



HOTEL • MOTEL • RESTAURANT • ASSOCIATION • INC.

Ocean City Over The Years

Cheers to 150 Years of Hospitality!

OC's 1st Hotel

Colonel Lemuel Showell III, a member of a prominent Worcester County family, spearheaded a group of fellow investors to form the **Atlantic Hotel** Company in **1868**, which opened the hotel on July 4, 1875. Fifteen years later, it was purchased by the Sinepuxent Beach Company, and in 1923, by Dr. Charles W. Purnell, whose family still owns and operates it today.

The hotel contained 112 small bedrooms ranging in size from 8ft x 17ft to 16ft x 17ft, with no electricity or indoor plumbing. Chamber pots and outdoor privies were the only “bathroom” accommodations available for guests.





Conner Family

George & Willye Conner pictured with their sons (L/R) George B. Conner Jr., John William Conner, & in his mother's lap, Milton L. Conner.

OC's 1st Restaurant

This circa 1915 photo is of the George Conner family, pioneers in Ocean City's hotel and restaurant industry. George Conner (1874-1916) opened Ocean City's first restaurant, **Conner's Restaurant**, on the Boardwalk at S. Division Street in **1892**. His wife, Willye Jones Conner (1886-1971) – known to later generations as Willye Conner Ludlam – purchased the Hastings Hotel in 1922, and later on she built the Santa Maria Motel on 15th Street in 1956.

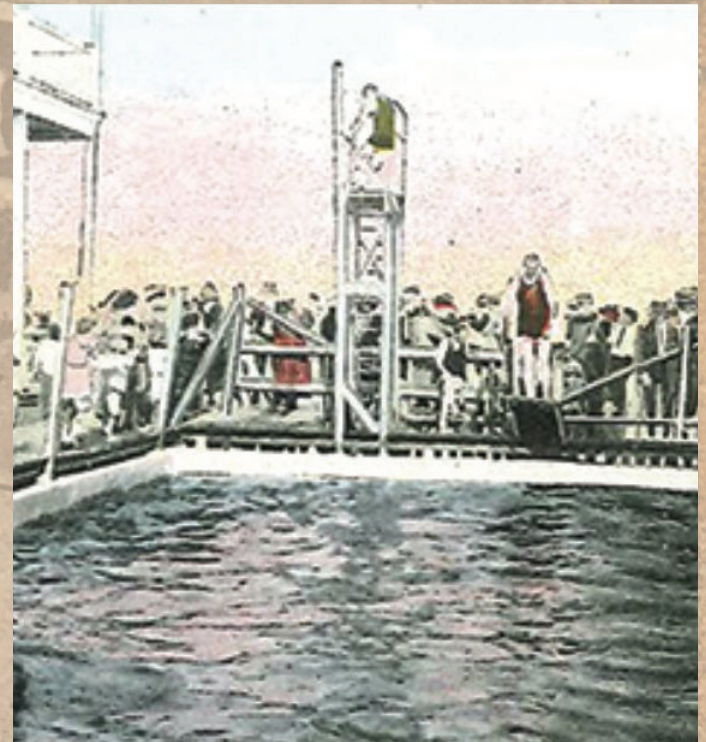
OC's 1st Swimming Pool

John Dale Showell Jr.

built Ocean City's 1st swimming pool in **1917**. Located on the Boardwalk between N. Division and Caroline Streets, it was a saltwater pool with water pumped in from the ocean.

Showell charged 25 cents to swim in the pool and cleaned it once a week, re-filling it at night. The Showell Bathhouse offered bathing suits and locker rentals for 25 cents a day

Ocean City, Md.



OC's 1st Attraction



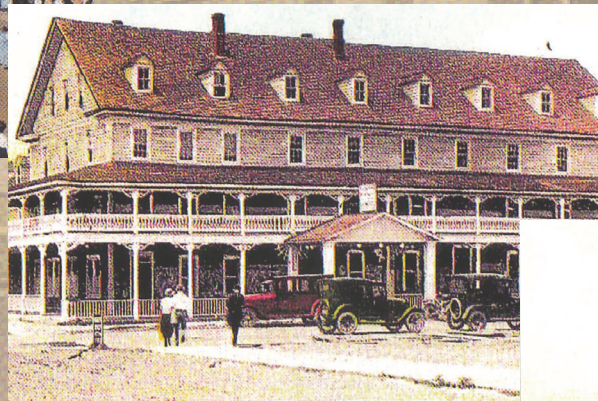
Daniel and Margaret Trimmer, German immigrants, originally ran the Silver Dollar Bar in Baltimore. A visit to Ocean City in 1890 captivated them so much that they sold their bar and relocated to the beach.

