

CHEQUAQUET LOG

The Newsletter of the Centerville Historical Museum
www.centervillehistoricalmuseum.org



WHAT WE ALL SHARE AND WHAT WE MISS Lois Lane, editor/writer

This past winter, heading toward summer, we have all been affected by a phenomenon, a completely vile minute virus that causes great inconvenience, sickens millions and has led to death, not only in our country and community, but around the world.

Not since 1918-1922 has there been this large a pandemic. For months now, each human has been affected, whether directly or indirectly. Our lives have been turned upside down. We are to wear masks. We ought to practice social distancing. We have been advised to think carefully about how we shop, stay in touch with others, keep ourselves as healthy as we can and to use common sense while thinking of others. Our children and grandchildren have been subjected to home confinement and remote schooling.

Dark and dreary has life been around these parts. Yet, strangely enough, this new lifestyle may be limiting, but it is nothing to whine about either. Yes, problems exist. The free and easy movement from place to place and person to person has been severely limited.

The museum has been closed for weeks and weeks, yet something worthwhile continues there. New exhibits are waiting the museum's reopening and having taken part in some, writing of some and seeing some evolve, you are going to be positively thrilled when you have the chance to visit them, linger over them, and learn about the whys and wherefores and whatsits that they

all present. So put a reminder on your calendar to come and visit. Wow! is not too strong a word.

In the meantime, the American spirit exists-plus its humor. Who makes this stuff up? The funny, no, hilarious emails that come frequently are rib-splitting. Either that or all of us are so bored, we will laugh at anything, right? Phone calls to family and friends, all the tricks of technology that allow us to keep in touch helps an awful lot. It is true we are alone together.



Staying at home means it is permissible to dress in hideous mismatched outfits and not wear makeup. Some, with naturally curly tresses are forced to resemble Beethoven's famous black onyx bust, the one that looks as if he stuck his finger in an electric socket. Some sport odd dark streaks in blonde

locks; see, the truth will out. Some men are threatening to bring back the long hair 18th century style. Help!

All in all though, this quarantine stuff has not been awful. It is all right to complain once in a while, but there is much more to be happy about. We will get through this. We will see our friends and families as we always did. We will spend money on things we don't need. We will be able to walk on a sidewalk without having to cross the street every minute and a half when someone is coming toward us. We have science and knowledge and faith and the will to survive and do it well. Hang in there, everyone, hang in there.

W H A T ' S C O M I N G

If all goes well and the virus is contained, we hope to resume our events listed here. Dates TBD

MURDER MYSTERY THEATER

Murder! Mayhem! and, Music! Come help solve the mystery.

LADIES NIGHT

An evening of socializing, music, sweets, beverage, shopping, jewelry and more.

CENTERVILLE HISTORIC MAIN STREET GHOST TOUR

Village tours of historic haunted houses, the reported ghosts and haunting stories.

COUNTRY & WESTERN COOKOUT

Music, dancing, games, food and fun

WINE AND ART NIGHT

Want to paint a Van Gogh and have fun doing it?

E X H I B I T S

SPEAKEASY

In January of 1920 our nation enacted the ratified 18th Amendment which plunged America into thirteen years of prohibition. Prohibition in the United States was a nationwide constitutional ban on the production, importation, transportation, and sale of alcoholic beverages from 1920 to 1933.

The Centerville Museum examines the history of those tumultuous times on the 100 years anniversary.

See page five for more interesting information about this period.



WHAT'S UNDERNEATH

What's Underneath displays women's undergarments from the mid-19th century to the present. Arranged in four time periods, this exhibit visually conveys the radical and humorous side of ladies undergarments over the past one hundred and fifty years.

From the leather band around the chest to Madonna's cone bra to the thong, undergarments have always been more than frippery and lace.



the WAIST

Selecting thirty 19th century waists from the collection, we have compiled fine examples of the popular types, styles and fashions of that century.

From the early 19th century through the Edwardian period (about 1914), the word waist or waister was a common term in the United States for the bodice of an outfit. The term blouse replaced the term waist in women's garments and became popular and commonly used in the 20th Century.



A video sampler for each of these exhibits can be seen on You Tube / centerville historical museum

I N T E R E S T I N G H I S T O R Y

HOW A TELEPHONE MONOPOLY ALMOST STOPPED ANSWERING MACHINES

Danish engineer Valdemar Poulsen invented a telegraphone in 1898, a machine so simple it required only a wire, with varying magnetic fields producing a sound. This magnetized wire could then play back the sound. It was the world's first telephone answering machine.

