

Sun 10-23-94  
**Melancholy leader  
confronts himself  
in a museum**

By Alice Steinbach  
Sun Staff Writer

Years from now, when school children study the history of Maryland, they'll run across pictures of a man named William Donald Schaefer and wonder: Who the heck was this guy?

Who, they'll wonder, was this middle-aged man shaking hands with an ape named Godzilla at something called the City Fair? And could he be the same man who, in another picture, is breaking down — just totally breaking down in grief — about the sinking of a ship called the *Pride of Baltimore*? And isn't that him about to plunge into a seal tank, outfitted for the occasion in a striped Victorian swimsuit, a rubber duck tucked under his arm?

And why, they'll wonder, does this man who's photographed out boating with an American president named George Bush and a Russian one named Boris Yeltsin later show up in his undershirt to paint a Baltimore city school? Or dressed in a black cape and sombrero-like hat, posing as somebody called "The Shadow"?

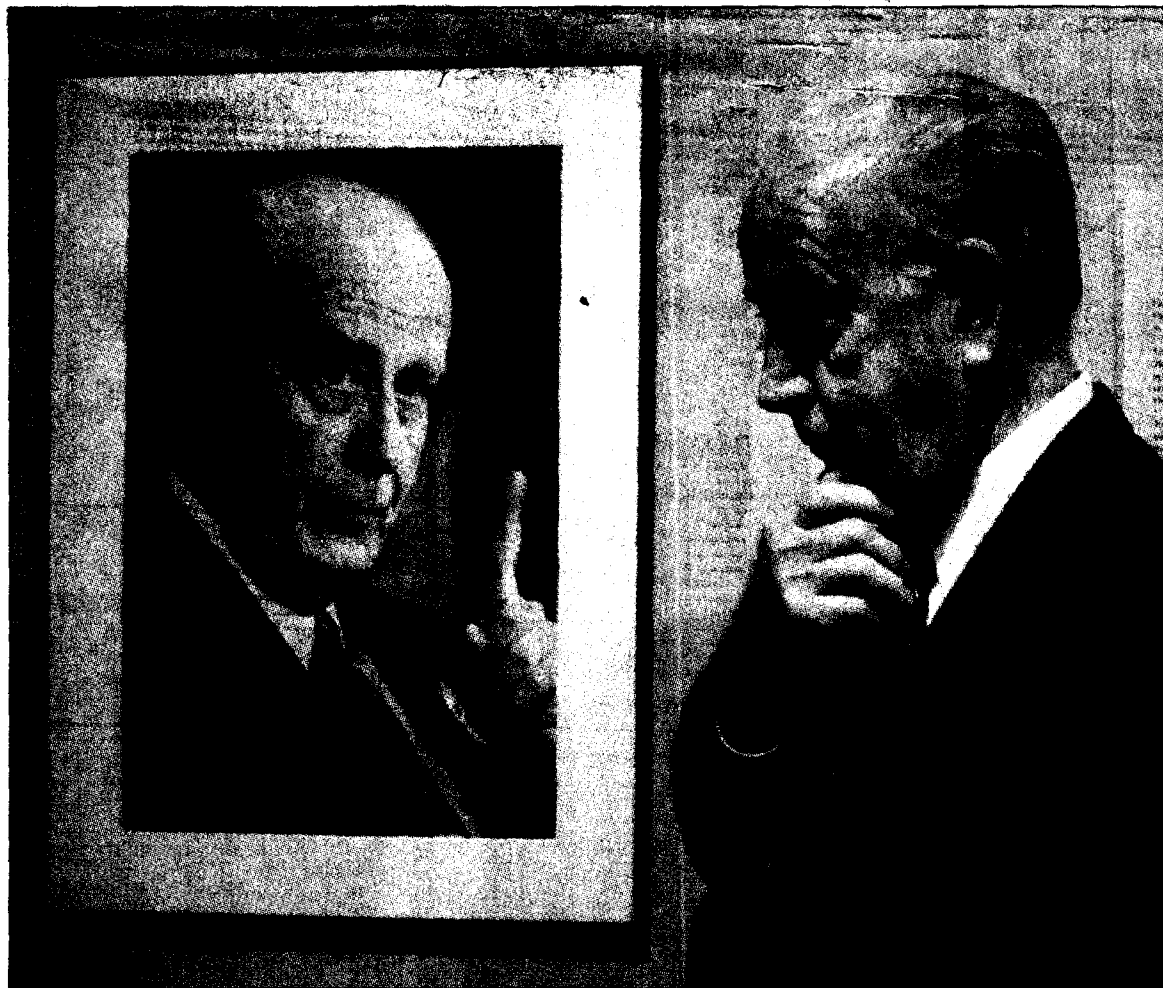
Years from now, they'll see such pictures and wonder: What did this man do? Was he in public relations? Was he a maintenance man? A politician? A construction worker? An actor? A train conductor? An orchestra conductor?

