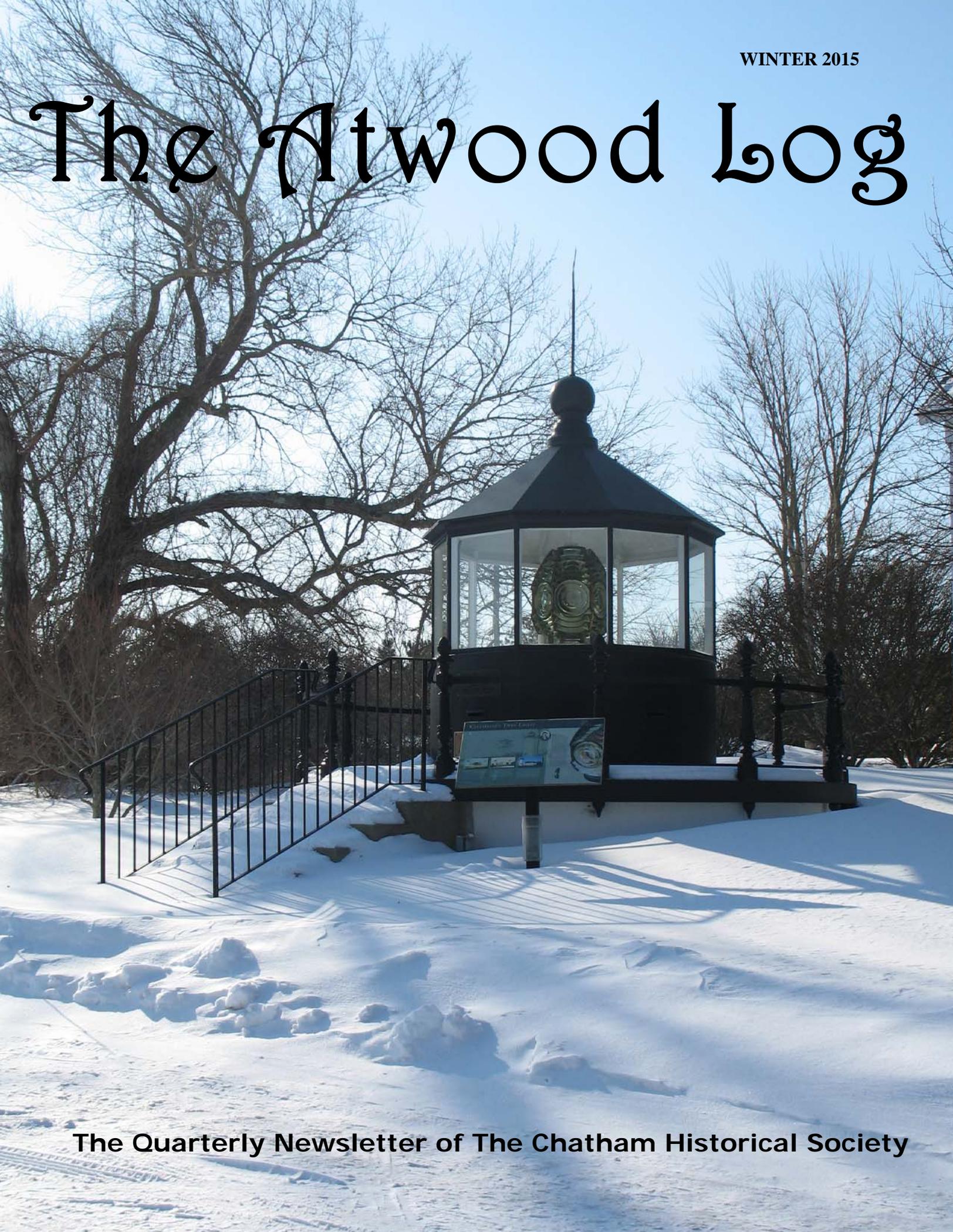


WINTER 2015

# The Atwood Log



The Quarterly Newsletter of The Chatham Historical Society



## *From the Interim Director*

### The Lighthouse Gift

Greetings to all of you. I am enjoying some time as Interim Executive Director while the Executive Board searches for a new Executive Director now that Dennis McFadden has moved to Maryland. It is good to see volunteers here whom I knew in 2007-2008, and to meet new volunteers.

