

THE SLOOP'S LOG

Newsletter of the Chebeague Island Historical Society

June, 2003



Special Edition

**You are cordially invited to
celebrate the grand opening of**

The Museum of Chebeague History

at the District 9 Schoolhouse

**Sunday
July 6, 2003**

1:00 pm

Welcome — *Donna Miller Damon, President*

Invocation — *Bob Brown*

Flag Salute

Battle Hymn of the Republic — *Chebeague Violin Ensemble*

Remarks — *William Shane, Cumberland Town Manager*

The Time Capsule — *Joan Bennett Robinson and Sylvia Hamilton Ross*

Class of 1913 Ode — *Words by Ethyl Hamilton Ross sung by The Whalers*

The History of Chebeague — *Earle Shettleworth,*
Director of The Maine Historic Preservation Commission

Words of thanks — *Kenneth Hamilton, Jill Malony, Philip Jordan*

Dedication of the Museum of Chebeague History

Cutting the Ribbon — *Raymond L. Hamilton*

Visit the inaugural exhibit at the Museum of Chebeague History:

In Her Words...The 1878 Diary of Mabel Hamilton Hill

Receive your honorary Diploma from Beverly Johnson

Look at School Memorabilia with Martha Hamilton

Listen to the Whalers Concert at 2:30 PM

Enjoy Lemonade and Cookies



In Her Words...The 1878 Diary of Mabel Hamilton Hill

Several years back I received a call from Ray Hamilton to tell me that his cousin Marilyn had come to the island and had something she wanted me to have. I did not know Marilyn but I knew she was Robert Wheldon's first cousin. It seems Marilyn had a pocket diary from 1878 that her grandmother, Mabel Hamilton Hill wrote when she was a thirteen year old school girl growing up in the Hamilton Villa on the East End. Marilyn wanted to entrust the diary with an islander and Ray suggested me. Thank you, Ray.

Although Mabel died before I was born I had heard a great deal about her. When my father, Ellsworth Miller, was a young man he went fishing with her husband Philip Hill. My father admired Philip Hill and thought of him as a second father. With this background I could not wait to read the diary. What was life like back at the time my grandfather was a boy I wondered? Boy, did I find out!!

Mabel meticulously recorded everyday life on the East End of Chebeague. The diary was not just a diary of teenage drivel about boy crazy girls although there is some of that. The diary describes an island community with all of the trappings of a Victorian middle class neighborhood. Economically, socially, educationally and spiritually the people worked and played like Victorians. She writes about the ordinary and the extraordinary. Throughout the winter Sue Burgess, Jane Frizzell, Jennifer Hamilton, Jim Millinger, Mac Passano and I have met on a weekly basis to plan, prepare and present an exhibit which will allow the viewer to learn about life on Chebeague 125 years ago. Mabel's diary transported us back to 1878 as we attempted to find the answers to many questions we had about the past. Were islanders isolated? Did they have stores or a post office? What were their clothes like? Did they have boat service? How did they celebrate their holidays? What subjects did they study in school? What were the children's aspirations? How did people get around? How often they go to the West End?

You'll find the answers to these and many other questions when you visit the Chebeague Island Historical Society's inaugural exhibit at the Museum of Chebeague History. Admission is free but donations are gladly accepted. The Museum will be open during July and August Tuesday thru Sunday from 1-4:30 PM. We look forward to seeing you at the Museum.

Donna Miller Damon President, Chebeague Island Historical Society

The Museum Of Chebeague History at the District 9 Schoolhouse: A place where you can gain knowledge of the past to help you to better understand the present and plan for the future.

Museum of Chebeague History

TIME LINE

Sylvia Ross, President

➡ Town gives right of first refusal - 1987.

