



SUMMER 2014

The Atwood Log

The Quarterly Newsletter of The Chatham Historical Society



From the Director

It seems that at least once a week we receive an email at the Historical Society from someone asking if we can help answer a question about a person, place, or event in Chatham's past. The query may be prompted by the discovery of an old photograph in a desk drawer, a family genealogy project, or a remembered story. After just two years in Chatham I find I am rarely able to answer these questions off the top of my head. Typically, I pass them along to Mary Ann Gray and her crew in the Society's Archives. They take it as a point of pride to be able to ferret out an answer.

I say ferret out because the line from question to answer is seldom direct. The Historical Society has a remarkable amount of information in the computer database we use to manage our collection. We have done our best to organize and index it effectively and if we have a proper name or an address to work with, a first step is to query the database. But this doesn't always produce a reference. And sometimes we don't start with anything as specific as a name or address. That is when it falls to Mary Ann and the volunteers who work with her to draw on the wealth of knowledge they have acquired while processing thousands of the documents, publications, and photographs in the Archives, and while answering previous questions. Theirs is a knowledge built up from specific bits of information. Unlike the student of history who begins with an idea and then searches archives and libraries for evidence to support it, they start with the discreet facts and weave them together, sometimes into whole stories, other times into a sentence or phrase, and often into an answer to a question.

Many of our patrons are satisfied with an answer to a single question. The curiosity of some, however, leads them further. They come to the Atwood House to embark on projects in the Archives that last for days, weeks, and in some cases longer. While here they will find their way to our research library and then turn to the historical collections at the town's excellent Eldredge Library. The next step may be to look beyond resources here in Chatham to other archives and research collections. We always ask them to share their findings with us. When they do they contribute to our ongoing efforts to know our town better. Sometimes they also become volunteers, helping us process our collections and answering questions like the ones that brought them to us in the first place.

Dennis McFadden

Chatham Historical Society

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Looking at Works most artful & ingenious...

If you intend to stop by the Atwood House to see the exhibition *Works most artful & ingenious: Embroidery by Ann Grey* you might want to plan to make a point of visiting when a member of the Cape Cod Chapter of the American Needlepoint Guild will be in the galleries. Guild members have volunteered to be available to answer questions about the embroideries in the exhibition and about embroidery in general. Some will be working on their own projects while here and will be able to tell you about them as well, and about the Guild and its activities. Guild members are scheduled at the following times in August.

August 7th from 10 am to noon
 August 19th from 11 am to noon
 August 20th from 10 to 11 am

We are very grateful to the Cape Cod Chapter of the Guild and these members for volunteering to share their knowledge of embroidery with our visitors: Nan Ahearn, Carolyn Bell, Jeannie Curhan, Eunice Goodhue, Nancy Hellstrom, Cindy Kadzik, Ann Lang, Ann Longton, Barbara Prue, Carol Smith, Barbara Yocom, and Carla Zavorskas.



From the exhibit, an embroidery detail based on a page from a medieval manuscript

2014 Annual Meeting of Members

Sunday, August 17, the Chatham Historical Society's Annual meeting will be held at 4 pm in the lecture/exhibit hall of the Atwood House Museum. There will be a short business meeting including election of officers and trustees, approval of the Board of Overseers, report of the Treasurer, and consideration of any others matters properly brought before the meeting.

Following the business meeting speaker Spencer Grey will present a lecture titled *Tourism in Chatham: An Illustrated Talk*.

Atwood House Museum Hours through October

Plan to stop by to visit the Atwood House and see this year's special exhibitions

Works most artful & ingenious: Embroidery by Ann Grey

Constructing Wilderness: Images of Monomoy

The Chart Makers

and the special installation of wedding dresses from the Historical Society's permanent collection in the Atwood House

Through Labor Day

Tuesday through Friday – 10 AM to 4 PM

Saturday – 1 to 4 PM

September 2 through October 11

Tuesday through Saturday – 1 to 4 PM

For Columbus Day Weekend the Museum will also be open Sunday, October 12 from 1 to 4 PM

Evening to Remember 2014

We are grateful to the more than 200 supporters of the Atwood House, a record number, who attended this year's Evening to Remember. Wonderful weather, great hors d'oeuvres and beverages, and terrific auction items made for a great event which, in addition to providing an opportunity for friends of the Historical Society to gather, is a source of critically important funding for our organization.

The planning and flawless execution of the event was the work of an enthusiastic and hard-working volunteer committee co-chaired by Judi Clifford and Ginny Nickerson. Joining them were committee mem-

bers Stephanie Bartlett, Susan Collins, Peggy Sullivan Crespo, Phyllis Freeman, RoseMarie McLoughlin, Patricia Sachtleben, and Debbie Swenson.