The Chatham Historical Society is fortunate to have this historic lantern room with its Fresnel lens, a photograph of which is captured beautifully by Margaret Martin for the cover of this issue of The Log. This lantern room was part of the third set of the twin Chatham lighthouses. The first two sets were destroyed by storms and erosion (sound familiar?). The third set, built of cast iron, was lined with brick and placed across the shore road away from the water.

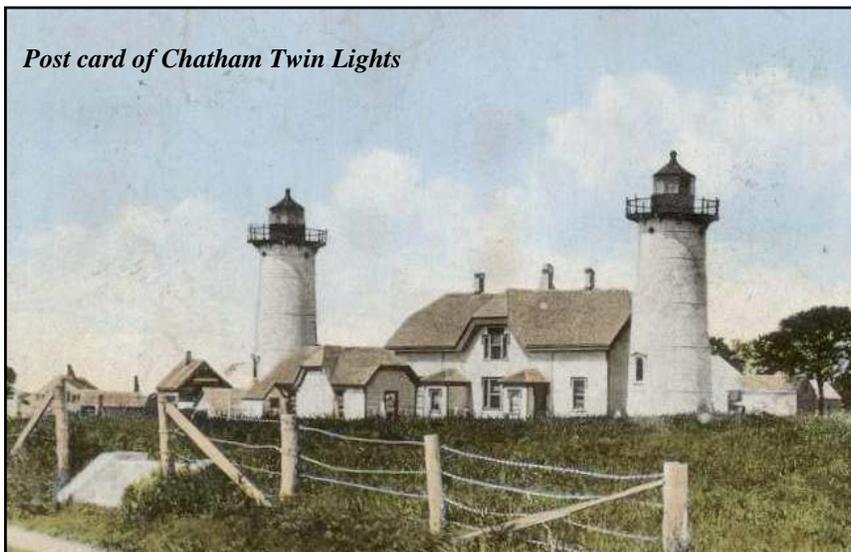
When the Fresnel lens was invented in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century by French physicist Augustin Jean Fresnel, it was described as the most important breakthrough in lighthouse illumination in 2000 years. In 1923 with further updated technology, only one light was needed on Chatham shores, and the north twin light was moved, becoming Nauset Light.

In 1939 the United States Coast Guard took charge of all lighthouses in the United States. In 1969, after further improvements in Chatham light, the old lantern room and Fresnel lens were donated to the Chatham Historical Society for preservation on the Museum grounds. The Society has restored and maintained this very special gift and moved it from near the Stallknecht Mural Barn to the opposite side of the parking lot.

The lantern room with Fresnel lens may be visited during regular seasonal open hours, or by special arrangement. We are happy to welcome visitors to share this special part of Chatham history.

*Cynthia McCue*

*Post card of Chatham Twin Lights*



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## Nova Scotia Connections - From the Archivist

Nova Scotia has been of interest to me for some time now. It began with my own family's genealogy in which I had hoped to explore the branch of the family that settled in Lunenburg, N.S. as a member of the Foreign Protestants. These people were brought from Europe to settle in the homes of the Acadians who were forced to leave when the English retook Nova Scotia from the French. My other area of interest and that is the basis for this article, resulted from the time I spent investigating one of the major emigrations from New England, and in particular from Chatham, at approximately the same time. Again these settlers were also encouraged by the British government by the offers of grants of land and other items if they would settle in Nova Scotia. When I was offered the chance to travel around Nova Scotia, it seemed like the perfect time to combine the two areas of interest along with a pleasant vacation.

The research I had done about the citizens of Chatham who left to go to Nova Scotia revealed that those individuals, who availed themselves of the offer from the British Governor, felt that there wasn't much opportunity for them to get ahead in Chatham. At that time, the common lands in Chatham had been divided among the families already living in Chatham. Because of the rule of primogeniture, they knew that the oldest son in the family would inherit the family farm or business, leaving the other children to find some other way to earn their living. Had they been in England, the opportunity would have been open for the other sons to go into the military, become a teacher, become a business owner, or perhaps go into the ministry. None of these opportunities would have been available on Cape Cod. Thus the offer of land, a financial reward, a house seemed very attractive. Also many of the Cape residents had experience fishing off the coast of Nova Scotia during the summer. This also meant they were familiar with the land. Some of the men had participated in the French and Indian Wars, that brought them into that area.

