

THE SLOOP'S LOG



Newsletter of the Chebeague Island Historical Society
Volume X, Issue 2

November, 2006

Message from the President

by Richard Bowen

Before the advent of historical societies, small town history was by word of mouth or stored in the attic as letters, photos, or diaries. The family elders passed down to the younger generation the local stories of family and friends. Bedtime tales of old family happenings were told instead of watching TV or using the computer. For example, we might have heard the tale (the old folks would have called this a "yarn", The Editor) of Uncle Enoch. It seems that Enoch, while cleaning out a well at the East End, fell in said well. After two days someone thought to look for him. He was found a little banged up, wet, and hungry- but not thirsty now, this tale would not be recorded unless you had a family that was forthcoming. But with the help of forthcoming neighbors and the advent of our Chebeague Island Historical Museum, Uncle Enoch's tale of woe will be saved and made available for generations to come.

The founders of the CIHS, bless their hearts, wanted to be sure that such stories would be preserved. You see Uncle Enoch was related to many Chebeaguers through his "TeeHee" connections.

Let us not forget the history of our Summer Natives as well. Antoine Dorticos comes to mind. The Dorticos family was the first to build a "cottage" on Chebeague. Mr. Dorticos was a well known architect in southern Maine, and he designed his own Chebeague residence. Antoine's descendent, Bill Mead, still owns the property which is located on the big bend in the Cottage Road.

Historical trivia combines with more conventional historical record to make the holding of our Museum. Donna Damon, our curator, Carly Knight, our Island Fellow, and Sarah Brown, our Summer Intern have been cataloging a myriad of historical data and storing it in our museum software. You might be surprised at some of the happening which are recorded there. I'm told you might find the story of the last car to go off the Stone Pier due to brake failure if you are willing to dig hard.

Please stop by the Museum, and please help us add to the record of your family history.

Thank You 2005 Appeal Donors

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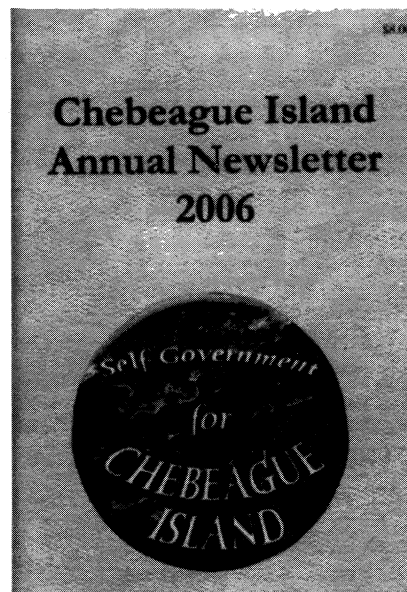
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We are busier than usual these days; the island is awash with the preparations for us to assume self government next July. As determined by the state legislature, we have elected nine representatives and they have set about to settle all the details of the new Town of Chebeague. Fire and police, roads, the stone wharf, the harbormaster, the transfer station, the school, the appraiser, town meetings, zoning...the list is almost endless.

It is too soon to tell you all about that now. The events that led us to independence are already history, and can be told. In fact, they have been told. The "cover story" of this year's Chebeague Island Annual Newsletter is called "The Birth of a Town" and is a complete, widely acclaimed 44 page account by Beth Howe of the entire 14 month process from a public meeting at the Hall, to Augusta where Governor Baldacci signed the act into law.

The Chebeague Island Historical Society is proud to publish the Annual Newsletter as a permanent record of activities on Chebeague. Copies of this 120 page bound publication are only \$8.00 (or \$10 mailed to any address). Please send your order and check to:

Mac Passano, co-editor
Annual Newsletter
168 South Road
Chebeague Island, ME 04017



The Mayflower Club

by Sylvia Ross

In the 30's and 40's the Mayflower Club was organized by a rather large group of Chebeague women... probably wishing for a change of pace from events of the time. Remnants of a recent Depression and a war threatening over the horizon gave them plenty cause for worry. It does seem that at one time or another almost every woman on Chebeague belonged to the Mayflower Club.

The Mayflower Club was formed strictly for camaraderie, entertainment and just plain fun meeting at each others house at least twice a month.

It is unfortunate that we do not have a complete list of the Mayflower Club members. In previous years there had been the Cheerio Club preceded by the Kilttime Club. Both had consisted of practically the same members. Yet at different intervals....different times. Some had belonged to all three clubs. In other words, attendance varied from year to year.

