

WINTER 2007

The Atwood Log

The Quarterly Newsletter of The Chatham Historical Society



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From the President

New Year, New Plans

We are off to a great start in January with the special exhibit gallery filled with Chatham school children's posters, hangar art and essays, plus Michael Tougias's lecture on King Phillip's War was standing room only! Ryder Martin of the Chatham Railroad Museum will speak on the railroad coming to Chatham on Sunday, February 11, and Chairman Spencer Grey has designed a quartet of exciting Bus Trips to History with his first choice the state-of-the-art Pequot Museum in Mashantucket, CT

Behind the scenes we are collecting memorabilia, artifacts and items for the 2007 Special Exhibit – *A Flight into History: Chatham and the Naval Air Station 1917-1922*. And it's not too late to share any items you may have of World War I, the Naval Air Station or Chatham memorabilia of this time in our history for use in the exhibit!

Volunteers have cleared out the Durand Room so that it can be completely refurbished with enlightening signage for this wonderful gallery filled with shells from around the world, Parian Ware [see article on facing page], Sandwich glass and the ever-popular A.E. Crowell miniature set of carved birds. It will truly show off the wonderful collections of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Durand and their children, Virginia Shelden and son John Durand, in a most engaging and informative way.

Mary Ann Gray, our archivist, and her volunteers, including a group from the Chatham Woman's Club, have been busy cataloguing Chatham's history. Priscilla Dalrymple, chairman of Costumes & Textiles, is working with her team to review the state of our many costumes, as well as accession and conserve them for posterity. Mary Ann Fritsch, chairman of Galleries & Displays, is working on the never-ending job of conserving the Old House and freshening and updating several galleries, including the Lincoln Room, the Maritime Room and the Atkins-Kent Gallery.

Many of the society's members from the Executive and Operating Boards are engaged in planning to make sure this wonderful treasure of a museum continues to be responsive to you, our members' needs, while providing an exciting time for our visitors. When we open this summer, we've added additional hours on Thursdays in July and August. There will be three guided evening tours at 6, 6:30 and 7 p.m. free to the community. These added hours are for all Chatham's residents and visitors, who often find it difficult to visit the museum in the daytime during the busy summer months!

Remember too, that researching Chatham's history or your family's genealogy during the winter months makes for a fun morning or afternoon. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, the archival center is open to members by appointment. Just let us know ahead of time what you are looking for, so we can prepare for your visit.

The Atwood House Museum is yours to enjoy all during the year! I look forward to seeing you – whether it's with your nose in a reference book or checking out our records, enjoying a Sunday afternoon lecture or getting on that bus with Spencer to see historic sights. As members of the Society, you are the "wind beneath our wings" so do take the time to enjoy all the wonderful events and archives available to you.

– Janet M. Daly

Direct IRA Donations

Do you have an IRA account and are you over the age of 70½?

If so, then you know that you are required to take minimum distributions annually, whether you wish to or not. Of course, you still have to pay federal income tax on these distributions, which may also bump you up into a higher bracket!

So, here's a very recent change in the tax law that could be interesting to you. For the year 2006 (starting on August 17th) and 2007 only, you have the option of paying those minimum

distributions of up to \$100,000 annually directly to a charity of your choice, without having to pay income tax on the distributions. It's an easy way of avoiding additional income tax while making a gift to your favorite charitable deduction (assuming you itemize).

As always with tax matters, this has to be done correctly, so you do need to speak with your IRA trustee as well as your own tax advisor to see if and how it should be accomplished. And if you would like to talk with us further about this at the Historical Society, please don't hesitate to call and ask for the Treasurer, Karl Fehrle.

Chatham Historical Society

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Parian Ware A Victorian Obsession

The marble-like beauty of Parian Ware captivated Victorians,” according to Bob Brooke in *Parian Ware – Affordable Art for the Masses* from americanantiques.com. “It allowed the middle classes to possess articles of high art. And by the end of the 19th century, every properly furnished Victorian parlor contained at least one piece of it.”

Parian Ware also captivated Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Durand and their daughter Virginia Sheldon who donated their collections to the Atwood House Museum for exhibit.

