully. The patriarch of the Scully family, he will be sorely missed by many, but none more than Kitty (Dickson), his wife of 69 years, and his four children: Bob Jr. (Cindy) Scully, Lee (Chip) McEntee, Lori (Jim) Flynn, and Linda (Bob) Williams. His legacy will carry on with those who called him Pops, his 16 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren as well as many nieces and nephews.

Bob lived his life in the Wildwoods, NJ. He graduated from Wildwood Catholic HS, where he was a basketball player and was chosen for the 1951 New Jersey All-State Parochial Quartet. He then went on to attend Villanova University. He married his high school sweetheart, Kitty Dickson, then proudly served in the U.S. Army from 1955 to 1957. After his service, Scully returned to Wildwood to raise his family and join his father and brother as a general contractor.

Over the years, he built many houses, motels, and boardwalk stores. He designed and built his and his wife's first home as well as the home where he lived out his life. Bob's life was filled with many great friends, cherished moments, and exceptional experiences. He was an active member of the community, having been served in the Knights of Columbus, as president of Jaycees, as a volunteer fire fighter, on the board of directors of the Union Trust Company, on the Wildwood Urban Renewal Board, on the North Wildwood Zoning Board, in the Wildwood Catholic Booster Club, on the board of directors of the Burdette Tomlin Memorial Hospital, with the the Wildwood Marble Tournament, and with the the Wildwood Baby Parade. He dabbled in the restaurant business as co-owner of the Two Mile Inn and was the developer /proprietor of the Wharf.



Bob Scully

Scully loved the ocean and appreciated sailing, boating and fishing. Travel and photography were among his favorite pastimes as well. In retirement, he enjoyed many years as a Florida snowbird. As a recreational pilot, he traveled to Florida via Biplane, boat and RV. He also documented the Scully lineage back to 1645 through research and through various trips to Ireland.

Starting in the late 1990s, Scully served as president and curator of the Wildwood Historical Society and co-authored two Wildwood history books, including the definitive *Wildwood by the Sea: The History of an American Resort*. In honor of his legacy as a star athlete and alum of Wildwood Catholic, the Wildwood Historical Society dedicated the school and sports exhibit as the Robert J. Scully School and Sports Room.

In addition to his parents, Scully was predeceased by his mother-in-law Catherine (GG) McManus (2005) and his grandson Andrew Ritchey (2021).

In memory of Kathy Boyer Maher, daughter of Wildwood Historical Society founder George F. Boyer, who passed away this year and who — in and after life — was among our biggest supporters. Rest in peace, dear friend.

Donate Your Used Vehicles to the Wildwood Historical Society

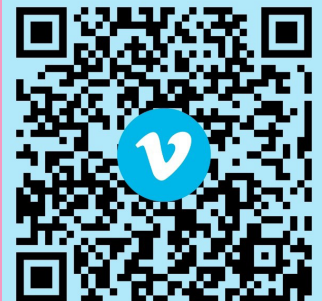
Do you have a vehicle you are interested in trading in or selling? Why not donate them through the CARS program we belong to?

Donate your vehicles to the Wildwood Historical Society (WHS) and receive a tax deduction according to IRS guidelines. WHS is a registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization who relies on public donations to maintain the George F Boyer museum.

The types of vehicles can be cars, trucks, trailers, boats, RV's, motorcycles, campers, off road vehicles, planes, heavy equipment, farm machinery and most other motorized vehicles. This program is available in 48 contiguous states. Just need a clear title. Vehicles do not have to be in operating condition. Make a phone call at 855-500-7433 or you can schedule a vehicle pickup through this link: careasy.org/nonprofit/wildwood-historical-society.

For individuals who would like to support the museum through Planned Giving options, we have suggestions on the homepage of our website, wildwoodhistoricalmuseum.com. Look for the "Plan Your Gift" button and read the suggestions we provided.

In addition, you may use the QR codes below to donate to the museum via Paypal (left) or Venmo (right).



A promotional poster for the 1st Annual Castle Dracula Weekend. The text reads "1st ANNUAL CASTLE DRACULA WEEKEND August 9th & 10th, 2024". It features a silhouette of a castle against a sunset with bats flying. At the bottom, it says "Theater 4500 Ocean Ave, Wildwood, NJ 08260".

Then and Now



This building at 4000 Pacific Avenue was originally an A&P Market. When A&P closed in 1940, Bonelli's Market, which had operated a deli across Pacific Avenue since 1929, moved into the new store. The market closed in 2014 after the passing of patriarch Richard Bonelli. A new market was expected to reopen here, but it now appears it will be replaced with condos.

Visit <https://www.wildwoodhistoricalmuseum.com/research> to buy a vintage photo of your favorite Wildwood spot for just \$10!

Membership

Please renew your membership if you haven't done so recently! If you have already done so, thank you! Donations are welcome, too! Membership donations help cover the costs of newsletters and mailings, and help us keep the lights on at the museum!

Visit wildwoodhistoricalmuseum.com to renew your membership, view past newsletters, buy items from our gift shop, and get a hit of Wildwoods history!

Other ways you can donate!



FOR CHARITY 



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