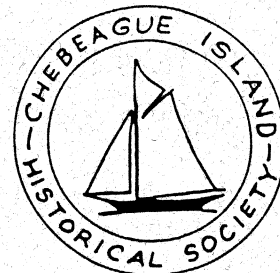


# THE SLOOP'S LOG



Newsletter of the Chebeague Island Historical Society

Vol. II, Issue 1

Spring 1999

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Jill Malony

The Chebeague 20 have returned from their fabulous trip to Egypt organized by Vail Traina and Suhail Bisharat. The Historical Society has realized \$10,000 from this fundraiser. This will help towards our goal of restoring your Museum of Chebeague History. To date the building has been made "tight to the weather" and plans are being drawn up by Architect, Nancy Barba. This is only the beginning, but the support and enthusiasm from the community and membership is gratifying.

On behalf of the entire board and officers, I would like to thank retiring board members Dot Colbeth and Vail Traina for their invaluable contributions to the Historical Society.

The slate of Officers and Directors will be voted upon at the Annual Meeting.

The Directors and I look forward to seeing you at our many wonderful events offered this year.

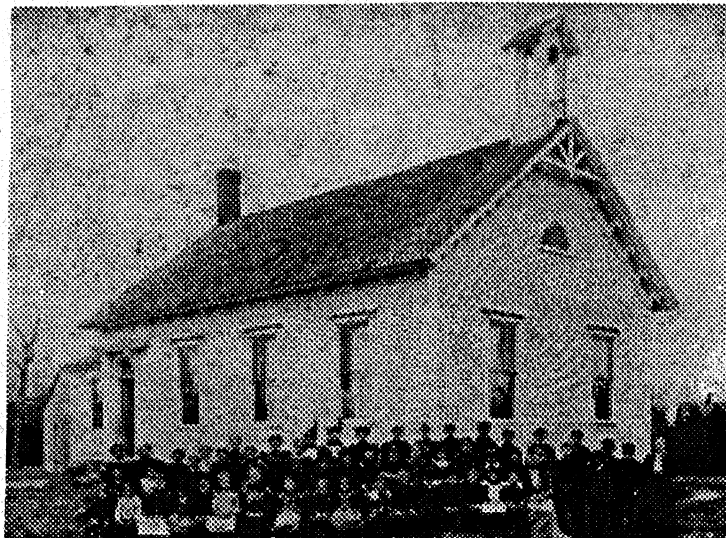
## CUPOLA MYSTERY SOLVED

by Donna Miller Damon

While researching the history of the East End School House, aka District 9, we viewed nearly a century of pictures of the schoolhouse. The Building Committee was intrigued by the turn of the century photos which showed a "faux belfry" on the roof. We liked the look and wondered when it was built and what end it ever made. Well, we still don't know if it was original to the building, but we do know what happened to it.

Frances Todd fondly told the story of the day she and her brother, Arnold [Bim] Ross went over to the school to talk to the men who were working on the school roof. The schoolhouse was refurbished in the early 1930's and transformed from a one room sub-primary through eighth grade school house to a 7-12 junior/senior high. The young Ross children inspected the job and then spied the discarded cupola. "Could they have it?", they inquired. The workmen were happy to give it away, "but what plans did these youngsters have for the decaying architectural detail?", they wondered.

Frances and Bim hurried home. They lived in the house now owned by Ernie and Sue Burgess,



*District #9 School House c. 1870*

so they didn't have far to go. In a few minutes they returned with their wagon and proceeded to load the structure on and then hauled it home. What did they do with it? A play house or a fort would be good guesses, but they would be wrong. Frances and Bim turned the school "faux belfry" into a chicken house!

The Ross children were the original recyclers. They understood the meaning of "waste not want not"! And they certainly had the most creative hen house on the island!

## BUILDING COMMITTEE

Kenneth Hamilton, Chairman

Not many visible changes have occurred at the old school building since our last edition of the Sloop's Log. The committee has met three times with Architect, Nancy Barba to arrive at a floor plan and cost estimates. Our aim is to maintain the original school building as rooms to display historical objects and to inform visitors about the Island's history. There would be on going, and changeable display areas. The annex will be used for storage and a work area. The welcoming center and public restroom will probably be in the shed-like addition where lower grade classes were once held. Your thoughts and comments are always welcome.

