

Keeping Our History Alive



Apple tree blooming near our conservation area © EJH 2019

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CHATHAM ALLIANCE FORUM ~ THE BELL ~ VILLAGE NEWS/EVENTS

FROM THE EDITOR

Conservation is on everyone's minds these days and this issue highlights the many perils of over-use, overcrowding, and overbuilding. Fortunately there are also several tools presented herein to aid us immediately in good stewardship of our neighborhood's unique architectural and natural assets. Year-round, we are fortunate to enjoy the splendor, shelter and shade of a variety of trees—some of these gems are featured in this issue's lovely photographic arboreal tour.

Hearfelt thanks go to our tireless contributors: John Whelan, Bob Lear, Carol Pacun, Joan Horrocks, Nancy Koerner, David MacAdam, and a special shout out to Murray Green for heading up our new Kids For Food Facebook page!

Wishing you a happy summer,

Jennifer Longworth
newsletter@oldvillagechatham.org

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Greetings Fellow Villagers,

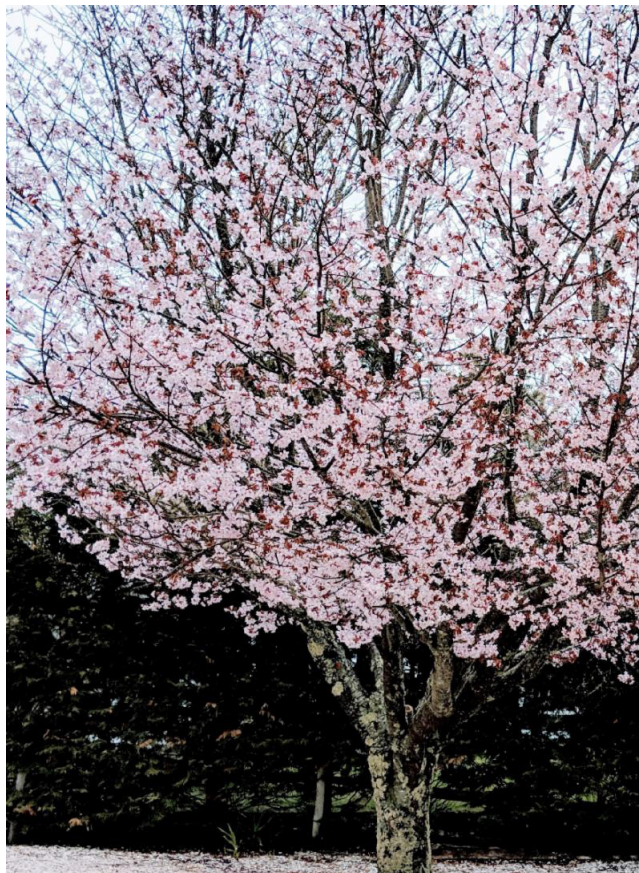
Summer has finally arrived with bright sun, blue skies and the usual astounding number of happy vacationers. It has been a quiet year for the Old Village with only the occasional sound of nail guns from our many construction sites in the neighborhood. I have included an important article in this newsletter explaining what to do if you receive a notice from the ZBA announcing a neighbor's building project as well as tips for you as you try to navigate our many boards and commissions as you are planning your own alterations.

August will be a busy month. We look forward to our annual Kids For Food event as well as the Porch's get together. The guest speaker at our annual meeting on August 19th will be Bob Staake, renowned children's author and New Yorker cover artist.

I hope to see you at these events and wish you a lovely summer season.

Warmly,

Winnie Lear, President
directors@oldvillagechatham.org



Kwasan Cherry © EJH 2019

Let's Not Kill the Goose That Lays the Golden Egg

~ Carol Pacun

All of us are really good at identifying problems which affect our communities and quality of life, but when it comes to doing something about them before they become almost impossible to solve - that's a different matter. For example, a year has gone by since the Chatham Alliance for Preservation and Conservation sponsored an important forum on the unintended consequences of the town's popularity as a tourist destination. The discussion was comprehensive and far reaching, with most agreeing that Chatham cannot continue to encourage an ever growing group of vacationers year after year without some risk.