When the time came for my mother to entertain the Mayflower Club, I have vague memories of polishing furniture and silverware, at the ripe old age of ten. I was rewarded with the skimpy remains of the whipped cream clinging to the bottom of the bowl and egg-beater! But Good! Glorified rice always requires ample amounts of pineapple and whipped cream. It was a favorite and most frequent dessert.

The Mayflower Club enjoyed trips through the mountains, to the movies, out to dinner, and on picnics. A special meeting place or 'haunt' was Ethyl Miller's camp down on the shore near Fenderson's Wharf.

For those who remember the wonderful benefit plays the Mayflower Club put on at the Hall, how could one forget the hilarious antics of Gladys Bennett and Ivy Walker, in costume, pushing a baby carriage down the aisle with, guess who, Waldo Crafts literally stuffed...almost permanently ...into the carriage with bottle, bonnet and blankets. Unsurprisingly a roar of laughter followed.



Gladys Bennett - front Ivy Walker - in back (on Hall stage)

Leah Webber played the preacher in a mock wedding as she married Alice Hill, the "Groom", and Elizabeth Curit Rush, the "Bride", along with Pearl Rines as "Bridesmaid".

Evelyn Seabury was Best Man, Eloise Hamilton Munroe was the Ring-bearer and Gert Brewer as Father of the Bride. A fabulous group!



As they Started on their "Trip"!

l. to r. Pearl Ross - Leah Webber - Eloise Munroe - Elizabeth Rush
Alice Hill - Gertrude Brewer - Evelyn Seabury



And so they Were Married

l. to r. Gertrude Brewer - Evelyn Seabury - Eloise Munroe (child)
Alice Hill - Elizabeth Rush - Pearl Ross - Leah Webber

Members of the Mayflower Club included Arlene Barjam, Mildred Beeler, Gladys Bennett, Madeline Bennett, Madeline Brewer, Alice Cleaves Frizzell (Blackwell), Geneva Bowen, Gertrude Brewer, Winnie Calder, Waneta Cleaves, Dot (Bennett) Doughty, Virginia Hagen, Delia Hamilton, Ellen Hamilton, Babel (Ray) Hamilton, Martha (Floyd) Hamilton, Martha (Warren) Hamilton, Alice Hill, Ethyl Hill, Mabel Hill, Leilia Horr, Gladys Hutchinson, Mildred Johnson, Anne (Mrs) KomLosy, Betsy Leonard, Dot Mansfield, Ethel Miller, Melba Miller, Eloise Munroe, Mertie Parr, MinaPerry, Pearl Ross, Stella Ross, Elizabeth (Curit) Rush, Evelyn Seabury, Bertha Seabury, Lida Small, Ida Stilphen, Ruth (Elliot) Thompson, Ivy Walker, Sarah Webber, Bernice (McClellan) White.

Thanks to Betsy Ross, Marjorie Munroe, and Priscilla Ross for furnishing me with important information and Photos .Please forgive me if I have left a name, even though I tried not to, off this list.

250 Years of Hamiltons

by Jane Frizzell, Exhibit Chair

This year marked the 250th anniversary of Ambrose Hamilton's purchasing of land on Chebeague Island. The island was a very different place in 1756. The French and Indian War was raging, and the Revolutionary War was still some 20 years in the future. Travel along the coast was most easily done by water. We don't know why Ambrose chose to settle on Chebeague. Perhaps it was safer on the island, and perhaps farmland was available.

Ambrose and his wife, Deborah Soule, not only moved to Chebeague but also left behind them many children and grandchildren whose descendants still live on the island, or are away thinking of that ancestral place in Casco Bay.

Because of this anniversary, two big events were held at the museum this summer. The first of these was the Hamilton Exhibit. The focus of this exhibit was the entrepreneurial spirit of the Hamiltons over all those years. This large family was able to sustain itself by getting involved in a certain profession and changing that profession when it became necessary. The exhibit featured the Hamiltons working as stone sloopers, as storekeepers, as owners of boarding houses and hotels, and as postmasters and postmistress. Many pictures of the family, both past and present were included. The show was very well received by Chebeaguers and visitors, including our celebrity guest, Walter Cronkite.

Our second Hamilton event was a Reunion. We made a big effort to spread the word of this gathering and had many enthusiastic descendants from nearby and not so nearby in attendance. The attendees toured the Museum, gathered at the early Hamilton cemetery lots for a talk by Donna Damon, and obtained genealogical information from Marianne Durgin or Gloria Brown at the Chebeague Island Hall and Community Center. It was a real treat to hear and answer questions both at the Hall and the Museum.

