

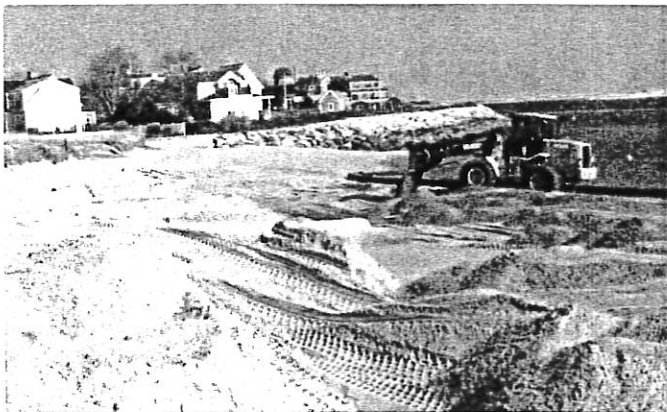


## Development at the Dolphin Gets a New Look

Developer David Oppenheim, the new owner of the Dolphin Motel property, has received preliminary approval from the Planning Board and the Historic Business District Commission to divide the property into six (including the inn) single family building lots. Each lot will at least hover around the 20,000 sq. ft. (R-20) requirements. This plan is considerable less dense than the project proposed by a previous bidder, who wished to build nine new homes on the property. Oppenheim has said he will not develop the properties himself but will sell them to individuals who wish to do so. In preparation for a hearing in front of the Zoning Board of Appeals (not yet scheduled), he has filed site plans which are at the Annex and available for public viewing.

The Board of the Old Village Association welcomes the reduction in the number of houses, which will make the development more compatible with adjoining residences. At previous hearings, the Board expressed preference that the Dolphin and other converted properties in Chatham business districts follow R-20 guidelines, and this remains the goal for the east Main Street area. However, until any rezoning takes place, this property is still in a business district. This raises

continued on page 3



*No, this is not the Sahara Desert but the beach at Andrew Hardings Lane. For eight days in November 8,000 cubic yards of sand were pumped onto the beach. We have a real beach, once again. The sixty-four dollar question remains: How long will it last?*

## New Structure Proposed for Lighthouse Site

The US Coast Guard has asked the Massachusetts Historical Commission to review its proposal for a Global Maritime Distress and Safety System Upgrade at the Chatham Coast Guard Station. The upgrade would involve the installation of a 54-foot tall whip antenna on the Chatham Lighthouse property. The antenna would be on a concrete pedestal and surrounded by a security fence.

In that the station is on the National Register of Historic Places and in the Old Village National Register District, the Massachusetts Historical Commission has asked for more details in order to determine the effect the structure will have on this historic property. The Old Village Association has also asked for some clarification and will forward it to abutters as soon as it arrives.

## Preservation Awards Applications Welcomed

The Chatham Historical Commission and the Chatham Historical Society are now accepting applications from property owners and other interested parties for the third annual Chatham Preservation Awards program. The awards are presented annually for local projects, such as the rehabilitation, reuse or restoration of historic structures completed between January 1, 1996 and January 1, 2006 as well as for landscape preservation and the preservation of streetscapes. Properties must be at least 75 years old to be eligible and primary emphasis will be given to exterior preservation. In 2004, two Old Village homes, the Snow house on School Street and the Barzilla Harding (Seymour) house on Water Street, received awards.

Specific details of the application process are on the Historical Society and Town websites. The Historical Commission has applications at Town Hall.



## From the President

Happy fall! This is a wonderful time of year here in the Old Village. The busy pace of the summer is over, many houses look sadly empty, the water sparkles more than usual and the russet colors of the Cape Cod season absolutely glisten in the late afternoon sun. This is a time of knuckling down to finish all the projects we never quite completed during the summer. It's a time of not wanting to look ahead to the long, often gray, days of winter. But it's a time for us, the Old Village Association Board of Directors, to focus on what we need to do to continue to maintain the charm of our little corner of the world.

We have some real challenges facing us as the town changes from a summer resort/fishing village to a more residential community. The number of hotel rooms is declining as motels and B&Bs are becoming sites for private homes. Some things we cannot control, like erosion, high tides and hurricanes! But there are many things that we can influence. Don't you love the tasteful restorations that have been completed in our neighborhood? Don't you hope that our zoning and other restrictions will encourage more of them?

I've been coming to the village for many years...first as a child at The Hawes House (a boarding house at the corner of Main and Water Streets) with my family and later as a young wife at our summer cottage with my husband and children. Now we are frequently here enjoying our retirement and appreciating the time to look around and appreciate this lovely area. As President I hope to work on your behalf to keep the Old Village as special as it is.