Chatham's future as a viable town as well as a popular vacation spot depends on our dealing with uncomfortable issues which are tempting to push aside. Sunny summer days (whenever they occur!), blue water and remarkable views make it easy to convince ourselves that everything is and will be perfect forever. After all, little inconveniences have been and will continue to be manageable. Haven't we learned to get out of the Old Village without driving down Main Street? Don't we always walk the loop early in the morning when we have the town to ourselves? And, crowds are only here for a couple of months... well, OK, maybe closer to four months. So, why worry? Everyone is having a wonderful time.

Maybe we can let the future take care of itself. But in this new age of mass tourism, an increasing number of towns and cities which had counted on summer visitors for their economic survival are now facing a meltdown. Expensive new building and infrastructure are required to meet the needs of visitors. Full time residents are being priced out of their homes by escalating real estate prices and rentals. Local rental agents find themselves competing with worldwide businesses such as Airbnb. Eventually, those tourists who have enjoyed the unique-but disappearing- character of their favorite vacation spots will choose to go elsewhere. In June, a New York Times article suggested alternate vacations for those who are tired of overcrowding, overpricing and over-development.

Does this apply to our little seaside fishing village? No, we are not Venice Italy or even Bar Harbor Maine, overwhelmed by tourists - especially those arriving by cruise ships. But, could you have imagined ten years ago that up to seven tour buses at one time would stop at the Overlook? Or that young people are leaving Chatham, unable to afford to own or rent a home for their families? Who knows what's next. Are cruise ships in our future? Harold Goodwin, with the International Center for Responsible Tourism, commented in the Boston Globe that "if you constantly talk about sustainable tourism but don't do anything, and the growth continues, at some point you tip over into a crisis."

I don't mean to cast a shadow on your perfect summer day. But thanks to the Overlook, a five star beach, the Coast Guard station/lighthouse, many historic houses and our proximity to town, we in the Old Village are at the center of the tourist business. The future is in our hands, but only if we have the courage (and take the time) to press the town on the issue of overcrowding and convince those doubters that economic growth itself is at risk if we become so crowded that we destroy our reputation as a charming seaside town, which all can enjoy in peace and relative quiet.

June 2019



Lichen on the Old Village Schoolhouse cedar © EJH 2019

How to Make Your Views Known to Boards and Commissions

If you receive an abutters notice or read a legal notice in the Chronicle that activity in which you have a concern will be occurring near your property, you may communicate with the relevant authority to express those concerns. Letters should be sent to the appropriate entity at 261 George Ryder Road, Chatham, MA 02633, or you may e-mail it to the contact person shown below. Since the notices are just summaries, it is a good idea to request a copy of the plans, which you usually can obtain by e-mail by calling the contact person at the Community Development Department: 508-945-5168.

Request that your letter be put in the appropriate file and read into the record. Your letter does not have to be long or detailed. It is important to submit your letter well in advance of the hearing, since information packets are often sent to the commissioners a week ahead.

Boards and Commissions Review the Following:

Each of the Town's regulatory boards and commissions has a specific mandate, and each has a web page on the Town's website. For the Historical Commission (CHC) and Zoning Board

of Appeals (ZBA) this page includes references to the rules and regulations which explain in detail what that entity may rule upon. Your letter or comments will have greater impact to the extent that it addresses those issues.

CHC: For buildings listed as contributing structures in the OVA National Historic Register District the CHC considers whether the proposed alterations impact over 25% of the gross floor area and are “substantial” to the extent they would jeopardize its status as an historic building. If the CHC finds they are, it must refer the matter to the Cape Cod Commission, which usually will try to negotiate with the applicant to reduce the impact, and/or deny the project. The primary focus of the CHC hearings is on preservation of historic character and streetscape. The contact person for the CHC is Michele Clarke: mclarke@chatham-ma.gov.

