

# THE SLOOP'S LOG

Newsletter of the Chebeague Island Historical Society

Vol. IV, Issue 1      2001

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Jill Malony

Once again, with so much activity at the Society, this issue covers 2000 AND 2001 to date.

The All Island Campaign to fund the Museum of Chebeague History ended December 31st. Thanks must go to Donna Damon and the Development Committee, as well as the whole Board for all of their wonderful work on this campaign.

The public rest room will be up and running this summer in its' convenient location at the District #9 Schoolhouse. This has been funded by USDA, Rural Development, the Recompense Fund, with the Town of Cumberland contributing supplies and some fixtures, not to mention in kind contributions by Wayne Dyer, Chebeague Sand & Gravel, Mark Dyer, Builder, and Beverly Johnson and Jon Rich, Chebeague Plumbing.



The Society has received the following grants and contributions:

Davis Family Foundation	\$10,000
R. Allen Malony-seed money for a Summer Internship at the Museum of Chebeague History	\$ 2,000
USDA, Rural Development	\$ 8,884

Continuing contributions to the Summer Internship program will be greatly appreciated in order to maximize this opportunity.

The Board of Trustees and Officers have participated in workshops and presentations by various architects to forward our vision of the Museum of Chebeague History. The firm of UJMN and Carol A. Wilson Architects of Philadelphia, PA and Falmouth, ME has been awarded the contract for the restoration, conversion and remodeling of the District 9 Schoolhouse. Their credits include: restoration of the Yarmouth School House and 200 Danforth Street, Portland, the Maine Audubon Society, Falmouth, and the Flynt Center of New England Life at Historical Deerfield, MA.

## ALL ISLAND CAMPAIGN A SUCCESS !

Our monetary campaign goal of \$300,000 was reached by December 31, 2000. This was achieved by a combination of pledges, donations, challenges and grants, as well as an old fashioned lobster bake (thanks to the Ferragamos for the extraordinary site, lobsters donated by our Island lobstermen, and the talented services of BJ Abrahamson).

The sale of the Historical Society sponsored Chebeague Island throws have made a tremendous contribution to our bottom line, as well as our trips to Egypt and Jordan led by former Trustee, Suhail Bisharat.

We are now striving for 100% participation in our fund drive. If you haven't already done so, please consider contributing to the Historical Society, as your Museum of Chebeague History will be built to tell the story of your past, present, and future.



*Success will bring change!*

# Cottage Road - Then and Now

by Donna Miller Damon

*Dorticos (Mead)*

*Joel Ricker (Hulburt)*

*John H. Ridge (Shattuck)*



*Before there was a Cottage Road; Cottage Road Neighborhood pre-1900*

People often wonder why the North Road changes names in what appears to be midstream and becomes the Cottage Road. They also wonder where the North Road ends and the Cottage Road begins. To answer these seemingly simple questions requires an understanding of the development of Great Chebeague Island. This article is the beginning of a series of several articles that will be published in the *Sloop's Log* over the next year or so which will take the reader through a journey that will discuss many of the island's historical periods and themes. This discussion will focus on the neighborhood from the Ballard Farmhouse on the North Road to the South Road.

It all goes back to Zachariah Chandler's purchase of the western half of Chebeague in 1746 and the subsequent division of the land between Chandler and other members of his family. Unfortunately the later deed was not registered until 1777 after several parcels had been conveyed. The failure to register deeds on Chebeague occurred more than one might imagine resulting in challenges for today's researchers. It is an understatement to say that some estimates of acreage that were made at that time have since proven to be inaccurate.

When Zachariah Chandler died his estate was divided among his children. Much of the area under discussion was conveyed to the heirs of Sarah Chandler Barker, whose twin sons, Chandler and David Barker, conveyed their parcels to Wentworth Ricker (1791) and Daniel Wait (1787) respectively. Town records indicate that Wait built a house, which may or may not have been on the cellar hole near Habig's garden on the Cottage Road. Wait sold this property, which he described as 48 acres 29 rods, to Jonathan Webber Jr. in 1807. It is unknown if Webber built a new house or used the Wait house. The stone wall that lies south of this cellar hole is the original Chandler line that separated Zachariah Chandler's piece of Chebeague from that of his siblings and is used by surveyors to determine accurately most West End lines. Jonathan Webber Jr. then conveyed 21 acres lying to the west to Joel Ricker. Town

records indicate that Ricker built the Federal cape, now owned by the Hulbert's, shortly after he acquired the land.

Meanwhile, Wentworth Ricker built a house overlooking the sandbar to Little Chebeague. There is evidence that more than one house existed on the property. It is possible that Ricker built a smaller house on the lot, which no longer exists, and then built what is known as the Stavropoulos House, which is also from the Federal period. In later years Ricker deeded his saltwater farm to his grandson, Joel Ricker Jr. In return for paying \$1000 to Ricker over three years, "... and to support and maintain said Wentworth during his life ...". Wentworth Ricker died in 1842 and his grandson was unable to pay his estate the amount that remained on the note, so the property was foreclosed. Henry Mansfield Jr. bought the property in 1845. Mansfield and



*Wentworth Ricker (Stavropoulos)*

his wife Rachel Hill are said to have had twenty children. Mansfield operated a store near his house and sailed up and down the coast selling goods. Two of their sons served in the Civil War. Mansfield and Ricker graves are evident in a small cemetery near the driveway to the Ballard house known as *Khatmandhu*.

The first Chebeague town road was laid out in 1850 and started near the sandbar and ran to the southside of Mansfield's house and continued to the East End. This was the North Road and remained so throughout the nineteenth century. The South Road was laid out at the same time. In 1856 the Town accepted a road that ran from the South

Road to the North Road. This road, now known informally as Lovers Lane, ran from the old District 8 school which was located on the south side of the South Road to the North Road near the present Gary Varney house. Although paths may have existed along what is now the Cottage Road it was not a Town road in the Nineteenth Century.

The Ricker family sold the Joel Ricker farm to Katherine Edmonds in 1883. Katherine Edmonds' husband George, was a Portland entrepreneur who may have had dreams of creating a cottage development similar to those which were constructed on other Casco Bay islands at this time. Although a site plan has not been found one may have existed. The Edmonds, conveyed various rights of way and use of a common reserved shore parcel. The Edmonds were the first off island developers to turn a Chebeague farm into a cottage development.

The first conveyance from the Edmonds' property on Great Chebeague Island was made to Sarah Bates Dorticos in 1893. Antoine and Sarah Dorticos owned a cottage which was located on the Edmonds property as early as 1885, two years after the Edmonds bought the Ricker farm. This may have been the first summer cottage ever built on Great Chebeague Island. Earle Shettleworth and William David Barry, noted Maine historians, believe that this cottage was



*Antoine Dorticos (Mead)*

destroyed by fire and that Dorticos built the new cottage, which is still owned by their descendants, on an adjacent lot in or about 1893, but that theory has not been confirmed. Antoine Dorticos was a teacher in Portland, but more importantly he was an accomplished architect of the shingle style cottage. His connection to George and Katherine Edmonds is not known, but Dorticos may have been a business partner, for it would appear that he designed not only his own cottage, but those of John H. Ridge (now Jane Shattuck's) and Annie Thompson (now Sidney Morse's).

Three of Edmonds' lots on the shoreside of Cottage Road

were created before the road was laid out and accepted. The first lot was sold to John H. Ridge (ancestor of the Shattucks) in 1896. The first reference to a reserved shore parcel is found in this deed describing it as 25 feet above highwater. Edmonds guaranteed that "no fish houses or other nuisances" would be built along the shore. Katherine Edmonds conveyed the Joel Ricker farm house in 1898 to William H. Howell, ancestor of the Hulberts.

While all of this was happening Henry Mansfield died and his son Isaiah inherited the farm overlooking the "Parrot"



as the Hook was known at the time. The father and son had entered into an agreement in 1875 that Isaiah would care for his parents, a sister and a couple of nephews and in return would receive the farm and "all of the household furniture, stock and cattle, farming tools and utensils, crops and farm products". In 1893 Isaiah Mansfield sold a parcel of land to Harmon Morse who built a cottage overlooking Little Chebeague. This was the first parcel to be conveyed out of the original Ricker farm and is still owned by the Morse family.

As Isaiah Mansfield aged records indicate that he suffered from some sort of dementia. Many of his siblings had moved to Yarmouth and there appeared to be a family dispute about the farm. Joseph Curit and Ammi Littlefield were appointed guardians and the Mansfields for the time being left the island, although their descendent Frank Mansfield remains a parttime resident. Ammi Littlefield sold a lot near the farmhouse to Annie Thompson in 1897. She never built on the lot.

As the Twentieth Century approached the Webbers still owned the house which stood near what is now the Habigs' garden. The Dorticoses, Morses, Ridges, and Howells were all established summer families, just as their descendants are today. The Mansfield house lay vacant waiting for the new century.

(To be continued)



# THE PAST

by Ken Hamilton

**RAIL SERVICE TO BEGIN.** That was the headline announced recently by the news media. So we should be able to travel to Boston from Portland once again. This trip should be a brand new and exciting experience for just about everyone under forty years old. It is a reminder of the past for some of us --- a look back with tons of nostalgia attached. I remember at the time Union Station was demolished an editor in a local paper thought we should all sing a sad and mournful song for the passing of the train.

In 1944 I traveled by train to New York, Mississippi, Virginia and California. Another train carried me to Bangor in 1946 and again in 1952 a train delivered my bride and me to my new job in Augusta. But by then the old time steam engines had been replaced by diesel engines and the sound of the lonesome steam whistle had faded into obscurity, although the thrilling sensation of powerful drive wheels lurching into motion was still part of the train ride. I don't know which I enjoyed the most --- the sight of the grand old steamboats coming into the dock or the steam locomotives with the black smoke, jets of hissing steam and the clanging bells.

Maybe it was because I had an uncle who fired the boilers for the Boston and Maine for many years. I don't know.

But I know that the sound of the whistle that sounded in Falmouth and continued through Yarmouth and Brunswick caused a longing and a curiosity as to who was riding in the train and who was at the controls as that big black giant roared down the track. We didn't notice the mournful sound on the southeast side of the island as much, but if you were sleeping on the northwest side on a quiet night, perhaps a little fog in the inner bay, then you might just as well be sleeping right beside the rails. I recall waking one night at my grandmother's house (that is where Jeff Hamilton lives now) when I was about five years old listening to the lonely call of the train whistle rising and falling in the distance. It was my first experience of hearing that call of the train and I loved it and will not forget it.

Even though the new trains are going to be very fast and heading south, some of us will always remember the slower trains heading north --- "Train for Bangor now loading on track three; train will stop at Brunswick, Gardiner, Augusta, Waterville ---".



# Why Walter Curit Quit Stone Slooping

by Walter Curit

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The Stone Sloops of Chebeague

"It all dates back to about 1889. Aboard the Sloop Twilight were four Curits, Caaptain Franklin, mate Sewell M. and two young men in their teens, my cousin Elmer and myself. The Twilight had been taking stone from Rockland to Kennebunkport since early spring. The Captain promised that if we worked hard, we would go home for the 4th of July. We had worked hard, and we were now homeward bound.

It was the night before the 4th when we arrived off Casco Bay only to find a fog setting in—in fact it was pretty thick--to thick to sail in, but Uncle Frank was taking a few chances---after all we boys had done a lot of talking about what we were going to do when we got home. The Twilight was picking her way along home, when all of a sudden out of the thick of the evening, we heard the weird squeaking and creaking and mournful groaning of a ship--such sounds as only can be heard when a huge ship starts to break up. "Hard down" yelled the skipper, and around we swung, and sure enough we could faintly see the dark hull of a schooner hard on the rocks. It was a close shave for the Twilight---even Captain Franklin heaved a sigh of relief---but for that vessel's trouble we too would have been on those rocks. We hove to for the rest of the night—"it would be better in the morning". But at dawn it was worse if anything, and it was the 4th of July. All day we were in pea soup, dead at anchor somewhere off Mark and Eagle Islands---near to home yet so far. That was where four curits spent the 4th. One of those Curits made a vow---it was I---"if I ever make land again, I'll never go slooping again'---I didn't."



## Become a Member!!!

*dues envelope  
enclosed*

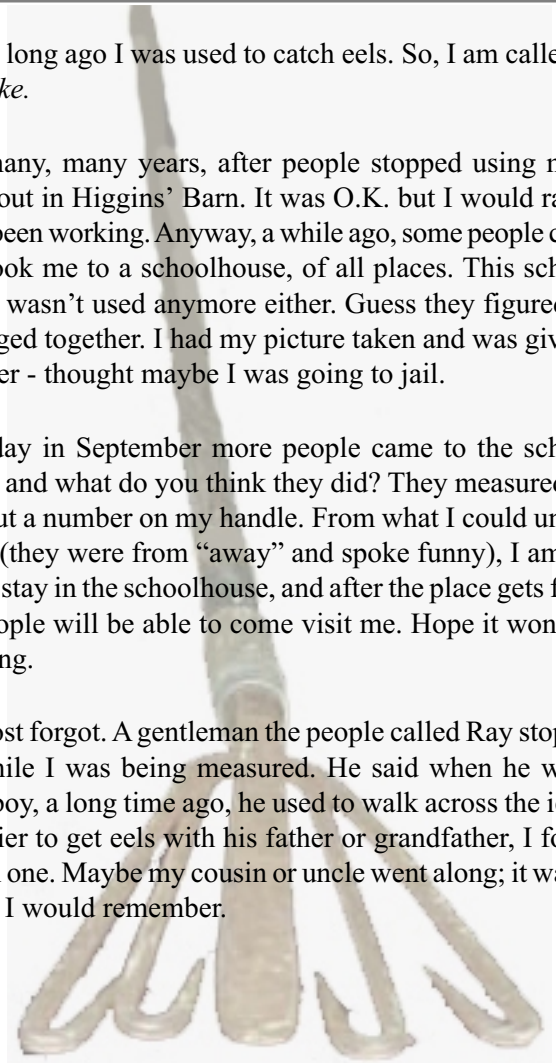
### An Accession Speaks

Long, long ago I was used to catch eels. So, I am called an *eel rake*.

For many, many years, after people stopped using me, I hung out in Higgins' Barn. It was O.K. but I would rather have been working. Anyway, a while ago, some people came and took me to a schoolhouse, of all places. This schoolhouse wasn't used anymore either. Guess they figured we belonged together. I had my picture taken and was given a number - thought maybe I was going to jail.

One day in September more people came to the schoolhouse and what do you think they did? They measured me and put a number on my handle. From what I could understand (they were from "away" and spoke funny), I am going to stay in the schoolhouse, and after the place gets fixed up people will be able to come visit me. Hope it won't be too long.

I almost forgot. A gentleman the people called Ray stopped by while I was being measured. He said when he was a little boy, a long time ago, he used to walk across the ice to Moshier to get eels with his father or grandfather, I forget which one. Maybe my cousin or uncle went along; it wasn't me or I would remember.



## 2001 Programs

The Chebeague Island Historical Society is once again planning a busy year. We hope you will be able to join us in some of the upcoming events. Our program topics are tentative at this point, but we have meetings scheduled as follows:

Monday, May 21	Sardine Fishing
Saturday, June 16	<b>ANNUAL MEETING</b> "Watch School Factory "
Monday, July 16	Central Landing Over the Years - Jim Millinger
Monday, August 20	Story Telling
Monday, September 17	Presidential Candidates in Centennial Years – Phil Jordan
Monday, October 15	(not yet scheduled)
November	no meeting
December 10	<b>ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY</b>

**Other programs and events in the works.**

**Donations at free programs help defer expenses.**

**Thanks for your support.**

**ALL WELCOME....ALL WELCOME....ALL WELCOME....ALL WELCOME**

## New From the Gift Shop

by Joan Robinson, Chair

The cotton afghan throws of Chebeague scenes are so popular it is hard to keep them in stock. They come in either blue and cream or cranberry red and cream, and are only \$50.00.

The same pictures as the throws can also be obtained (much reduced in size) on the cover of a note pad, for \$6.00.

Schoolhouse pins, magnets or ornaments (by Gail Miller): \$10.00

As a closeout special, we can provide either of our posters (suitable for framing) for only \$1.00 each. Choose from : Original quilt or Stockman Island quilt (by Shirley Burgess).

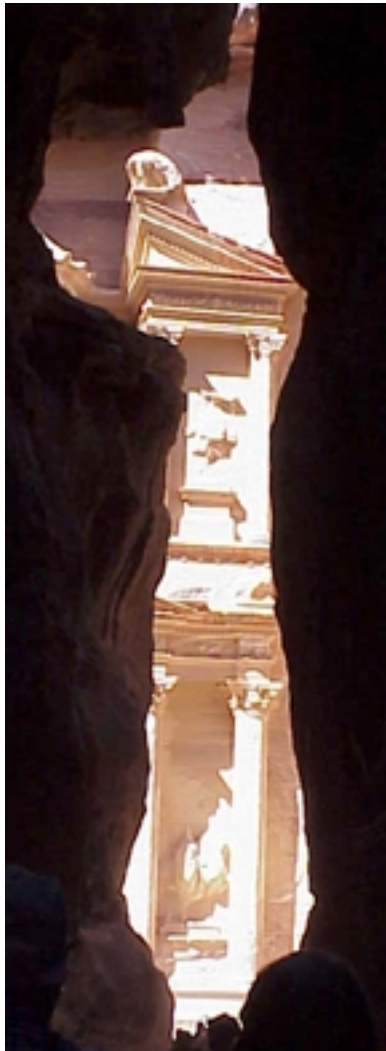


## Annual Newsletter

As in previous years the Historical Society will publish the *Annual Newsletter* for Chebeague Island. All the Island organizations contribute to this publication and it includes many pictures of people and events of the past year. As previously, this 2001 edition will be edited by the team of David Hill, Beverly Johnson and Mac Passano. This record of Island life will be ready for the annual Fourth of July parade and picnic. It can be picked up there for \$6.00, or can be sent directly to any address in the United States for an additional \$2.00 shipping and handling fee. Use the order form included on your annual dues envelope, enclosed with this *Sloop's Log*.



# JORDANIAN ADVENTURE



**Entering Petra**



**Lessons to be learned for the  
Museum of Chebeague History**



**Taking a mud bath at the Bisharat farm**

## **Chebeague Island Historical Society**

### **Trustees and Officers**

\* Marianne Brenton \* Sue Burgess \* Nancy Chamberlin \* Dot Colbeth \* Donna Damon  
\* Jane Frizzell \* Jennifer Hamilton \* Ken Hamilton \* Phil Jordan \* Jill Malony \* Jim Millinger \*  
Marjorie Munroe \* Mac Passano \* Joan Robinson \* Sylvia Ross \* Nancy Sharp \* Al Whitaker \*

*Sloop's Log* staff - Beverly Johnson, Mac Passano and Jill Malony  
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<http://www.chebeague.org/history>

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