

THE SLOOP'S LOG



Newsletter of the Chebeague Island Historical Society

Vol. I, Issue 1

Fall, 1998

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Jill Malony

The District #9 School House was built in 1872. Over the years it housed every lower grade. At the end of its "school house days" it was known as The Chebeague Island High School. In October, 1953 all grades were consolidated into the "red school house". Next it became the Town Garage. The floor and windows were removed and an overhead garage door was added. When quarters became tight an annex was built. In December of 1997, the Town turned the building over to the Chebeague Island Historical Society. With your support of our programs over the years, and donations earmarked for restoration, one can see exciting changes taking place.

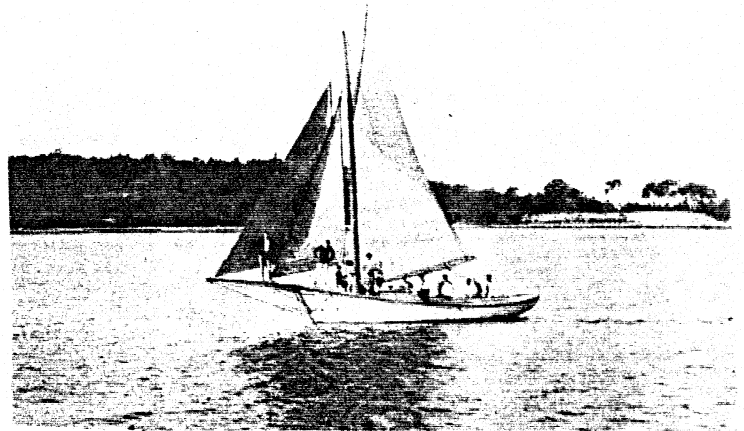
The MUSEUM OF CHEBEAGUE HISTORY is becoming a reality thanks to those who recognize the importance of preserving our unique island heritage. The building will not only be used to store island artifacts, but will offer displays and programs and also a public restroom. The Historical Society is grateful for the \$40,000 in grants which have allowed us to start this transformation.

As we approach the holidays, I hope you will consider the Historical Society as you plan your year-end giving.

THE STORY BEHIND THE NAME

by Donna Miller Damon

The Sloop's Log is more than just a catchy title for the Chebeague Island Historical Society's newsletter. The society's logo, designed by Pommy Hatfield, depicts a stone sloop, also known as a rock sloop. These vessels were owned, captained, and crewed by Chebeaguers. During the Nineteenth Century, the majority of islanders were directly involved in this business in one way or another. Stone Sloopers were marine contractors who built



wharves, breakwaters, lighthouses, as well as carrying granite from quarries Downeast to railheads up and down the East Coast. Some of the smaller sloops blasted away at the rock on Chebeague and neighboring islands gathering grout (a filler stone) and ballast rocks. Not only did they reap a profit, but also they created the shoreline as we see it today! In the days before steamboat service, stone sloops were also used for the ladies' annual shopping excursions to Portland, as well as to freight an island farmer's goods to market.

Other types of sloops also played a part in Chebeague's history. Sloops such as the Friendship Sloop were used by fishermen to haul lobster traps and to fish for cod and haddock. After the arrival of the rusticators, sloops were used to take out sailing parties. Even today, we see sloop rigged boats racing off Chebeague on Saturday afternoons.

The log of a vessel recorded its story. From wind speed to weather conditions, from triumphs to tragedy, its all there in the log to read. The fate of the vast majority of Chebeague logs is unknown, however several account books, which describe the financial aspects of a stone sloop's operation and diaries which describe every day life have survived. The Historical Society hopes that a log lies safely put away in an island attic just waiting to be discovered and read again! Until that time we hope that you enjoy reading about the happenings of the Chebeague Island Historical Society in The Sloop's Log.



Casco Bay Me., Cleaves Cove, Chebeague Island.