Willy Muller designed an automatic answering machine in 1935 that was three feet tall and became popular with Orthodox Jews who were forbidden to answer phones on the Sabbath. After that came the Phonetel, the first answering machine sold in the United States beginning in 1960. Subsequent improvements included Casio's Model 400 TAD, now archived in the Smithsonian Institution, and the PhoneMate, for sale as an answering machine featuring a reel-to-reel tape that could hold 20 messages, invented in Japan in 1971.

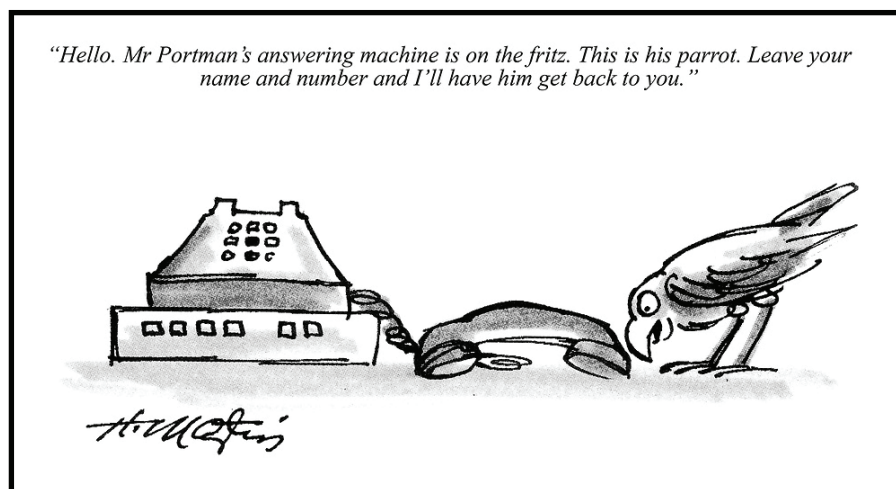
Gordon Matthews's VMX (Voice Message Express) company in Dallas, Texas, produced the first voice mail system and is known as "The Father of Voice Mail." He patented his device in 1979 and sold it to the 3M Company.

Not everyone was overjoyed with the idea of an answering machine in the home or office. AT&T, which had a monopoly on the US telephone system and forbid the use of third-party technology until the 1980's, suppressed the new answering machine inventions for half a century, beginning in the early 1900's.

AT&T was worried that these new devices would answer phones and record conversations. It was feared the use of recording a voice would lead to less use of its nationwide telephone system and the result would be loss of business, with estimates of one-third of its revenue.

To combat others interfering with its business, AT&T sought to build its own version of the answering machine. In 1934, callers to Bell Laboratories were able to leave messages. However, it took another 17 years for this now everyday technology to reach customers. AT&T rented the equipment (phone and answering machines) to customers.

In 1960, the AT&T monopoly slipped a bit when Phontel came out with an answering machine and sold it rather than renting it. AT&T, from its beginning to when it was broken up in 1982, did not sell its equipment that was in customers' homes.



P R O H I B I T I O N

A SUMMARY OF MUSIC AND ENTERTAINMENT FROM 1920-1933

After the devastation of WW I and the ensuing worldwide flu epidemic, the sadness of it all had to be expunged. Not all the world chose to join this freer age, but the significance of its effect still reminds us of the imaginative and creative forces that brought music, technology and social upheaval to new heights. Jazz, blues and traveling dance bands thrived during a booming economy and optimism was upbeat, despite Prohibition during the era. Highlights include:

1920: Vaudevillean Mamie Smith records "Crazy Blues," the first blues song by an African American singer.

1921: KDKA in Pittsburgh, PA becomes the first radio station with regularly scheduled programs. Vincent Lopez's dance band gives the first live performance broadcast on the radio.

1922: Country music is first recorded. The New Orleans Rhythm Kings, leads the way for white jazz players. Ed Wynn, comedian, performs the first studio performance with a live audience.

1923: Boogie-woogie piano appears. Country music gains popularity. Jelly Roll Morton is the first to distinguish ragtime from jazz in his piano playing. Square dance music makes hay in Texas on Fort Worth's radio WBAP.

1924: George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" becomes a huge success. The Charleston dance is introduced in James P. Johnson's musical, "Runnin' Wild."

