

Mad Batter porch dedicated to year-round service

By **JOHN COOKE**
Special to the Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Under clearing skies May 24, about 150 people gathered to celebrate the opening and ribbon cutting of the newly renovated Mad Batter porch at the Carroll Villa Hotel on Jackson Street.

When Harry Kulkowitz bought the Carroll Villa back in the 1970s, it was a Victorian seaside hotel that had seen better days. He envisioned the sprawling, European-style porch as a great place for friends to gather and enjoy amazing food and spirited conversation. And, for decades, that porch has lived up to his expectations — and then some.

The porch was a seasonal spot in 1976 when Harry and his partner Vickie Seitchik opened the Mad Batter. But, truth be told, the

whole town was a Memorial Day-to-Labor Day resort, so an open-air, unheated porch worked well during those summer months.

The Mad Batter quickly became one of the most popular gathering spots in town, a restaurant known for an amazing, eclectic menu, music, art exhibits and eventually a great bar. But the porch, a favorite with just about everyone in town, was closed during the colder months.

All that changed this year, according to Harry Kulkowitz's son Mark, who now owns the Carroll Villa and Mad Batter along with his wife, Pam Huber. The couple's three adult children — Marta, Tessa and Kyle — are now part of the family business.

Local and county dignitaries were on hand to witness the official ceremony starting the 41st season of the historic hotel.

"Thirty seven years ago when my husband and I first dated, he brought me to breakfast at the Mad Batter. I realized then what an iconic place the Mad Batter was at first glance," Freeholder Marie Hayes said.

Hayes presented Mark Kulkowitz and family with a resolution from the Board of Chosen Freeholders. According to Hayes, a resolution was something preserved for very special occasions.

Bernadette Matthews, standing in for Chamber of Commerce of Greater Cape May President Tracie Citchitti, congratulated the Kulkowitz family.

"When my grandchildren come to visit in Cape May, they always want to have breakfast at the Mad Batter," Matthews said.

"The porch has seen a lot of use — and abuse," Kulkowitz said recently as he walked around the



John Cooke/Special to the STAR AND WAVE

Mark Kulkowitz, right, smiles after cutting the ribbon on the newly remodeled porch at the Mad Batter Restaurant in Cape May. With him are his wife, Pam Huber, left, children Marta and Kyle, Freeholder Marie Hayes, Mayor Chuck Lear and business leader Vicki Clark.

ongoing construction area, obviously happy with his decision to turn the seasonal space into a comfortable, modern porch with all the charm of the past but with plenty of added amenities.

"The Carroll Villa has been one of the favorite spots around town," Cape May Mayor Chuck Lear said. "With the renovation of the historic porch, that's sure to continue."

Kulkowitz has a fondness for treating veterans well at the Carroll Villa. Each November on Veterans Day, he invites vets to an overnight stay free of charge.

No doubt inspired by his father Harry's military service, which included the D-Day landing in Normandy, France.

"Where veterans are put first," said Hayes, who went on to explain the long line of veterans in her family. "It's like a piece of my heart goes with them."

The new porch has retractable plexiglass panels framed in wood with ornate white brackets that can be open to the ocean breezes or closed when the days and evenings are cool. Radiant heat will also add to year-round comfort. The

floor plan focuses on half-wall partitions offering privacy from the openness of the older porch, with some booth seating featuring vibrant, colorful upholstery to complement the white wainscoting and pale blue ceiling. The vibe is definitely fun, relaxing and laid back.

More than 135 years after the Carroll Villa was built and more than 40 years since Harry Kulkowitz financed a \$96,000 loan to buy the building, the establishments continue to be an integral part of the history and fabric of Cape May.

Meeting June 3 on bike, pedestrian plan

CAPE MAY — The New Jersey Department of Transportation's Office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs is seeking input from Cape May and Cape May Point residents and visitors as part of its ongoing study of bicycle and pedestrian conditions throughout and linking between the two communities.

A public meeting is scheduled for 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, June 3, in Cape May City Hall's auditorium.

Through a grant from NJDOT's Local Bicycle/Pedestrian Planning Assistance Program, Cape May and Cape May Point are finalizing BikeWalk Cape May, a joint bicycle and pedestrian plan that seeks to

improve mobility and safety for nonmotorized traffic.

This plan included a detailed review and inventory of pedestrian and bicycle traffic generators, crashes and overall conditions at major intersections and along key corridors. Following that review, a series of conceptual recommendations were developed to address many existing deficient conditions. Ultimately, the recommendations are intended to create a robust bicycle and pedestrian network that better links the two communities, enhances connections between neighborhoods and key destinations, expands the existing on-street bicycle network, leverages

the communities' historic and natural assets, and enhances Cape May and Cape May Point as major tourist destinations.

BikeWalk Cape May is part of ongoing efforts by Cape May, Cape May Point and NJDOT to implement their Complete Streets policies.

The event will be conducted as an open house, where the public is welcome to stop by at their convenience to review the study findings, maps and graphics. Residents will also have the opportunity to ask questions of the consultant team and comment on the study findings.

For more information, visit capemaycity.com.

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TIDES : June 2017				
DATE	HIGH		LOW	
	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
31	1:07	1:56	7:30	7:39
1	2:08	2:59	8:28	8:44
2	3:10	4:00	9:25	9:48
3	4:11	4:56	10:19	10:48
4	5:06	5:45	11:08	11:42
5	5:57	6:29	11:53	
6	6:43	7:10	12:31	12:35
7	7:26	7:48	1:16	1:14

MOON PHASES
Full moon, June 9 • last quarter, June 17