Enclosed with this newsletter is the current membership form and dues envelope. Please take the time to enclose a note if you have ideas to share. PLEASE NOTE: We would welcome your donations; just add them to your membership dues. All contributions to the Old Village Association are tax deductible and will go into our general fund. Thank you for your continuing support.

*Nancy Koerner, President*



*Old Village, 2005*

*Dreaming of Another White Christmas?*

### Support for a Neighborhood Association

Word of advice from Clair Baisly, 1986

We hope that some of you, this summer, will use this Newsletter and our files, as a base for a Village Organization. Some stalwart residents (summer or otherwise) with the help of a civic-minded lawyer, could easily make this into a non-profit organization for information, neighborliness and a sense of community.



Ten years later, in 1996, the Old Village Association became a reality. Keep the dream alive by participating in your neighborhood association.



### *In Memoriam 2005*

Jean Berdan      John Mack      Barbara Streibert

## MORE ABOUT ZONING

### Zoning Rewrite: Is the Planning Board Going Underground?

In October, the Planning Board decided to move the bulk of its discussions on the proposed zoning bylaw rewrite from the Board itself to a subcommittee, which would meet on a regular basis with the mandate to review the work of the consultant, John Connery, and come up with proposals for the full Board to consider. Members of the Subcommittee are Wayne Jostrand, Chairman, Skip Kendrick and Len Sussman. All televised Planning Board meetings on zoning will be cancelled at least through the end of the year. The Subcommittee's meetings, open to the public, are not televised. No one in the audience is being allowed to speak except possibly at the end of the meeting, at the will of the Chairman. People may submit questions or comments in writing. Apparently, the Planning Board has been frustrated by its lack of progress on the rewrite, which is now tentatively scheduled for a November 2006 Town Meeting vote. The Board has suggested that public input must be curtailed in order to make even that deadline. Those who have been attending the meetings on a regular basis see things quite differently, feeling that community discussion is a necessary component of any new town regulations, and that the lack of televised hearings is compromising the public's right to know.

This new process presents difficulties for representatives of neighborhood associations who are trying to keep members informed of new proposals which will directly affect them. It has been the experience of the Old Village Association that once documents reach a final stage it is almost impossible to successfully question content. Almost everyone agrees that any lack of progress because of public participation is certainly preferable to bringing an unpopular document to Town Meeting and having it rejected. The Old Village Association Board wants to assure its members that it will do everything possible to keep them in the loop.

### Dolphin - continued from page 1

the question not only of lot size (in theory, these lots could be further subdivided by new owners), but also lot and building coverage requirements as well as the amount of green space and the size of each building all, of which are regulated differently in a GB-2 district. The Board is glad to see in Oppenheim's ZBA filing that he is proposing "to restrict coverage on each of the new lots to the maximum permitted in an R-20 zone." He plans to ask permission to increase the coverage on the lot which contains the historic inn. The Board hopes that as the regulatory process moves forward, conditions which could control the density and mass of the development will become a part of any approval given.

### Planning Board Subcommittee Nixes Transitional District for Main Street

In October, the Planning Board Subcommittee on the zoning bylaw rewrite voted to reject consultant John Connery's proposed "Downtown Residential Transitional District." The area in question is east of 400 Main Street (on the north) and Homestead Lane (south) and abuts the Old Village National Register District. Instead, Skip Kendrick and Chairman Wayne Jostrand recommended to extend the R-20 zoning through that small section. Len Sussman, architect for the original Dolphin project, was not present for the vote but stated later that he preferred the Connery plan.

Connery's proposal, which would have allowed by right attached housing and clusters and by special permit, multi-family housing, was opposed by all three neighborhood associations. Debbie Aikman, speaking for the Old Village Association, stated that the proposal would not be acceptable in terms of density and appropriateness.

If instead, as the Old Village Association suggested, the Main Street area is rezoned for single family residential use, all commercial businesses will be permitted to remain as non-conforming uses, even under new ownership. A special permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals would be required for a different commercial use. The conversion to residences would be by right. All zoning rules for R-20 development would apply, including those concerning lot coverage and setback requirements. The Board of the Old Village Association feels that this is the optimum solution for this small area which abuts an historic residential neighborhood.

Please note that the recommendation to change the area's zoning has not been subject to the vote of the entire Planning Board. That vote will probably not be made until the beginning of 2006. The Association will inform interested members of the deliberation schedule. The Board, as always, is ready to respond to any questions or comments on this issue. The web site ([www.oldvillagechatham.org](http://www.oldvillagechatham.org)) will carry up-to-date information. Meanwhile, members should know that the Board remains committed to preserving east Main Street as one of Chatham's historic assets.

