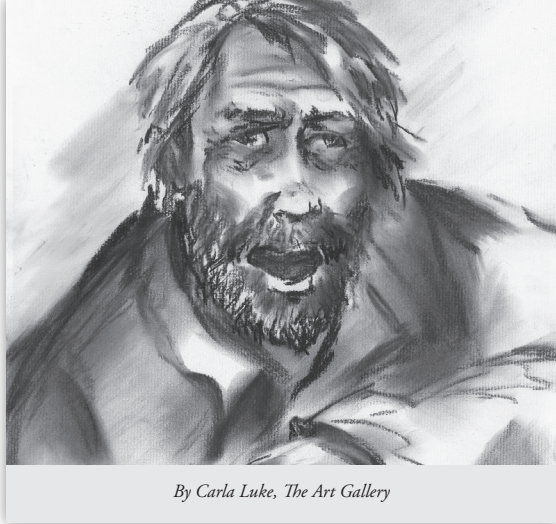


Mad Mike Finds Quiet in Company of Friends



By Carla Luke, The Art Gallery

Fell's Point lost a familiar raging face last month. Known to most as Mad Mike, he was a homeless soul bedeviled by what some surmised was Tourette. Mike usually sat in front of the Daily Grind, engaged in endless tirades against imaginary foes. His profane rants especially disturbed visitors. Yet Michael Sibert, as the police eventually found his name to be, posed no threat. His turmoil was internal.

To some, Mike was a testament to street survival. For about five years he weathered the seasons on the neighborhood stoops and curbs. His clothes were ripped and reeked but occasional replacements gave evidence of responses from the charitable—although he never begged. To others, Mike was

evidence of a failed system. Had his ailment been diagnosed and medication prescribed? Where was his family? Why were the pleas of several residents on his behalf to city offices not acted upon? Police detentions had a revolving-door ineffectuality.

On April 4, Mike collapsed near Broadway Market and was taken by ambulance to a hospital, where he died. He was mourned by staffers at the 'Grind who had slipped him coffee. The birth date turned up by police put him at 50. A rumored brother could not be found. Mike's one close friend, resident Wes Robison, arranged to bury Mike if the body was not claimed. "The man loved me," said Robison. "I know because he told me so."

Robison had found ways of provisioning Mike on his own terms, which indeed stopped short of solicitation. "He may have been crazy, but he was our crazy. . . . I simply did it because it needed to be done." With the help of Lilly & Zeiler Funeral Home on Eastern Avenue, Robison buried Mike two weeks later at St. Stanislaus Kostka Cemetery on Dundalk Avenue. Two witnesses accompanied Robison, who said a marker will read, "He gave those who helped him a chance to feel better about themselves."



Photo by Lew Diuguid
Wes Robison, with Dave Myers, buries Mike—at peace at last

REMEMBERING MIKE

We asked you daily to leave,
To go somewhere else,
To stop all the screaming,
Yelling—the shout after shout.

We watched you each season,
Through heat and cold,
'Pointers and tourists staring,
As you fought your demons bout.

Sometimes you were lucid, calm,
Having a coffee too,
Then hallucinating—
Oh yes, "nuts" without doubt.

You are gone now—it IS quiet,
No more sounds of Mike.
Gone the raucous ranting,
Maybe we should've helped out.

Some of us will miss you.

—Maria Cavacos

Happenings

JAMESTOWN ON THE PATAPSCO

Jamestown Settlement's Godspeed and the Virginia Landing Party Festival will be in Baltimore June 9-12. On Friday, June 9 at 1PM the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation will host Cultures at Jamestown, at the Fell's Point Maritime Museum, 1724 Thames Street. Sponsored by the Maryland Historical Society, the program will be free with museum admission. Participants will explore reproduction artifacts from Jamestown to compare the housing and technology of Powhatan Indians, English settlers and Africans in 17th Century Virginia. For more information, call 410.685.3750 ext. 321 or visit www.mdhs.org

MAYBE WE SAY "TEMS"?

The British are coming on June 6-12 aboard the HMS Northumberland, carrying a crew of more than 280. Cammie Kane of the Water Taxis asks merchants to contribute to a Gift Basket for the Captain, Commander Tony Guy, and/or the crew. Deliver items to the Water Taxi Office, 1735 Lancaster Street, by June 5. Suggestions: certificates, souvenirs, wine, beer, post cards, toys. "And hang up a British Flag if you can," she said. Questions 410.563.3901.

POLICE RESPONSE FORUM:

Officer Melvin Penn will be at Peters Inn on Ann Street near Eastern Avenue on Monday, May 15, at 7PM to discuss the issue of police responsiveness. Residents can share specific circumstances when they felt appropriate police response was lacking. Penn will offer advice on getting the desired response when using the 911 system and what to do if you feel it was inadequate. For more information, call Colleen Doering at 410.522.3080.