## THEN AND NOW

by Donna Miller Damon

Newcomers to Chebeague often comment about the richness of the island's architecture. Through the years, many beautiful old island homes have changed hands as family members left the island, while other island homes have been left to deteriorate beyond repair. Many houses, which were home to generations of islanders, are now referred to as summer cottages. The Sloop's Log is about to embark on a new endeavor. Each issue will profile a familiar Chebeague house. Then and Now will attempt to provide a glimpse of a bygone era and introduce you to the folks who created our cultural landscape. We hope you enjoy this new feature.

THEN.....

### The Benjamin and Eliza Ross Hamilton House

James Hamilton conveyed a forty-eight acre parcel of land to his son, Benjamin in 1835. The land ran from behind what is known as the Leonard barn and included Wharf Road leading to Central Landing. The parcel extended up into the woods to the Brick Church. Benjamin and Eliza had five



View from the oceanside

children all of who were born in this house. The Hamilton's built a barn nearby. It is assumed that Benjamin ran a subsistence farm, and like his father and brothers Simeon, James Jr., and John (Uncle Jack), was involved in some aspect of stone slooping.

Benjamin died in the mid 1840's leaving Eliza with five children under ten years of age. She was a strong, capable woman and was able to hold on to her family farm. In 1850, ten people lived in the small cape including Eliza, her five children, and the four members of the David Webber family. Taking in boarders helped her pay her bills. Family stories tell of her siblings leaving her food anonymously because they knew she was in great need but was too proud to ask for help.

By 1860, two of Eliza's children had married. John R. married Statira Hamilton and built a home on



50th Anniversary of Caroline & Stephen Bennett 1908

Page 2

the hill above her house. (Now across from Mike and Lee Robinson's house.) Caroline A. married Stephen Bennett and they moved in with Eliza. Eliza retained the title to her house and farm for most of her life. Eventually she conveyed the

house to Caroline, and the land on which John's house stood to him. Her youngest son, Royal, and his wife, Martha Ross Hamilton, also built their house on the family farm while Eliza still held the title to the land.

During the nineteenth century it was not unusual for Chebeaguers to build their homes on

property they did not own, so it is not surprising that they rarely conveyed rights-of-way to the shore. Freedom of movement was the norm and a man's word was respected. Eliza Hamilton and her peers would never have



dreamed that some people from away would eventually acquire some of their property and try to restrict access to the shore, but it happened all too often. Eventually the remainder of the farm was equally distributed between these three children and their brother, Henry Oren Hamilton, who with his wife Margery Jewett, bought a house near the Brick Meeting House.

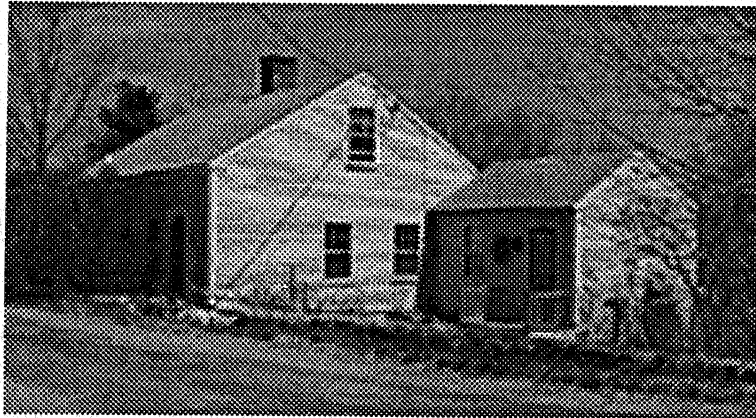
Benjamin and Eliza Hamilton's second son, Benjamin met with a tragic death on January 25, 1861. He was about 22 and a stone slooper. He

had just married Mary Horr who was about 17. She was a daughter of Joseph and Charlotte Pettengill Horr. Mary lived on Long Island, although she spent her early years on Cliff Island near her mother's family. After the ceremony took place on Long Island, the happy couple headed to Chebeague to set up housekeeping. They were traveling in a dory with Benjamin's cousin, William Hamilton, who was about 20. He was the son of Simeon and Sarah Bennett Hamilton. A sudden snow squall came up and they were swept into the breakers near the Stepping Stones off the south side of Long Island. It

is not known how long it took folks on Long, Chebeague, and Cliff to realize that they were missing, but it couldn't have been too long because their bodies were recovered. Benjamin and Mary are buried on Long Island, while William was laid to rest on Chebeague. The story is still told on both Long Island and Chebeague of how the frozen bodies of the newly weds were found hand in hand stretched across the upturned dory. Can you imagine the magnitude of this tragedy and its affect on the inhabitants of these three island communities? It is safe to say that Eliza Hamilton did not mourn alone.

