

# Ocracoke Working Watermen Association Makes Public Appearance



Left: The fishery had a great turnout and raised money to benefit the Fishhouse. Photo by Linda Rippe.

Below: Fish and a smile. Rex dishes up some beans and slaw. Photo by Linda Rippe.

Right: Members of OWWA and other locals prepare the feast. Photo by Ray Buck.



Representatives of OWWA attended the NC Seafood Festival in Morehead City during the first weekend of October and set up a tent to talk about the association and the campaign to save the fish house. Despite the weather, there was a good turnout of people that stopped

by to say that they had been keeping up with the progress of the fish house. The OWWA's booth was next to Carteret Catch so they were able to enjoy great seafood samples throughout the day. Later that night, WITTN covered the festival and included a

special segment on the mission of the fish house. "It provides a flavor and



it's good for the economy," said Robin Payne, organizer, in a television interview.

"If we can preserve it, we can see into the future. [Ocracoke's economy] is based on

tourism and when tourists come down, they like to see that flavor. They like to stop by the fish house and it's great for them to be able to buy ice and see the fishermen coming in right there off the dock."

Visitors enjoyed seeing the displays of generational ties and pictures from vintage time to present. OWWA was able to borrow the pound net display from the Ocracoke Preservation Museum to show visitors the pound net fishing process. A replica is being made by Edward Carson O'Neal to be displayed at the fish house. OWWA is also involved in the NCCAT seminar, "Salty Dogs and the Life of the Sea". The teachers have sessions out on the water pulling in gill nets

and crab pots with locals like Rex O'Neal, Gene Ballance, and Farris O'Neal. They then visit the fish house to learn about the operation from water to retail shelf and then eat their own catch later that night.

OWWA had their first fish fry on Sept. 30 and it was deemed a success. They raised \$5200 towards their goal. BIG thanks to all the ladies who baked, the restaurants and supply companies, the fishermen



*Lip smacking barbecued mullet was smokin' on the grill. Photo by Linda Rippe.*

who supplied fish, the servers and the cooks. It's important

to show that this project is locally backed with donations, contributions, and full support. Don't miss the next fish fry on November 11 from 6 - 8 p.m.



*Folks with eager appetites line up for the fixin's served by Rex and Eric O'Neal. Photo by Kay Buck.*