ZBA: Jurisdiction of the ZBA is governed by the Town zoning bylaw, and it hears applications which are not approved by the Building Commissioner. The bylaw is very detailed, including the percentage of land that may be covered by a structure, setback distances, etc., with which many of the houses in the OVA do not comply. In that instance the property owner needs to obtain a variance or special permit, which requires that the project will not be “substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood” than the existing situation. Since this is a very subjective standard, the ZBA pays particular attention to concerns of abutters and neighbors and welcomes their comments. If the Board does grant a special permit, it may also restrict noise and/or working hours as a condition of the permit, as well as address issues of construction vehicles impeding traffic. The contact person for the ZBA is Sarah Clark: sclark@chatham-ma.gov.

Chatham Planning Board: This Board regulates sub-divisions and approves site plans on any change of use of property. While the OVA has little open land available, “approval not required” divisions of properties which are nonconforming due to size can occur if there is adequate frontage on a passable way. The contact person is Aly Sabatino: asabatino@chatham-ma.gov.

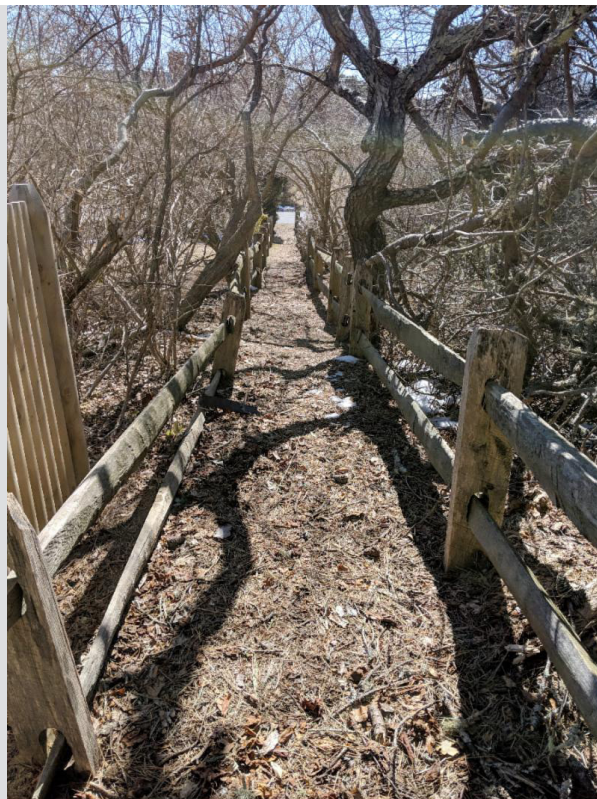
Chatham Conservation Commission: This Commission has jurisdiction over proposed alterations to the land within 100 feet of a wetland (e.g. the Mill Pond and adjacent marshes). It does not have any authority over buildings except to the extent the footprint is proposed to expand in the resource area. However, neighbors may legitimately express concerns over cutting or planting of vegetation that impacts their property or view. The contact person is Mary Fougere: mfougere@chatham-ma.gov.

What to look for in the plans:

- The mass, size and height of the new addition (especially if it compromises the original structure)
- The increase of building footprint into the setbacks, which can result in loss of privacy for abutters, loss of greenspace and views
- Inappropriate and invasive architectural obtrusions, such as second story decks, cupolas, lighthouses, bay windows, etc.
- Incompatibility with other houses nearby

The Old Village Association hopes that together we can set high standards for development in our neighborhood and maintain the special characteristics we worked so hard to protect and for which we were honored as a National Register District.