Deborah Hamilton, Ambrose's wife and their children are buried on Chebeague. We do not exactly where Ambrose is buried, but we do know the location of the land he purchased in Duck Trap, Maine. This is where he died, perhaps of typhoid fever at age c.60 If you get a chance to drive through Bayside in the present Northport, Maine, you will be traveling across Ambrose's 200 acre wood lot. Give him a thought as you look out over Penobscot Bay and picture what it must have been like not long after the Revolutionary War.

We offer many thanks to all who helped in the Hamilton Exhibit and the Hamilton Reunion. It truly would have not been done without you. The Exhibit is still up at the Museum. It's not too late to revisit or to check it out for the first time.



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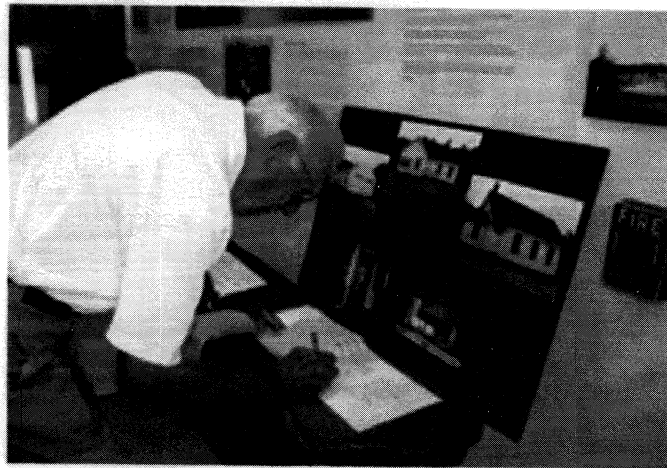
Henry Orren Hamilton 1841- 1918
stone sloop, mason, fisherman, clam digger

Elizabeth Curit Rush Collection
Chebeague Island Historical Society



A note from Carly

In August, Mary & John Holt and Cynn timer Sheketoff welcomed special guest Walter Cronkite to Chebeague and included the Museum of Chebeague History as part of his visit. Donna Damon gave Mr. Cronkite a tour of the *Creating Community* exhibit and he was quite impressed with our facility and the people of Chebeague Island. Several islanders had the opportunity to meet the legendary anchorman while he was docked at the stone pier before continuing his journey sailing the Maine coast on *Wyntje* with J Holt and Jenny Goff, his captain and 1st mate. As a tribute to Mr. Cronkite's 90th birthday on November 4th, Jerry Wiles gave an entertaining presentation on his life, complete with a birthday salute from those attending. The event was taped and will be sent to Mr. Cronkite with best wishes from Chebeague.



Walter Cronkite signing the Museum guestbook
Photo by Jenny Goff



CIHS Receives Grant to Preserve *Casco Bay Breeze*

Any serious Casco Bay historian has studied the newspaper, the *Casco Bay Breeze*, to better understand what life was like in and around Casco Bay during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Published by Crowley and Lunt, the *Breeze*, was issued weekly during the summer and monthly during the winter from about 1901-1917.

The paper chronicles the golden age of Casco Bay's summer resorts and highlights the local residents who developed the resorts, as well as the many of the early summer residents who visited the islands and coastal communities of Casco Bay. The *Casco Bay Breeze* records everyday life in the communities as they face the pressures associated with unplanned growth. Houses were converted into hotels; wharves were built; stores opened; cottages replaced crops on local farms; and summer residents and island entrepreneurs initiated various "improvements". Local news columns describe the activities of the year round residents as they went about the business of daily living. Stories about schools, churches, fraternal organizations, local politics, fishing and more, provide information that is unavailable elsewhere.

For many years Casco Bay researchers have had to travel to the Maine Historical Society to read deteriorating copies of some issues of the *Casco Bay Breeze* or drive to the Fogler Library at the University of Maine to view other issues on microfilm, but thanks to a grant from MBNA Foundation to the Chebeague Island Historical Society, that is about to change. The idea for the project of microfilming the MHS collection was inspired by a collaborative effort between CIHS and the Fogler Library, which resulted in Chebeague obtaining a copy of UMO's *Casco Bay Breeze* microfilm. The CIHS used the information gleaned from the *Breeze* to enhance its current exhibit, *Creating Community*. CIHS then contacted Maine Historical Society to discuss the possibility of microfilming the MHS collection of the *Casco Bay Breeze*, which includes many issues that are not in the Fogler collection. Nicolas Noyes of MHS was enthusiastic about the Chebeague proposal and researched the costs of the project. Thanks to a \$1500 grant from the MBNA Foundation, in-kind contributions by MHS, and a contribution from CIHS, the MHS copies of the *Casco Bay Breeze* will be microfilmed. The grant provides for copies of the microfilm to be given to the Fogler Library, the Portland Public Library, the MHS and the historical societies on Long, Chebeague, Peaks and Cliff Islands. A limited number of microfilmed copies will be available for sale to other interested institutions for about \$50 for a two-reel set.