David Hill, President

➡ Town deeds us building - 1997

Jill Malony, President

➡ Tight to the Weather - 1999

All Island Campaign - 2000

Phil Jordan, President

➡ Construction - 2001

GRANTS

***Island Institute - feasibility study**

***USDA, Rural Development - tight to the weather
public restroom**

***Recompense -public restroom**

exhibits

seed money for product development

general support

***Davis Family Foundation - museum construction**

***MBNA - temperature controlled room**

annex shelving

temperature controlled room shelving



A Brief History of the East End Schoolhouse

By Donna Miller Damon

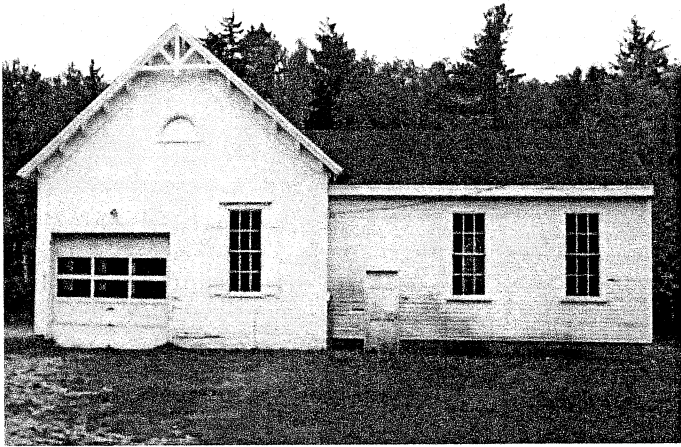
If someone stopped you on the street and asked you where most of your tax money goes, you would most likely say roads and schools. It just so happens that one hundred thirty-three years ago in 1871 people on Great Chebeague Island would have given the same answer.

1871 was the year that Jeremiah and Matilda Hamilton's house (burned in the 1924 Hillcrest fire) was assessed as the most expensive home in the entire Town! It was also the year that the people of Chebeague took the Town to court, because the Town refused to build the North and South Roads. The Superior Court ruled in favor of Chebeague and mandated the Cumberland County Commissioners to lay out the roads as they now run and ordered the Town of Cumberland to pay land damages. This action redistributed the Town's funds, because some islanders received over \$300 in damages, which was more than a year's wages for some folks.

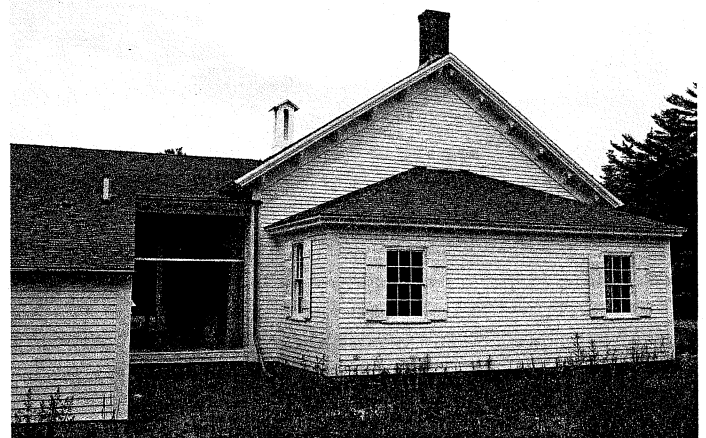
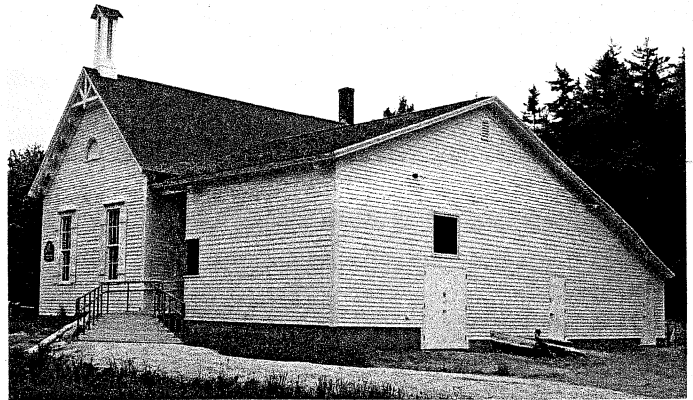
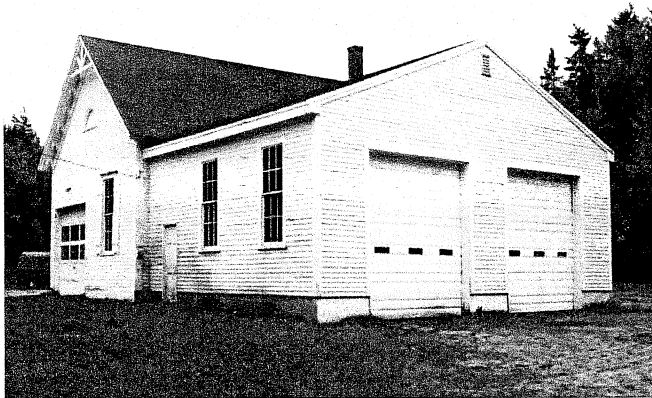
It may be hard to believe but forty percent of the "scholars" in Cumberland lived on Chebeague in 1871 and more than half of those students lived in the East End District. Given the value of property, the recognition by the court that Chebeague deserved services, and the fact that there were more than two hundred school age children on Chebeague, it is not surprising that the people in School District 9 on the East End of Chebeague decided to build a new school. Built on land bought from Samuel Ross and David Hill the school sat at the junction of North and South Roads at what came to be known as the "Green A." An 1872 article in *Portland Transcript* reported that the school was built during 1871 at a cost of \$2600 and had all of the latest equipment including globes and outline maps. Town reports show that District 9 had more students than any of the other twelve districts in the Town for more than thirty years. Sixty-nine students attended the school on one August day in 1878 with the potential of forty to fifty more who were school age. The Town Report of 1876 described a system, which determined the number of terms a student could attend school by their age. The younger children, under age twelve could not go in the winter when the older boys were home from rock slooping. There just was not room to accommodate the total number of scholars nor was there a human being alive who could have handled a school with over one hundred students! Overcrowding became such a problem that an addition was built on the school in the mid-1890's and an additional teacher was hired. The primary grades held their classes in the addition while the older children were educated in the large room.