–Bob Lear



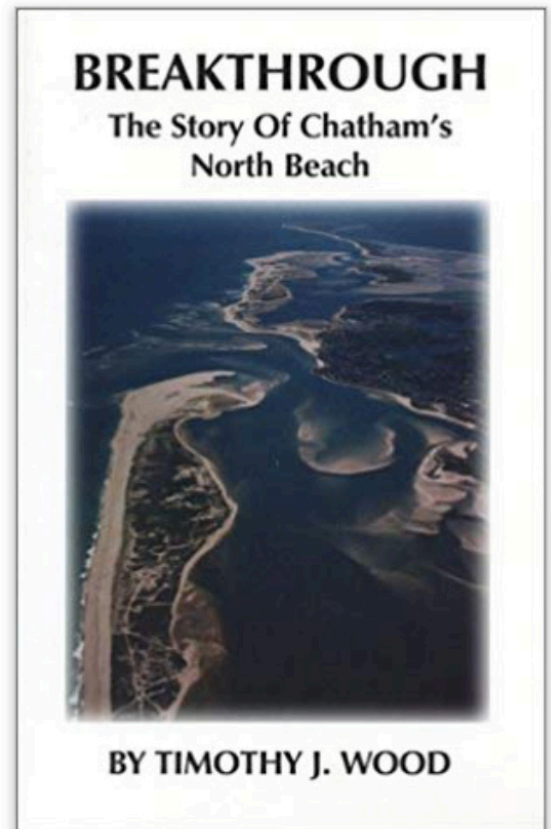
© EJH 2019

Ancient History

I have lived in the Old Village for a long time. The years, and there have been a lot of them, have just flown by. In June, on one of the first warm days of the year, I had a conversation with a young couple celebrating their honeymoon on the beach. They were about halfway between Andrew Hardings Lane and Holway Street and had just waded into the water about ankle deep. The young man asked me if the water ever got warm enough for swimming. I said that the answer to his question would vary from person to person. I told him that the very cold

water is what we get when Cape Cod has a cold, dismal spring like we had this year. It takes a lot of sun to warm the Atlantic, and the sun has been a stranger most of 2019. I invited them to come back in August and that swimming, or at least wading, wouldn't be so painful. Their next question was why there were no houses along that stretch of beach. I said it was a long story and I suggested they pick up *Breakthrough -The Story of Chatham's North Beach* by Tim Wood at one of the local bookstores.

Breakthrough was first published in 1988, 31 years ago. Many of the people in the book have either moved on from Chatham or died. It may sound funny, but I remember the events of 30 plus years ago as if it was yesterday. For those of you who were not here and those of you faint of memory, it was a frightening and exciting time. On January 2, 1987, the beach broke through. North Beach was a barrier beach extending all the way down from Nauset Beach in Orleans. Barrier beaches have a habit of breaking through and breaking up and reforming over time. And North Beach had broken through before and more than once. As a barrier beach extends longer and longer, water seeks a weak spot and pressure builds and in a storm or period of particularly high tides, breaks through. Sometimes, the break fills right back in and sometimes it grows wider and wider.



I owned a Suzuki Samurai at the time and decided to drive down from Nauset the next day to examine the break first hand. When I arrived, I found a low area in the sand about 30 feet across and no water flowing through. A number of other brave beach drivers had crossed the low area and were headed south towards the point. So I slowly drove across and thought at the time that this was one break that would fill in within a few days. I guess I was a timid soul who knew that the tide would shortly be coming in so my time south off the break was just a few minutes. I got back on the northern or safe side before the first trickle of ocean water appeared. I knew others were far down the beach, but I was not going to risk getting stuck south of the break. I made my way home and, the next day, watched from Holway Street as the break widened and became permanent. I had no idea the little trickle of water would lead to 9 and 1/2 houses being lost to erosion. I had no idea that for the next 5 years, I would fight almost every day for the right to pay to protect my own home. So to find out the rest of the story, as Paul Harvey used to say, pick up your own copy of *Breakthrough* and find out just why I say it was an exciting and frightening time.

