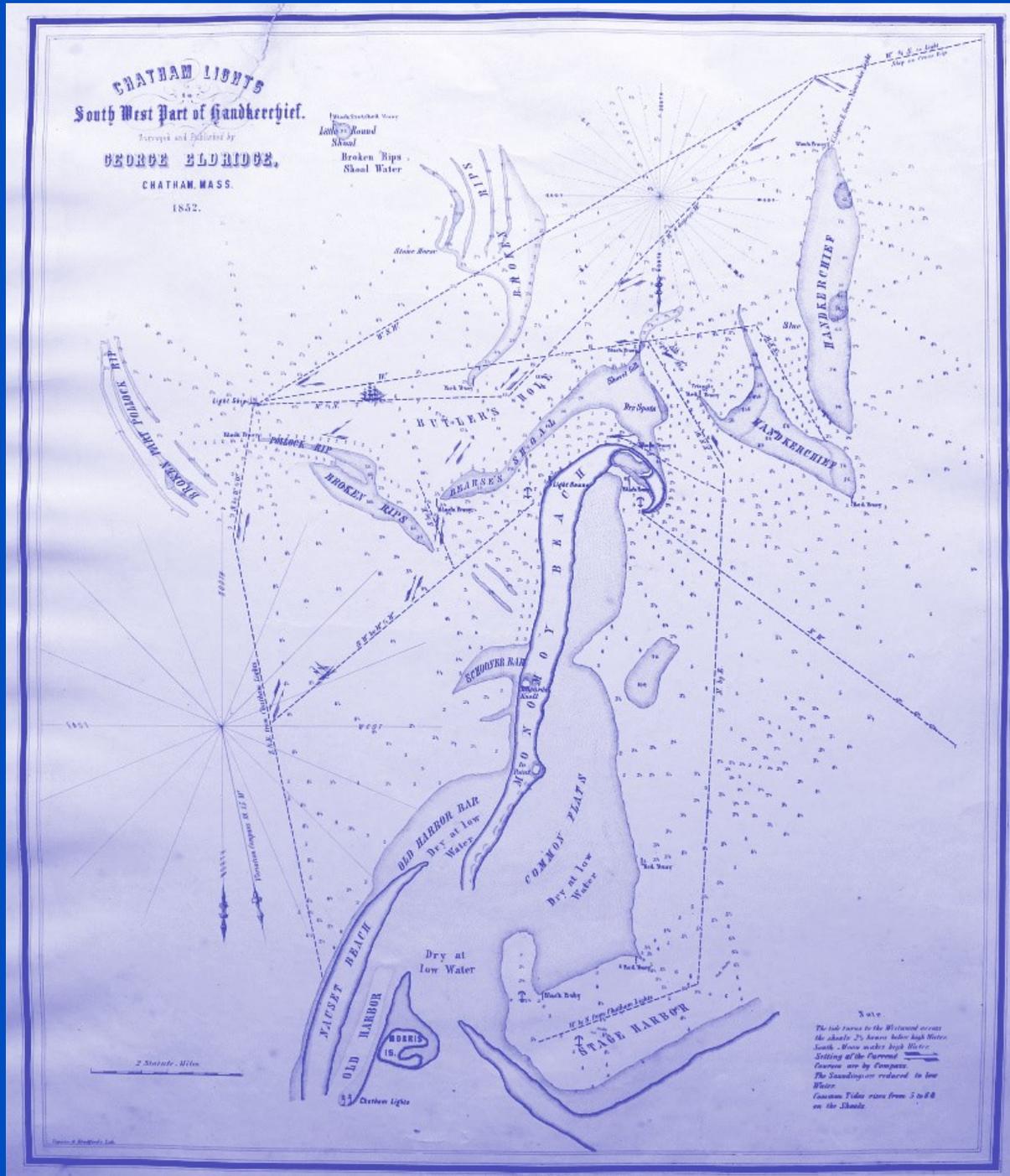


# The Atwood Log

SPRING/SUMMER 2016



The Newsletter of  
The Chatham Historical Society



## *From the Director*

Greetings,

There is much to be excited about at the Museum. Both inside and out, you will see a difference starting with new signs outdoors. This year we have increased our use of technology to tell our story, provide updates, and communicate within the Museum, to members, and to the public. Are you receiving our monthly electronic newsletter called the Atwood E-Log? Please provide us with as many email addresses as you wish to get that publication, along with regular email updates from the Atwood House Museum.

