



SPRING 2011

The Atwood Log

The Quarterly Newsletter
of
The Chatham Historical Society



From the Director/Curator

The Raptor's Eye –the Natural World of Robert Verity Clem

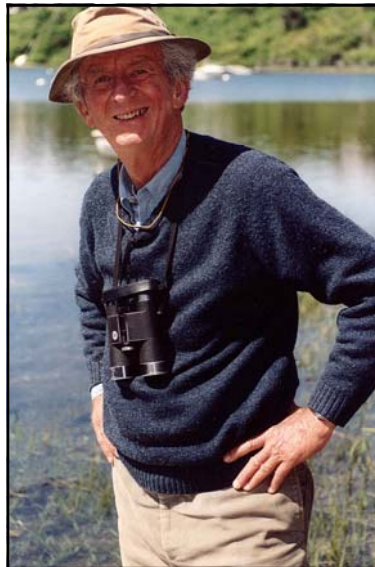
Robert Verity Clem lived and worked in Chatham quietly for more than 60 years. To Chatham locals he was loved and appreciated as a gentle man who always had a kind word and cared about the wild and natural world. Many saw him at his frequent station steering his beloved double-ender launch, cruising purposefully in Chatham's coastal waterways and on its remote barrier islands. Others noticed Bob observing the many birds that pass through Chatham on yearly migrations, through a spotting scope from his car or on foot. However, very few knew Robert Verity Clem for his prowess as a painter of birds in their natural surroundings. His amazing clarity of artistic vision coalesced with the ornithological exactitude of a scientist, to create unparalleled and iconic images –both in their accuracy and beauty. In this genre he was a true perfectionist and, in the opinion of many, one of the greatest and most exacting painters of birds during the last century.

For Robert (Bob) Clem, avian life –in its myriad forms- resonated deeply with him. His affection and reverence for birds was his lifetime obsession, and judging by the care with which he treated his subject, he was determined to capture not only their corporeal manifestation, which he did ingeniously, but their essence. Clem understood that birds do not belong in cages or in aviaries, but in their natural environment. The only way Clem wished to capture his subject was in his art. The environment was an integral part of Clem's art as was his passion for the undeveloped and undisturbed beauty of the unadulterated natural world.

The Atwood House Museum honors and preserves the memory of Robert Verity Clem in partnership with the Chatham Conservation Foundation, with an exhibition that will expose visitors to his special world through his art, a re-creation of his studio and insight into the man and the poignantly beautiful Chatham environment that inspired him. A comprehensive two-year educational program will be facilitated by the Atwood House Museum and the Massachusetts Audubon Society. Look for these programs on our website soon!

Visitors will be able to explore the fascinating world and clarity of vision of this Chatham master and see how he observed and immortalized the unspoiled beauty of Chatham like no artist before. The exhibit will open to the public on June 14th, 2011 and will remain up for two years. The exhibit will include 8-10 large paintings (including AHM's recent acquisition "Island Three"), which will chronicle Bob Clem's artistic development and thematic scope. Importantly all of these images will focus on Clem's time spent living and working in Chatham. The three major themes explored in the exhibit will be conservation, raptors and shorebirds. There will also be 4-6 smaller paintings/studies which lend keen insight into key aspects of his process or compositional approach—one of the paintings in the exhibit dates back to the 1950s! In addition, Bob loved and used his wooden double-ender, so there will also be a model of his boat included in the exhibit, which will be appropriately mounted on a pedestal and encased in Plexiglass vitrine. In one corner of the gallery, we will reconstruct a portion of Bob's studio—including his actual drawing board on which so many of his masterworks were created. There will also be many interesting artifacts such as Bob's signature hat, his brushes and other painting implements, and his binoculars.