Chatham Bars Inn and Wequasset Resort and Golf Club provided great food, drinks, and friendly staff to take care of guests. A long list of donors generously provided a wonderful selection of auction items. This year saw the introduction of a Live Auction of seven highly desirable lots conducted by veteran Cape auctioneer Bob Eldred. The centerpiece of the evening was the introduction of the Bringing History to Life award to Mary Ann Gray and Ron Nickerson.

Our sincerest thanks to the following Live and Silent Auction donors

About Face
Mark August
Richard Batchelder
Bistro on Main
Tom Buckley
Candy Manor
Cape Cod Personal Chef
Captain's House Inn of Chatham
Chatham Beach Dog
Chatham Clothing Bar
Chatham Cookware Café
Chatham Health/Swim Club
Chatham Jewelers
Chatham Light Liquors
Chatham Natural Market

Chatham Squire
The Children's Shop
Cottage Street Bakery
Del Mar
Tommy Dixon
The Eldredge Family
Forest Beach Design
Gustare Oils
The Hair Company
Hanger B
Hearle Gallery
Bob and Bonnie Hessler
Housescapes by Jane
John Hutchinson
Island Pursuit

J. McLaughlin
Francis Johnston
Bill Kellman
Andy King
John and Pam King
Judy and Kirk Kitson
Lazy Lobster
Life is Good
The Mayflower
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Suzanna Nickerson, Tom Sharkey
Ollie's
Pate's Restaurant
Puritan Cape Cod
Sweet Tomatoes
Pentimento
Picnic Fashion
Kim Roderiques
Shoe Salon
Samantha's Hair Studio
Matt Sutphin
Trading Company
Craig and Martha Vokey
Jane Nickerson West
Where the Sidewalk Ends
Wild Goose Tavern
Sandy Wycoff
Yankee Ingenuity
Yellow Umbrella Books



Guests consider the Live Auction items as presented by auctioneer Bob Eldred



Recipients of the Society’s “Bringing History to Life” Award for this year are Mary Ann Gray and Ron Nickerson

Thank you to our Staff and Volunteers without whom this event would not be possible

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| Chuck Barlett | Phil McLoughlin |
| Ellen Burnham | Janet Marjollet |
| Linda Cebula | Margaret Martin |
| Ron Clark | Barbara Newberry |
| Rich Clifford | David Oakley |
| Bob Eldred | Alan Sachleben |
| Joe Gagliano | Marge and Bill Scheck |
| Barbara Hogan | Johanna Smith |
| Judith Johnson | Joanna Springer |
| Wayne Jostrand | |

“Bringing History to Life” Award

The highlight of this event is the recognition of one or more individuals for contributions to “Bringing History to Life”. Two recipients were recognized this year.

Mary Ann Gray has worked in the Society’s archives since 1999 and has served formally as society archivist for many of those years. She has presented many lectures locally on various aspects of Chatham history and was one of the seven authors who wrote the book published for Chatham’s 300th anniversary, *Three Hundred Years of a Cape Cod Village*.

A descendent of William Nickerson, Ron Nickerson is active in the Nickerson Family Association, and served on the committee that planned the tercentennial celebration of Chatham. He has continued to be involved with the History Committee and worked to bring about the success of the Historic Chatham Weekend this past June.

Ron and Mary Ann collaborated on the 2006 Atwood House Museum exhibition “A Journey of Rediscovery”, about Champlain’s arrival at what is now Chatham in 1606 and the Wampanoag who were here at that time.



Silent Auction items on display as guests review the selection, enjoy the refreshments, and visit with each other



Steve Burlingame and Judi Clifford reviewing details



Debbie Swenson explaining the Live Auction logistics

Our New Dory

A new addition to the Atwood House Museum is an early 1900's Amesbury dory. Currently placed on the museum grounds outside the Nickerson North Beach Camp, the dory is another piece of the Chatham fishing industry's long history. Dorries were traditionally small, lightweight rowing boats with high sides, a flat bottom and sharp bows. Modern versions of dorries are often made of fiberglass and may also be outfitted with a motor.

A 1900's era dory, such as this one, would have been used for long line fishing and catching lobster. Dorries have been used traditionally as fishing boats along the coasts and the open sea and are known for their characteristic ability to carry tremendous weight for their small size along with their ability to be at home in rough waters. Don St. Pierre, who acquired the dory for the Chatham Historical Society, explained that when in use, very little of the dory actually sits in the water. From Don's description, dorries simply, "Bob up and down" on the water. They are easy to maneuver for a skilled rower. Often dorries were a "single dory" meaning, they could be operated by one person.

The Chatham Historical Society's Amesbury dory was owned by Dave Morgan. Don St. Pierre recently approached Morgan's widow about donating the dory to the Historical Society and she kindly agreed. The dory was in some disrepair when Don acquired it. The seats and ribs were gone and according to Don, the



Showing the line hole on one side of the dory

dory looked like it "had not been painted in 50 years".