REDEVELOPMENT FRONTS:

The Preservation Society's campaign to save the buildings scheduled for demolition on the ex-St. Stanislaus Church site won a round. A judge refused to dismiss a suit alleging that sale of the properties by the Franciscan Order was flawed. The purchaser would redevelop the church into an expanded Mother Seton School and replace most other buildings with luxury town houses.

The purchaser of Miss Irene's tavern on Thames Street reached an agreement with the Homeowners' Association and the Preservation Society to forgo a roof deck in exchange for 100 percent coverage of the lot at Thames and Ann Streets. The Society lauded the restaurant developer's efforts to restore the aged structure.

THE PROMENADER

An Opportune Harbor View At Critical Point for Future

Fell's Pointers have one more shot at fleshing out the city's draft six-year Master Plan to guide further development, and among issues open for consideration is whether the planning department has applied enough imagination to recuperation of the harbor's waters and enhancement of the Promenade. As it happens, residents also have a chance to check on the issues by taking part in a Promenade Party and Clipper City ride on Sunday, May 21, at 4:30PM, with proceeds benefitting two watchdogs—the Promenade Partnership and Baltimore Harbor Watershed Association.

The party initially was scheduled for April 30 but it was postponed because of the overflow of events during the Waterfront Festival. The May 21 party will begin on the pier of the new Douglass-Myers Maritime Park at the foot of Thames and Caroline Streets. The \$25 tickets include free parking at Harbor Point. Guides will lead attendees east on the Promenade to see recent openings of bottle-necks in the harbor-circling walkway—such as the fence that barred promenaders' direct access to the new footage at North Shore on Boston Street. The walk ends at Harris Creek, where efforts of the BHWA have resulted in installation by the city of a test interceptor that prevents trash from floating

into the harbor from storm sewers up the creek. With that, the walkers will board the nearby Clipper City for food and drink, a tour of the harbor and return to the Maritime Park pier.

It is the trash interceptor that draws attention to the city's much ballyhooed Master Plan. Among its specific goals is installation of 10 such interceptors on major storm sewers flowing into the harbor. This comes under the draft's objective to "Protect and Enhance Baltimore's Natural Harbor and Environmental Resources." Other goals are to "Create a comprehensive City-wide Sanitation Plan" and to "educate on how the residents can help keep the City clean." These could be allusions to a court order requiring the City to repair leaking sewers. But there is no bow to the federal Clean Water Act mandate of achieving fishable and swimmable waters.

Should this be a goal of the Master Plan? The answer could prove self-fulfilling: the Planning Department has vowed that the Master Plan will figure large in allocation of budget funding over the six-year span. The final hearing is June 15 at 6:30PM at the War Memorial across from City Hall. As for the Promenade, the plan is more forthcoming, vowing to assure total access to the waterfront by completing the 7-mile park "from

Continued

With Salty Trading Company, Bunker Made Port His Business

By Mark Walker

Marketing Analyst, Puppeteer, Conjuror

For more than 20 years Steve Bunker plied maritime shops in Fell's Point that reeked of pine tar and pipe smoke. They rang with parrot caws and sea stories. He was the waterfront's most familiar character, a goateed sailor with a ring in his ear and a spirited sensibility for his community.

Coming from a long line of Maine salts, Bunker had worked as a ship's boy and crewman on lobster boats before coming to help build The Pride of Baltimore and take part in 1976 Tall Ships Bicentennial celebration. In 1980 he opened the North Atlantic and Orient Trading Company on Broadway at the site of the old Methodist Port Mission.

In 1983 he moved his shop to the one-time car barn for horse-drawn streetcars, known then as the J.C. Mooney Ship Chandlery and now as The Fell's Point Maritime Museum. Bunker called it the China Sea Marine Trading Company, pulling in me and legions of other sidewalk adventurers. His shop looked as if it was created for a movie set. Nothing was new, though, and that gave it

character. On guard outside, like a wooden indian, was a helmeted diving suit seemingly dredged up from 20 leagues under the Chesapeake—along with a barrel or two, fishing nets, and thick coils of rope.

Inside were several canons, showcases of obsolete ship hardware, swords and cutlasses, antique knives, pocket telescopes, curios from the seven seas and a rack of threadbare Annapolis dress uniforms. On the walls were harpoons, ship's wheels, vintage photographs, and carved figureheads from lamented sailboats. In a peaked cap and striped shirt, looking like Kirk Douglas just down from the rigging, Bunker would play a concertina and his parrot let him do the talking—a fluent mix of legend and history that made him a favorite for harbor tours. Soon he turned to 'Point politics.

(To be continued.)



Photo by Mark Anthony Kowalski
Bunker's goods, and demeanor, were bound to rock the boat.

Wheels for One: More Segs, Less Legs

By: George Zokle

To segue into a story about Segways, consider this: the headquarters for these two-wheeled electric person movers in Maryland and the District of Columbia is here at 2003 Fleet Street, with Australians Tonia Edwards and Bill Main at the tiller. They offer Segways for sale or rent, and guided tours through Fell's Point. Business is rolling. Main said that when Dean Kamen of New Hampshire invented the two-wheeled, self-balancing vehicle in 2001 it was known simply as "It, then briefly Ginger and soon as Segue, which evolved into Segway." It is an innovation in sightseeing nationally and Main's Segs in the City offers daily tours departing from the Science Center in the Inner Harbor as well as from Fleet Street.



