

# CHEQUAQUET LOG

The Newsletter of the **CENTERVILLE**  
**HISTORICAL MUSEUM** [www.centervillehistoricalmuseum.org](http://www.centervillehistoricalmuseum.org)

## ONE PERSON'S TRIP INTO THE PAST

Maybe it was the Hershey bar that brought back childhood memories. Those bites of chocolate dredged up many, most of them pleasant, since memories tend to be happy rather than sad.

Anyway, those happenings took place in the southeastern area of Pennsylvania and the Jersey shore and they are many many years old. The amazing thing is, looking back, after living in our technological world for several years, it is a wonder how we were able to communicate. Yet we did and handily, too. So here goes, with the 40's and 50's as background.

In the fall of 1944 a hurricane demolished the ocean piers of Atlantic City, NJ and our family, on a barrier island ten miles south, was unable to flee. Ocean met bay that day. The noise was overwhelming and the ground seemed to shudder as each wave of sea water crashed over the boardwalk. Washed up boats sat in the streets for days. Thankfully no one perished.



When the war in Europe was over people ran out of their homes, delirious with joy. Us little ones did not really know what all the fuss was about but everyone else was excited, so we were, too. As parents tucked their kiddies into bed that night, they knew the nation was safer.

There was a Japanese American who was my best friend

in second grade. A move to a new school meant new friends. No texts, no need. We all spent hours outside whether summer or winter. We sledded down the hill in rubber galoshes and wet wool snowsuits, our Flexible Flyers or toboggans in tow. Our roller skates were fastened to shoes and tightened with keys. We rode our Schwinn bikes everywhere. There were no play dates. We tended to show up and soon the neighborhood did, too.

At school we wore skirts and blouses or dresses. On our feet were leather shoes and ankle socks. No sneakers until after school and they were white or blue, plus black hightops for boys. After school, as we got a little older, the place to meet was Mr. Martin's drugstore. There was a counter with red stools and the milkshakes made to order were dee-lish. The movie magazines held special appeal with stories of the stars. On TV, there was One Man's Family and Ed Sullivan and a slew of comedians who never uttered one word of profanity. We learned the latest dances from Dick Clark's Bandstand show.

On major holidays the dinner table groaned with food. We were all dressed up in our finest clothes out of respect for the holiday. The children were permitted to leave the table after dessert to go play outside.

Moms called friends and family on the rotary dial telephone. They wrote letters, sent birthday cards and thank you notes. They hung laundry outside to dry. The local grocer delivered the order which had been phoned in. Tuesdays and Fridays were market days when farmers had their own food stalls. Customers knew who to buy from for a particular specialty.

The list of memories is endless; black and white TV's, family trips to Broadway shows, the allure of Hershey, PA, home of the chocolate bar, with its fantastic park, ice arena and magnificent rose gardens. Sometimes there is nothing nicer than to return to that innocent, simple past.

# NEW TO THE COLLECTION

## TWO NEW ACQUISITIONS HELP DEFINE THE TERM JACQUARD

Recently, the museum became the recipient of two donated Jacquard bed covers, both lovely.

The weave of jacquard began in fourth century brocade. What was unique about it was its construction. The designs and colors, using linen and wool, were threaded into the fabric itself rather than stamped on, printed or embroidered, creating a stronger and thicker weave. By the 15th century silk was added, but any brocade was so expensive that even the wealthy could barely afford it.

Weavers worked on wooden looms. The first ones were small, with any length but width confined to the loom's narrow frames. A machine, called a draw loom, was operated by the weaver and a youngster, a draw boy. The weaver would tell the draw boy, who stood atop the loom, which colored threads to lift, what set of reeds to use and when to do so. Weaving was dangerous to the draw boy, was labor intensive and slow overall. A day's hard labor would yield about two inches of cloth at best.

Joseph Marie Jacquard started out as a draw boy in the late 1700's, spending all day in work that could have ended up crippling him. He decided to do something about the horrible conditions of jacquard weaving. After several attempts, he created a simple yet ingenious solution in 1804. Instead of youngsters having to lift threads and pounds of weaving reeds at a time, he fastened chains of paper punch cards together. Holes were put into each card, corresponding to one row of design. Napoleon himself commended the inventor on his work.

There is no particular "Jacquard" loom; control is what automates the pattern. More fabrics can be woven with this way, including damask, matelassé and tapestry. Home goods and upholstery products use Jacquard woven fabrics for their strength and texturing. Today, computers have replaced chains of punch cards. They automatically thread the yarns on to the loom, saving the time and hard labor of centuries before. The birth of the computer stems from Jacquard's invention, which turned out to be the world's first programmable machine. Charles Babbage, whose integration of punch cards into modern applications, is credited with inventing the first computer. Punch cards also helped create binary code systems.