Some of our exhibits opening for the season on June 17 will include technology and interactive experiences. Thanks to funding from the Chatham Community Preservation Committee, Chatham Women's Club and Cape Cod Antique Dealers Association, we will be able to display our newly-digitized Chart Collection, offer more information on Chatham's Maritime History, and share accounts of individual adventurous heroes. I am also grateful to the highly dedicated volunteers and staff who are spending many hours researching, designing, and assembling material for these exhibits. Our docents are preparing for the season and with our technological enhancements, we hope to create a new and exciting experience at the Museum for you as well as your friends and families.

Visit us often this summer and fall. We look forward to seeing you, hearing from you and learning about your reaction to what is new at the Atwood.

*Danielle Jeanloz*

### *Cover Photo*

### *Chatham Lights to West of Handkerchief (Upside-Down Chart)*

This 1852 chart shows Monomoy Island and surrounding shoals just to the south of Chatham and includes Old Harbor, Stage Harbor, Nauset Beach, Morris Island, Broken Rips Shoal, Bearse's Shoal, Butler's Hole, and the Handkerchief Shoals in Nantucket Sound. It was the first chart produced by Chatham native, George Eldridge.

### *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.*

## **Chatham Historical Society**

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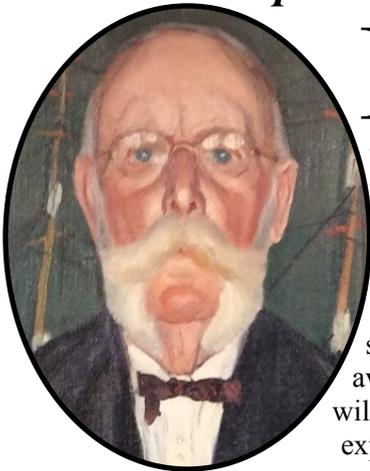
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Newsletter Editor  
*Margaret L. Martin*

# What's Happening in the Galleries for the 2016 Season

## Masters of the Seas

**Opening June 17, 2016**



Introducing—*Masters of the Seas*, an exhibit of sea captains' portraits in the Main Gallery expanded to show more about their voyages in the nineteenth century. Models of the ships that sailed the seas, the cargos they carried, and the routes they sailed, are all part of this exhibit. A computer and monitor will enable visitors to view a *Virtual Gallery* of sea charts that have been digitized and are available online. Another area of the exhibit will include a table for children so they can experiment with building a ship using Legos.



- ◆ Listen to interviews of the Sea Captains through interactive touch screen technology
- ◆ See the routes navigated by Chatham Sea Captains
- ◆ Learn more about their trade
- ◆ View models and paintings of the ships that these Captains commanded
- ◆ And find out why our area produced some of the finest ship Captains in the world

In the *Pendleton Rescue* exhibit, you will experience the cramped quarters of the CG36500 rescue boat and hear Bernie Webber's recounting of their harrowing adventure. Visit the recently expanded exhibit this summer.



**Ron Flechtner and Donald St. Pierre with the replica of the cabin of the CG36500 that they are building as part of the exhibit of artifacts relating to the Pendleton Rescue continuing in one of our museum galleries for the 2016 season**

### Are you familiar with Historic Chatham?

This organization was originally formed by members of the Chatham 300 Committee who implemented the 300-day celebration of Chatham's 300th Anniversary. The mission of Historic Chatham, to Celebrate Our Town's Past, is promoted through collaborative efforts among non-profit organizations in Chatham who value and promote our town's history. Once a year, the group sponsors Chatham History Weekend, a town-wide celebration offering special programs with free or reduced admissions to town museums, monuments and historic sites.

The weekend, June 17 - 19 this year, coincides with the seasonal opening of many of the town's museums. Additional information may be found on the Historic Chatham website: [www.Historic-Chatham.org](http://www.Historic-Chatham.org)

Join us for Historic Chatham Weekend at the Atwood House Museum. Admission will be free and we will provide tours of the Museum. Our newest exhibits will be ready for you to enjoy. The Museum will also feature four Spotlight Talks and one Sunday Lecture. More details on our website at

[www.chathamhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.chathamhistoricalsociety.org)

## Exploring Our Nautical Chart Collection

### The Chatham Chart Initiative

The Atwood House Museum recently completed Phase One of a multi-year chart restoration and digital imaging program. This initiative, generously supported by the Town of Chatham through a Community Preservation Grant is designed to insure the restoration and acquisition of high-resolution digital images of the Chatham Historical Society's antique nautical charts and to make the collection readily available to the public for general interest and for research and educational purposes. Of our 130 charts, 41 have been professionally restored and digitally imaged in Phase One. These digital images may be viewed online on the Atwood House Museum's website (see access instructions below).