In **1893** they brought the first amusement ride to town, which was a small hand-cranked carousel. Within a few years, they changed the boardwalk forever with more and bigger rides.

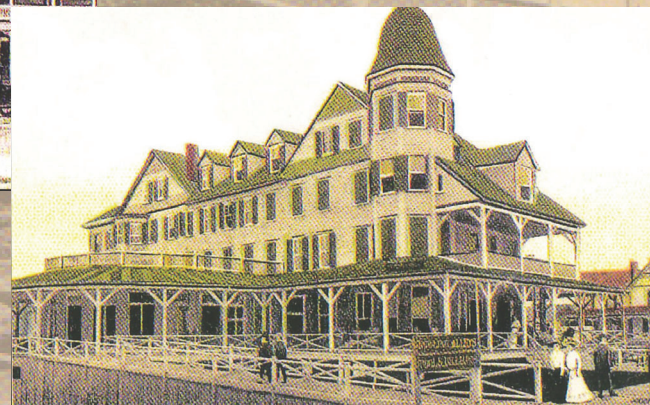
Hotels of World War 1



The Atlantic was Ocean City's first hotel, opening on July 4th, 1875. Located on the Boardwalk between Wicomico and Somerset Streets, the original building (pictured here) burned to the ground in The Great Fire of 1925. It was rebuilt the following year in a different style and continues to serve guests today.



The Seaside Hotel was located on the corner of Wicomico Street and Baltimore Avenue. Built in 1876, the Seaside was Ocean City's 2nd hotel. Also a victim of The Great Fire of 1925, it was never rebuilt.



The Plimhimmon was Ocean City's "grand hotel" in the WWI era. Built in 1894 by Rosalie Tilghman Shreve, it took up half the oceanfront block between N. 1st and 2nd Streets. The Plimhimmon was lost in a fire on November 21, 1962.

The Nordica was a frame Victorian style hotel built circa 1905. It was located on the Boardwalk between Dorchester and Talbot Street. The Nordica was another victim of the “Boardwalk Arson Bug” in January 1973.



The Hamilton, built in 1901 on the north corner of 3rd Street, drew an upscale WWI-era clientele and stood alongside the Atlantic and the Plimhimmon as one of OC's top hotels. It burned down in December 1969.



The Colonial Hotel, built in 1897, shared the oceanfront block between N. 1st Street and 2nd Street with the Plimhimmon for over 65 years. The Colonial was the first victim of the “Boardwalk Arson Bug” and burned to the ground on December 15, 1962.



The Breakers was one of Ocean City's most northern hotels during the WWI era. Located on the Boardwalk and the south corner of 3rd Street, it served summer visitors until 2003 when the original Breakers was demolished to build a modern hotel of the same name.

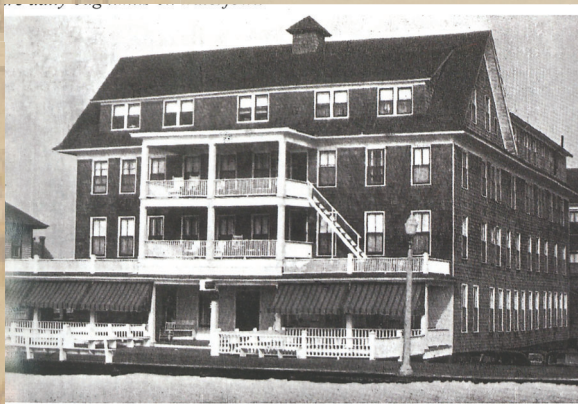


The Belmont was located on the North side of Dorchester Street just off the Boardwalk. It served Ocean City's visitors for nearly 100 years before being demolished in 2004. The Belmont Towers was built on the site in 2006.