During Victoria’s reign – 1837 to 1901 – sculpture was affordable to royalty and the wealthy only. The queen often commissioned marble statues and busts of her children and Prince Albert, placing them within her palaces. As the fashion leader of the day, Queen Victoria’s preferences affected fashion and interior design.

Parian Ware was introduced to the public in 1842 by Copeland and Garrett. The firm called it “statuary porcelain,” Wedgwood named it “Carrara” and Minton coined the term “Parian” now its generic name. Paros is the Greek isle from which the majority of the beautiful white marble used for classic Greek statuary came. The official catalogue of

the Great Exhibition of 1851 gives Thomas Battam credit for its invention, noting: “He succeeded in producing a very perfect imitation of marble, both in surface and in tint.”

Parian’s popularity was spurred on by a social and artistic development of the Victorian era, Art Unions. In 1836, the first Union was formed to “advance art by the improvement of public taste and to advance civilization by the improvement of art.”

After the introduction of Parian Ware, Brooke notes, “Americans often returned triumphantly from their Grand Tours of Europe with Parian statues that spoke eloquently of their continually acquired ‘culture’.”

Christopher Webber Fenton and Julius Norton first made Parian Ware in America at their Bennington, Vermont pottery. Known for its utilitarian salt-glazed stoneware, Bennington employed the services of an English potter from the Copeland works, John Harrison, in 1843, and three years, later Fenton produced its first Parian Ware. The items were copied from English designs. Brooke explains, “Using plaster molds, Fenton made not only figures but also decorative ornaments that included everything from vases decorated heavily with applied grapes, leaves and tendrils to boxes and cologne bottles destined for the mantles and whatnots in scores of American homes.”

Fenton closed its doors in 1858. By the end of Queen Victoria’s reign, Parian Ware had declined in popularity after 60 years of consumer demand. However, Parian Ware is enjoying increased interest here and abroad.

“Parian Porcelain: A 19th Century Passion” is a special exhibit that opened in April 2006 at the Lora Robins Gallery of Design by Nature at the University of Richmond Museums, and runs through May 27. Curator Laura Murphy gathered more than 60 Parian porcelains from America, Britain and Europe, from the museum’s permanent collection and several private collections. The exhibition examined the development of Parian statuary and wares, their impact on popular culture and decorative arts in



A dramatic bust of a veiled lady. Untitled, some records say it is Rebecca weeping over her children – others, a widow mourning like Victoria.

America, and themes of Victorianism and nationalism with specific emphasis on the 1876 Centennial Exhibition. In addition, a 352-page book, *Parian Ware: Copeland’s Statuary Porcelain* by Robert Copeland, is being published this spring. [Editor’s note: The society has it on order for our library.]

In the 1998 Shire Album, *Parian Ware* by Dennis Barker, he notes: “Parian was a development of biscuit porcelain, a previous imitation of marble produced by first baking and then firing in an oven or kiln. Biscuit ware was produced extensively in France (Sevres) and elsewhere in the 19th century.”

Barker describes the items in biscuit as heavy, thick-walled, dead white and granular in appearance. “Parian is normally silken in appearance and feel,” Barker explains. “Where biscuit is almost opaque, Parian is translucent, as can be demonstrated by shining a torch into the hollows of busts or inside jugs.”

Potteries made Parian statues by slip-casting, pouring liquid porcelain or slip, into a mold and allowing it to harden enough to coat the walls of the mold, explains Brooke. Parian is fired at a lower temperature than porcelain

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Parian Ware photos by Garry Gates

This unmarked vase is probably American because of the motif—an ear of corn. Grape clusters are another frequent American decoration.

Tips on Taking Care of Collections

During the fall and winter months, the Atwood House Museum may not be teeming with visitors, but there is lots going on. One of the activities is caring for the collections, rotating some items in our galleries – not only to keep the museum displays fresh from year to year – but to prevent light, dust, bugs and normal wear-and-tear from being on display to harm items.