..... *AND NOW* .....

Today Mark McGee lives in the house that was built by his great-great-grandparents 164 years ago. The salt water farm house was nearly one hundred years old when Mark's great-great aunt, Lillian Bennett Doughty, had the kitchen ell built in 1934. While restoring the house during the 1970's and 1980's Mark's



mother, Rebecca discovered the original cooking fireplace complete with its original cast iron cookware behind a wall.

By today's standards, it is difficult to imagine ten people living in this house during the nineteenth century, but life was simpler and people knew the difference between wants and needs. Eliza Hamilton was a woman who did what needed to be done to provide for her family. No one could ask for more.

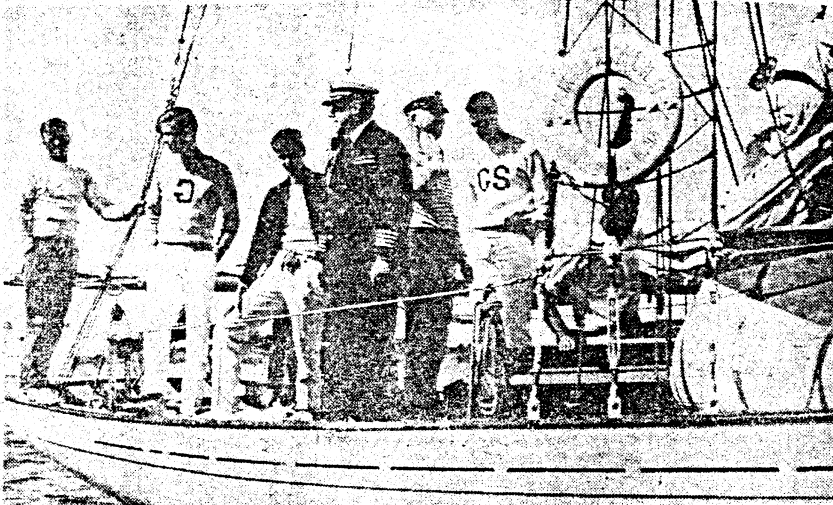
The house is owned jointly by Mark and his sister, Betsy. William Bennett's house sits across from the homestead and is also owned by Mark McGee and Betsy McGee Wemesfelder. The Royal and Martha Ross Hamilton home is now owned by Dick and Dianne Calder; Benjamin Hamilton's home is now owned by

Waneta Cleaves, who is also a descendant of Benjamin and Eliza Hamilton; Sherman Hamilton's home is now owned by the Partlows.

[Today, five members of the Chebeague Island Historical Society Governing Board are direct descendants of Benjamin and Eliza Hamilton. Kenneth Hamilton, Sylvia Ross, Joan Robinson, Marjorie Munroe, and Donna Miller Damon are pleased that this ancestral home is still in the family!]



by Kenneth Hamilton



*John and James Roosevelt and the crew of the Amberjack*

Do the names Ellis, Bernadou, Amberjack, Cayahoga mean anything to our readers? If not, let me tell you that the Amberjack was President Franklin Roosevelt's schooner, which he anchored in Chandler's Cove on July 22, 1933. The Ellis and the Bernadou were U.S. Navy destroyers acting as protectors. The Cayahoga was a Coast Guard cutter which stayed in close proximity to the schooner to keep well wishers away.

My interest in this event was sparked at seven years of age as I was rushed by my father to the banks of Chandler's Cove to see, or get a glimpse of the President of the United States. It was an exciting time for me and others who broke through the woods to gain a vantage point to view the President's yacht.

This was a really big occasion which caused newspaper reporters from Maine to Massachusetts to hire boats for transportation, and sightseers to man the boats. It brought Portland officials, from the Mayor on down, on the brand new fireboat, with all

guns spraying water, hoping to speak with the President. (By the way, the captain of the fireboat was my wife's uncle, Lt. James L. MacVane.) With all this activity the Cayahoga was kept busy protecting the President and his sons, who were also aboard.

The humor in this story is that all the Portland officials expected the schooner to anchor in Portland harbor. However, once past Portland Head the President, who had stayed at the helm, stayed his course through Luckse Sound and on past Deer Point to anchor at Chandler Cove. According to newspaper accounts, Mr. Roosevelt was delighted with his choice of anchorage and proclaimed, "the yachting waters to be the best he had ever seen." He was sorry not to be able to stay longer, but

the morning would see him off to Campobello.