The New Avalon had been pieced together by combining large cottages on either side of owner Josephine Hasting's boarding house. Located between N. Division Street and N. 1st Street on Baltimore Avenue, in later years it was known as the Delmarva Hotel. Demolished in 2008, it is now the site of the Sleep Inn.



Notable 1st's



The Shoreham Hotel on the corner of 4th Street and the Boardwalk was built in 1922. At the time, it was the tallest building in Ocean City at 55' tall until surpassed by the George Washington hotel in 1931.



The Commander was built by the Lynch family in 1930 and was the northernmost hotel on the Boardwalk. The hotel boasted 62 rooms and the first elevator in Ocean City. Clambakes and the Boardwalk Cabaret were popular here.



The Alamo Court was Worcester County's first-ever motel, located in West OC. The construction supervisor, Ridge Harman Sr., saw the future of lodging and built his own motel on 22nd Street in 1948, named Miami Court, which resembled the Alamo



The Fountain Court
(Now Cabana Motel)

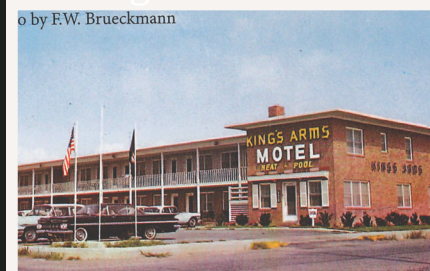


Santa Maria
(Now Courtyard by Marriott)



Sea Scape Motel
(Now Hyatt Place)

King's Arms Motel

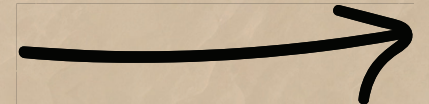


The Eden Roc



Motel Row

Motel Row developed in the mid-1950s and early 60's because of the post-WWII baby boom, a strong economy, and the opening of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge made beach travel easier. Young families' desire for less expensive and more casual lodging spurred the development between 15th and 33rd Streets.





Flamingo Motel



Quality Inn Boardwalk



The Diplomat
(Now Flagship Hotel)



Ocean Park Motel



The Stardust Motel
(Now Hilton Suites)



Sandyhill Motel

Photo from the Bunk Mann collection

Ocean Park & Sandy Hill
are now
Holiday Inn Suites 17th St.

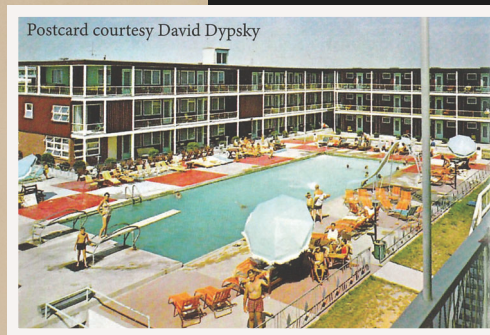


Suf and Sands Motel
(Now Days Inn)

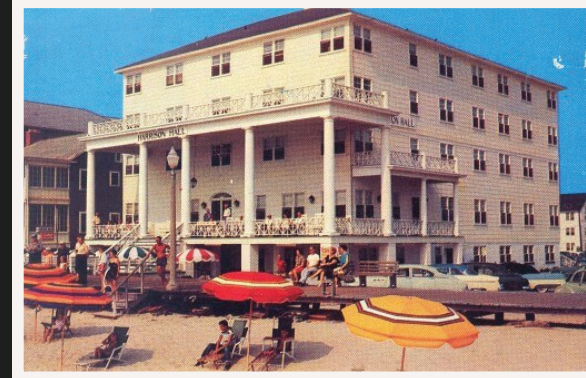




Harrington Arms
(Now Quality Inn Beachfront)



The Stowaway
(Now Grand Hotel)



Harrison Hall



Yankee Clipper Motel
(Now La Quinta Hotel & Suites)

The Satellite Motel
(Now Howard Johnson Inn)



The Satellite Motel



Ocean Mecca Motel
(Now Fish Tales Boardwalk Inn)

Landmark of the 60's



The **Plim Plaza**, as it appeared in 1963, was site of the Plimhimmon Hotel. The original Plimhimmon, one of Ocean City's early Victorian style hotels, was destroyed by fire on November 21, 1962.