After exploring the CHS archival records to determine the last

names of those citizens who moved to Nova Scotia, I found that these people had gravitated to the towns of Yarmouth and Liverpool. Armed with several family names, primarily Hamilton and Collins, I thought it would be interesting to follow their lives and so in preparation, I read a number of books that were available to me. The first of these was a rather light hearted travelogue, *To Nova Scotia: The Sunrise Province of Canada* by T. Morris Longstreth.<sup>1</sup> I scanned the Table of Contents for Liverpool, and read the Chapter. On the second page, I found two verses of a ballad, dedicated to Alex Godfrey and the Rover privateer. The ballad was published in a book by Thomas H. Raddall. On the next page you will find the full ballad and I couldn't help myself from imagining a bar room in Liverpool with settlers raising their drinks in a toast to their folk hero.

It was then time to explore the Liverpool archives and trace down the Godfrey Family to see if they had come from Chatham. Several archivists helped me, searching their very orderly surroundings, and then bringing newspaper clippings and other information to me, and offering to make copies of the story of his famous battle. That description is also included for the reader to see why he was acclaimed as a hero. A computer search of genealogical resources soon yielded the name of Alexander Godfrey and his father Josiah who were both born in Chatham and emigrated to Nova Scotia.

Traveling on to Halifax, and the Nova Scotia Archives, I followed down the trail of Enos Collins who was the first son of Hallett Collins and Rhoda Peek. Hallett Collins was a merchant, trader, and justice of the peace in Liverpool N.S. When he died in 1831, he left an estate of 13,000 British Pounds. His son, Enos, received little formal education but went to sea at an early age as a cabin boy. Before he was 20, he was captain of the schooner *Adamant*, sailing to Bermuda. By 1799, he served as the Lieutenant on the famous privateer, *Charles Mary Wentworth*. It wasn't long before Enos was able to obtain part membership in a number of vessels trading out of Liverpool. Soon he felt the opportunities available to him in his hometown were inadequate so in 1811, he moved to Halifax. During the War of 1812, he became a partner in a firm that bought American vessels captured by privateers and then sold their cargoes at a profit. Collins was the owner of 3 privateers, including the *Liverpool Packet*. This ship was the most dreaded Nova Scotia vessel to sail in the New England waters.

Along the way Enos amassed enough funds to own a bank known locally as the "Collins" bank. When he died, he was rumored to have been the richest man in British North America. His estate has been said to be \$6,000,000. In spite of his financial success he is not remembered as a folk hero in the same way as Alexander Godfrey who lost his life to a tropical disease.

*Mary Ann Gray*



**Enos Collins**



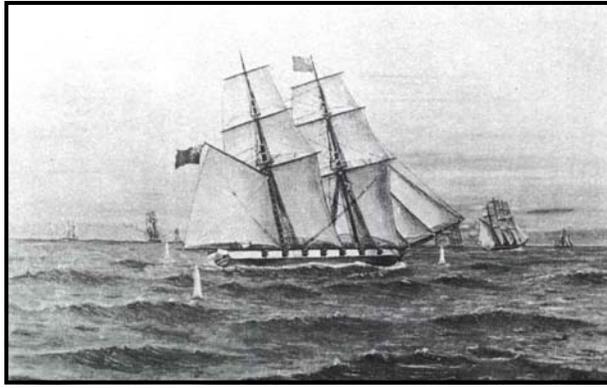
<sup>1</sup> Longstreth, T. Morris. *To Nova Scotia: The Sunrise Province of Canada*. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. 1936

## The Rover

The Rover was a privateer brig out of Liverpool, Nova Scotia. Built in Brooklyn, Nova Scotia over the winter of 1799-1800, she was owned by group of merchants from Liverpool, Nova Scotia led by Simeon Perkins and Snow Parker. Captained by Alexander Godfrey, her crew was made up of mainly fishermen. The Rover could carry a crew of 60; was rigged as a brig; her tonnage was 100; she was armed with 16 guns (four pounders); and her letter of Marque was issued May 20, 1800.