Don first took the dory to Francis "Frannie" Jones for confirmation of the dory's type and age. Frannie, a 95 year old trap fisherman, said that it was a 1900's Amesbury dory. When Don asked Frannie how he could be sure that it wasn't a Nova Scotia dory, Frannie replied, "I know my dorries."

Chatham Historical Society's dory was re-

stored through the hard work of Dave Archibald and Don St. Pierre. Don sanded and scraped the old paint

off of the dory and then brought it to Dave Archibald for reconstruction work. Dave built all new ribs, stringers and new seats for the dory. Then Don finished by repainting the dory and bringing it to Atwood House Museum.



The restored dory, outside the Nickerson Camp

In the 1900's several dorries would have been taken out to the Grand Banks on a schooner. The seats inside the dorries were removable and would have been taken out so that the dorries could be stacked together for transport on the schooner. Upon arrival at the banks, dorries would have been unstacked and fishermen would put the seats and a tub trawler back into each of the dorries. Dorries were lowered into the water by lines that were run through holes in the bows (see photo).

Fishermen would row the dorries out to sea and set trawl using herring and mackerel for bait, setting trawl just before the slack tide. When the tide was slack, the fish would all swim to the bottom. Fishermen would haul in their catch when the tide started moving again. Don explained that long line fishermen fished this way until the 1970's. Hooked fish were caught alive and were put face down and fishermen would throw ice on them to preserve them. If the fog came in while fishing, the fishermen would have to row their dorries back sometimes as far as Newfoundland, about 100 miles.

Dorries are still in use today, often equipped with outboard motors; they still retain those characteristics that made them excellent fishing vessels of the past: lightweight frame, ability to carry large weight, and the ability to handle rough seas.

Our new dory is a wonderful compliment to the Historical Society's collection of fishing artifacts from the town of Chatham. We thank Don St. Pierre and Dave Archibald for restoring it to its original beauty.

Joanna Springer

Based on conversations with Don St. Pierre

Chatham History Weekend 2014 a Success

When the Atwood House Museum opened for the season on Saturday, June 21st, it joined eight other sites around town in celebrating Chatham History Weekend. A project of Historic Chatham, a consortium of organizations that offer public programming on historic topics, the weekend was a great kick off to the summer. Participants reported solid visitation numbers and at the Atwood House many guests said the coordinated campaign publicizing the weekend inspired their visits. A number of our younger visitors that weekend were participating in a History Hunt. This great addition to the weekend was organized and sponsored by the Chatham Women's Club. Now in the midst of a busy summer season, the Atwood House and its partners, the Lighthouse, the Railroad Museum, the Windmill, the El-dredge Library, the Marconi-RCA Wireless Museum, the Mayo House, Monomoy, and the Nickerson House, are focusing on their individual projects. Representatives plan to come together again in the fall to compare notes and beginning planning for future projects.

Think Museum Shop

Are you starting your Christmas or other holiday shopping, or is there someone for whom you need a birthday present? What about a hostess gift? Stop into the Atwood House Museum Shop and see the beautiful array of gifts and books available for your shopping pleasure!

The shop is open whenever the museum is open.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Chatham Historical Society is to collect, preserve, exhibit and interpret art, decorative arts, artifacts, archives, and places of historical interest relating to the history of Chatham and vicinity; and in so doing provide a record of the cultures and the people of our past and thereby inform and educate succeeding generations.

Join Us !

Chatham Historical Society members receive free admission to The Atwood House Museum, 10% off Museum Shop purchases, and a complimentary subscription to our newsletter. Our members play a vital role in helping to preserve the rich history and culture of Chatham and the surrounding region. Many members cherish volunteer opportunities at the Museum

Membership Categories

___ Captain Atwood Circle	\$1000 +
___ Heritage Society	\$ 500 - 999
___ Discoverer	\$ 250 - 499
___ Explorer	\$ 100 - 249
___ Family	\$ 50 - 99
___ Individual	\$ 25 - 49
___ Student Historian (to age 18)	\$ 10

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The Chatham Historical Society
and mail with this form to:
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If you have allowed your membership to lapse, please consider renewal now. If you are an active member perhaps you can think of someone to pass this along to who might be interested in becoming a member.

OR CURRENT RESIDENT

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The
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Mark Your Calendars

Coming up at
THE ATWOOD HOUSE MUSEUM

At the Atwood -

Programs are at the Atwood House Museum

Sunday August 17, 2014 at 4:00 pm, following the Annual Meeting

Tourism in Chatham: An Illustrated Talk

by Spencer Grey

Sunday, October 12th at 2:00 pm

What We Heard, What We Saw:

Three Chatham Women Share Memories

of Our Town

Sunday, November 9th at 2:00 pm

Elizabeth Reynard and Virginia Gildersleeve:

Shaping the World, the Nation, and Cape Cod

by Marsha Finley