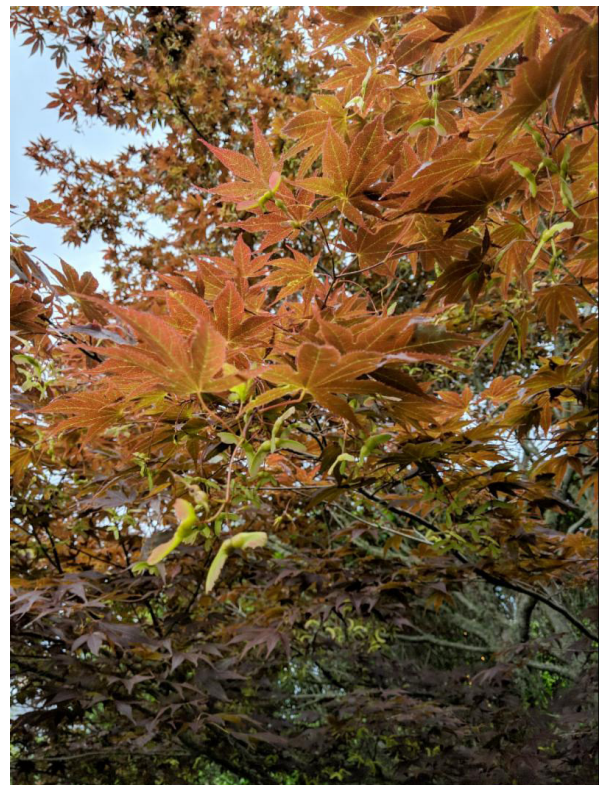
—John Whelan

Chatham Alliance for Preservation and Conservation Forum 2019

Nearly all the energy of the Alliance for Preservation and Conservation over the past year went into planning and hosting its annual Forum for 2019, which took shape over several fall and winter months. Following the success of the Alliance's 2018 Forum Chatham in the 21st Century, several related topics were considered, including Chatham's economy, and the retention of young families in Chatham. As these were addressed by other civic groups, the Alliance turned to the seriously neglected matter of addressing climate change in Chatham. Working with Kristin Andres, educational outreach officer of the Association to Preserve Cape Cod, the Forum **Make A Difference at Home in A Changing Climate: Eco-friendly Ideas for You and Your Property** was planned, and held on June 22nd.

Following her introductory comments describing climate change at the local level in the context of the national and world climate situation, Kristin spoke about native plants and their connection to our gardens. Unlike imported species, native plants are particularly well adapted to survive in the unique climate conditions and soils of Cape Cod. Further, unlike non-native species, they play host to myriad insect species at the bottom of the food chain for native birds and wildlife. Kristin outlined some ways to better manage our properties to enhance nature's functions such as planting for diversity by including trees and chemical-free wild areas, instead of chemical dependent monocultures (e.g. turf lawns) with comparatively little carbon sequestration capacity and high irrigation requirements.

Teresa Sprague of BlueFlax Design discussed rainwater management at home. With clearly defined wet and dry seasons on Cape Cod, rain barrel technology is particularly suited for our properties. This technology has evolved to be very functional and aesthetically pleasing. Planting for diversity optimizes water use and leads to pervious soils and healthy soil biomes, whereas investing in monocultures does not. Just what is the function of our turf lawns? How much turf lawn do we really need on our property? Both questions are worth thinking about. Rain gardens are designed, as an alternative for a portion of our property, specifically to optimize the use of water and foster healthy natural soils. In Massachusetts, all municipal water is potable. With potable water becoming scarcer in a changing climate we need think more carefully about how we use it.



Maple © EJH 2019

Michael McCluskey of Cape Save gave a spirited talk on composting - how to compost at home. Michael described his personal experiences in aggressively working toward an “organic homestead”. Think a little about everything you bring onto your property and everything that leaves your property. Municipal recycling is good, but think of the carbon produced by the fossil fuels expended in hauling off-Cape. Intelligent composting at home decreases what must be hauled away for uncertain disposal, and nurtures a healthy soil biome on your property that hosts native plants, insects and species more effectively than fertilizers and pesticides, without their unwanted side-effects.