She was one of five privateers commissioned from Liverpool during the Napoleonic Wars. The Rover won fame with several bold engagements, including a single handed attack on a French convoy, but is most famous for a battle off the coast of Venezuela with the Spanish naval schooner Santa Rita and three accompanying gunboats.

The following account of that battle appeared in the local newspaper, *The Liverpool Advance and Western Counties Advocate* of Dec, 1921. "On the 10<sup>th</sup> September, 1800 as the privateer "Rover", armed with 14 long guns—4 pounders, 54 men and boys, under Captain Godfrey, was cruising near Cape Blanco, she



*Privateer brig "Rover", engaging a French squadron off the Atlantic Coast.*

Source: Glasner, Joyce. *Pirates and Privateers: Swashbuckling Stories of the East Coast*. Toronto: James Lorimer & Co. Ltd., Publishers, 2013. p.51

fell in with the Spanish Schooner "Santa Ritta", mounting ten long guns—six pounders; two English cannonades with about 122 men, and accompanied by three gunboats, also under Spanish colors. The schooner and gunboats had the previous day been equipped by the Governor of Puerto Caballo on purpose to capture the "Rover". A light breeze, which had been blowing, having died away, the schooner and the two gunboats, by aid of oars, gained fast upon the brig, keeping up as they advanced, a steady fire from their bow guns which the "Rover" returned with two guns pointed from her stern, and as her oppo-

nents drew near, with her small arms also. Seeing that the schooner intended to board on the starboard quarter, and two of the gunboats on the opposite bow and quarter, the Rover suffered them to advance until they got within about 15 yards of her. She then manned her oars on the port side, and pulling quickly around brought her starboard broadside to bear right athwart the schooner's bow, upon whose deck, then filled with men ready for boarding, the brig poured a whole broadside of round and grape shot. Immediately within, about fifteen yards of her, she then manned her oars on the port side, and pulling quickly around brought her starboard broadside to bear athwart the schooner's bow, spun whose deck, then filled with men for boarding, the brig poured a whole broadside of round and grape shot. Immediately after this her crew manned the guns on the opposite side, and raked the two gunboats in a similar manner.

The Rover then commenced a close action with the "Santa Ritta," and continued it for an hour and a half, when, finding her opponent's fire grow slack, the "Rover" by aid of a light air of wind, banked her stern into contact with the schooner's side. Captain Godfrey's crew rushed on board of, and with little opposition, carried the "Santa Ritta." The two gunboats, seeing the fate of their consort, sheered off, in apparently a very shattered state.

Notwithstanding this long and hard fought action, the "Rover" had not a man hurt. Every officer on board the "Santa Ritta" was killed, except the officers who commanded a party of twenty five soldiers. Fourteen dead and seventeen wounded were found on the deck. The prisoners, including the latter, numbered seventy-one, while the enemy's total loss was said to be fifty killed. The prisoners being too numerous to be kept on board, Captain Godfrey landed them all, save eight, having previously taken from them the usual acknowledgment not to serve again until exchanged.

As a reward for this gallant action, and other services, Captain Godfrey was offered a commission in the Royal Navy and the command of one of the 11 M. ships, which was declined."

The story of this battle was also published in the form of a letter sent by Alexander Godfrey in the *Provincial or Halifax Monthly* magazine in 1853 and republished in *Bridgewater Bulletin* of June 5<sup>th</sup> of 1968.

*Mary Ann Gray*

### *The Saga of the Rover*

*Come gather round the capstan, lads, an' lend an ear to me,  
For I've a tale of the days o' sail, when England won the sea;  
Of loss an' gain on the Spanish Main, o' powder, beef an' beer;  
O' fightin' Alex Godfrey an' the Rover Privateer.*

*Big Alex was the kind that breeds in the Nova Scotian air,  
A fathom neat in his naked feet, an' strong as the northern bear.  
His taut an' trim slim-waisted brig (save guns and the galley stove)  
From jolly boat to sprits'l yard was built at Herring Cove..*

*O, the streets are filled wi' laughter an' the tavern rings with song,  
The seamen kiss the serving miss that brings the beer along;  
The beggar-man's plate wi' pieces of eight is filled in a silver rain,  
An' the parson sings a chanty, for the Rover's home again!*