### A Poet's Thoughts on Change

There will be stars over the place forever;  
Though the house we loved and the street we loved are lost,  
Every time the earth circles her orbit  
On the night the autumn equinox is crossed,  
Two stars we knew, poised on the peak of midnight  
Will reach their zenith; stillness will be deep;  
There will be stars over the place forever,  
There will be stars forever, while we sleep.

Sara Teasdale

## EDITORIAL

# The Changing Face of Chatham

In a recent issue of the Chronicle, the editor worried about the cost of real estate in Chatham and wondered if upscale development might in the future change the town's character. It might have been more accurate to say that such changes have been occurring right in front of our eyes for years. After all, it was in 1996 when Old Village home owners, with no special expertise, started to worry about the changes they were experiencing – escalating development and the pervasive demolition of older homes for what some called “Mac-Mansions.”

Fifteen years ago, in a poll conducted by the Long Range Planning Committee, a wide majority of Chatham residents said they wanted the town to remain a small fishing village. Due to a combination of forces, some of which we once had the power to control, we let this goal slip away. Chatham is now an upscale resort – a resort of great beauty and charm – but a resort nevertheless whose primary purpose is to create an environment which appeals to the second home buyer or the affluent vacationer. The town has crossed a line from which there probably is no return.

The biggest result of our ever-accelerating upscale movement is that development, redevelopment and related tourist-oriented businesses are the engines that drive the town's economy. The individuals who deal in the buying, selling and conversion of property have become very rich – and very powerful. With our present real estate market and the huge amounts of money floating about comes an obligation of town government to do its business in public, to provide accurate, timely information to its citizens, to create a non-threatening environment for public input, and to guarantee that every decision made is out in the open for all to see. In this regard, the Old Village Association sent a letter to the town asking that boards and commissions assure, through the use of microphones and podiums, that those in attendance can see and hear the proceedings. We are glad to learn that the Director of Community Development has urged that these simple changes be enacted and we hope they are carried out.

The Old Village Association efforts were but a small piece of what must be done to help our town retain whatever sense of community that remains, and to be sure that economic power does not lead to the stifling of public comment or to the perception of wrongful conduct. There are some disquieting developments. We had hoped that the televising of town meetings would be expanded to include all boards and commissions. However, so far, that has not happened. In addition, the Planning Board has decided that the major work on the zoning bylaw rewrite will be done, not by the Planning Board itself in televised meetings, but by a subcommittee meeting which is not televised and at which public comment is not being allowed.

We hope the Chronicle will support the public's right to know and will send reporters to those meetings which are off the radar screen. Before any solutions will be found for future problems, we must concentrate on improving the process of decision-making to insure that it is open, fair and does not discourage alternate views. In the Old Village we have always believed that information is power, and that all citizens are deserving of as much information as they need to make informed choices.

*Carol Pacun*

## For More User Friendly Board and Commission Hearings

The Town should:

- Provide a podium for the applicant and place it so that he or she can be seen and heard by both the audience and the panel
- Put a copy of any plans up on an easel so they are visible to all
- Provide microphones (with batteries) for board and commission members, applicants and members of the public
- At the beginning of each session, the chairman should state the procedures and insist that applicants use the above so those in the audience can be fully informed

– From OVA Board of Directors' letter to the Town Manager, September 19, 2005

## Long Range Planning Committee Back to Work

The Long Range Planning Committee, chaired by Richard Batchelor (“Batch”), met this month after a long hiatus to establish a procedure by which it can ascertain the compatibility of zoning bylaw rewrite proposals with the goals of the Long Range/Comprehensive Plan.

The purpose of the Long Range Plan (LRP), which passed unanimously at the 2001 Town Meeting, was to provide Chatham with a blueprint for the future and to aid in any zoning bylaw rewrite. The Committee hopes to set up a process by which it can over the next months assess segments of the zoning rewrite in terms of the LRP goals.



The current zoning bylaw draft, which does not highlight changes or include the present regulations for comparison, will complicate the Committee's work.

Members expressed the hope that the format will be revised in the near future. However, in that the LRP Committee is made up of representatives from town boards and commissions and includes at-large members, the group offers expertise in a variety of areas and is in a good position to make appropriate recommendations to the Planning Board. Batch encourages interested citizens to participate in the meetings and to write the Committee. He assured the audience that their comments would be “taken seriously.”

## TALKING ABOUT THE OLD VILLAGE – *What Could be Better?*

Under the leadership of Ann Ellis and Nancy Koerner, the Old Village Oral History Committee has completed six oral histories. The interviews have been done, the tapes copied, transcriptions made and editing complete. Eventually, the tapes will be sent to the Chatham Historical Society, and the transcriptions will be put into book form.

If you would like to be a part of this project, please contact the Association. We need people with memories of the “good old days,” as well as people who would like to conduct interviews. We have new, state of the art equipment.

Here is a sample of what's to come . . .