Briana Kane of Cape Light Compact spoke on energy efficiency at home. The best way to reduce energy consumption and the production of waste carbon is to minimize the use of energy from fossil fuels, and seek maximum efficiency from that you do use. Briana described the home energy audit provided by Cape Save - a tailored set of suggestions you may want to consider implementing in your home to decrease energy usage from fossil fuels. Energy saving has moved well beyond the use of energy efficient lightbulbs, storm windows and insulation, and today includes such things as a “smarter home” (e.g. Wi-Fi thermostats), and solar off-sets on your property.

This Forum was an exercise in promoting climate change mitigation “lite”, especially suited to the recent convert just awakening to climate change. Where better to start addressing the problem than on your own property where there can be no controversy? Yet, like others attending, I brought to the Forum a more global perspective on climate change and related threats. It was against this background that I listened to what was being said. I was consoled by the optimism of the speakers. Every one of them conveyed the belief that if we all pulled together we would eventually lick our climate problems. After all isn't that the American way? But by the end of the Forum I was not fully convinced. The proposals described, while all good, were dismally out of scale with the magnitude of the problem. Quantification and measurement were notoriously absent at this forum—likely by intention—making a comparison of the effectiveness of solutions to the magnitude of problems impossible.

Early on in the program, a graphic showed that the carbon expelled by a car in one year is sequestered by the native plants on a square plot of land 1000 feet on each side - about 23 acres. The NC State University Agricultural Extension puts this in grimmer terms: a mature tree sequesters around 50 pounds of carbon a year. A typical gasoline-powered car driven about 20,000 miles in a year yielding 27 mpg expels around two tons of carbon (one estimate is four times higher!). Do the math. That's eighty mature trees. On my quarter-acre lot, I have four mature trees. I am sequestering about 5% of the carbon my car expels in a year. The other 95%, or 3,800 pounds, accumulates along with everyone else's in our atmosphere. Yes, there are plenty of forests, but enough to absorb the total carbon expelled from all the automobiles? I doubt it, especially since a warming climate is putting new stresses on our forest lands. Half of all carbon emissions from fossil fuels have been produced in the last 30 years, and about

85% since the end of WWII. Our plant world remains the most effective and cost efficient means on the horizon for sequestering carbon. The disconnect between the good I can do in addressing climate change at home, and what I contribute to climate change on the road is staggering. And none of this takes into account our other uses of fossil fuels.

Several speakers gave very convincing arguments for organic gardens and native species, as well as easy ways of going this route. Much of what they suggest I already practice on my little quarter-acre with house and “Cape Cod (weed) lawn”. In the early evening, I often see a bunny or two chomping away at whatever grows out there. I’m confident I’m not poisoning them. There are birds and insects (not all welcome) back there as well. But when I go out on the road in my carbon-producing car, my windshield and front grille are almost never soiled by a dead bug anymore. What’s going on? My property is fast becoming a bug oasis in a world devoid of insects. The Guardian of Great Britain is about the only newspaper left not beholden to commercial interests, and about the only newspaper left that does serious climate change reporting. Yes, there is a connection. In a recent article, they reported that in the past few years the world has lost 40% of its insect population. Insects are at the bottom of the food chain. Soon populations further up the food chain will be crashing. How can this be? Global rising temperatures don’t occur in a vacuum. Everything, from the tiniest insect to the greatest ocean and beyond, in our world’s environment is linked to everything else. Rising temperatures bring chaos everywhere else in the environment. Crashing species populations is just one. It makes me feel good to do what I do on my little quarter acre, but when measured against the damage done by large scale injection of carbon into the atmosphere, will what I do on my property really matter?

Composting is good. Buying with an eye toward composting is even better. Regardless, we still use a tremendous amount of plastic packaging. Our country has yet to begin developing infrastructure to effectively recycle the plastics collected in recycle bins. Worse still, the fossil fuel industry, in the face of declining fuel usage, is gearing up to flood consumers with a tsunami of new plastic packaging.