Donna Damon is currently researching and indexing the Fogler collection and plans to index the MHS collection after the microfilm project has been completed. Researchers and institutions interested in acquiring copies of the *Casco Bay Breeze* microfilm should contact the Chebeague Island Historical Society at 846-5237.

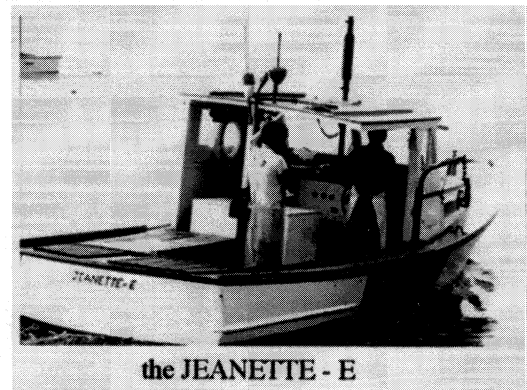


"Lobsterin"

by Kenneth Hamilton

I recently reread a copy of Emil Faubert's, *The Cracker-barrel Tales* in which he states that he hopes "that these stories and conversations will give lovers of the Maine coast, and especially its island people, a greater understanding and appreciation of the way of life then and now." He also encourages other island folk to share their tales. *The Sloop's Log* will hopefully give an opportunity for that to happen.

Faubert quotes Albion Miller as saying that he and his father always fished every day, hauling the same 150 traps. After a week of this they took a day off and went to town to sell. Albion had a small boat with a one cylinder engine but his father in his time either rowed or sailed. This was a time when lobsters were plentiful and cheap." Ten traps could fill a dory half full day after day." Sounds great but there was a catch. Lobsters sold in the early 1900s for 1/4 to 1 cent a pound. They caught huge lobsters and tiny ones and they all were sold for the same price. *The Cracker Barrel Tales* describes winter fishing as Albion remembered it. He tells of going off shore in a 21 foot boat with the old Hartford one cylinder engine. They went off around Half Way Rock to fish and were able to get 125 to 130 lobsters from 10 traps. Lobsters weighed 1 1/2 to 2 pounds each. This was a hard and treacherous occupation. As Albion says, they came home lots of nights with their feet frozen in their boots. I encourage everyone to read more about this time in the islands history. *The Cracker Barrel Tales* are still available at the Chebeague Historical Museum.



the JEANETTE - E

I started "lobsterin" after being discharged from the Navy in 1946. The first summer I raked and sold sea moss while I was building a string of traps.. The next year I went

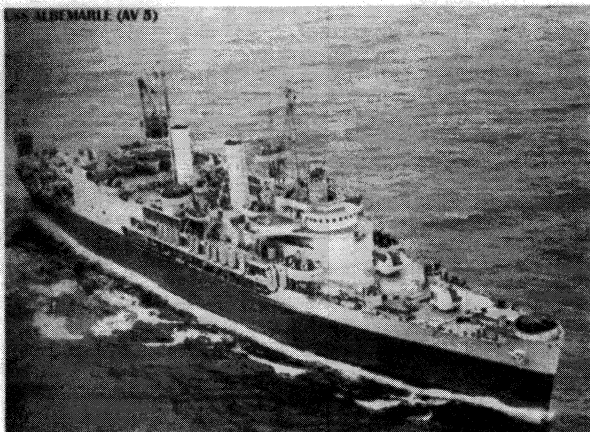
Remembering our Veterans

by Kenneth Hamilton

Theron F. Hamilton



Theron enlisted in the Navy on Oct. 21, 1948 and attended Boot Camp at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center. After completing his training he was assigned to the USS Albemarle AV 5 [known by her crew as the Able Mabel] at Portsmouth, VA. The ship was in drydock



undergoing repairs after returning from the Pacific. The ship had participated in the Atom Bomb test at Bikini and Eniwetok as the laboratory ship carrying the atom bomb for testing. After dry dock she was the Admiral's Flagship for Training Command, Atlantic Fleet. Theron was on the Albemarle from Jan., 1949, until August of 1950 when she was decommissioned and assigned to the "Moth Ball Fleet".