Mark C. Wilkins,
Executive Director/Curator



Robert V. Clem

Chatham Historical Society

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Civil War Weekend

This year marks the Sesquicentennial of the Civil War. Consequently, the Atwood House Museum is endeavoring to organize a Civil War weekend for August 6th and 7th. We have been in contact with members of the Massachusetts 9th Artillery Regiment, who have agreed to participate subject to funding. Their program includes setting up an encampment on Museum grounds, demonstrating period surgical procedures, weapons drills, answering questions posed by the public, and of course –demonstrating their field artillery piece. They promise they will only use black powder when firing the cannon! In addition, we are trying to organize a period music demonstration, and Director and Curator Mark Wilkins will be giving a lecture on the Battle of Hampton Roads on the 6th at 2 pm, and on Chatham's role in the Civil War at 2 pm on the 7th. We are also endeavoring to organize a baseball symposium on Friday the 5th, which would include a selection of talks on the history and origins of baseball, followed by a Barbeque and period baseball demonstration. Look for information concerning these events on the Museum's website soon.



Engraving of the battle between the Monitor and the Merrimac at Hampton Roads, Virginia by Kurz and Allison

Summer 2011: Changes to the Museum Hours and Special Events

Plans are well underway for the reopening of the Atwood House Museum.

June hours:

Tuesday through Saturday, 1 to 4 pm

Opening Day: Tuesday, June 14

July and August hours:

Tuesday through Friday, 10 am to 4 pm

Saturday, 12 to 4 pm

September and October hours:

September 1st through 17th

Tuesday through Saturday, 1 to 4 pm

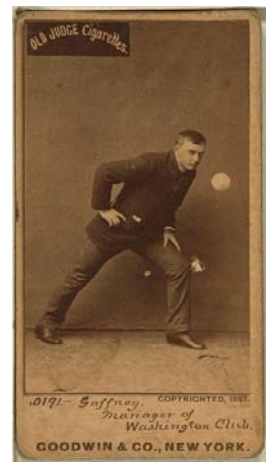
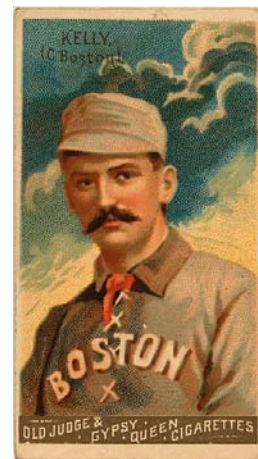
September 22nd through October 7th

Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, 1 to 4 pm.

October 8th: end-of-season Open House, 10 am to 4 pm

Among the exciting new happenings for the 2011 season are the Robert V. Clem Special Exhibit, discussed in more detail on the opposite page of this Log. During July, Director/Curator Mark Wilkins will be presenting Wednesday afternoon gallery talks from 2:00 to 3:00 pm in the Mural Barn. His topics are Alice Stallknecht (July 6), Chatham and the Sea (July 13), the China Trade (July 20), and the *Sparrow Hawk* (July 27). The Atwood House Museum also anticipates sponsoring two "Movie Nights", and two "Coffee and Discussion" events. Each of these events will be held once in July and once in August.

Programs for children, detailed on page four of this Log, include a Children's Camp from June 27 through June 30 for children ages nine through twelve; the Monday Mornings at the Museum Series, now in its sixth year, for children ages seven through twelve begin on Monday, July 11, and continue for a total of eight weeks, ending on August 29.



Baseball cards of two 19th and early 20th century baseball figures - on the left, King Kelly who played for Boston during a part of his career, and on the right, John Gaffney, the first important umpire in professional baseball



Model of Robert Clem's wooden double ender, model by Chatham resident and model builder David Murdoch

Children's Offerings for Summer 2011

Colonial Camp - June 27 - June 30

This June, the Historical Society will offer a four day colonial activity experience at the close of the school year. The camp will run from June 27 through 30, from 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM. The planned activities are designed for children between the ages of 9 and 12 years. Participants will spend time carrying out activities that would have been done during the early years of the family occupying the Atwood House. These activities will include learning about the herbs in our herb garden; dyeing and weaving yarn; constructing a mob cap and a simple apron; making ink and using a quill pen; learning about the use of trees for making ship masts, and preparing a drum such as would have been used in the militia. Attendees will have an opportunity to choose what they wish to do from the available activities on the first day of camp. It is hoped that those who attend will be able to join the Historical Society's entry in the Fourth of July Parade. The cost of the camp will be \$25.00 for children of members and \$30 for children of non-members. A snack will be included. Please inform us if your child has a food allergy. Check the web site for more details in late May or early June. You may also call the Chatham Historical Society (580 945-2493) for information or email the society at mmartin@chathamhistorical.org.