Tug of War
©EJH 2019

One can argue with projections, but no one can argue with what's going on right now. While the corporate print and visual news media go out of their way to keep us in the dark as to what is happening by reporting weather and climate events in isolation from climate science, there is not a total blackout of information about the big picture. We just have to dig a little for it. Good information can be found in print publications like *The Guardian* and *Scientific American*, and by asking pointed questions of our internet search engines. In addition, there are some very informative books out there synthesizing what's happening right now - Naomi Kline's *This Changes Everything: Capitalism and the Climate*, and Jeff Goodall's *The Waters Will Come: Rising Seas, Sinking Cities, and The Remaking of the Civilized World*. There are many others with a broader scope, and a less optimistic take-away, than *Make A Difference at Home in A Changing Climate*.

Close monitoring of climate events over the past couple of decades reveals conclusively a powerful trend in a bad direction. We don't need doomsayers' forecasts of the future to tell we are in a civilizational emergency, and perhaps even an existential crisis, with respect to climate change and the environment. We all now experience at least minor inconveniences from climate change, and soon life for everyone (not just the Third World poor) will get much more difficult. Our present lifestyle is simply not sustainable in a warming climate. Yet, both major political parties and the titans of capitalism would have us continue to put our heads in the sand regarding climate change and the terminal despoiling of our ecosphere to save their economic and political order.

I for one care deeply about the future of life in the world beyond my own lifetime - a decade or two at most. If we can manage to take drastic action now, as demanded by many millennials, we may be able to mitigate, and perhaps even ameliorate, some of the worst long term consequences of our species' recent abdication of responsibility as stewards of the land, sea and sky that sustain us. The economic and political systems that got us into this mess are a creation of humankind, and are still sustained by humankind. They can be changed by humankind. Anything less is no more than rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic. Do we stay the course to worldwide disaster, or do we take the kind of eleventh-hour drastic concerted action today necessary to save ourselves? That's the grim choice facing us.

I'd like to think that ***Make A Difference at Home in A Changing Climate***, in spite of its very limited focus, served as a climate change wake-up call, and that the solution lies in all of us working together for fundamental and immediate change in the way we do things not just as a community, but as a nation, and as a world.

—David MacAdam

OVA Representative to The Chatham Alliance for Preservation
and Conservation



Dogwood ©EJH 2019

The Bell

What do you think of when you hear the word “bell”? Church bell, jingle bell(s), For Whom the Bell Tolls, bell(e) of the ball ... or, if you were a waitress at an inn in the ‘40’s you’d know exactly what “bell” means. It could only be the old-fashioned school bell that was kept on the lovely old oak buffet that stood in the dining room of The Hawes House.

The Hawes House was an inn that opened in Chatham in 1892. Some described it as “thirty rooms with one bath” as was portrayed on the old radio show Glamour Manor. Actually The Hawes House had about thirty rooms but more than one bath! The main house still exists at 114 Main Street as a private home. Meals were served in the dining room at tables of ten or twelve. The bell was rung prior to each meal to call folks to breakfast, lunch and dinner. A big treat for youngsters (and older folks too) was to have the waitress share her job of ringing that bell out on the deck. And each morning at 7:30AM a waitress would go to each level of bedrooms to ring the bell and awaken the sleepy guests so they’d be ready for breakfast



photo courtesy N.H.Koerner

at 8AM. In the 1980's the bell was ceremoniously handed down from the owners of The Hawes House to a family living year-round on School Street. In that way the bell would stay in the neighborhood. A few years later, as those year-rounders prepared to move on, they, with great ceremony and a bottle of wine, passed on the bell to the Koerners for safe keeping.

Now and then you can still hear the bell clanging...to cheer on the foot racers as they pass the house during the New Year's Eve Noise Parade, or to proclaim the winner of the annual whiffle ball game that takes place each 4th of July on the front lawn.

Hopefully the bell will always be in the neighborhood to remind us of the time when it was used to mark an event in the day of vacationers at the Hawes House. And those of us who remember the Hawes House will think of that bell when we hear the word "Bell".