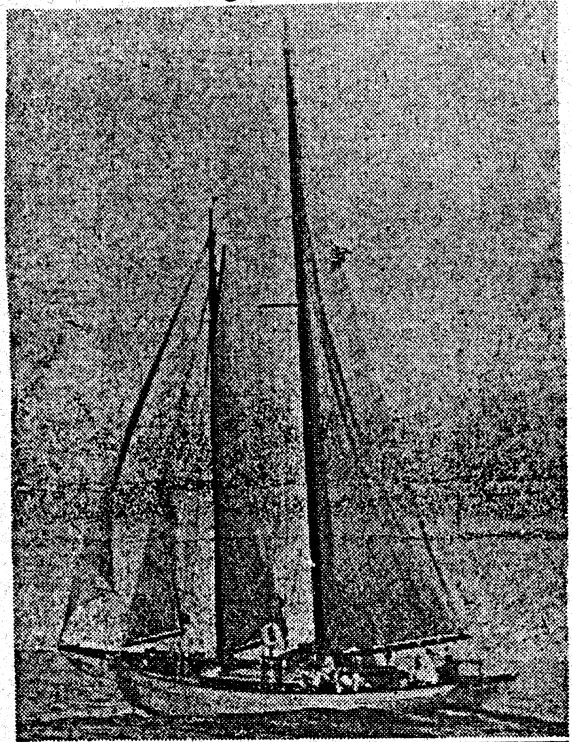
A Gloucester fisherman had also trailed the Amberjack with a 60 lb. Halibut to give to the President. Newspaper photos show John and James Roosevelt accepting the gift. Sanford Doughty recalls that a Chebeague fisherman carried the halibut to the schooner where it was hoisted aboard. Sanford also remembers that Roosevelt was struck by the sweet scent of pine and spruce wafting across Chandler Cove that night. It would appear that the beauty of Chebeague Island must have captivated another admirer that night back in 1933.

## Roosevelt Stands Off To Eastward

Skipper-President Leaves Chandler's Cove After Restful Night—Tenant's Harbor Believed Next Port Of Call

By William C. Langzettel

A FRESH SAILING BREEZE, whistling out of the northwest, sent President Roosevelt in his little schooner Amberjack II scudding out to the open sea at 10.30 a. m. today from the sheltered anchorage in Chandler's Cove, Great Chebeague, where he spent the night.



**Amberjack II**

Photo taken at Chandler's Cove

## 1999 PROGRAMS

Jane Frizzell, Chair

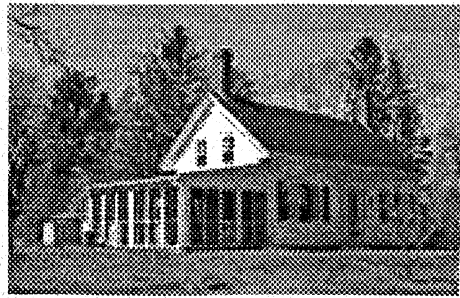
The Chebeague Island Historical Society is planning a busy summer. We hope you will take time to join us in the fun.

- **Saturday, June 19** will be the **Annual Meeting** at the CIHCC at 8 pm. The program will be a history of the Chebeague Fire Department. We hope to have lots of pictures and stories. Please bring your own.
- **Wednesday, July 14**, there will be a trip to Long Island on the Islander. Be watching for more details of this trip in the Calendar. We had a great time on our Cliff Island tour last summer and plan a repeat performance.
- **Monday, July 19** at CIHCC, 7:30 pm, Architect, Nancy Barba will report on the plans for the future renovation of the District No. 9 School.
- **Thursday, August 12th**, the **House Tour** is planned. Volunteers are needed for this event. If you are interested in helping, please get in touch with Donna Damon or myself.
- **Monday, August 16** at CIHCC, 7:30 pm, our program subject will be Joshua Chamberlain. There will be a guest speaker.
- The September program has two parts. The first will be a viewing of a film by Laurie Kahn-Leavitt about Martha Ballard, whose diary was the basis for the book entitled "A Midwife's Tale." This film will be shown on **Sunday, September 26** at 4:30 pm at the CIHCC. A bus trip to the Hallowell/Augusta area is then planned so that the participants can see the area where Martha Ballard lived and worked. Again be looking for more details about this trip in future Calendars.
- **Monday, October 18**, Joel Eastman will rejoin us on at the Parish House, 7:30pm. His lecture is called "Anchors Aweigh: the U. S. Navy in Casco Bay."
- **Monday, December 6** Our annual Christmas party, 6 pm, at the Parish House will complete our 1999 programs.