Above: the Herb Garden at the Atwood House Museum



Left: Children's activities at a previous program

Monday Mornings at the Museum Children's Summer Program 2011

Monday Mornings at the Museum Children's Summer Programs will take off on July 11 with its first of three programs about Sharks. With sightings off the coast of Chatham last year, interest is high about sharks, the Great White in particular. Activities will include comparisons among the various species, shark anatomy, and, if available in the local fish market, cooking mako shark during one class. The second and third classes about sharks are July 18 and July 25.

The fourth and fifth weeks (August 1 and 8) will introduce children to the Legacy of the Cranberry. The classes will look at the cranberry from the perspective of three groups - the Wampanoag Native Americans, Cape Verdean workers, and the modern consumer. Games, foods, and craft activities will all be part of the program.

The final three weeks (August 15, 22, and 29) will explore the story of Nee-shima Shimeta, a Japanese stowaway on the ship of Captain Alpheus Hardy from Chatham. Captain Hardy brought Nee-shima home with him. He was educated in New England and eventually returned to Japan to found a university there.

Children should be able to read and follow basic instructions. The programs are designed for students ages 7 through 12. Retired educators, Richard Curcio and

Stephanie Hamilton, with assistance from museum interns and adult volunteers, will be teaching the classes. Importantly, the curriculum focus and teaching methodology are dedicated to reaching different ages and ability levels. Art projects, learning games, cooking lessons, computer on-line resources, small group work, and individualization will all be a part of the classes. A primary goal is to teach Chatham history through the use of applicable resources from the Atwood House Museum. To do all this effectively, the students will be challenged with appropriate age level activities by practicing cooperative learning skills in a relaxed, yet highly structured environment. Further, creating fun based learning opportunities helps to guarantee students a stress free experience. At the end of each class, students will leave with completed projects ranging from shark masks and origami samurai hats to delicious cranberry muffins.

Questions may be directed to Richard Curcio, Educational Coordinator, by telephone (508 945-3080) or by e-mailing him at scchatham@comcast.net. A brochure with all sign up information will be available in late May. To have a brochure mailed to you call the Chatham Historical Society at

508 945-2493 or email

mmartin@chathamhistorical.org.



Food preparation is always fascinating

SAVE THE DATE

*The Chatham Historical Society's
Annual Summer Celebration*

AN EVENING TO REMEMBER

Saturday, July 23, 2011

6:00 to 8:00 pm

Cocktails and Hors d'oeuvres

Please join us as we present our second annual
"Bringing History to Life" award, honoring the memory
and legacy of Robert V. Clem

INVITATION TO FOLLOW

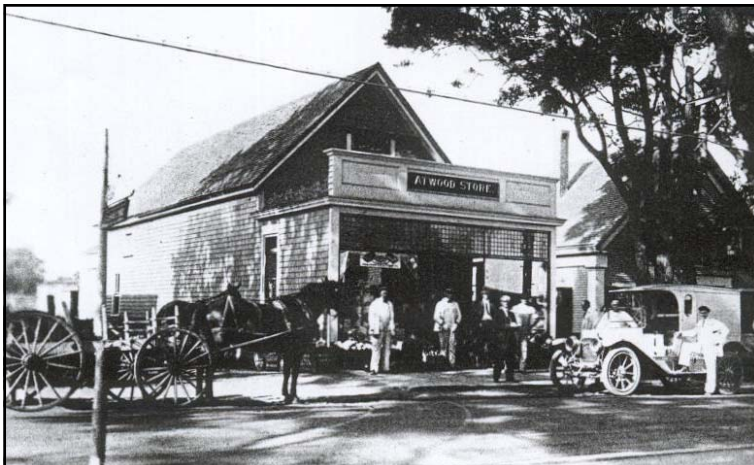
2011 Spring Lectures

Afternoons at the Atwood Lecture Series continues on Sunday afternoons at 2:00 pm in the Mural Barn on May 15 and June 12.