Private collectors, according to a recent *Cape Cod Times* article, “make room for items that revive happy memories or simply make them feel good.” The Atwood House Museum has been the recipient of some wonderful private collections or parts of them in the past. So to help those of you who are collectors keep your treasures safe now and perhaps for future donation to the museum, we pass on some tips to keep your treasures in tip-top shape. They come from the Smithsonian Institute and originally appeared in *The Washington Post*.

Preservation Tips For Your Collections

Photo Albums: Make sure to use acid-free (and not simply “archival”) pages and covers. Albums should be stored in a dark, dry place because the enemies here are light, bugs and mold.



Stuffed Animals: Handle a favorite stuffed animal only while wearing white fabric gloves to avoid leaving a residue of oil from your skin. Animals that are not too fragile can be gently vacuumed, but do not vacuum directly on the fabric; use a piece of linen or a vinyl window screen as a buffer. Store in a cool, dry place.

Vinyl phonograph records: If protected from sunlight, heat, scratches and chemicals, vinyl records can last hundreds of years. You should clean them and remove shrink-wrap on albums because it will continue shrinking and may warp the records.

Flags: Don't display a treasured flag outdoors because of damage potential from ultraviolet light, wind, insects and water.

Battlefield flags should not be cleaned because gunpowder or bloodstains are part of the history.

Musical instruments: Any rapid changes in temperature or humidity are no-nos for wooden instruments. Never use an oil-based polish or alcohol on wood.

Most historical societies have collections policies that focus on what is kept, sought and accepted into their museums. So what they do have is precious to them and requires constant, year-round attention. Follow their lead!

Cover: Youthful Museum Display

A youthful display of artistic and literary talent was the focus of the Chatham Historical Society's December and January main gallery. Almost 200 entries in the Society's "A Journey of Rediscovery" Essay and Project Contest, all by Chatham school students, were featured as a special exhibit.

Participation included students of the second, third and fourth grades of the elementary school, fifth grade students from the middle school, and 11th grade American literature students.

Presentation of the awards was made before a packed house of children, parents, and society members on December 9. Savings bonds were presented to 15 students whose entries were judged to be outstanding. Chairman Spencer Grey announced the award winners with Chatham School Superintendent, Dr. Mary Ann Lanzo, congratulating students.

Elementary School Winners

Second graders made mobiles. Winners were Shara Allison, first place; Char-

lotte Brighton, second place; Megan Woods, third place.

Third and fourth graders made posters. Winners were Nicholas Bruinooge, first place; Charles Kiernan, second place; Jared Carroll, third place.

Fourth graders wrote essays. Winners were Sophie Bergquist, first place; Molly Pelletier, second place; Julian Petralia, third place.

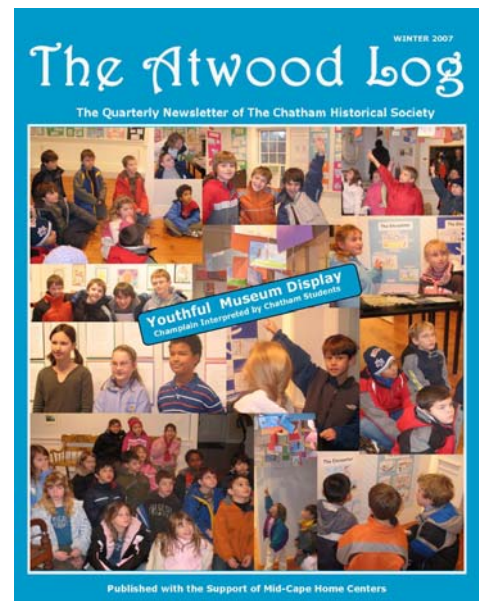
Middle School Winners

Fifth graders created postage stamps. Winners were Kjell Hemstead, first place; Susan Hart, second place; Courtney Milley, third place.

High School Winners

The Advanced Junior English class wrote journals, logs and essays. Chelsea Swanson won first prize, Tyler Holmes took second place, and Jesse Hoffman-Klaucke placed third in the high school division.

The exhibit featured the students' interpretation of the 2006 special exhibit marking the encounter 400 years ago be-



tween Champlain and the Wampanoag. It was on view during the Society's Hearth Warming Open House, part of the Chamber of Commerce's Christmas Stroll. Visitors to the Sunday lecture on January 14 also got a chance to view this exciting and youthful rendition of the Society's exhibit. Before the exhibit was dismantled, the elementary classes visited the museum with their teachers.