Once again, please join us and happy historizing. If the Y2K bug doesn't get our mainframe and put us out of business, we will be looking for program ideas for 2000. Please let us know your thoughts.

### 1999 HOUSE TOUR

Keep August 12th open because you won't want to miss our last house tour of the Twentieth Century! The July and August calendars will provide more details. We need hosts and hostesses and people to help with refreshments. If you can help please call Donna Damon at 846-5140.



### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

(September Membership Meeting)

Mark your calendar for Sunday, September 26, 1999, 4:30 pm at the Chebeague Island Hall for a special showing of Laurie Kahn-Leavitt's noteworthy film, "A Midwife's Tale", which tells the story of a pioneer Maine midwife, Martha Ballard who lived in the emerging Hallowell/Augusta community two hundred years ago. Tea and other refreshments will be served at this special meeting for the memberships and their guests.

This powerful, historically accurate account was based on the Pulitzer Prize winning book by Laurel Ulrich. It weaves together an account of her research, using Ballard's own diary, with the unfolding of a better understanding of the lives of Martha and her family and community. Penny Armstrong, from the University of New England, will introduce the film and discuss "Home Birth, Past and Present".

Plans are moving forward for an all day bus excursion to the Hallowell site of Ballard's life along the Kennebec River. We will be able to visit Fort Western, now a museum, and other locales. Details and sign up will be available at the September, Sunday meeting.

## 1999 MEMBERSHIP

Belvin, William & Christy  
 Bennett, Alden & Eleanor  
 Bennett, Stanley & Christine  
 Biesiegel, Vera McGuire, Barbara  
 Bingham, Peter & Connie  
 Bisharat, Suhail & Leila  
 Bowen, Richard  
 Burgess, Sue & Ernie  
 Chamberlin, Nancy  
 Cobb, Dana & Theresa  
 Colbeth, Gerald & Dot  
 Doughty, Louise & Cecil  
 Doughty, Mary  
 Freidlander, Robert  
 Frizzell, Jane  
 Hales, Charles & Mary Ann  
 Hamilton, Kenneth & Jeannette  
 Haskell, Enid & Lyman  
 Hayden, Barbara  
 Hill, David & Nancy  
 Hilly, Charles & Mary Lee

Hodge, Paul & Avis  
 Hogan, Robert & Leonard, Ann  
 Isenberg, Michael &  
 Brenton, Anne E.  
 Johnson, Eleanor  
 Johnson, Phil & Betty  
 Johnson, Stephen, Beverly,  
 Vika, Denis & Dasha  
 Johnston, Katherine & Jerry  
 Jones, Woodman & Connie  
 Leonard, Elizabeth  
 Leonard, Henrietta  
 Malony, Jill & Allen  
 Mansfield, Frank & Barbara  
 Marsh, Albert & Carolyn  
 Matrazzo, Milo & Linda  
 McCuskey, William & Roberta  
 Middleton, Dugan  
 Morse, Judith B.  
 Munroe, Marjorie & Bill  
 Putnam, Gertrude

Rice, Marjorie  
 Robinson, Joan  
 Ross, Sylvia  
 Rothchild, Thomas  
 Sharp, Nancy & Will  
 Shute, Elizabeth  
 Smith, Linden & Allison  
 Sullivan, Susan  
 Szewczyk, Susan  
 Traina, Vail & Al  
 Van Ardsdale, Elizabeth G.  
 Vaughan, Margaret  
 Webb, Patience & Alexander  
 White, Edward & Bernice  
 Whitman, Robert & Elizabeth

### Honorary Life Members:

Shirley Burgess  
 Donna Damon  
 Charlotte Hatfield

The membership list is reflective of dues paid since the November, 1998 issue of The Sloop's Log. Please note the dues envelope included in this edition, for your convenience. This is the first time, since the founding of the Historical Society, that the dues have been raised.