Of course, those of us who've been a part of Maryland's history over the last 40 years know that William Donald Schaefer is all of those things. And more.

In fact, it's hard to imagine life around these parts without him turning up in some goofy costume or dashing off an Action Memo about potholes. But you'd better try. Because William Donald Schaefer is about to step out of the public spotlight and into private life.

It's been a long and winding

# SCHAEFER *revisits* SCHAEFER



ALGERINA PERNA/SUN STAFF PHOTO

Gov. William Donald Schaefer ponders himself in a 1991 photo by Richard Tomlinson, one of 50 photos on display at the Baltimore Museum of Art. (Vignettes of 40 years of public life, Page 18A)

road for the man who served four terms as mayor of Baltimore and two terms as governor; a road that seems to have had a photographer waiting at every turn. Now as part

of *The Long Goodbye*, the Baltimore Museum of Art has assembled an exhibition of 50 photographs honoring his career.

There's a lot of history stored in

these pictures. And for William Donald Schaefer a lot of emotion, too. That became obvious earlier

See **MEMORIES**, 18A

# SCHAEFER REVISITS SCHAEFER



## CELEBRATING BALTIMORE'S WORLD SERIES VICTORY

WITH ORIOLES OWNER EDWARD BENNETT WILLIAMS IN PARADE  
THROUGH DOWNTOWN, OCT. 16, 1983

**G**overnor Schaefer remembers Edward Bennett Williams as "a good man; a wonderful, warm individual." He also remembers how he and Mr. Williams would meet "secretly" to conduct their negotiations.

He would call me up, and we'd meet secretly at a hotel. A little hotel on Pleasant Street. The Tremont. We used to go up to the top floor and we'd sit down and we'd start to eat. And then we'd start to do negotiations. Everything would be pleasant, and then all of a sudden he'd get up and start walking up and down, up and down. And he'd say, "That's the thanks I get. All I've done for you and all

I've done for the city — and this is what you're doing to me." I said, "What am I doing to you?" And he said, "You're not doing what you should be doing for me." Then we'd negotiate.

Next time we have dinner and he gets up, storms up and down. "Oh, my God, how could you do this to me, Don? All I've done for the city." The second time I'm watching him do this I thought, "He's pleading a case before the jury." And this time I'm laughing to myself. Then he'd say, after he put on his performance, "I want this, I want that, I want this." And we'd negotiate. And I'd say, "Yes, yes, yes."



## SITTING WITH THE FIVE BALTIMORE CITY MAYORS WHO PRECEDED HIM AT HOPKINS PLAZA.

(L-R) THOMAS J. D'ALESSANDRO JR., THEODORE R. MCKELDIN, PHILLIP H. GOODMAN, THOMAS J. D'ALESSANDRO III, AND J. HAROLD GRADY, SEPT. 6, 1972

**W**hen William Donald Schaefer entered the City Council in 1955, "Old Tommy" D'Alessandro was mayor. When City Councilman Schaefer was elected mayor of Baltimore in 1971 he took over the office from "Young Tommy" D'Alessandro.

Now, there are some great guys. There's old Tommy. I learned so much from that guy. He was a magnificent man. Go-get-it-done kind of guy. Very excitable. McKeldin. He was a great, great speaker. We didn't get along too well when he was mayor. I remember one thing he did. There was this bill — the One-Percent-for-

Art bill, I think. Well, he vetoed my bill and then he put the bill right back in — under his own name. But after I became mayor, he and I became really close friends.

That's Grady. J. Harold Grady. He was the smartest of them all. He was misplaced. He didn't want to be Mayor. And that's Tommy the Younger. He had the biggest heart of all... He was just a real, real, nice, good man. And the community took advantage of him. Of his goodness. He let them push him around. Which is not right. He got tired of politics. Got out early.