The
Chatham
Historical
Society, Inc.

Volunteer Focus

There are 100 volunteers who play a variety of parts at the Society's Atwood House Museum, and Betsey Stevens directs this ensemble. As Chairman of Volunteers since 2005, Betsey solicits volunteers, finds roles to their liking, arranges training, and schedules their shifts from opening day in June to closing day in October. For tours and extracurricular activities, Betsey arranges the volunteers, too.

It takes a special person to orchestrate all the details, but Betsey seems ideal for the job. Her career at Planned Parenthood of Connecticut as director of sexuality education and training provided valuable experience. "I enjoy organizing and working with people and this post is a good combination of doing just that," she says. "I try to satisfy our volunteers, letting them do what they're interested in while meeting the needs of the museum." Last year that meant adding a morning shift during July and August.

Betsey and husband Don have had a house in Chatham since 1992 and moved here permanently in 2001. That's when they attended an event at the Eldredge Public Library where various organizations were seeking new volunteers. "Don's inter-

est in history is how we became involved with the historical society," Betsey explains. Don is a guide in the Tool Room and at the Nickerson Camp, where their golden retriever, Bentley, often accompanies him. Betsey began as a docent in the Old House and the Mural Barn and continues to inform visitors about these galleries.

When Betsey took over the volunteer chairman post, she engaged Don's computer skills to design a monthly schedule for docents and guides. This year, she says the schedule will include hostesses and shop personnel. Carol Kolb schedules the shop personnel, however, since these volunteers operate as a team very well.

To make the schedules easily available to volunteers who use the Internet, Betsey will use email to circulate them and any changes that arise. She will be requesting email addresses for this purpose on the volunteer application forms being mailed at the end of March. The docents and guides themselves at last year's volunteer retreat suggested this idea, and several other innovations for the upcoming museum season.

Betsey appreciates being a society member and on the Operating Board. "Although Don and I lived for 38 years in



Betsey Stevens

Woodbridge CT, a town where my parents were prominent residents, we never became involved in the historical society. It was not very visible. Perhaps that's why I feel the way I do about being a volunteer here. Chatham is a small town and its historic heritage should be shared."

Betsey is also active in other community organizations including the Chatham Woman's Club where she is treasurer of the American Heritage Department and the Council on Aging where she is a receptionist. She and Don have four grown children and seven grandchildren. Since the children all live away, they try to visit their parents during the summer, overlapping stays so the family has an old-fashioned reunion each year. That's why she understands that volunteers have lives outside the museum and helps them work out schedules that allow time for both!

Something to Remember

Alice Stallknecht's Murals went on a national tour 30 years ago exhibiting in Los Angeles, Houston and Washington D.C. Entitled "A New England Town: A Portrait by Alice Stallknecht (1880-1973), the exhibit provided most visitors with their very first view



of this "authentic" Chatham artist. William C. Agee, then director of Houston's Museum of Fine Arts, noted in the exhibits catalogue: "When I first saw her painting . . . I was surprised, because I was so taken by what first appeared to be in the vein of 'popular,' 'folk,' or 'naïve' art, which generally is not to my taste. Her art is far more complex . . . Agee continued, "Alice Stallknecht captured a uniquely American experience and way of

life." Her murals capture Chatham in the early 20th century. How fortunate they are here at the Atwood House Museum for descendants of her models to enjoy . . . and the rest of us, too!

The Chatham Cultural Council has awarded the Society a \$650 grant to create a **Wampanoag Mishoon** exhibit on the museum's front lawn. The mishoon or dugout was brought to the museum by the Wampanoag interpreters from the Plimoth Plantation and burned and scraped out last summer as part of the special exhibit, "A Journey of Rediscovery." Thanks to a \$600 donation from Mary Ann Gray plus Society funds, this grant will allow us to create a permanent Native American exhibit complete with an interpretive sign. That sign allows visitors to learn about Chatham's native people even when the museum is closed to visitors. A brochure will complete the exhibit.