While on the Albemarle, Theron visited many Ports along the Atlantic Coast. Among them were Norfolk, Key West, Port-au-Prince, Jamaica, Bermuda, Guantanamo, New York, Newport, Martinique, Grenada, Curacao, and the

Dominican Republic.

He was transferred to the Reserve Fleet at Bayonne, N. J. after decommissioning. While there his three year tour was extended to four years due to the Korean War. While Theron was at Bayonne he helped put many ships back in commission. One of these ships was the USS Corregidor, the ship that his brother, Ken Hamilton, had served on during WW II. He also helped put the Battle Ship, New Jersey back in commission to go to Korea. The New Jersey's guns fired many shells into Korea

He was shipped to the Brooklyn Navy Shipyard in Oct. for discharge and received his discharge on Oct. 16, 1952 and returned home to Chebeague Island. Chebeague was also being the birthplace of Admiral Willis Cleaves who had also served on the Albemarle in 1941 when she was hunting German submarines in the North Atlantic.

After Theron was discharged from the Navy he worked for the Portland Pipe Line Corp. for thirty Years servicing Crude Oil Tankers from all over the world.

Richard F. Collins Sr.



Dick volunteered for Military service when he was still in High School. He joined the United States Marines in 1949 where he was attached to the 2nd Marine Division stationed at Little Creek, Virginia. This was a naval amphibian training base. He was later transferred to Camp Lajune, North Carolina in 1950 and was stationed there until his discharge in 1950 as a corporal.

Dick came to Chebeague after marrying Audrey Hamilton in 1964. He grew up on Munjoy Hill in Portland, ME. From the Military he went to work for the telephone company in Portland and retired from the company after 30 years service.

Herman Boxer

deceased

Herman Boxer was born in Brooklyn, NY on March 24, 1918 and graduated from Lincoln High School in Brooklyn. He enlisted in the United States Army following the U S involvement in World War II. Boxer's first tour of duty was on Chebeague Island where he met and married Leona Doughty, daughter of Captain Edmund and Helen Osgood Doughty. His barracks on Chebeague was located at the Schoolhouse Road on land that is now the Volunteer Field.

After his tour of duty on Chebeague was completed, he served at Fort Williams in Cape Elizabeth. Subsequently, he was transferred to Fort Benning, Georgia where he attended Officer Training as part of the Airborne Division. Boxer was a Paratrooper and led the team by being the first to jump during the training session. He completed his tour of duty with the Army as a 2nd Lieutenant and settled in Portland, ME, where he joined the United States Postal Service and served for over thirty years.

Herman and Leona spent their summers on Chebeague with their seven children; Doris, Jeffrey, Vivian, Danny, Joyce, Ned and Donna who all have fond memories of Chebeague. Herman passed away on Jan. 26, 1996 of heart failure at the Maine Medical Center in Portland surrounded by his family, and is buried on Chebeague.

Daughter, Vivian "Binkie" Boxer recently bought a new home on Chebeague and now lives with her friend, Lynn year-round on the island. Daughter, Doris, has a summer home on Chebeague.



Thank you to our summer docents and volunteers who during 2006 helped staff the Museum and gift shop, gave exhibit tours and worked on various office projects. Marianne Brenton, Anne Brown, Audrey Collins, Jackie Cross, Donna Damon, Marianne Durgin, Beverly Dyer, Linda Grant, Martha Hamilton, Hobey Hinchman, Jim Millinger, Sylvia Ross, Betsey Whitman

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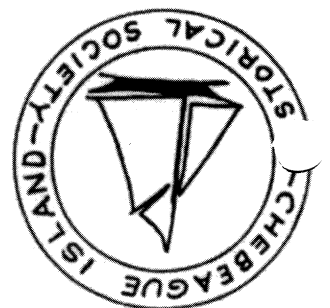
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We hope that you think of shopping at the Museum gift shop this holiday season. We have a new order of attractive blue Chebeague Island throws, magnets, coffee mugs, an excellent selection of children's books, hats, tote bags and more! Regular hours are: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday 9-12 and 1-4, and Wednesdays 9-11 but you're welcome to stop in anytime you see the flag and the open sign.



THE SLOOP'S LOG
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