## MEMORIES: 40-year career goes on exhibit

From Page 1A

this week as William Donald Schaefer took a slow walk through his past.

"That's the one that made me cry," Governor Schaefer said, pointing to a 1979 photo of himself with his old friend and political fund-raiser, Irvin Kovens. "He was my good friend. I remember he called me 'Shaky' Schaefer — because I was always scared in an election."

The governor paused. "Without Irv Kovens, I wouldn't be here. The things that happened in the city wouldn't have happened. The things on the state level wouldn't have happened. . . . I had such high respect for him. You know, they always say a political boss, he pushes you around. Not him. He never asked for anything, never wanted me to do anything for him. Never, never, never."

"There's a lot of nostalgia there"

Next stop: a photograph of his mother, Tululu, and his old dog, Skippy, standing with him in 1971 on the porch of the West Baltimore home where Governor Schaefer was born.

The sight of it turned the governor's watery-blue eyes a bit more watery. "Oh, boy," he said, sighing deeply. "That's a picture of my mother — just before my first inauguration as mayor."

He leaned in to study the picture. "The house is different now. This bush is there, but now there's two trees here." He still stays at the house from time to time and plans to keep it. "I've got a bedroom furnished upstairs, kitchen's furnished and there's a little furniture in the living room."

Another sigh. "There's a lot of nostalgia there," he said.

And the nostalgia, as visitors to the exhibition quickly find out, relates not only to his past but to ours as well.

Think about how long he's been around: When William Donald Schaefer entered political life in 1955, a postage stamp cost 3 cents, bus fare was 15 cents and a '55 Chevy went for about \$2,000. Thomas J. D'Alessandro Jr. was Baltimore's mayor, and

LISTENING TO  
ROBERT IRSAY  
CONFIRM THE COLTS'



## LISTENING TO ROBERT IRSAY CONFIRM THE COLTS' COMMITMENT TO BALTIMORE

AFTER RETURNING FROM HIS TALKS IN TAMPA, JAN. 20, 1984.

Describing Robert Irsay as a "very odd, strange man," Governor Schaefer recalls the winter night that the Colts' owner showed up at BWI airport to scream and rant at reporters — and then to suddenly depart in his private plane.

Irsay called me the night before and said, "I'm flying in to Baltimore. I want to go to Tio Pepe's." And I said, "Jeez, Mr. Irsay, I can't get you a reservation there. It takes two weeks." And he said, "I don't care. Get me a reservation at Tio Pepe's." So I called Tio Pepe's and said, "I need a reservation." They said, "Sorry, we can't help you." And I said, "I've got to have it. Irsay's coming." So they said, "All right. We'll do it." So he flies in. And he's absolutely wild. He gets before the cameras, and he lets them have it. And I'm trying, I'm really trying, to understand why he's acting this way... Anyway, I'm dying. But he finishes and I say, "OK, Mr. Irsay, are



you ready to go to Tio Pepe's?" And he says, "No. I'm going back to Chicago. Goodbye." Said he didn't remember calling me up to go to Tio Pepe's.

The last time Governor Schaefer saw Colts' owner Robert Irsay was in October 1993. The NFL team owners had gathered to vote on which two cities among the five finalists would be awarded expansion teams. "He waned, and I waned," recalled Governor Schaefer. But just before leaving

for Chicago, Governor Schaefer bit the bullet and "actually called him up."

I called him and asked him to vote for us. He was surprised that I called him. He didn't say no; he didn't say yes. But I knew he wasn't going to be for us. Even though he morally should have been. He morally should have been. Without any hesitancy he should have been standing up and yelling for Baltimore.