### **On Chatham Winters – Dan Buckley**

As I recall, the town had one snowplow. They had road gangs that went out with different foremen for different sections of town. They'd have so many men per gang and they'd start, for example, where Shore Road begins and you'd work right up there to where the stop lights are now. The gang of men would be all lined up across the road and shoveled the snow out 'till they got to the end of their route...You could work on a gang if you were 16 years old...All of us kids, once we turned 16, got our work permits. We didn't get paid until March and back then we only got 15 to 20 cents an hour.

### **The Rusty Car on the Beach: A Mystery Solved – Lucille Howes**

There used to be a road on the side of the Hawes Houses, and it was eventually washed out. When we had the break in North Beach (in 1987), an old car of Freeman's was exposed. His father had told him he had to get rid of his old car. He didn't know what to do with it, so he got his friends to help him. They took it to the beach, dug a big hole and buried it. When the storm came up, it exposed the car after all that time! They had put loads of sand over it and it was all right for years.

### **On the Old Village – Alice Weidman**

It was a very noisy and active neighborhood with all the children playing and the fishermen coming and going to the Mill Pond with their wheelbarrows. The Mill Pond was a very active place. There were many shanties with piles of shells thrown out their doors and boats leaving for Inward Point or just returning. So the motors could be heard. Louis Tuttle drove his big truck down to the pier and loaded barrels of fish to take to Boston. Even in the '30s the Chatham American Legion Band came to practice every Monday night and often marched up and down School Street. The gypsies and ragmen and fruit and vegetable vendors came and went and the ice men and grocery trucks or horses and wagons went up and down the village streets.

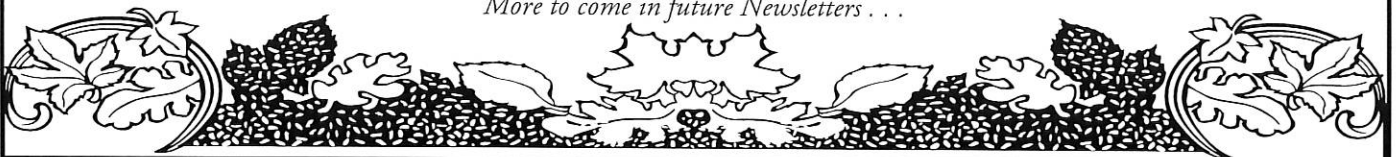
### **Newcomer's Lament – Anita Eldridge**

Anita Eldridge lived in the Old Village when she was stationed at the Coast Guard Station during World War II. After her marriage to Sullie Eldridge, she moved to Chatham permanently. People used to kid me a lot because I was an outsider. One day, I went next door and the neighbors were eating what looked like a bowl of soup. But there were big things in the bowls...I said, “What's that?” And they said, “Fish eyes.” I said, “Oh my God.” I went home and told Sullie they were eating fish eyes next door. He cracked up because he knew they were scallops. I didn't know – I was just an outsider.

### **And a Compliment – Dick Temple**

Chatham was always a wealthy town – especially in natural resources. It was a smaller world and a slower time...Lots of houses like my wife's family house (72 Main Street) were unfinished inside, but it was warm and full of history and so forth. Our house was also warm and inviting. Today, my observation is that it's more important to have square footage...If you have something that is bigger than the next person's, apparently it makes a statement. Unfortunately, when you put a lot of statements together you change the entire flavor of the place. That's why I'm so pleased to know there's an association in the Old Village section.

*More to come in future Newsletters . . .*





*The Board of Directors of the  
Old Village Association  
wishes you a joyous holiday season  
and a healthy, peaceful New Year.*

**OVA Board of Directors**

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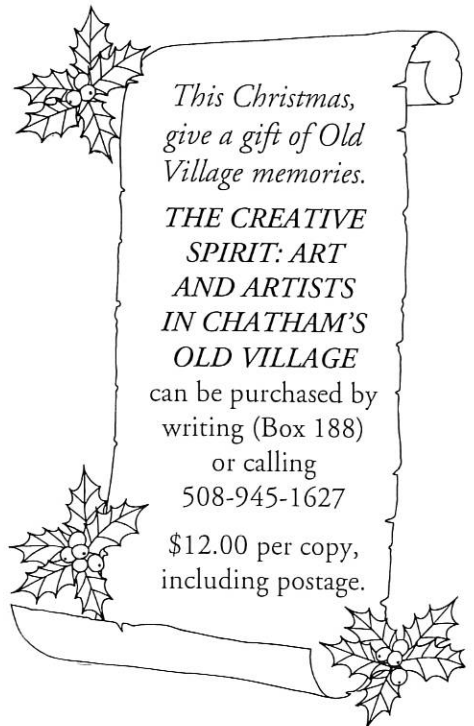
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*working in the present*

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