## Help preserve our Island Heritage by becoming a member!

Individual	\$10.00
Family	\$20.00
Contributor	\$25.00
Supporter	\$50.00
Life (per person)	\$200.00
Students	free
Senior	\$5.00

Donations to a fund are greatly appreciated:

Building Fund  
 Margaret Bates Book Fund  
 Arts & Craft Fund  
 Cobb/Small Memorial Fund

By Erno Bonebakker

We boarded brand new Lufthansa Airbus for the overnight flight to Frankfurt where we landed in the grey, foggy dawn to change planes. The polyglot, colorful and diverse crowd at the airport gave us a slight introduction to what was coming. When we boarded our plane to Cairo, continuing to Khartoum, and the safety lecture was given in German and Arabic with English subtitles, we began to realize we really were entering a different world.

Egypt first presented itself as a green swath on the shores of the Nile and cutting through the most barren desert imaginable: sand and rock with not a shred of vegetation. The airport terminal was a swirling mass of humanity. Many languages, every style of dress from Italian designer clothes to the headdresses and long robe of the Egyptian Fellahin. We then emerged into Egypt: hot, dry, sandy. Soon we were greeted by Suhail and our guide, Amr El-helli, who got us loaded onto our bus and launched us into the Cairo afternoon rush hour. Masses of people, swirling rivers of traffic, from Mercedes to primitive donkey carts, all flowing with seemingly complete disregard for traffic lights, regulations or logic. Some how it all works.

We were an hour later at the Mena House Hotel, exhausted, disoriented but close to a quiet room and a bed. The next morning we look out our window and



front row: Bob Putnam, Bradley Putnam, Nora Bisharat, Elizabeth Hill, Beth Howe, Amr El-helli; back row: Al Traina, Vail Traina, Cynthia Sheketoff, Mac Passano, Althea Bennett, Vickie Bonebakker, Dianne Ash, Erno Bonebakker, Marianne Durgin, Frank Durgin, Joan Robinson, David Hinchman, Hobeys Hinchman, Phillip Jordan, Sheila Jordan

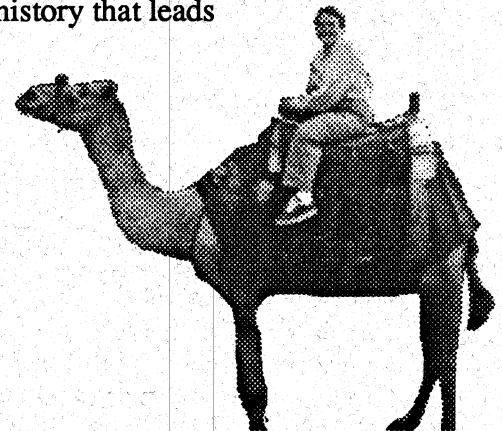
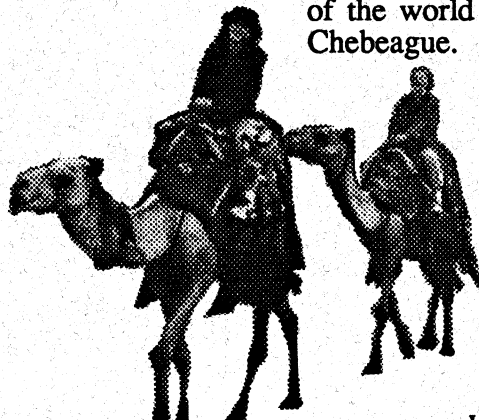
the great Pyramid is looming up above the trees just across the street! We really are in Egypt. What followed cannot be summarized: tombs, temples, pyramids, sphinx, camels, feluccas, amazing sculpture and art, the Aswan Dam, Lake Nasser, the desert at night,

beautiful museums, hotels and cruise ships on the lake and the Nile. Modern and timeless life side by side, wealth and poverty side by side, Ancient Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Jewish, Christian, Moslem religion and culture all woven together in a fascinating whole. The experiences ranged from trudging across the desert sands, to the glittering party at the Bisharat's, where we met ambassadors and archeologists who shared their knowledge and fascination of Egypt.

Sixteen days passed in a blink of an eye, and we were back on Lufthansa, headed home. The passengers from Khartoum were the same, but somehow they were familiar now. We missed the sights and sounds of Egypt, the charm and warmth of the Egyptian people, and the truly awesome sweep of culture and history that is Egypt. We came away with a larger sense of the background of our culture and the sweep of history that leads to and touches our little corner of the world on Chebeague.



Suhail and Leila Bisharat



Camel riders: Elizabeth Hill, Vail Traina, and Joan Robinson.