—Nancy Husted Koerner



Wild Animals in the Copper Beech! Young and old happily together

Old Village Association Officers 2018-2019

directors@oldvillagechatham.org

Officers: One-year terms

President:	Winnie Lear
Vice President:	Debbie Aikman
Treasurer:	Nancy Koerner
Clerk:	Bill Horrocks

Directors: 7-11, each with a three-year term

Term ending 2019	Debbie Aikman
	Nancy Koerner
	David MacAdam
	Lisa Green

Term ending 2021	Winnie Lear
	Carol Pacun
	Bill Horrocks

Term ending 2020	Lisa Edge
	Nancy Phelps
	Jennifer Longworth
	George Olmsted

Appointed	
Corresponding Secretary:	Lisa Edge
Assistant Treasurer:	Nancy Phelps

~ Village News ~

Tuesday, August 6th



Mark your calendar for our 8th Annual Kids for Food Collection Date! Once again we'll be collecting food and checks for the Chatham Food Pantry. We've had wonderful success in the past and the Pantry has really appreciated our generosity.

We'll need many returning and new teams of volunteers to deliver the empty grocery bags on the weekend of August 3rd and 4th; then to collect the bags on Tuesday August 6th. Visit like our new Kids For Food Facebook page and please contact us if you can help:

Lisa Green 617-680-1166 *or*
Nancy Koerner at nbkoerner@yahoo.com

August 19 at 5:30pm

The Annual Meeting is scheduled for August 19 at 5:30pm, at the Chatham Beach and Tennis Club. Bob Staake will be our guest speaker. The author of 70+ best-selling children's books as well as creator of some of The New Yorker's most iconic magazine covers (and our illustrious OVA logo), Bob Staake will give us a behind-the-scenes glimpse of his Old Village studio, with a lively visual presentation featuring his published and unpublished illustration work. For more information, please visit BobStaake.com.



Please Save The Date!

Come Celebrate the Launch of **Protect Our Past**

Protect Our Past's purpose is to promote education and public awareness of the value of local architectural legacy; to preserve, protect and restore the visual quality and integrity of historic buildings, landscapes, and landmarks; to honor the values and traditions reflected in them, and thereby, to nurture our cultural and societal connection to the past. Learn about its first project, a documentary to create a movement to save historic properties on the Cape and Islands, and around the nation.

Meet:

Thomas Bena, director of **One Big Home**, Martha's Vineyard Film Festival
Oliver Becker, filmmaker: Discovery, CBS, Martha's Vineyard Film Festival
Nick Fitzhugh, director **Starboard Light**, redfitz films

September 21, 2019, 5-7pm

Location: 72 Shore Road
- home of Ellen Briggs and the Briggs Windmill
Looking forward to seeing you!

Atwood House—a full roster of summer exhibits, events and activities awaits you, see more here!

Chatham Alliance For Preservation and Conservation meetings are held and open to everyone, and usually from 3:30-5:00 pm, the first Thursday of the month, September—June (except January) at the Community Center. There is usually a speaker/lecture on a topic relevant to conservation and preservation in Chatham at each meeting. The Alliance also hosts forum/panel discussions on conservation and preservation topics of broad current interest. For more information email David MacAdam.

Historical Signs for Pre-1914 Houses—Eligibility for Chatham Historic House Signs houses 100 years or older are eligible for the white rectangular signs that summarize the early history of pre-1915 buildings, e.g.

Name of first owner	FRANKLYN NICKERSON
Function of building	Market
The date	c. 1850

Over 670 Chatham houses are eligible for these signs, 107 are in the Old Village. The information and application form are available on the Town web site under Historical Commission (www.chatham-ma.gov/historical-commission). For street designations in the Old Village visit our National Register District webpage (www.oldvillagechatham.org/owners.htm). Questions? Email housesignquery@gmail.com.

Get better connected! Help us conserve resources and funds by subscribing to our e-newsletters—please email newsletter@oldvillagechatham.org. Your email address will be used only for OVA communications. We welcome new contributors as well!

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Happy Summer!
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