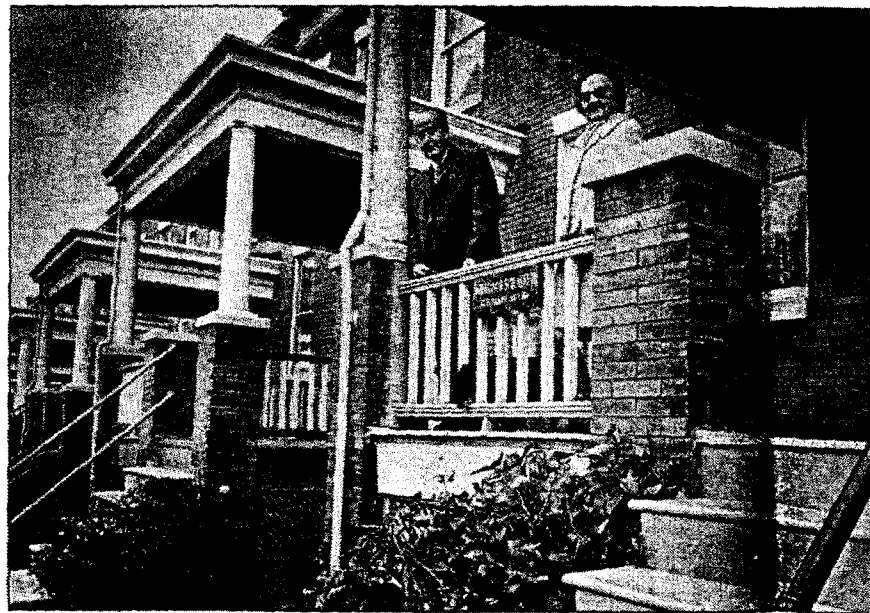
## PORTRAYING "THE SAGE OF BALTIMORE"

AT THE H.L. MENCKEN HOUSE IN BALTIMORE, JUNE 12, 1984.

When Governor Schaefer stopped to look at this photograph he didn't see H.L. Mencken. He saw someone else: his father.

That's my father! That's exactly what my father looked like! Take away the hair, that's him. My father always had a cigar stuck in his face, he had horn-rimmed glasses, he wore short-sleeve shirts and, most times, suspenders.

My father believed in hard work. He worked for the Maryland Title Guarantee Company and he used to work five and a half days — a half-day on Saturday. And then time came on when they cut out the half-day. My father thought he was stealing from the company. He couldn't understand that.... He was really a good, good man. I guess the honesty, and the hard work are the things I inherited from him.... I also got my great interest in planting my own flowers from him. When



## AT HOME ON EDGEWOOD STREET IN BALTIMORE WITH HIS MOTHER, TULULU

TWO DAYS BEFORE HIS FIRST MAYORAL INAUGURATION, DEC. 5, 1971.



## FIVE-YEAR-OLD WILLIAM DONALD SCHAEFER

AT MARLEY CREEK, 1926

In the summers of his childhood, the entire family would vacation down at Marley Creek in Anne Arundel County. Young Donald and his mother would spend the entire week there; his father would come on weekends. Father and son were very close.

"If they were both sitting on the sofa, one of them would have his arm around the other's shoulder," a niece, Anita Kienzle, once told The Evening Sun. Now the 5-year-old boy in the picture is a 72-year-old man. But he remembers vividly those days at Marley Creek.

I used to play on that beach all the time. There was a little pier with a sandy beach at the bottom. I used to go fishing there. My father liked to fish and we used to row, my father and I, to a cove back there. There was a sandbar there, and we'd anchor the boat to the sandbar. And we'd catch yellow perch and white perch. And crabs. I remember that so well.

But the photograph jogs loose other memories, more recent ones, of his father. Of how, for instance, when Donald spent four years overseas in World War II, his father wrote him a letter

Think about how long he's been around: When William Donald Schaefer entered political life in 1955, a postage stamp cost 3 cents, bus fare was 15 cents and a '55 Chevy went for about \$2,000. Thomas J. D'Alesandro Jr. was Baltimore's mayor, and

he presided over a booming downtown retail section: On Howard Street alone, you could shop at Hochschild Kohn, Hutzler's, Stewart's, The May Co., Schlesinger's.

All the talk about 1955 sparked a memory in Governor Schaefer about his father: "He was so proud when I won for City Council in '55. Then he died in '59. Never saw me become mayor. He would have loved it. Oh my gosh, he would have been so happy and so proud."

And maybe surprised; surprised at both the respect and the animosity his son has generated over the years.

William Donald Schaefer has been called everything from Mayor Annoyed — which, one reporter observed, rhymes with paranoid — to the Michelangelo of Mayors.

Call him what you will. The truth is, for better or worse, his personality has remained remarkably consistent over the span of his career.

He even looks the same: when he entered politics at the age of 34, he looked 50; now, at the age of 72, he still looks 50.