## HERMAN'S POND

by Sylvia Ross

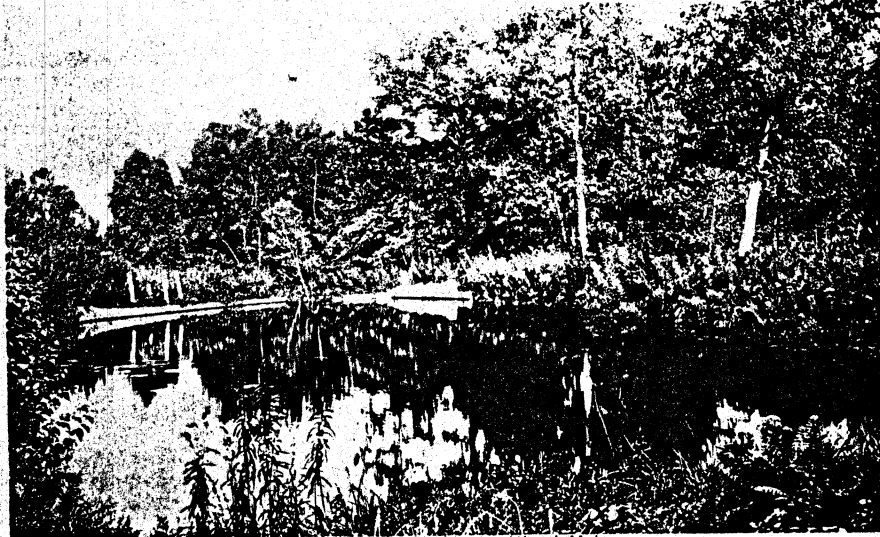
Just to the right of the crossroad leading past Ken Hamilton's and Beth William's homes, one may notice the little pond, currently surrounded by a steel fence, located about twenty feet from the road.

Ken Hamilton, grandson of Herman Hamilton, sold the pond a few years ago to the Chebeague Island Fire Department. It

is now a reliable source of water supply for the fire trucks and pumps when an emergency strikes

But this pond has historical interest as well. In the summertime, during the early years of the century, when electricity was practically non-existent, people relied heavily on ice for the preservation of the food they kept in their ice box (refrigerator). This in turn prompted much activity through the winter months at Herman's Pond.

Herman owned and operated a grocery store just the other side of Edmund and Julie Doughty's house. Behind the store was the ice house where he stored huge blocks of ice (a wild guess is that the ice blocks measured about 20" by 24"), buried deeply in sawdust for several months until summer



Pond Herman, Chebeague Island, Maine

when the ice would be delivered and securely fitted under the cover of the customer's ice box.

One can only imagine the grating sounds of the lengthy, jagged-toothed ice saws, the clinking chains, and the hammering of ice picks as Herman's crew proceeded to extract the frozen squares from the pond. Then add

to that the scene of the horses dragging the ice by sled to its destination - the ice house.

After the ice box days, the kids skated on the pond. Now and then a bonfire would be lit. Today, Sanford's Pond would seem like Rockefeller Plaza to those children!

Come spring the frogs, tadpoles, and turtle would entice curious children, causing much anxiety for nervous parents until a fence was built around the pond.

One summer, Marshall Bowen kept white ducks in the pond. That was a sight to behold. Nowadays, that wouldn't be possible with all the raccoons around.

### Chebeague Island Historical Society Trustees and Officers 1998-1999

\*Suhail Bisharat \* Richard Bowen \* Sue Burgess \* Nancy Chamberlin \* Dot Colbeth \* Donna Damon \*  
Louise Doughty \* Jane Frizzell \* Ken Hamilton \* Jill Malony \* Dugan Middleton \* Marjorie Munroe \*  
Mac Passano \* Joan Robinson \* Sylvia Ross \* Nancy Sharp \* Vail Traina \* Maggie Vaughan \*