1925: "Tea for Two," "Yes Sir! That's My Baby" and "Sweet Georgia Brown" are big hits. Paul Robeson, is critically acclaimed in Greenwich Village with his Negro spirituals.

1926: Jelly Roll Morton's "Black Bottom Stomp" and "Gene Austin's "Bye Bye Blackbird" are top sellers.

1927: Jerome Kern's "Showboat" is a watershed event and called the first great American musical show. "Stardust" by Hoagie Carmichael and "My Blue Heaven" by Gene Austin are the year's top songs. "The Jazz Singer" is the first motion picture with sound. The first car in the USA with a radio is manufactured.

1928: Walt Disney introduces "Steamboat Willie." "I Wanna Be Loved By You" by Helen Kane and Louis Armstrong's "West End Blues" debut.

1929: The Graves Brothers' recording "Crazy About My Baby" is named first rock 'n' roll song. Fats Waller's "Ain't Misbehavin'," Ethel Waters "Am I Blue?" and Louis Armstrong's "When You're Smiling" become memorable songs of the year.

1930: MGM's two-strip Technicolor film "Chasing Rainbows" features "Happy Days are Here Again." Rudy Vallee sings "If I Had A Girl Like You,"

1931: Frank Sinatra debuts as a singer and becomes one of the first musical superstars and teen idol.

1932: Black author Zora Neale Hurston's revue, "The Great Day" appeals as "genuinely Negro. Thomas Dorsey and Willie Mae Ford found Gospel Choir organizations, one with Mahalia Jackson. Fred Astaire's "Night And Day" Bing Crosby's "Brother, Can You Spare A Dime" are popular. Franklin Delano Roosevelt uses "Happy Days Are Here Again" as his election campaign song.

1933: Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers perfect smooth moves in dance musicals. Hits include Ethel Waters' "Stormy Weather" and Duke Ellington's "Sophisticated Lady." "Happy Days Are Here Again" becomes associated with the 21th Amendment's repeal of Prohibition.

The end of Prohibition leads to a rise in clubs, juke joints and honkytonks, many of which will feature live music or jukeboxes.



Centerville Historical Museum BUSINESS Supporters

We wish to acknowledge our current business members and business sponsors and ask you, our members, to support these businesses that support us.

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website: www.centervillehistoricalmuseum.org

P H I L A N T H R O P Y

SUSTAINING SUPPORTER: How you can help us!

Please consider becoming a Sustaining Supporter. Someone who sustains is one who stands, endures and nourishes another. Our museum needs more people who will do just that and stand with us as we preserve and interpret our shared history. Become a Sustaining Supporter of the museum for as little as \$20 per month. Relying on predictable monthly support will enable us to plan with much greater certainty how to provide a place where the past and present meet the future.

We encourage you to make monthly contributions as a Sustaining Supporter. Please use the donor cut-out below. As a Sustaining Supporter you receive all the benefits of Sponsor membership and more.

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WITHOUT A HERITAGE, EVERY GENERATION STARTS OVER.

PLEASE PUT THE CENTERVILLE HISTORICAL MUSEUM IN YOUR WILL

After providing for their families and loved ones, museum members and others may want to put the Centerville Historical Museum in their wills, thus helping to assure the long-term future of this museum. Such bequests are free of estate tax and can substantially reduce the amount of your assets claimed by the government. You can give needed support for the Centerville Historical Museum by simply including the following words in your will: *"I give, devise and bequeath to The Centerville Historical Museum, 513 Main Street, Centerville MA 02632 (insert amount being given) to be used to support the programs of the Museum."*

It is recommended that a lawyer help in drafting or amending a will. For other bequeathing options, call us and we will send our brochure that covers all the various options available. Thank you.

NOT A MEMBER - please join, ALREADY A MEMBER - how about giving a gift membership*

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ADDRESS: _____ EMAIL: _____
CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____ (please print)

Check One - all memberships are annually
INDIVIDUAL (\$35.00) _____ DUAL/FAMILY (\$45.00) _____ PATRON (\$80.00) _____
BENEFACTOR (\$125.00) _____ BUSINESS (\$150.00) _____ BUSINESS PLATINUM/SPONSOR (\$200.00) _____

Please charge membership to: (circle one) VISA MASTERCARD AMEX
Card Number: _____ Expiration Date _____
Signature: _____

* We will send an acknowledgement to them of your gift membership.

Mail membership to: *Centerville Historical Museum, 513 Main Street, Centerville MA 02632*