During the 1930's under the leadership of Stanley Libby, the District 9 School was renovated and became the Chebeague Jr./Sr. High School and the younger children moved to the Central School (now the Grange Hall). Number 9 remained the Chebeague High School until 1953 when the new sub-primary through twelfth grade Chebeague Consolidated School was built on what had once been the site of Army barracks. District 9 became the town garage and was altered beyond recognition.

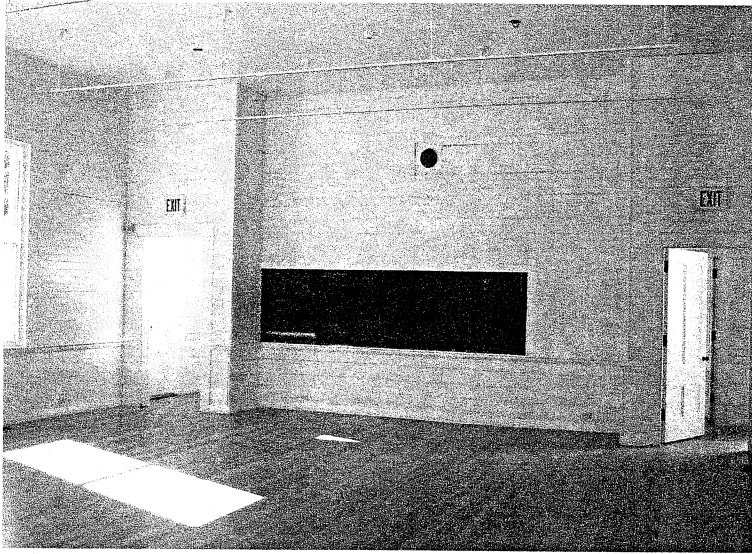
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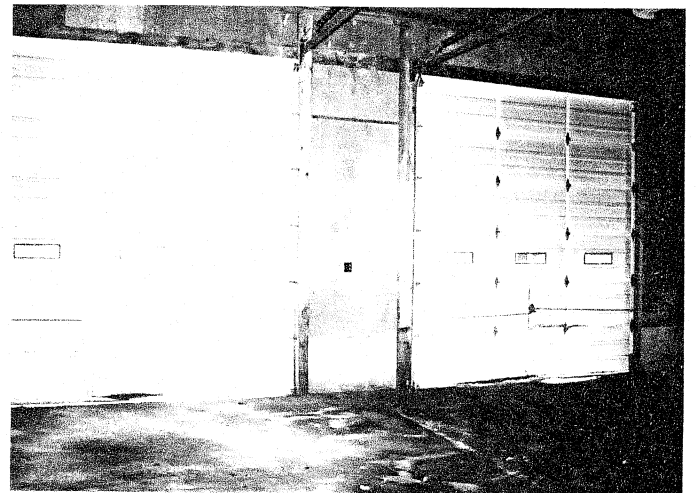
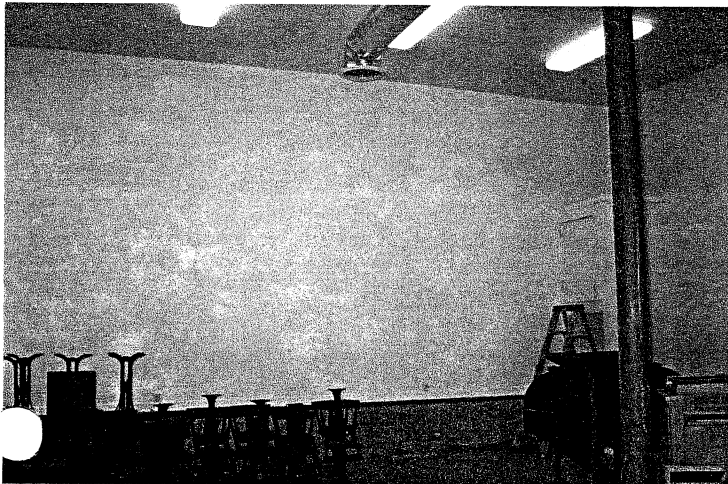
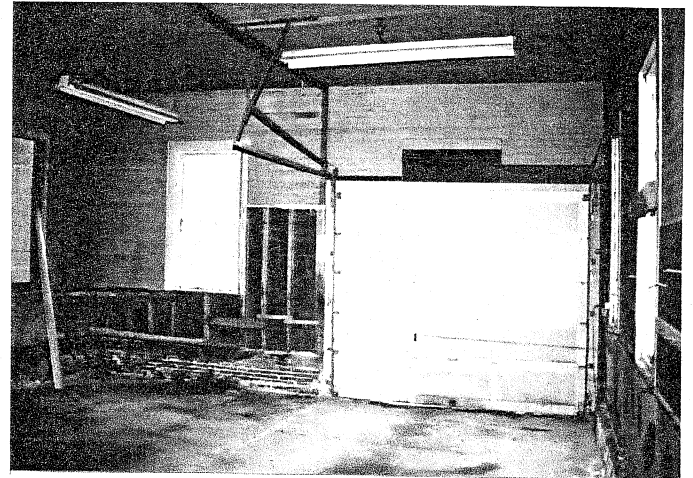
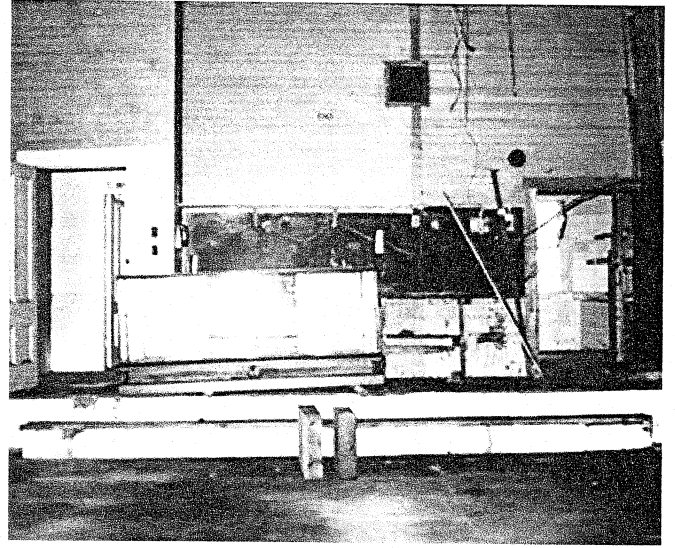
...and Now



Now ...



...and Then



TRAVELS WITH SUHAIL



The Chebeague 20, Egypt 1999



Long Stay in Jordan, 2000



Turkey, 2002



Washington, D.C., 2003

The Gift Corner

Joan B. Robinson

The Museum opening will bring new magnets, 5x7 pictures, throws in cream and hunter green and hopefully a new t-shirt.

Books for sale will include 2 books on Little Chebeague by Richard Inness, Duke Faubert's Cracker Barrel Tales, and Suzanne Jackson's updated version of The Stone Sloops of Chebeague.

There will be a new order of caddy notes along with favorites of post cards and posters.

Gail Miller Designs has new pins, pendants, money clips, and key rings in a variety of sizes and materials. They feature the Chebeague Island Historical Society logo.

Come check us out!

It is thanks to your support that the Museum of Chebeague History
has become a reality.

If you are not a member yet please take this opportunity to join. Marjorie Munroe will have a membership table at the grand opening or you may contact her at 27 Fenderson Road, Chebeague Island, ME 04017. Your annual membership goes towards operations.

Of course donations are always appreciated.

Chebeague Island Historical Society

Officers & Trustees 2002 – 2003

Richard Bowen**Marianne Brenton**Sue Burgess**Dianne Calder**Mona Calthorpe**Dot Colbeth
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