Bill Main Segways to a neighbor's along Fleet Street at Washington.

Edwards said their business began when they came to Maryland on a sailboat from the Caribbean. "We were docking in Annapolis when we noticed there weren't any places to rent bicycles or scooters." They decided to stay, and to open a rentals store-internet cafe.

"Segways seemed like a natural progression," she added. Segs in the City opened in September and she said that in the first few days of May they have conducted over 30 tours, averaging six people per tour.

Internet bookings help bring in the tourists and curiosity draws residents. In Fells Point, \$45 hour tours take off from Fleet and Washington Streets to Thames Street, then toward the Inner Harbor via the Promenade and on to the Flag House and Little Italy—returning by Eastern Avenue. "Baltimore is a friendly town for Segways. . . our

customers are always greeted by people waving to them in the streets." said Edwards. A two-hour tour is \$70 and the hourly rental rate is \$50.

Segways have their skeptics. Some fear collisions with pedestrians—and their dogs—on the sidewalks and wonder if the vehicles should be licensed. Main said most municipalities, including Baltimore, embrace Segways in the same way as motorized wheelchairs under the American Disabilities Act. While often-ignored rules for the Promenade forbid bicycles, they do not address Segways. Segs' rules say riders must be at least 14 and under 260 pounds. Edwards also advises good hand coordination to use the turning mechanism on the handlebar. Reaching a maximum speed of 12.5 mph, the Segways are set to operate on scales of 6, 8, and 12 mph, with riders mindful not to exceed the city ordinance of 10 mph on sidewalks. She said no injuries or collisions have occurred here so far. The range per plug-in battery recharge is about 20 miles.

Main said police are fond of patrolling on Segways, finding people in often hostile neighborhoods striking up conversations after hailing an officer to ask about his odd transport. He has sold 10 to the security force at BWI Airport. The latest model costs \$5,000 plus tax. The store is open 10 AM to 6 PM except Wednesdays. There is a branch at the Old Post Office in Washington as well as in Annapolis. For reservations, 800.734.7393.

. . .Or Win Free Wheels

The Baltimore Metropolitan Council, www.baltometro.org, reports that BikeTown USA has given away over 1,300 bicycles in towns across the United States and wants to hear from Baltimore area residents on the question: How Would the Gift of a Bike Change Your Life? Visit www.bicycling.com/biketown to submit essay or learn about bike maintenance, commuting, staying motivated, and more.

east along Locust Point toward Fort McHenry. For tickets to the floating field trip, call Cristin Bieretz at Living Classrooms, 410.396.3453, or Megan Sines at BHWA, 410.563.7300.

Schedules

Garbage Bags Are No Longer Allowed

TRASH

Place trash outside in cans or after 6AM on Mondays and Thursdays. All Trash must go in cans!

RECYCLING

Place outside by 7AM on collection day. Glass, metal and plastic in blue plastic bags on the second and fourth Monday of each month.

Paper and cardboard in paper bags, cardboard boxes or tied with string on the second and fourth Fridays of each month.

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS

Douglass Place: Third Wednesday of every other month at the Polish National Alliance, 1637 Eastern Avenue, (410) 563-1297.

Fell's Point Antique Dealers' Association: Call 410.675.4776.

Fell's Point Community Organization: Second Mondays, 7PM, Fell's Point Visitor Center, (410) 276-5471.

The Fell's Point Development Corp. Board meets at 8AM on first Tuesdays at True Restaurant. On third Tuesdays, the Board meets at 8AM in Teology, 1705 Eastern Avenue, followed by an Open Business Forum at 9AM, also in Teology, with all business owners welcome.

Fell's Point Homeowners' Association: First Wednesdays, 7PM, Bertha's 2nd Floor.

Greenspace Action Partnership: Second Tuesdays, 6PM, Visitor Center, 410.675.6750 ext 10.

Society for the Preservation of Fell's Point and Federal Hill: Call (410) 675-6750.

The Fell's Pointer is published monthly by volunteers of Fell's Point Citizens on Patrol, Inc. Questions, input and participation in patrols and this newsletter are welcome. E-mail fpcop@verizon.net. Online www.fpcop.com. Write to P.O. Box 6137, Baltimore, MD 21231

House Tour Sunday:

The 35th Fell's Point Historic House Tour of the Preservation Society is on Sunday, Mothers' Day, from 11AM until 5PM. Tickets are \$15, on sale at the Visitor Center on Thames Street and Long & Foster on Broadway.

thanks!

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"Promenader" continued from page 1

Canton Crossing to the Museum of Industry." But this ribbon already is complete or under construction, and the Living Classrooms-backed Promenade Partnership is looking to continuation farther