He has also been consistent in his steady resistance to the pressures of curiosity about his private life. But now with the public life winding down, he seemed more reflective about what he missed by choosing to devote himself to politics.

## 'People are hesitant to talk to you'

Regrets? He has a few.

"I've been lonesome so many times," Governor Schaefer said. "You could be in a room absolutely filled with people, and you're standing there all by yourself. Everybody's with somebody else, everybody's talking to somebody else. And a lot of people are hesitant to talk to you because you're the governor. Or the mayor. Others just don't want to talk to you."

It's been hard, Governor Schaefer said, to have a private life. "I didn't have any for a long, long time. Hilda Mae is my private life," he said, referring to Hilda Mae Snoops, whom he has known since childhood. "She's been with me for, I guess, 30 years, and she's my private life. There was no other private life."

Does he ever regret not having children?

"I've thought about that," he said. "And, yeah, I regret it because I see people who are so proud of their children. Like Hilda Mae. . . . She's so proud of her family. And I regret that I don't have that, that I don't have them to talk to."

## Baltimore, 24 hours a day

What he had instead of a family was the city and, later, the state.

What he had was a willingness to think about Baltimore 24 hours a day: to get up in

I go out in the yard (at the West Baltimore home) I remember how my father used to love to come home at night and work in the flowers. That was a tension release for him. Then I got started doing that.



TWO DAYS BEFORE HIS FIRST MAYORAL INAUGURATION, DEC. 5, 1971.

**H**e remembers with astounding precision the old neighborhood as it was sixty years ago. Beck's Bakery, Thomas' Grocery Store, Lilly's Hardware, the Edgewood Theatre. When he stops in front of this picture, he points with excitement at a dog sticking his head through the porch railing. "That's my dog, Skippy," he says. "He's getting old there. See the gray?" What he remembers most, however, about the neighborhood is his mother.

I was her life. Strong-willed woman. Determined. She used to stand right there on the porch and yell up the street when we played street hockey up on Edgewood. She used to stand there, yelling "Donaaald." And that

would be it. I'd be on my way home.... My mother wasn't so happy when I ran for City Council. She wanted me to stay a lawyer. But she came round eventually.

My mother and father were very close to the people on both sides of us. They used to compete to see who had the prettiest yard.... My mother loved to talk over the fence. Back then the porch always had furniture on it, and my mother and father would sit out there and talk. And there were always canvas awnings you could pull up and down. I think about her and my father both. Remember the things they were interested in. Oh, boy. *The governor stops and covers his eyes with his hand.*

*ald spent four years overseas in World War II, his father wrote him a letter every day. And of how his father died. That day in 1959 when his father had a heart attack is etched clearly in his mind: the detail, the texture, the exact minute it happened.*

One Saturday I said to my father, "We've got to clean up the front yard."... So we went outside and clipped the hedge — there was a big hedge right in front of the slope. So we were cutting the hedge and the clippings were all over the place. So I said, "I'll go in and get a bag." So I went up the steps and I went in. I came out. I looked for him. Couldn't find him. And so I walked down the steps. And there he was. He was lying out on the sidewalk. He was dead.

city and, later, the state.

What he had was a willingness to think about Baltimore 24 hours a day: to get up in the morning thinking about alleys in his city that needed repairing and go to bed at night jotting down a Mayor's Action Memo about the importance of signs directing tourists to city attractions.

In between, he probably dreamed about the status of pothole repairs.

What he didn't have was style and charisma. Didn't need it. He had intensity instead. About almost everything. Trashball and baseball — he pursued each with the same intensity. A clean city, after all, is just as important as a major-league sports city. At least to the people who live there.

Now the days dwindle down. And while it's hard to imagine never seeing Don Schaefer again dressed as an admiral or patrolling the neighborhoods on weekends in his Buick, looking for trash, that day is coming.

It's a reality that William Donald Schaefer is also facing: That come Jan. 22, 1995, he's going to get up and not have any place to go.

"That is tough," he said as he stood alone in the gallery, taking a last look at his past. "Because I know that will happen. I won't have an office to go to. I won't have all the people around me who've worked with me for 40 years. That'll be quite a change."

## THE SCHAEFER EXHIBIT

"DO IT NOW!": LASTING IMPRESSIONS OF WILLIAM DONALD SCHAEFER

PHOTOGRAPHS 1955-1994

AT THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART THROUGH NOV. 6