### 1999 - 2000 SLATE OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

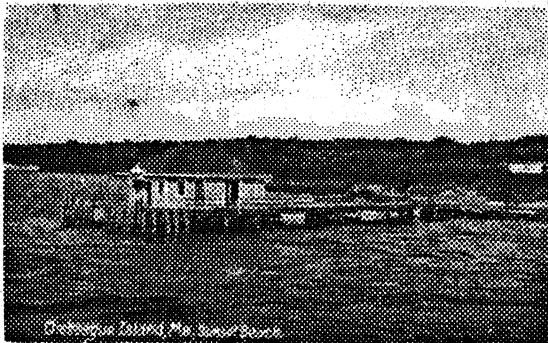
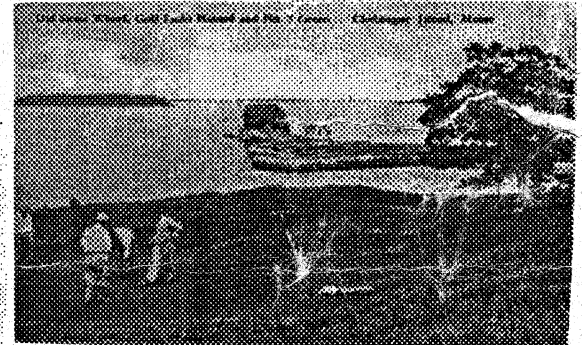
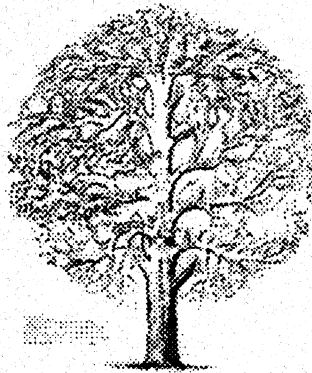
*Jill Malony - President	*Nancy Sharp - Recording Secretary	*Jim Millinger - Director
*Mac Passano - Vice President	*Nancy Chamberlin - Corresponding Secretary	*Jennifer Hamilton - Director
*Ken Hamilton - Treasurer		



## MAGNETS AND HISTORIC PHOTOS FOR SALE

The Historical Society is pleased to offer a new collection of historic scenes of Chebeague which have been made into magnets and matted prints. The magnets are \$3 each and the matted prints are \$10.

Special orders will be accepted through Memorial Day Weekend. If you have a photo that you would like made into a magnet/ matted print or would like to remember a special place call Donna Damon at 846-5140 for more information.



## ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

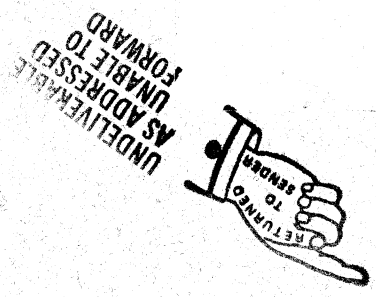
The Historical Society will again publish the Annual Newsletter, formerly published by the Island Council. As last year, it will be edited by the team of Dave Hill, Bev Johnson and Mac Passano. All the organizations of the Island have been asked to prepare summary reports of what has happened during the past year. There will be lots of photographs included as well. This attractive and useful record of Chebeague Island life will be available for only \$6.00 postpaid, on or after the July 4th parade and picnic. Pay for it now with your annual dues and you can pick up your copy "hot off the press" at our sales table at the picnic, or have it sent to any address in the U.S.

Newsletter Staff - Beverly Johnson and Jill Malony

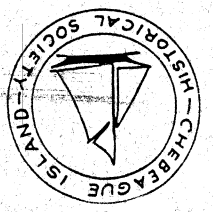
Any correspondence should be sent to:  
Chebeague Island Historical Society, PO Box 28, Chebeague Island, Maine 04017

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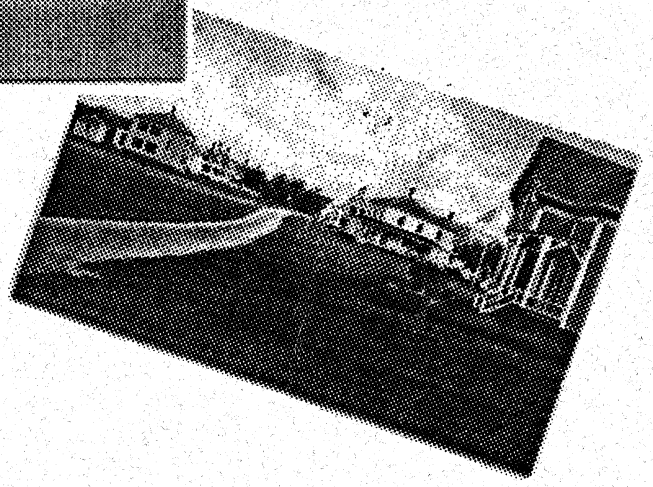
Mr. Roger Bruley  
Box 737  
Middale, CT 06467



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Chebeague Island, ME 04017



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**THE MUSEUM SHOP**  
LOOK FOR OUR TABLE AT ISLAND EVENTS  
AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS