



**Newsletter of the Old Village Association of Chatham, Massachusetts**

Volume V

Issue 1

Winter, 2002

## Coast Guard Station Expansion

Debbie Aikman and Candy Jenkins joined members of the staff of the Massachusetts Historical Commission, and Sarah Korjeff from the Cape Cod Commission (the old gang) to discuss with Coast Guard staff a possible demolition of the garage at the station in order to build a new, larger structure, which would provide more indoor working space for boats. Those present expressed concerns about the demolition of an historic building (not only in the District but also independently listed on the National Register), the scale of the new structure and, in particular, the plans to flatten much of the bank on Silverleaf Avenue for a wider driveway. While the Cape Cod Commission does

not have jurisdiction over federal government buildings, the Massachusetts Historical Commission will continue to review the final project. The Old Village Association Board, while supporting Coast Guard activities, will continue to play a role in attempting to mitigate the negative impact any construction and demolition would have on the neighborhood, particularly for those homeowners whose properties abut the station.

*(If any Old Village Association members wish to see the plans and/or comment on the work to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, they should contact Debbie Aikman (945-8969).*

## National Register News from a Distance

Now that the Old Village is a National Register District, Old Village Board members have become instant experts on applications, rules and procedures. In October, Old Village representatives traveled to other communities to give information and lend support. Debbie and Don Aikman, representing the Association and the Historical Commission, respectively, attended a meeting this fall of the South Chatham Village Association, which is considering a National Register District.

And, in the same week, Carol and

Norm Pacun drove up to North Truro for an informational meeting of Pond Village residents, who are also thinking about a National Register District. Chuck Steinman, Chairman of the Truro Historical Commission, has done a superb job in organizing materials, and we were honored that he used some Old Village information in his packet. While no decision was made at the meeting, guess what? Those present thought a good first step was the formation of a neighborhood association. Right on!

## Grant for Storm Water Drains Denied

Bob Duncanson, Director of Chatham's Water Quality Lab, reports that the grant Chatham had applied for to add storm drains in the area around Little Mill Pond has been denied by the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (Coastal Zone Management division) because—believe it or not—the pond's water quality is not bad enough to be closed for shellfishing and public use. This was a competitive grant and the areas in the worst shape received the money. (Hard to say whether the denial is good or bad news.) Duncanson said that the town will reapply next year.

## New OVA Directors and Officers Elected at Annual Meeting

At the August 25 Annual Meeting of the Old Village Association, the following slate of officers and directors were approved:

*President:* Debbie Aikman

*Vice-President:* Bob Walsh

*Treasurer:* Dick Towne

*Clerk:* Ann O'Connell

*President Ex-Officio:* Carol Pacun

Newly Appointed Directors:

Mary Ann Gray, Nancy Koerner

Continuing Directors:

Debbie Aikman, Ann O'Connell,

David MacAdam, Ellen McKinley,

Carol Pacun, Sam Streibert,

Dick Towne, David Veach, Bob Walsh

*The Old Village Association thanks retiring directors Kathy Earnshaw and Sally Daniel for their years of dedicated service.*



## From the President

I first came to the Old Village in the summer of '59. I was a college student taking on a summer job as a waitress at the Hawes House, located at 114 Main Street. This turned out to be a pivotal time in my life. It was here that I met my future husband. Don and his family had been long time summer guests at the Hawes House, starting in the early '30s. We married a week after I graduated from college, and the Old Village has been an integral part of our lives ever since.

We have owned 78 Water Street for 27 years, purchasing it from Robert and Alice Morse. Dr. Morse was a physicist who had been a senior scientist at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, an assistant secretary of the Navy, a dean at Brown University, and president of Case Western University. The owner prior to the Morses was Clair Baisly. Clair operated "Millpond Coppercrafts" at the time I was waitressing down the street (we called it "The Copper Shop"). The shop is no more, but we do have many of the handcrafted items made by Clair. Perhaps you spotted our Coppercrafts directional sign that I displayed at the Annual Meeting.

Don and I each have another legacy from Clair Baisly. Among her many accomplishments, Clair was a founder of the Chatham Historical Commission. Don is now the Chairman. Clair was also the driving force behind the concept of the Old Village Association, B.C. (before Carol). And here I am, 16 years later, taking on the presidency. It is an honor for us to help sustain Clair's vision of preservation for our beautiful little corner of the world.

Being permanent residents now affords us the luxury of experiencing the beautiful fall weather here. As I walk the streets of the Village, I have mixed emotions. The peace and tranquility is refreshing, but it makes me sad to see so many empty homes. I found myself wondering about comparative data relating summer to year round homes. Having been a math teacher, I decided to put together some numbers:\*

- 309 dwellings are in the Old Village.
- 54 OV dwellings are occupied by year-round residents.
- 17.5% is the year-round occupancy rate (no wonder it's so quiet now).

There's more:

- 90 registered voters live in the OV.
- 5785 voters are registered in Chatham.
- 1.6% of the total registered voters live in the OV.

Also:

- 4.4 % of the 7000 Chatham dwellings are in the OV.
- 50% of Chatham dwellings are seasonal.
- 210 days until next summer, when the OV has full occupancy again!

We hope those of you who return will find everything to be pretty much as you left it. Your Board will be doing everything we can to address issues that pertain to maintaining the quaintness that we all treasure.

*Debbie Aikman*

\*Numbers are approximate

## Report on Wastewater Issues November 21, 2002

*David MacAdam*

Chatham Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) on wastewater management has met three times this fall. In addition, there were several subcommittee meetings formulating questions concerning alternative sources and methods of funding wastewater solutions for Chatham, all of which I attended.

In truth, the CAC has been on temporary "hold" since late summer, awaiting the State Estuaries Project's determination of critical nitrogen loads for Chatham saltwater embayments. Earlier this year, the state took over this aspect of the study, saving significant local money. As an added bonus, the delay will enable us to base final wastewater solutions on new watershed delineations from the U.S. Geological Survey. Results from these two endeavors are anticipated early in the new year. At that time, work will commence on a Transitional Needs Assessment Report, integrating the new data into the August 1999 Needs Assessment Report. This work will occupy the CAC and the consultants during the spring and early summer. In the summer, the consultants will begin to develop appropriate wastewater solutions, and the CAC will evaluate them and determine which best fit our goals and needs. A final wastewater plan is now expected to be presented at Town Meeting in May 2005. Construction would begin some time after.

Anticipating an inactive fall, the CAC undertook a program of self-education on topics soon to be of critical concern to the Committee. Foremost among these has been to survey funding for a wastewater solution for Chatham. Unlike the situation 20 years ago when the Feds underwrote 85% to 90% of the costs of local wastewater infrastructure, we are now in a time when federal priorities have shifted elsewhere (not the least to generous tax cuts). All indications are that the bill for Chatham's wastewater solutions will have to be paid largely through betterments (one-time

continued on page 4

## National Trust Preservation Conference Topic One: *Taming the Teardown Trend*

In late September, Norm and Carol Pacun, and Coley and Nancy Yeaw, attended the National Trust's Preservation Conference in New Bedford. By far the most pertinent lecture for those of us in Chatham was based on the research the Trust has been conducting on teardowns and trophy houses. Since Old Village homeowners have lived with this problem, it was interesting to hear statistical proof that demolition has become epidemic throughout the country. For example, in Denver, Colorado, 200 homes were demolished last year in order to make way for homes three times their size, and in two neighborhoods outside Dallas, Texas the figure is now at 1,000 demolitions of historic homes.

Certainly, none of those present from Chatham needed information on the negative effects both of the loss of historic structures and the out-of-scale structures that replace them. However, the Trust has also researched the adverse effect of demolition on the economic and social diversity of towns and neighborhoods. Each small scale house that is replaced by a mansion permanently removes a relatively affordable home for someone to buy, increases land values (and subsequent taxes) beyond average incomes and puts the real estate market in the hands of speculative developers, rather than residents who lose control of their neighborhoods.

The Old Village's place on the National Register has, hopefully, created a solution which will, by slowing demolition, help preserve our historic neighborhood. But as a part of a wider community, Chatham residents can be encouraged that the National Trust is working hard to present these issues to a wider public and to help communities find viable solutions. And, it is also comforting to know that Chatham is not alone as it continues to cope with its own epidemic of teardowns.

*The National Trust for Historic Preservation is a private membership organization located in Washington D.C. with an office in Boston. Its web page is at:*

*HYPERLINK "<http://www.nthp.org>"*

### Old Village Association Newsletter

*Editor*

Carol Pacun

*Contributors*

Debbie Aikman

Don Freudenheim

Hope and Julia Fraser

David MacAdam

George Olmsted

*Banner*

Bob Staake

*Production*

Marty Fairbanks

Mary Ann Gray

Fran Greenhalgh

Ellen McKinley

Steve Merselis

Ann O'Connell

Bob Walsh



## Survey Results

85 Members responded to the survey that the Association mailed to members along with the Spring 2002 Newsletter. The purpose of the survey was to give some indication to the Board of Directors where the members' concerns lie and to look for areas of possible consensus.

The issues which received the most attention were parking and traffic (72), particularly along the Main Street-Bridge Street intersection, beach usage (58) and possible Main Street reconstruction (56). Although 51 people expressed concern about wastewater, there was no real consensus on what should be done, with many questions left unanswered.

Very surprisingly, although the area around the Overlook was of great concern, more people felt the parking and traffic were satisfactory (43) than worried about congestion in the area (35). Surprisingly, by a two to one ratio, most responders wrote that the shuttle bus was helping relieve the problems at the Overlook. The majority wanted crosswalks in the area, a stop sign and a sidewalk around the intersection of Bridge and Main Streets. Lighthouse Beach should be left alone, most argued, voting two to one against any bathrooms (temporary or permanent) or lifeguards, but by the same percentage agreed that the beach should be cleaned. (See story on Supplement – Page 5.)

By a whopping 55 to 5 vote, most indicated that a simple resurfacing of Main Street and the sidewalk was sufficient, while two out of three people encouraged a crosswalk at Andrew Harding's Lane.

Because of low response numbers, the comments concerning wastewater were largely inconclusive, although 35 people (out of 55 voting) thought the whole of the Old Village should be sewered, while 31 people "worried about the cost."



As far as Old Village Association activities were concerned, 45 people did want the Association's Board to explore the possibility of a "Old Village National District" sign – but with 43 people asking "not to change a thing," the Board does not, at least at this point, see the kind of consensus needed for immediate action. However, the Board will consider some focus groups next summer on some of the issues in the survey, will explore the viability of a web site to keep members informed, will continue our Annual Meeting neighborhood meeting format and will – promise! – try to start meetings on time.

Thanks to all who responded. Keep those cards and letters (complaints accepted!) coming. The Association is only effective if it reflects the needs and concerns of its members.

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*Special Beach Supplement*  
*Inside*

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The Old Village Association, Inc.  
Box 188  
Chatham, MA 02633

## Wastewater Report - continued from page 2

assessments for users) and local tax revenues. Fortunately, our local officials have built funding for treatment expansion into their long-range capital outlay budget. Other capital costs (such as laying neighborhood sewer lines where required) will be paid for through betterments. Operation and maintenance costs will be covered primarily through user fees. Think of a sewer hookup as a significant property (and environment) improvement, not a cost to be avoided if at all possible! The details of the method for determining betterments and user fees will be determined locally. The CAC will be at the center of the action on this one. The final recommendations will come before Town Meeting for approval. You will hear much more on these matters in the coming year or two.

A second item occupying the CAC's attention has been the Board of Health's Draft 10 Nitrogen Loading Regulation, published September 24, 2002. The regulation has yet to be implemented. Its

primary purpose is to insure that Chatham's saltwater embayments and fresh water lakes and ponds are not further degraded by wastewater prior to implementation of the permanent solutions of the Comprehensive Wastewater Plan. Despite their importance and relevancy this is not the place to report on the proposed regulations. Suffice it to say they are controversial, and the criticism being focused on the Board of Health from some quarters may one day be inherited by whatever body ends up administering our permanent wastewater solution. In all this it is important to recognize that the Board of Health's responsibilities extend beyond human health issues to include environmental issues as well. Clearly the two are related even though there are no direct human health threats from excess nitrogen or phosphates in local water bodies.

All indications are for an active spring on the CAC. I'm always available to

discuss wastewater matters. It is lonely traversing the dark recess of Chatham's wastewater problems and solutions on my own. I'd be happy to have the company of anyone who wishes to learn more first hand. It promises to be quite an education. Call 508-945-9242 or failing that, e-mail to [dpmacadam@earthlink.net](mailto:dpmacadam@earthlink.net).

### Hot off the Presses

*Mill Cove* by Anne Rogers and David MacAdam, a collection of history, story and pictures – many never before published – all woven together to tell the story of the eastern shore of Chatham's Mill Pond and the people who frequented it, will be available to local bookstores the second week in December.



# Old Village Association, Inc. Special Supplement

Winter, 2002



## THE BEACH THAT WAS – AND MIRACULOUSLY STILL IS

Much of this Newsletter is devoted to the beach at the bottom of Andrew Hardings Lane which stretches northward to the Holway Street revetment. Over the years this tiny expanse of sand has brought great joy and great sorrow to those Old Village residents who have thought of the beach as an important part of their lives – past, present and future.

The beach itself has always ebbed and flowed with the tides; at one moment, wracked by storms, on the verge of extinction, and at another, lapped by gentle waves whose purpose seems only to please the children on their surf boards and to fool the sweet young things lying on beach towels too near an incoming tide. The lowest point in our memory was in 1987, when the breakthrough of North Beach

caused catastrophic havoc. Few will forget our feelings of sorrow and impotence as the raging surf took the beach and ten homes in a matter of months and left a scarred and desolate shore. All seemed lost; few felt the beach would return.

But, against all odds, new sand miraculously began to cover up the tar and debris left by erosion. Gradually, with added help from the dredgers, we watched the sand return. Perhaps the beach looked a little skimpy, and certainly there was no parking lot, but what was there seemed a true blessing, a chance to use a beach we had thought was lost forever. In the glow of this renaissance, we did not fully understand that the sand we were sitting on was not – not now – part of a town beach we remembered. Instead, the shoreline

had receded and what was left above the original beach was private property, belonging mainly to the Perry family, with tiny strips of Galanti and Wilson land. As such, the space is not ours and in that the Perry's have the land for sale, may never be ours again.

The Old Village Association is trying its best to find a way to keep this very important beach open to the public, free of charge in perpetuity. This will take care and effort, and will be, as it always was, dependent not only on sellers and buyers, but on natural occurrences as the coastline continues to change in ways over which we have no control. Meanwhile, enjoy this supplement, the story of a beach, a story in which we have all played a part.

*Carol Pacun, editor*

Supplement – Page 1

## Living by the Sea in the 1940s and 1950s



1976: Art Gould with Alma G. II and two customers



"Good Walter Eldredge"



Row Boats to Let . . . Motor for Sale

The beach at Andrew Hardings Lane has always had its larger than life denizens. The last (so far) of these characters was, of course, Art Gould, whose philosophy of life, terse comments on the beach scene and wealth of knowledge about boats, tides and weather were legendary. But, before Art started his livery service, which brought him to the beach each and every day in season, there were others who settled in on the beach, and regarded it as a combination living quarters, office and oral history center.

In the 1940s Wes Eldredge used the Half-Way House on the beach to store

his gear. Wes and his friends would sit in front of the tiny building, basking in the sun in the mornings and in the shade in the afternoon and, as Clair Baisley reported, "yarn." To listen in to their musings was a privilege and Clair wrote that she wished she had taken notes.

Then, of course, there was Good Walter Eldredge who actually spent his summers on the beach, in a shack made of timbers of old ships and filled with the paintings and ship models he made during the winter. Lore has it that Good Walter could predict storms and always knew when the sea would wash a wreck clean and expose its timbers to

the sun. Like Art Gould, he rented a boat or two and was always ready to give a helping hand – and lots of advice – to the hapless novices who fished or launched boats from the beach. Children flocked to his shack and listened in awe to his seemingly non-stop tales. Elinor Gelsey, who wrote in an earlier Newsletter about her memories of Good Walter, said that she was impressed by his culinary skills, but that her mother forbade her to eat anything he cooked for fear that the meal had first been tasted by his cat (who sometimes lived, rumor has it, in the stove).

# Andrew Hardings Lane Recalled

*Don Freudenheim*

They're almost all gone now. They used to pass the long summer days waxing eloquent about current events, tomorrow's weather, how many striped bass Dave Ovans would bring back from his fishing forays in Pleasant Bay and of course the endless discussions about when the ocean would breach the bar. This was all before local writers began to write sequels about the "Breakthrough." They would all arrive after the clock struck four – seldom earlier – carrying their well-worn metal folding chairs. That's when most of the action, if you could call it that, would start in the parking lot at the end of Andrew Hardings Lane. On warm sunny days, Art Gould's quaint little North Beach ferry service would begin to retrieve its customers from the outer beach. It has been said that he never left anyone stranded there. Occasionally someone or thing would elucidate a comment from the assembled watchers. Since most of them were older gentlemen, these observations of course were almost always very gracious. Between these editorial asides, the conversation would touch on such weighty matters as how a brand new motor got lost off the stem of a boat or why some tourist's skiff dragged its anchor all the way to the other side of the channel.

Sometimes an off-course bird would arrive on Monomoy from Europe or South America and the birdwatchers would arrive by the dozens to record their sightings. Art's ferry service, an institution advertised by word-of-mouth only, was known to them all and his business would improve dramatically.

This was what went on day-after-sultry summer day in "Scrabbletown," the name local history bestowed upon this unusual place. The chairs were all set up in the proximity of Art's truck, which was the natural focal point, since Art was the first to arrive in the morning and always parked next to the landing ramp. Small boys were known to spend their whole summer vacations near Art's truck to watch and learn skills such as bailing boats and moving anchors, experience that one can acquire only by observation. The boys would gradually outgrow this pastime when they were about fourteen and had to get real jobs for real pay.

Scrabbletown, over a period in time had actually risen from the sea as the tidal currents deposited sand washed from further north on the beach. It had always been a popular spot for all the kinds of activities that go on at the shore. An old harbor had once existed there and after severe winters sometimes the relics of old piers and the skeletal ribs of stranded ancient wrecks would appear offshore.

Over the years many curious events took place around the homes and shops built by the watermen who scratched out their living there renting skiffs to tourists – a business promoted by predicting good weather and giving clues to where the fish were to be caught. There is of course no way to confirm the stories, but they are certainly worth noting. In the lore is the story about Mr. Dutton who gathered some driftwood that unknown to him was mixed with some unexploded ordinance from WW II. When Mrs. Dutton decided to use some of the wood in her cook stove it exploded with some surprising effects. Another involves the buried treasure that was uncovered on the outer beach and then almost immediately was covered up again, never to resurface. But these are tales for another telling.

This writer and his family spent 19 summers on Andrew Hardings Lane. We often go back to visit. There is no landing, no parking lot and very little beach any more, but the ghosts of prior summers are there. I recall those who owned houses on the Land, like Dave and Betty Ovans, The Perrys, The Wilsons, Jim and Diana Fitchette, Judge Galanti, George and Zee Ganaway, The Shortells, the Malagodies, The Rolfes, as well as the countless families too numerous to mention, who rented there summer-after-summer. The neighbors of Scrabbletown in the Old Village and all the others who visited there will never forget the seemingly endless sand bars where their children could safely play and they had such good times. No one calls Andrew Hardings Lane home any more; the landing belongs to the ocean now until North Beach shields it from the sea again.



THE BEACH CHAIR BRIGADE. Dave and Betty Ovans, Elwin Perry, "Madame X," Jack King (?), and George Lake. *Your editors need some help here —*

# Lost at Sea

*"The beach has broken through!"*

*This cry, shouted during the great storm on November 15, 1870,  
heralded the ultimate destruction of two lighthouses,  
and there are those who prophecy that history will repeat itself.  
Cape Cod Ahoy, Arthur Tarbell (1932)*

January 2, 1987 at "syzygy": BREAKTHROUGH AGAIN!

Spring-summer 1987: SOME EROSION, but with much of the beach returning to normal during a calm summer, residents hope for the best (although most choose to anchor their boats elsewhere).

Joha McGrath continues Art Gould's ferry service to North Beach, but by late August wave action makes these efforts increasingly perilous.

Fall 1987: THE OCEAN RETURNS with a vengeance at Andrew Hardings Lane-Holway Street beaches.

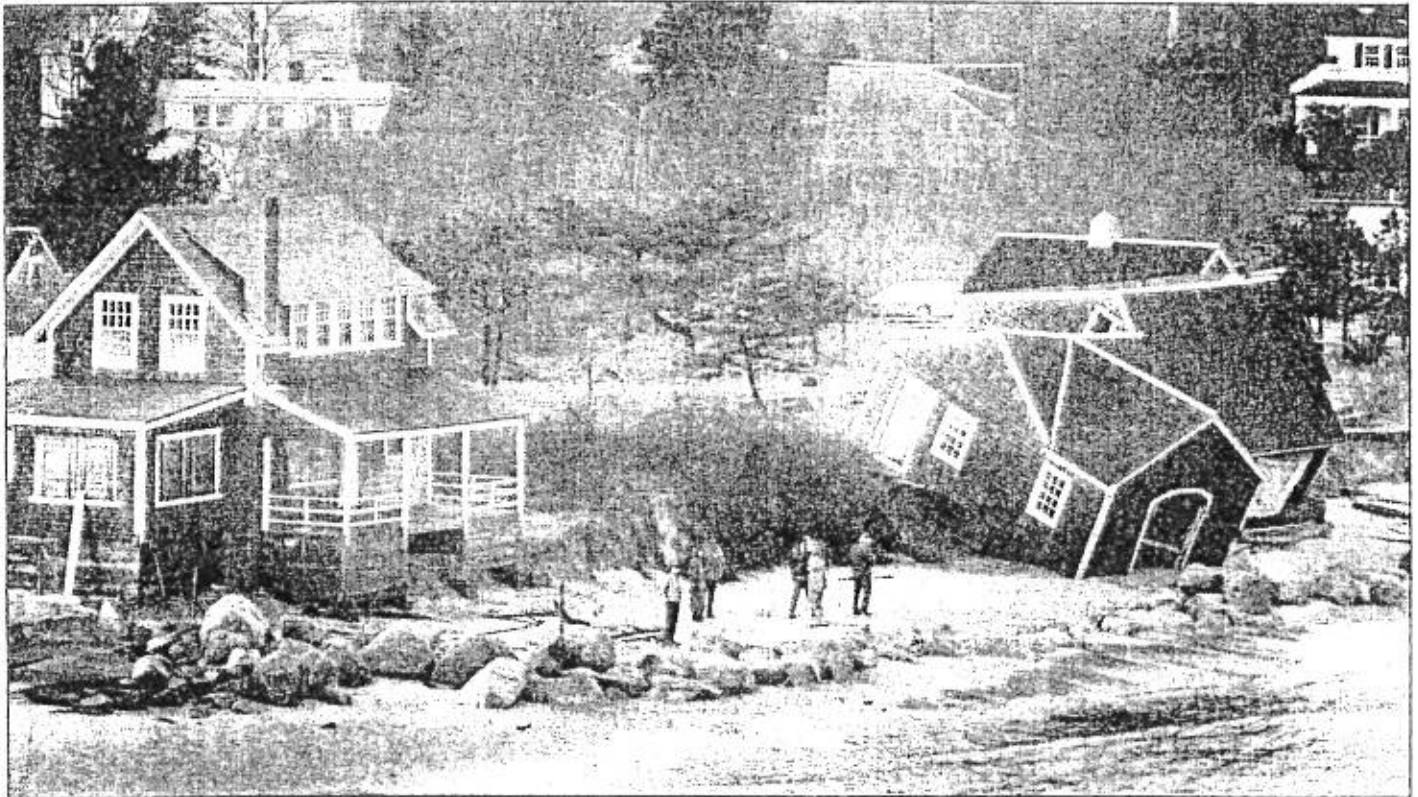
Waves shatter parking lot. Holway Street closed to traffic. As sand wears away, debris from past years surface, including a rusty car frame, assorted household goods, gold coins and hundreds of bottles. Collectors comb beach for treasures.

January 1988: THE BEGINNING OF THE END.  
Galanti house falls into the sea.

1988-1991: PROLONGED DISASTER as, like matchstick structures, ten houses are lost – compromised to the point that the only choice is demolition. GONE, homes belonging to the Wilsons, Coxheads, Butlers, Perrys, Fitchetts (after the building was tossed by the wind into the Ganaway's house), Rolfes, Witherbees, and Whitings (partial).

This list cannot in any way convey the lingering tragedy of these losses – people watching the sea's relentless march toward beloved properties, hopes of saving homes dashed, precious memories tainted not only by nature's fury but also by the conflicts that arose as the town, the courts and families wrestled with the ways to prevent further destruction. Now with revetments in place to protect the homes to the south and north of the beach, homeowners lucky enough to have survived those desperate years still look to the sea, and wonder about its next angry outburst. North beach grows steadily southward. Will it accrete fast enough to prevent yet another disaster? And will the town have the weapons in place to fight another battle?

*For a definite study of these issues: Timothy J. Wood's newly revised book, Breakthrough: The Story of Chatham's North Beach is now in bookstores.*



JANUARY 1988: The Galanti House Goes Down.

Globe staff photo/David L. Ryan

# Andrew Hardings Lane Beach in 2002:

## THE FACTS

■ The land on which the beach is primarily located (north of the remaining town property) is owned by Richard and Blair Perry, whose rights under Mass. law extend to the mean low water mark. A small part of the beach near Holway Street is owned by Mary Gould. There may still be small slivers above the low water line that belong to the Galantis and the Wilsons.

*Note: According to our understanding of Massachusetts law, once shorefront land has eroded and is covered by water, the ownership of that land is lost and reverts to the upland owners, regardless of any rebuilding or future accretion of the beach.*

■ Daring back to colonial times, the public continues to have the right to use the beach for fishing, fowling and navigation. The Perrys also entered into an agreement with the Town whereby they received some of the dredged sand from the harbor in exchange for allowing the public strolling rights along the beach. While the duration of that agreement is uncertain, it is our understanding that the Town regards it as presently in effect since at least some of the dredged sand is still on the beach.

■ Dredging. In the past, the beach has been the recipient of sand obtained from the dredging of Aunt Lydia's Cove. There are two dredges which work the harbor. The first, the Army Corps of Engineers' dredge ("The Currituck") comes once a year but, because of its size, can only dump sand in the water close to the beach, in the hope that it will migrate onto the beach itself. The second dredge from Barnstable County is scheduled by Ted Keon for individual operations according to need. There is a pumping unit, with a pipe, which deposits sand directly on the beach. Needless to say, this is the more reliable source of sand. Since the Town pays for this dredge, it is used only for projects which are deemed worthwhile and benefit the general public.

■ The Perrys plan to sell their portion of the beach. The reported asking price has been close to \$500,000. An earlier option on the property was not exercised. However, according to Blair Perry, the family is presently negotiating with a local developer who has offered close to the asking price.

■ The actual value of the beach is predicated on so many variables (the always changing coastline—for example, 10 feet of beach was lost during the latest northeaster, the question of other possible owners, the "best use" for the property considering conservation and zoning requirements, etc.) that it is almost impossible to keep surveys up to date or to make a credible appraisal.

■ The Land Bank Committee has shown some interest in acquiring the property, but the reputed asking price is a stumbling block. Coley Yeaw, representing the Committee, is in contact with the Perrys on a regular basis.

■ The Old Village Association would like to find some way to insure that the beach is conserved and made available for public use, free of charge, in perpetuity. The Association Board is presently meeting to consider a number of ways to achieve this goal. Representatives of the Association remain in contact with the Land Bank Committee and the Perry family in the hope that the beach can be purchased or a conservation easement can be arranged.

■ The Association has appointed a committee for the possible purchase of the beach consisting of Norm Pacun, chairman, Dick Towne, Bob Walsh, Carol Pacun and Debbie Aikman, ex-officio. The Committee has met with abutters to the beach and welcomes help and suggestions from any interested neighbors. Please contact Norm Pacun (945-1627) if you would like to help in this effort.

## Emergency Program in the Works for Chatham Harbor and South Beach

At their November 18 meeting, Chatham's Waterways Committee discussed possible ways of dealing with emergencies at South Beach. Stuart Smith, Harbormaster, outlined a possible program for next summer that he, Bill Hinchey, Town Manager, and Dan Tobin, Parks and Recreation, had put together, with the help of the Police and Fire Departments. If the outline is approved by the Selectmen, there will be a two-pronged approach. One person would be stationed in a small inflatable boat off-shore to help those swimmers who are caught on bars due to incoming tides, and another person with first aid experience in a 4-wheel drive vehicle would patrol the beach, respond to emergencies and educate the beachgoers about the current and the tides. Signage will be improved. "Swimming off South Beach is really not appropriate," Smith said, "but we have to recognize that people are using the beach, and therefore, the town has to deal with public safety issues."

The group determined that lifeguards would not be feasible because of the length of the beach, the large numbers of lifeguards needed to patrol it, and the services lifeguards would need (particularly bathrooms) — a big expense to the Town. Chatham will continue to designate the area as a "rural beach" (as opposed to a town beach) in order to avoid the rules and regulations required of town beaches as well as liability.

# Chatham Beach Watchers

## Monitor the Beach at Andrew Hardings Lane

*George Olmsted*

In support of Ted Keon, Director of Coastal Resources, the Friends of Chatham Waterways has developed Chatham Beach Watchers to monitor and profile Chatham beaches on a quarterly schedule. Technical guidance is provided by Jim O'Connell representing the Sea Grant program at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and the Cape Cod Cooperative Extension. The local profiling team includes Old Village residents Don and Debbie Aikman, David MacAdam, Donna Molander, George and Mary Olmsted and Phil Pratt.

The AHL beach provides an interesting study. It is a "pocket beach" in Chatham Harbor, so called since it is situated in a "pocket" between revetted coastal banks on both north and south sides. Strong tidal currents sweep the revetments and permit little or no beach area north and south, but the beach itself survives. In recent years the town has trucked spoil from the Chatham Harbor channel dredging to place it at AHL beach in an effort to preserve and nourish the beach. The coastal dune area landward of the beach sustains dune grasses to preserve the sand dunes.

Beaches have typical winter and summer shapes . . . sand moves down to



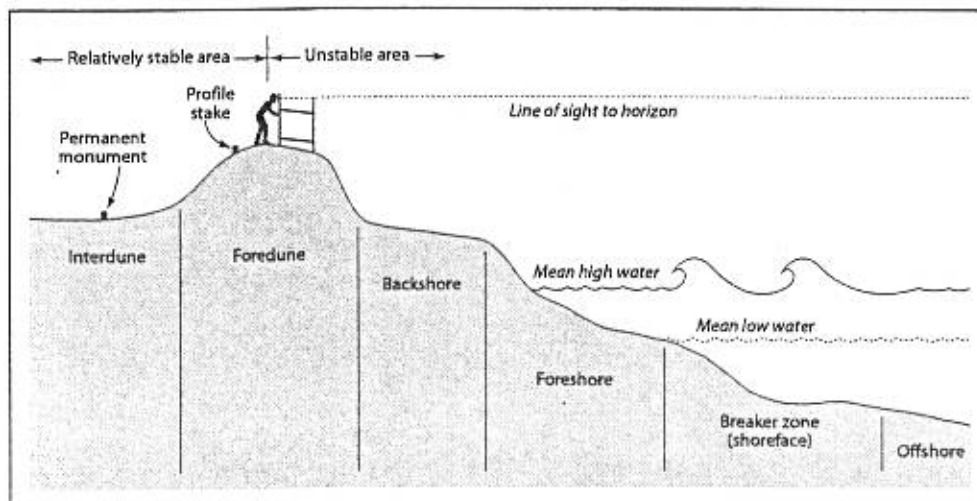
CHATHAM BEACH WATCHERS: Don Aikman (back to camera), Davey and David MacAdam and Donna Molander.

form near shore sandbars during winter, then sand from those bars is moved backwards to build up the beach during the summer. In addition to the impact of rising sea levels and wave-induced erosion, significant storms alter beach shape.

The purpose of the study is to record long-term shoreline statistics which document shoreline dynamics; to learn

more about natural processes and to better manage shoreline activities. This information should provide guidance to the Department of Coastal Resources about dune and beach restoration, to the Conservation Commission for conditions for seawall and revetment construction and to provide insight into the interactions of human activities and the natural changing of shoreline system and, thus, aid in improvement of coastal resource management.

Four times a year, using a portable device called an Emery Rod, the Chatham Beach Watchers measure beach surface profiles from precise geographic points along a precise transect to the low tide mark. Measurements are recorded every five feet along the transect direction. It is easy volunteer work, the fresh air and fellowship are rewarding. Additional volunteers are needed; call George Olmsted if you would like to help.



TERMS DESCRIBING A TYPICAL DUNE AND BEACH PROFILE

Note the location of the permanent monument and profile stake. (From SeaGrant, Woods Hole)