*There's too much blood in the crimson jack, an' little enough o' gold,  
"If ye be men," said Captain Ben, "ye do not need be told.  
Now I agree that piracy be robbery in the dark:  
But where'll ye get the same reward? In a hide-bound letter o' mark?"*

*He slipped away to the Carolines wi' two score knaves an' fools,  
His fear of the Lord went overboard along o' the book o' rules.  
If a neutral hold revealed no gold he sent her into port.  
And blood? His owners sweated it—in the Admiralty court!*

*The Rover's lost an gone, my lads, these hundred years an' more,  
Among the bones in Davy Jones, or rottin' on the shore.  
But when the lights are lit o' nights, she puts to sea again--  
The Carib fisher sees her ghost along the Spanish Main!*

1. As found in "To Nova Scotia: the sunrise province of Canada 1936 pp 51, 60

## SUNDAY AFTERNOON LECTURES AT THE ATWOOD HOUSE MUSEUM

### SUNDAY, March 15

*Cape Cod Life-Saving Stations*: an illustrated talk by Richard Ryder on the history of the United States Life Saving Service and the 13 stations which stretched from Monomoy Point to Provincetown from 1872 to 1915.

### SUNDAY, APRIL 19 (rescheduled from February)

*Governing Chatham in the 1970s and 1980s*: Reminiscences by two former selectmen, Bill Litchfield and Tim Pennypacker.

### SUNDAY, April 26

*The Work of Chatham's Coast Guard Today*: Chief Robert Goley, Officer in Charge, Chatham Coast Guard Station. This lecture is in honor of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Coast Guard and its service to the community.

Programs are at 2:00 P.M. at the Atwood House Museum.

Open to all at no charge, donations welcome

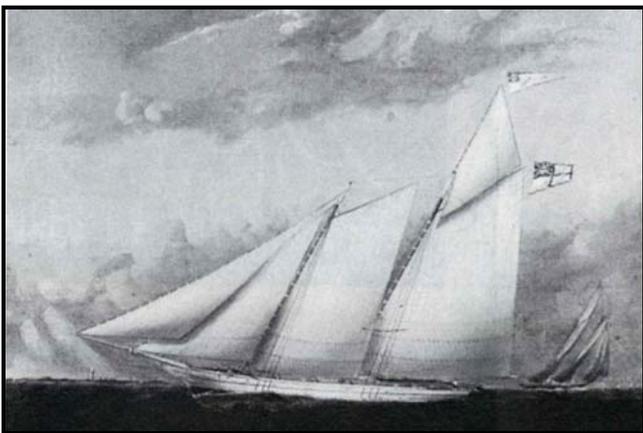
## Pirate vs. Privateer

One of the important distinctions each of the museums and archives that I visited during my stay in Nova Scotia made sure that the visitors understood was the difference between a pirate and a privateer.

The main point that they stressed was that pirates acted on their own authority when attacking vessels of all states indiscriminately, while privateers acted on a commission recognized under the Law of Nations and were afforded a "letter of Marque." Privateers usually joined in a war after a number of a country's ships were destroyed and the nation needed to look for a less costly and more efficient way to wage war. The only wages the crew of Privateers would receive would be derived from the capture of enemy ships.

Occasionally a Privateer would turn to acting as a pirate ship and they no longer were considered as acting in the services of the country from which they may have received a letter of Marque." One such ship was commanded by Benejah Collins. This man may have been related to another Chatham family that emigrated to Nova Scotia.

*Mary Ann Gray*



*The Liverpool Packet, oil on canvas circa 1815, from the Wood Collection, Queens County Museum, Nova Scotia*  
Source: Glasner, Joyce. *Pirates and Privateers: Swashbuckling Stories of the East Coast*. Toronto: James Lorimer & Co. Ltd., Publishers, 2013. p.63

# Atwood House Museum Volunteer Form 2015

Please provide the following information if you are interested in becoming a volunteer.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Summer Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Winter Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Summer Address: Street or Post Office Box \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Reside from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Winter Address if different from above: \_\_\_\_\_

The museum has two general areas that need volunteers, both of which accept year-round or seasonal participants. The first area is made up of docents, hosts and hostesses, and shop volunteers.