The May lecture, entitled "Open for Business" and presented by Society Archivist Mary Ann Gray, will describe some of the many businesses that have formed a part of Chatham's history. Mary Ann's presentation will begin with the very earliest days and the barter system, and continue through the changes in the

town's economy to the 1950's and the development of the Main Street as it now exists in Chatham.

In June the lecture, entitled "Japanese and American Acculturation during the 19th Century", will be presented by the Society's Director/Curator, Mark Wilkins. This lecture will highlight aspects of Chatham's 19th century far eastern trade relationship with Japan.



The Atwood Store, one of the earlier businesses to be discussed in the May lecture



Japanese print depicting Commodore Perry's Fleet entering Tokyo Bay in 1854

World War Two Oral Histories Project and Exhibit

The Atwood House Museum is currently involved in reaching out to the Chatham and Cape communities to try and find survivors from the Second World War. The purpose of this effort is to record oral histories of survivors of both combat and home fronts before they disappear! Thus far we have worked with the *Chronicle* to solicit members of the community and the response to date has been tremendous. After we have completed this phase of the project, the best stories will be featured in an exhibit on World War Two in 2012. If you are a survivor with a story to tell (either combat or home front), or know of someone who is, please do not hesitate to contact Director and Curator Mark Wilkins at the Museum: mwilkins@chathamhistorical.org

In addition, if you have artifacts dealing with the European theater of operations, such as uniforms, journals, medals, weapons, etc., or have items that deal with the home front-e.g. ration cards, civil defense helmet, posters dealing with the war effort, etc. and would be willing to loan such items- please let us know.

The exhibit will be similar in design to the current China trade exhibit, in that it will be a sequenced group of vignettes, through which the public will walk and interact with educational activities. We are also working with staff from the National World War Two Museum in New Orleans, who have agreed to loan us supplemental artifacts and materials to really make this exhibit comprehensive and exciting.



Air craft worker Virginia Davis



D-Day Normandy Landing



Three generations of the Freeman family enjoying the Tea



Mary Ann Gray and Martha Gray Crawford preparing small bouquets and chocolate covered strawberries at the tea

Photos from February Events: Chatham School Project Reception and the Valentine's Day Tea



Photo to the left - visitors enjoying the varied student projects at the student's reception



*Above - Richard Curcio, project creator, presenting a student certificate;
Left - visitors admiring several of the student projects*



It IS Easy Being Green!

In an effort to make it easy for our members to stay in the loop (and save stamps and paper), we encourage you to take advantage of two smart ways to connect with us online:

Sign up for our email updates and “like” us on Facebook.

There are many wonderful programs that take place in between each issue of The Atwood Log, and we want to share them with you. Be sure to get the latest information by adding your email to our database; simply go to our website

(www.chathamhistoricalsociety.org) and click on the “Connect/Contact” link on the left. From there you can sign up for both our Facebook page and our e-news updates.

Renew your membership online.

Now, renewing your membership is only a click away. Just go to the website and click “Membership” – you can renew or join in minutes. As always, if you prefer to print and mail in your form and donation, that option is available, too.



Tea Shop Miniature by Florine Myer, on display at the Valentine's Tea



Guests at the Tea enjoying the Chatham Student Projects

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
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___ Family	\$ 50 - 99
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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.

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Mark Your Calendars

Coming up at The Chatham Historical
Society & Atwood House Museum

Afternoons at the Atwood Lecture Series
Lectures for Winter and Spring 2011
2 pm at The Atwood House Museum

Sunday, May 15
Speaker: Mary Ann Gray
"Open for Business"

Sunday, June 12
Speaker: Mark C. Wilkins
*"Japanese and American Acculturation
During the 19th Century"*



Other Upcoming Events - see details inside

Museum Opens for the 2011 Season June 14

Evening to Remember: July 23, 6 - 8 pm

Civil War Weekend: August 6 and 7

Children's Programs: June, July, and August