THE WAY IT ALL BEGAN

by Donna Miller Damon

The Chebeague Island Historical Society was founded on April 6, 1984. After years of hearing folks say "we ought to", I decided we should! More and more of our history was found on the dump as island homes were converted to summer cottages. Occasionally documents and old pictures were saved because Martha Hamilton made it known that she would gladly house these items at the Library until a historical society was formed. If it had not been for Martha much of the island's past would have been lost forever. Other people were watching the dump and shifting through the refuse that came from island homes. Alice Bowman and many others found important record books and photographs that they have since donated to the Chebeague Island Historical Society. Many others are holding items for us. Mabel Bennett Hill found many examples of Chebeague's material culture on the dump, which are now residing with Joan Robinson, waiting for a home down the road. But sadly, much has been lost forever.

The founding of the Chebeague Island Historical Society was a community effort from the very beginning. Following an island tradition that folks from away sometimes find difficult to fathom, island organizations were approached for support and they eagerly responded. For example, the CIHCC, the Chebeague Island Council and SAD 51 were essential players. The CIHCC and the SAD gave us a place to

meet and the Council gave us our first donation to pay for incorporation.

The April 6 meeting was advertised in the Calendar and word spread quickly. A core group met that day, while several other people expressed interest in the new organization, but could not attend the first meeting. We have a list of everyone who played a role in the organization's founding. When summer came, the summer people joined the cause. By 1984, some summer families had been on Chebeague for more than 100 years. It didn't take the organizers long to realize that the Chebeague history provided a common ground for all who loved the island. Anyone who attended meetings before we were incorporated were considered founders, while members who joined the Society before the close of 1984 were considered charter members by paying \$5. While that first spring and early summer were spent creating by-laws and becoming incorporated, by the fall, the Society was presenting programs and planning for the future.

From the very beginning, the District Schoolhouse aka the old town garage was in our sights. As the Chebeague Island Historical Society is about to begin its 15th year as an organization, our sign on the District 9 School is a visible reminder of the importance this community places in preserving the past while planning for the future.

REPORT OF THE BUILDING COMMITTEE

by Ken Hamilton

Some good things have been happening this summer at the site of the old East End or District 9 School. We were aware that once we obtained ownership of the building some immediate repair was going to be necessary. Therefore, in July the Governing Board entered into an agreement with Mike Darling and Bob Parker, Building Contractors, to make repairs that would make the school tight to the weather.

The most obvious repair was to the roof. An architectural grade asphalt shingle over a plywood base was chosen for this job. In conjunction with this work we changed the overhang of the eaves on the annex to be more compatible to the existing architecture of the original structure.

Over the years gravel had accumulated around the building and had clogged all drainage. New drain pipe and the drain ditches were cleaned.

The foundation of the building was found to be firm and sound except for the southwest side where the old toilet clean outs were located. We took this wall out and built a new cement block and brick foundation. Other brick work included pointing up and cleaning the existing chimney.

Another major concern was the condition of the clapboard siding in certain locations. Many were either

cracked or rotten. We put new cedar clapboards in these areas and removed an old door in disrepair so that we could put new siding on the entire northeast side of the annex.

The front steps were rebuilt to replicate the original. As of this report, the front door is being repaired and new hardware added. The windows were all removed and reglazed, the sashes primed and painted.

The drainage field for the septic system is in and the grounds have been graded for better water runoff.

On behalf of all the members of the Building Committee, I want to acknowledge the contributions to this project by Bob Parker, Mike Darling, Wayne Dyer and crew. I believe our limited funds have been spent in a wise and prudent manner. I think we were very lucky to get the expertise of Darling and Parker with their crews because they have shown a very strong interest in the history of the building and what we are trying to accomplish.

You will be hearing more in the future about our goals and objectives for the building. We will report with more accuracy after our first scheduled meeting with our architect next month.



(Chairs found in the attic of the District #9 Schoolhouse)

COLLECTION COMMITTEE

by Sylvia Ross

Over the last few years, the Collections Committee has acquired, assessed and catalogued many interesting, some momentous, donated objects and archival material all relating to Chebeague. They range from George Higgins and Ed Jenks old, rustic farming equipment to very old newspaper clippings and documents from early settlers of our island.

Presently contained in a very small room in the Library, called the Archives Room, there are volumes of Chebeague's Newsletters, Town Reports, organizational records and various mementos and memorabilia from the past. The room is properly temperature controlled with filing sleeves and containers all acid-free, a must for long term storage.