Afternoons at the Atwood Lecture Series

Sunday, February 11, 2007, at 2 pm



Ryder Martin will present a lecture on *When the Railroad Came to Chatham*. The program will discuss the development of the Chatham branch of Cape Cod's railroad system with an emphasis on the Chatham Rail Depot building. The talk will be illustrated with a slide presentation and a scale model of the depot itself. Mr. Martin has been a member of the Rail Museum Committee for 12 years and has been involved with restoration work on the building and displaying its many artifacts.

Sunday, March 11, 2007, at 2 pm

Henry Beston and The Outermost House will be the topic of Donald Wilding's lecture. Mr. Wilding is the author of the books *Henry Beston's Cape Cod* and *On Its Solitary Dune*—the latter written for the 350th anniversary of the founding of Eastham. As co-founder of the Henry Beston Society, Wilding will tell how the author came to Cape Cod and his experiences here. The talk has slide and audio segments.

Sunday, April 15, 2007, at 2 pm

Michael Dyer, Librarian and Maritime Historian at the New Bedford Whaling Museum, will give a presentation titled *A Trip 'Round the World in the Words and Pictures of the Sailors Themselves*.

The presentation will feature ports-of-call, landfalls, vessels, charts and people encountered as illustrated by whale-men and other seafarers in their logbooks and journals from 1793 to 1870. The presentation combines a narrated slide show with the readings. Sarah Parks, Assistant Curator will perform the readings.

Sunday, May 27, 2007, at 2 pm

Lecturer and maritime historian, Dave Crocker, will present *The NC-4's Trans-Atlantic Flight*, a visual presentation, a preview of the 2007 special exhibit, *A Flight into History: Chatham and the Naval Air Station, 1917—1922*.

Shop Talk

After completing a profitable and exciting second year, the shop is in a semi-dormant state. Those attending the monthly lecture series, however, will enjoy the spoils of a winter SALE – huge markdowns – on selected items, to allow space for new and exciting merchandise come spring. See photos at right.

We're planning new items now - a museum tote is in the works. Ladies jerseys will re-emerge in a new style and color. Items to compliment the Chatham Naval Air Station exhibit are being explored. Research, buying and designing are going forth to provide exciting and new merchandise for the museum shop this spring.

– Barbara Newberry



Parian Ware: A Victorian Obsession

Continued from page 3

because it has an increased amount of feldspar, which causes the finished item to be more highly vitrified, thus producing a color that verges on ivory and has a marble-like texture, smoother than biscuit or unglazed porcelain. Most manufacturers left Parian in its natural creamy white state while others applied background colors, especially blues, to allow relief motifs to stand out, Brooke explains.

In addition to the Atwood House Museum's collection and the University of Richmond Museums' exhibition, several other museums –the Cincinnati Art Museum, Greenfield Village and Henry Ford Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art – have collections here in the United States.



Small decorative piece has an Indian touch, reflecting Queen Victoria's penchant for decorative elements from her most exotic colony, India.

In Great Britain, according to Dennis Barker, Parian can be found at the Minton Museum, Museum of Worcester Porcelain, National Portrait Gallery, Osborn House, Spode Museum, Stoke-on-Trent City Museum and Art Gallery, Victoria and Albert Museum, Wedgwood Museum and Westminster Abbey.

Currently the Durand Room is being redecorated to better display the Parian Ware as well as the Crowell bird carvings, shells and Sandwich glass collections found there. This action was taken in response to the member survey conducted last fall.

When the museum reopens in June, you will be able to see Parian examples from both European and American potteries and understand why this art form was so cherished by the Victorians.

–JMD



From the Chairman

Bus Trips to History

I have lined up an exciting and varied array of bus trips for society members and guests this year. All three of the spring trips leave Chatham at 7:30 am and return about 5:30 pm. The fall trip is closer to home so we'll leave at 8:45 am and return about 4:30 pm.

Wednesday, March 21

The first trip is to the Pequot Museum in Mashantucket, Connecticut. This museum and research center is one of the largest and most comprehensive sources for Native American history and culture in the world. It takes the visitor from the Ice Age to modern times using dioramas, text panels, interactive computer programs and films. We can tour the museum on our own and those interested may visit the research center. From 1 to 2:30 pm, you may enjoy lunch either at the museum or at Foxwoods.