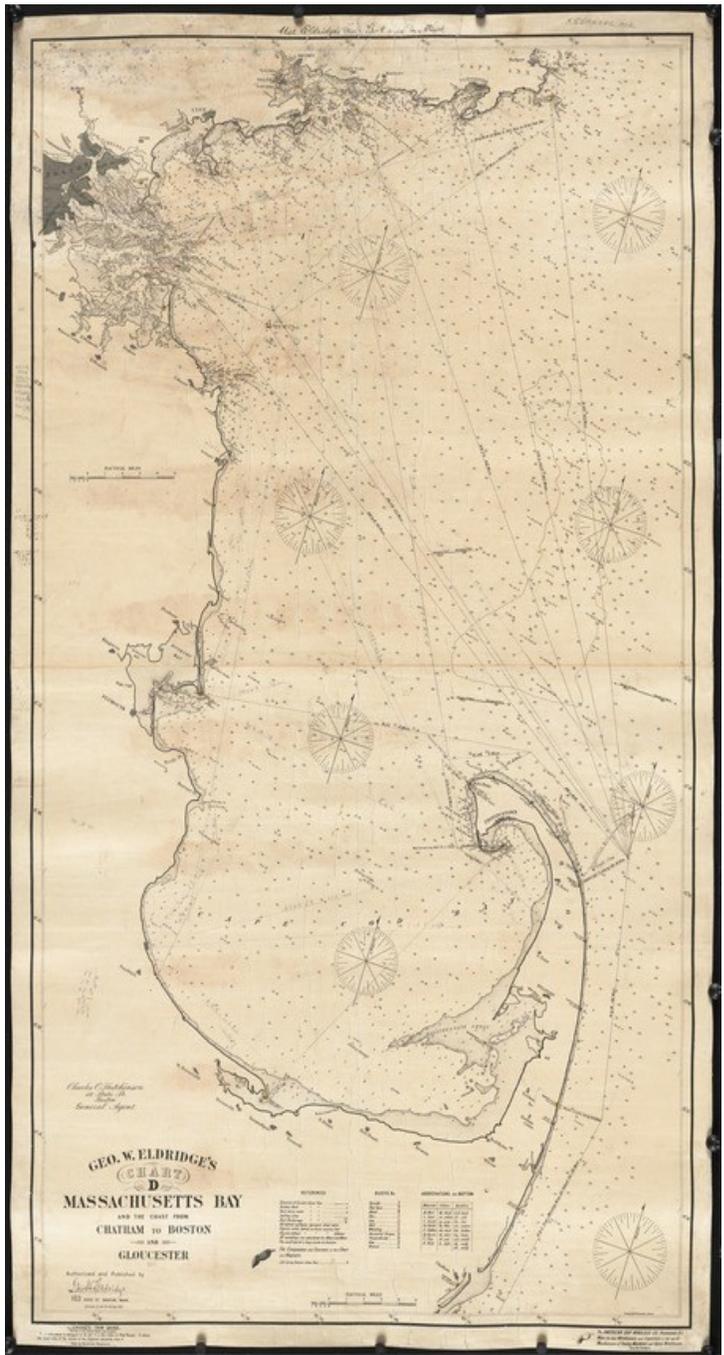
The digital images in our collection are permanently maintained by *Digital Commonwealth* on their website. *Digital Commonwealth* is a non-profit collaborative organization of over 130 member institutions devoted to the management and dissemination of cultural heritage materials held by Massachusetts libraries, museums and historical societies.

Join us this summer in the Main Exhibit to explore the *Virtual Gallery* and to see some of the actual charts on display. You can compare images from the online gallery and an actual chart, side by side. Nautical chart images

belonging to the Atwood House Museum can be copied only for non-commercial purposes under a special license arrangement with the Atwood House Museum described on the *Digital Commonwealth* website.

Special thanks to Cape Cod Antiques Dealers Association for providing the funds to purchase computer equipment to explore the charts in the Masters of the Sea Exhibit and to the Town of Chatham for the Community Preservation Committee Grant to make the Chart Initiative project possible. Grants like these help us display our valuable collection both online and in the Museum.

### Chart below of Massachusetts Bay by George W. Eldridge



### New Online Access to the Nautical Charts Collection

- 1: Go to [www.chathamhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.chathamhistoricalsociety.org)
- 2: Click on Collections, then select Nautical Charts
- 3: Click on Nautical Charts Virtual Gallery

The *Virtual Gallery* webpage displays thumbnail images of forty-one charts, each accompanied by a brief text describing the chart and how, in many instances, it relates to Chatham.

These charts have been grouped into categories by their geographical area, or by publisher, in the case of Eldridge charts, so that the collection can be easily browsed.

The first chart is a special case. For all other charts, clicking on the image opens a page on the Digital Commonwealth website which display a larger image. Clicking on this image yields a new image which has a button control at the bottom allowing the user to zoom onto any portion of the chart and view it in various stages of magnification.

The use of the *Virtual Gallery* for the examination of charts is an instance where a virtual experience can be as helpful as a real one. This can be done from the comfort of your home. How about that?



**1866 Blueback Chart of the North Atlantic, published by J. Imray and Son in London. This chart has many hand-written notes and plotting of voyages by Chatham captains from the Jones family.**

### The Chart Collection

Over the years, the Atwood House Museum of the Chatham Historical Society has acquired a significant collection of antique nautical charts. Most are 19<sup>th</sup> century working charts of the oceans and coastal areas navigated by shipmasters, many of whom made their homes in Chatham. The charts themselves found their way from local homes to the Museum in various bequests. A few years ago, an archive storage area and vault were constructed in the renovated lower level of the Museum. Shortly thereafter, our collection of approximately 130 charts was vacuumed and stored under climate-controlled archival conditions.

At about the same time, a generous bequest established the *Wendy Wade Costello Gallery* in the lower level corridor of the Museum for special displays of nautical charts and documents held in the archives. This gallery allows for

the display of only a few of the Museum's charts at a time. While items in the collection have been available to the public for study by request to the Archivist, there has been no easy way for a visitor to browse the large collection. This has changed with the advent of the online Nautical Charts Virtual Gallery where the charts are grouped by geographical region.

Our chart collection represents Chatham's maritime heritage and is an important piece of the history of the Town that needs to be preserved for the future and made readily available to the citizens of Chatham and to the wider public. Many of the charts in the collection contain handwritten notations and plots of specific voyages.

A significant number of the charts have been identified as used by specific Chatham shipmasters, including Captains Gershom Jones, Charles W. Jones, Simeon Taylor, John Taylor, Cyrus Eldredge and Charles W. Hamilton. Certain of these charts were used aboard sailing and steam ships named: *Revere*, *R. M. Heslen*, *Sylph*, *SS Kin Kiang*, *SS Mississippi*, *Thordis* and *Red Cloud*. Pencil notations by mariners reveal details of specific voyages (including daily navigational fixes) as the courses were plotted.

In the collection are many "Blueback" charts, so-called because they are backed by heavy blue paper to strengthen them. They were published in London by firms including those of Imray, Norie, Laurie, and Charles Wilson. Other charts in the collection include those by the British Admiralty, the U.S. Navy Hydrographic Office, private Dutch companies, the US Coast Survey and the private firms of Charles Copley and E. & G. W. Blunt.

A full list of our charts will be available online in the future. Only our digitized nautical charts are currently listed on the website.

**Bill Horrocks, Chart Initiative Project Manager,  
Atwood House Museum/Chatham Historical Society**

### George Eldridge – Famous Chatham Chart-maker

Chatham played an important role in the history of North American chart-making. George Eldridge (1821-1900), was born into a Chatham fishing family but was injured in his twenties while sailing. Unable to continue a seafaring career, Eldridge taught himself hydrography and chart-making. His first chart, published in 1851, is the now-famous "Upside-down Chart" of Monomoy Island and the surrounding shoals. This chart, with south at the top, became instantly popular with local sailors and fishermen. Its publication launched Eldridge's chart-making career.

The enterprise that he founded was joined by his son George W. (1845 - 1914) and came to include, in addition to charts, pilot books and tide and current tables. It continues today with the annual publication of the Eldridge Tide and Current Book by his great-great grandson, Robert Eldridge White and his wife Linda. In his book, *United States Coastal Charts 1783-1861*, Peter J. Guthorn states

that the two most important private chart-making establishments in America were those of E. & G. W. Blunt and of the Eldridges. Of the two, the Eldridge enterprise was, while smaller in scope, the more innovative and longer lasting.

The contributions of "Chart George" Eldridge, as he was known, and his son are embodied in the current exhibit in the *Wendy Wade Costello Gallery* which features the 1851 upside-down chart: "*Chatham Lights to Southwest Handkerchief*", a gift from the Executive Board to the Museum in recognition of the outstanding service of John J. King, II as chair. A large, small-scale Eldridge chart of the Northeast coast is displayed, as well as an example from a portfolio of forty-eight Harbor Charts published in 1901 by George W. Eldridge.

More information about Eldridge and his charts are available on the [www.chathamhistorical.org](http://www.chathamhistorical.org) website in the Nautical Charts Virtual Gallery and on exhibit at the Museum this summer.

## SAVE THE DATE

*The Chatham Historical Society's  
Annual Summer Celebration*

# *An Evening to Remember*

*Saturday, July 16, 2016*

*5:00 to 7:00*

*Cocktails and Hors d'oeuvres*

*Live and Silent Auctions*

**Please join us as we present our annual  
"Bringing History to Life" award**

**INVITATION TO FOLLOW**

## **WANTED GREAT ITEMS FOR EVENING TO REMEMBER**

The planning committee for Evening to Remember 2016  
is looking for great live auction items.

We would love to have those experiential items like:

- ◆ Vacation stay in a condo or house
- ◆ Boat cruise with lunch
- ◆ Fishing day trip
- ◆ Tickets to professional sporting events

The Society has many plans for enhanced exhibits and lectures.

We need you to help us achieve our goals and  
create a successful Evening to Remember.

**Please contact Linda Cebula @ 508-432-1599 or  
[macebula1@verizon.net](mailto:macebula1@verizon.net) with your contributions.**

**Thanks in advance for your generosity**

## Recently Accessioned Gifts to the Atwood House Museum

Among gifts received by the Museum/Society in recent months are the three items depicted here.

The two new acquisitions shown here, from World War I, are part of a collection of military items donated by Laurie Gates, who inherited them from her father and grandfather, Sherman L. Burson, Jr. and Sherman L. Burson, Sr. Other items in the collection include service badges, insignia patches, good conduct medals, ribbon bars indicating regions of service, and a US Army belt buckle.



*World War I Army Service Cap*



*World War I canteen with wool cover, and with bullet hole through the canteen*

The pillow cover below has a figure of a Civil War Union soldier carrying a flag and was a gift of Steve Burlingame. It came from a family farm, and could have been sewn by either his great-great-grandmother, or great-great-great-grandmother. Both women lived at the farm during the 19th and early 20th centuries.



*Embroidered pillow cover with Civil War design, depicted as if in battle in the act of raising the flag*

## 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

- Benefactor \$2500 +
- Captain Atwood Circle \$1000 - 2499
- Heritage Society \$ 500 - 999
- Discoverer \$ 250 - 499
- Explorer \$ 100 - 249
- Family \$ 50 - 99
- Individual \$ 25 - 49
- Student Historian (to age 18) \$ 10

Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Method of Payment

- Check       Visa       MasterCard

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. date \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to  
The Chatham Historical Society  
and mail with this form to:  
The Chatham Historical Society  
PO Box 709  
Chatham MA 02633**

*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.*

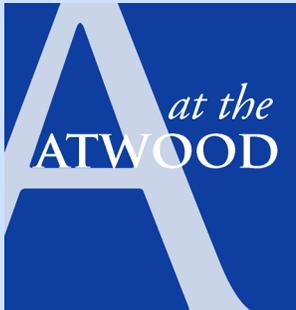
OR CURRENT RESIDENT

347 Stage Harbor Road  
PO Box 709  
Chatham, MA 02633



## Mark Your Calendars

Coming up at  
THE ATWOOD HOUSE MUSEUM



**SUNDAY LECTURE: May 8, 2016 @ 2 pm**  
*War Music from WWI and WWII*

**Speaker: John Whelan**

**HISTORY WEEKEND: June 17 - 19, 2016**

**Spotlight Talks: Fri. & Sat. @ 11:30 & 2 pm**

**SUNDAY LECTURE: June 19, 2016 2 pm**

*Torpedo Attack on Orleans*

**Speaker: Jake Klim**

**EVENING TO REMEMBER: July 16, 2016**

**5:00 pm - 7:00 pm Ticketed Event**