The Collection Committee determines which items shall be accepted and preserved by the Chebeague Island Historical Society.

Numerous antiques and artifacts, which already have been donated and assessed are temporarily being stored elsewhere on the island. People's willingness to shelter these valuable pieces of Chebeague history is very much appreciated. We are hoping to be able to store them in our new museum.

Nancy Sharp, Dot Colbeth and Committee are to be commended for successfully organizing and cataloging a mass accumulation of unsorted material that was brought into the Archives Room by various organizations and other sources during the past few years.

Sylvia Ross was recently elected as chairman of the Collections Committee. On her committee are Alice Bowman, Joan Robinson, Mabel Doughty and Marjorie Munroe. The Committee would enjoy hearing from anyone who would like to donate a bit of Chebeague's past to the future MUSEUM OF CHEBEAGUE HISTORY.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

by Jane Frizzell

The winter membership meetings of the Chebeague Island Historical Society will be held on Monday, January 18 and Monday, February 15. These meetings will be held at the CRC and will be work sessions to take a look at the Stone Sloop books. The March meeting will be held at the CRC Teen Center. The program will be a video of island history.

Future programs in the planning stage include a history of the Chebeague Volunteer Fire Department, a Long Island cruise, the House Tour, a talk about Joshua Chamberlain, a report on the Egypt trip, a report from the architect on the plans for the restoration of the District #9 Schoolhouse and a look at the geology of Chebeague. Watch for details of these upcoming events in the SLOOP'S LOG and the Calendar. If you would like to help with any program or have suggestions for future programs please call me or any member of the Historical Society Board.

NAPOLEON AND THE CHEBEAGUE 20 INVADE EGYPT

by Vail Traina

At the July membership meeting, board member Suhail Bisharat, who is currently serving as Advisor for the Preservation of 19th and 20th Century Cairo for the Fulbright Commission, presented a program entitled NAPOLEON INVADES EGYPT. He discussed the history of Egypt and its antiquities and the fact that over the years Egypt has allowed many of its treasures to be sent to England and France. The preserving and retaining of ones' artifacts was stressed. Preservation and retention of our history is exactly what the Chebeague Island Historical Society has set as its' mission.

This wonderful presentation brought about the idea of a trip to Egypt as a fund-raiser for the Society. Suhail graciously agreed to act as a host for the tour. "Invasion" plans were made! In February, 1999 twenty people from Chebeague will head for Egypt. During their sixteen day stay, they will visit Cairo, Luxor, Aswan, Abu Simbel and points in between. Included in the tour will be two cruises on the Nile. What a great way to raise money and have fun at the same time!

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(If your name is not listed and should be please contact us)

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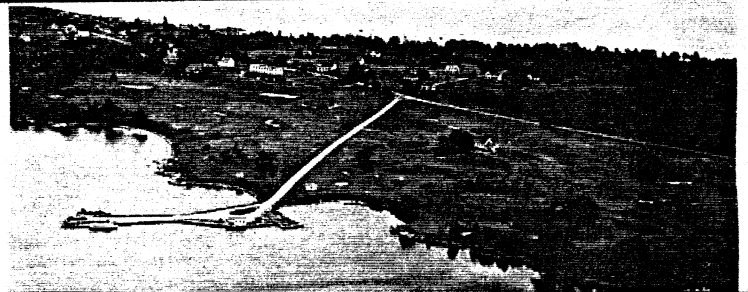
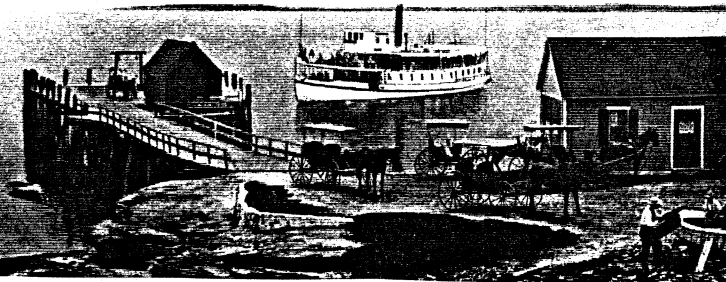
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