**Please place #1 next to the choice that interests you most. If you are willing to work in more than one area, number the others in order of preference. Our goal is to assemble a group of volunteers who can help us cover more than one area. Preference will be given to volunteers who can work weekly.**

\_\_\_ 1. **The Old House:** Lead visitors through the Old Atwood House, relate its history, and point out furniture and other items of interest.

\_\_\_ 2. **The Museum Galleries:** Lead visitors through The Durand Room (seashells, Parian ware, Sandwich glass, Crowell Birds); Portrait Gallery (sea captains' portraits and recollections); Tool Room; Joseph Lincoln Gallery; Fishing Gallery; and other galleries containing Special Exhibits. Explain and interpret the displays in these areas.

\_\_\_ 3. **The Mural Barn:** Provide information about the famous Stallknecht Murals, the artist, her work, the people of Chatham depicted in the murals, and their way of life.

\_\_\_ 4. **The Nickerson Camp:** Describe summer vacations in this two room camp saved from North Beach storms and preserved in its original 1940's condition.

\_\_\_ 5. **Hostess or Host:** Meet, greet, and assist visitors; accept admission fees; promote museum membership and activities; and open and close museum when necessary.

\_\_\_ 6. **Museum Shop:** Greet visitors and assist them in purchasing museum-related books and merchandise.

The second area offers comradeship while performing essential services. Whether you can work year-round or seasonally, on Tuesdays or Thursdays for one, two, or more hours in the archival areas, please check which of the following areas interest you:

**Mailings** \_\_\_ **Data Entry** \_\_\_ **Archival Filing** \_\_\_ **Folder Sorting and Filing** \_\_\_

You will be contacted for individualized training. Mailings are intermittent and occur on any day of the week.

**Continue at top of adjacent page**

For docents, hosts/hostesses, and shop volunteers, please check below all that apply to your preferences:

Weekly \_\_\_ semi-weekly \_\_\_ mornings \_\_\_ afternoons \_\_\_  
 either \_\_\_ year- round for special events \_\_\_

Check at **least** two day preferences: Tues. \_\_\_ Wed. \_\_\_ Thurs. \_\_\_  
 Fri. \_\_\_ Sat. \_\_\_

In order to be ready for opening on **Saturday, June 20, 2015, ALL volunteers** must agree to attend one of the **Preparation for Opening Day Sessions**. In addition, new volunteers will meet with the coordinator for an individually scheduled session prior to the session scheduled for all volunteers. If you will not return to Chatham until late June or early July, we will arrange individualized sessions.

**The Old House:** Monday, June 15, 9:30 A.M.

**The Galleries:** Tuesday, June 9, 9:30 A.M.

**The Mural Barn:** Tuesday, June 16, 9:30 A.M.

**The Nick. Camp:** Wednesday, June 17, 9:30 A.M.

**Hostess:** Wednesday, June 10, 9:30 A.M.

**Shop:** Monday, June 8, 9:30 A.M.

**Please return this form before Wednesday, April 1, 2015**

**Carol Kolb**

**Volunteer Coordinator**

**The Chatham Historical Society**

**P.O. Box 709, Chatham, MA 02633**

**(508) 945-2493**

**RETURNING VOLUNTEERS MAY KEEP THIS FORM FOR REFERENCE AND MERELY EMAIL YOUR INTENT TO RETURN carolpeterkolb@gmail.com**

**PARTIES PLANNED FOR VOLUNTEERS**

**Brunch: Monday, June 2 @ 9:30**

**Potluck Supper: Monday, August 3 @ 5:30**

**Cocktail Party: Sunday, September 13 @ 5:00**

***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

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

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## Mark Your Calendars Coming up at THE ATWOOD HOUSE MUSEUM

### At the Atwood -

Programs are 2:00 pm at the Atwood House Museum

**March 15, 2015 - *History of the Life Saving Service***  
Speaker: Richard Ryder

**April 19, 2015 - *Reminiscences by Two Former Selectmen***  
Speakers: Bill Litchfield, Tim Pennypacker

**April 26, 2015 - *The Work of Chatham's Coast Guard Today***  
Speaker: Chief Robert Goley, Officer in Charge, Chatham Coast Guard Station.