The bus leaves to return to Chatham at 2:30 pm. The cost of the trip is \$50. The reservation deadline is March 16. Lunch is not included.



Pequot Museum diorama

Wednesday, April 25

Gore Place, the 45-acre early 1800s estate of Massachusetts Governor Christopher Gore, is in Waltham. Many architectural historians consider Gore Place to be the most significant Federal period mansion in New England, and it has been referred to as "the Monticello of the North."



Gore Place.

After our tour we will have time for lunch in Lincoln before continuing on to visit the Gropius House. This is the home architect Walter Gropius built for his family when they moved to the United States from Germany. The house keeps to the principles of the Bauhaus school, which was founded and directed by Gropius in Germany. It used simple, well-designed, mass-produced fittings for interior details as well as in the exterior structure.

The bus will leave at 3 pm to return to Chatham. This trip is \$50, with lunch on your own. Reservation deadline is April 20.



Gropius House

Wednesday, June 20

The final spring bus trip is to Danvers. We will spend from 10 to 1 pm at Glen Magna Farms, a property of the Danvers Historical Society.

The estate at Glen Magna is a fine example of North Shore summer living in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The gardens at Glen Magna are especially noteworthy, recognized by the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. In 1893, owner Ellen Peabody Endicott began an expansion of the house and gardens. She received the Hunnewell Gold Medal in 1926, from Massachusetts Horticultural Society in recognition of the excellence of the gardens.

We will enjoy a box lunch at Glen Magna, included in the \$55 cost of the trip, after which we will visit the Rebecca Nurse Home, famous from Salem Witch Trials.

The bus will leave at 2:30 pm, arriving back in Chatham about 5 pm. The reservation deadline is June 15.



Glen Magna

Wednesday, October 24

Our fall trip is to Plymouth, Massachusetts, to visit Pilgrim Hall, the Edward Winslow House and the Spooner House. For this trip the bus will leave Chatham at 8:45 am and return at about 4:30 pm. The cost of this trip is \$50. Lunch is not included. Reserve space by October 19.

Pilgrim Hall Museum in Plymouth houses an unequalled collection of Pilgrim possessions as well as 17th century letters and documents that belonged to these early



Pilgrim Hall

settlers. We will have a lecture and guided tour by Director Peggy Baker.

The Edward Winslow House, built by the great-grandson of the third governor of Plymouth in 1754, is now the home of The Mayflower Society. It is furnished with a treasure trove of 18th century antiques.

The Spooner House, built in 1749, remained in that family until it was bequeathed to the Plymouth Antiquities Society in 1954. It contains the furnishings acquired by the family during the 200 years of their residency, making it a chronicle of the lifestyles of those two centuries.

Important: To make sure our bus trips happen, we need 35 reservations by the cut off date. Do alert friends, family or clubs about the bus trips so we will be booked and won't have to cancel.

Call Margaret Martin at 508-945-2493 for information on bus trips.

– Spencer Grey



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Chatham, MA 02633



On the Web: www.chathamhistoricalsociety.org

Mark Your Calendars

Coming up at The Chatham Historical Society & Atwood House Museum

Afternoons at the Atwood —Free Lecture Series

All lectures take place at The Atwood House Museum
347 Stage Harbor Road, Chatham, MA 02633

Sunday, February 11

Ryder Martin: *When the Railroad Came to Chatham*
at 2 pm

Sunday, March 11

Donald Wilding: *Henry Beston and
The Outermost House* at 2 pm

Sunday, April 15

Michael Dyer: *A Trip 'Round the World in the Words and
Pictures of the Sailors Themselves* at 2 pm



Photo by Ryder H. Martin

Bus Trips to History

Wednesday, March 21

Pequot Museum, Mashantucket, CT, \$50

See page 7 for details of bus trips

Wednesday, April 25

Gore Place, Waltham and
Gropius House, Lincoln, MA \$50

For more information, visit our website: www.chathamhistoricalsociety.org. Or call: 508.945.2493