The **China Seas Motel** was located on the oceanfront at 51st Street, and when built in 1963, was one of the first motels north of 33rd Street. Designed to resemble a Chinese "junk" (a fishing boat seen on the rivers of China), it attracted much attention on Coastal Highway.

The **Maryland Inn** was owned and managed by the Hagan family for over forty years. Located on the Boardwalk at Caroline Street, it was torn down in 1979. The Fun City Arcade occupies the site today.



The **Rideau** shared the Boardwalk between N. Division and 1st Street with the Roosevelt Hotel. A fire which began in the Rossevelt on March 11, 1970 spread to and consumed the Rideau. It was one of the largest fires ever fought by the OC Volunteer Fire Department.



Castle in the Sand Hotel was opened by the Showell family in 1960 and was considered to be "way up the beach". It was a new concept for it provided kitchens in the rooms and balconies to sit out on and view the ocean. The hotel is still operated by the family.



The George Washington Hotel was the tallest building in Ocean City for nearly 40 years and was a landmark for boats on the ocean. The hotel opened up in 1931 and boasted a ballroom on the top floor. Demolished in 1990, the site is now occupied by the Americana Hotel.

Landmark of the 60's Cont.



The **Delmarva Hotel** was located on Baltimore Ave. between N. Division and 1st Street. The hotel had been pieced together by combining cottages on either side of Josephine Hasting's boarding house in the 1900's. The Delmarva was torn down in 2008 and is now the site of the Sleep Inn.



The **Hastings-Miramar** was a fixture on the Boardwalk between 2nd and 3rd Streets for over 50 years. In this 1963 photo, The Hastings is in the center, the Miramar on the right, and the Westchester Apartments on the left. The Park Place Hotel occupies this site today.

The **Majestic Hotel** is located on 7th Street and boasts one of the few remaining shady porches on the Boardwalk. The Majestic was constructed in 1926 and originally called The Liberty Farms Hotel. It has changed little in appearance since this 1961 photo.



The **Nassau Motel** was owned by Euince and Herman Sorin and located on 60th Street. It was one of the first motels built following the January 26, 1965 annexation of North Ocean City from 41st Street to DE line. It was demolished in 2005, and the Meridian Condo occupies the site today.



The **Royalton Hotel** was built by Ethel Griffin Kelley and was well known for its dining room and her famous sticky buns. The Royalton was rebuilt as the Monte Carlo Boardwalk without the dining room, but with a rooftop pool and deck.



The **La Grande Hotel** was the northern section of the old Catholic Home and the site of Bob Ching's Chinese Restaurant in the 1950's. The La Grande was a victim of the March Storm of 1962. The former site is now part of the 13th St (Beach Plaza Hotel) parking lot.

The Carousel



Bobby Baker's **Carousel** opened on **July 22, 1962** after the original opening had been delayed due to damage from the famous March storm of that same year. At the time of its construction, it was far north of the existing city limits and stood virtually alone with only sand dunes.

The Carousel was a major point of interest in the Summer of 1962. It had a reputation for luxury and the publicity from its grand opening - Vice President and Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson and several busloads of Washington, DC insiders and political figures attended.

Baker envisioned constructing the Carousel into one of the grandest hotels of its time in North Ocean City. However, his plans were cut short when he was charged with tax evasion and fraud leading to imprisonment. The hotel made a comeback and now features the Next Ice Age ice skating shows.

The Ship Café Restaurant and Marina, originally built as the OC Yacht Club in the late 1930s, was as a landmark for over 30 years. Famous for its deep harbor and brief stint with a small airstrip, it was destroyed by fire on May 9, 1977. Now the area has **Harbor Island & Reel Inn**.



English's Chicken House opened in 1963 on the corner of 15th Street and Philadelphia Avenue and would serve some of the best fried chicken ever served on the Eastern Shore of Maryland for over 50 years. This site is now **Papi's Tacos**.



Photo courtesy Vera

The Samoa and Mario's were two of OC's most popular restaurants in the late 1960s. The Samoa, once between 22nd and 23rd Street, moved north in 1969 and is now the site of Sunsations. Mario's, beloved for steaks and Italian food for over 50 years, closed in 2005 and is now a parking lot.