The museum's acquisition of the two Jacquard bed covers is a first, as the museum did not have any examples of its own. Both coverlets are colorful and full of pattern. Of the two, one uses five colors in a lovely weave and by its corner markings, was made in Middletown, Fredrick County, Maryland. It is older as it has a bound seam in the middle. Earlier looms could not accommodate the width needed for a bed, so two matching halves were stitched together. The second bed cover, approximately the same size as the Maryland one, is from Pennsylvania and has an intricate and bold eagle and flag design in honor of the 1876 Centennial. It was woven on a wider loom and has no center seam. Both are lovely pieces and show steps through history that have brought knowledge and invention to where we are today.

# V O L U N T E E R I N G

## A VETERAN VOLUNTEER JUST KEEPS ON GIVING

It is not possible to say Joyce Canniff sits around the house and twiddles her thumbs. This petite and busy woman is a contained bundle of energy as she lists her accomplishments and commitments to what she values in her life.

Not only has Joyce volunteered at the museum for nigh unto seventeen years. She still loves what she does here, which happens to be a little bit of everything. To know her is to realize this is a committed woman who handles it all and does so with aplomb. For instance, trained as a dental assistant, she met and married her husband, Paul, a pediatric dentist. She and Paul have a close and loving family with five children and they are proud grandparents as well.

On top of being a fulltime mother who attended every possible school event, athletic and otherwise, she was a scout leader, and yes, the list could go on and on. And then, in the midst of driving to hockey games and supporting her children's lives, she decided, in her early forties, to get her B.A. degree in English and English Literature, a feat she accomplished over a period of a few years and an effort she is thoroughly proud of. As an adult, she felt she learned to appreciate the academic world's atmosphere because it was her decision to want to be there.

She is known as an excellent cook and is constant in her faith. She stays healthy with gym visits. She is a doer. Joyce, however, did not know very much about the Centerville Historical Museum until a friend suggested she go see for herself what it was all about. While working with the other volunteers, Joyce became a docent, which she found she enjoyed. Soon, she was helping with exhibits and the myriad of other tasks available. "I was amazed at the size and depth of the museum building," she says. "The outside looked so small. It's not just old things. There is the colonial keeping room and all sorts of other exhibits. There is an energy here and it takes energy to do these exhibits."

Joyce points out that the museum is a living example of its many attributes. She notes the events that also keep the museum busy. There are authors' talks, a variety of speakers, dinners and holiday events, to name just a few. To her, the building, its members and visitors alike, are a social center for the entire community, namely, the center of Centerville.

"I'm the helper, not the Indian Chief," Joyce notes. This is true. One might see her ironing a fragile garment carefully for an upcoming display or painting background walls; just ask her and she will tackle the job. All the while she is absorbing and demonstrating history as well. For example, she helped third grade classes learn of Sailors' Valentines, which led to a whaling industry lesson explained to the students as they crafted similar cards from shells and paper, a clever combination of hands on fun and historical exercise as well.

Joyce Canniff likes the camaraderie of the museum, feels strongly about its role in the community and continues to lend a hand where needed. "There are so many ways to help, so many areas to choose from," she states. "I love the museum."



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

## A SUFFRAGETTE WITH TIES TO CAPE COD

One hundred years ago, women gained a level of success that had taken decades, even centuries, to achieve. One of the leaders for women's rights was closely tied to Cape Cod. Her name is Anna Howard Shaw, a brilliant woman who was at the forefront in gaining the right for women to vote.

Born in 1847, Shaw's talents were many. After being one of the first women to be ordained as a minister, she served two congregations in the mid-Cape area, while traveling between the two on horseback. Eventually she left the ministry when she decided to become a doctor and earned her degree at Boston University's medical school.

After practicing medicine for a few years, she left that occupation when she decided that what she really wanted to do was work for woman's suffrage and the right to vote. She traveled thousands of miles in the U.S and Europe asking for acceptance to women's rights. Her abilities led her to form workable relationships with U. S. presidents, world leaders and college heads. Her prominent leadership helped the push for the League of Nations, today's United Nations.

During her lifetime, Ms. Shaw saw the expansion of America, railroads and automobiles, electricity and telephones, the abolition of slavery and the start of unionized labor. She and her good friends and fellow suffragette promoters, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, worked together tirelessly with thousands of followers for this cause.

So distinguished is Anna Shaw's career that Boston University named its School of Theology after her and she earned the Distinguished Service Medal for her work during World War I. Anna Howard Shaw believed, "Opportunity must be for all, women and men alike, and the people of every nationality-----we must all be part of the government."



Pastor to the faithful, doctor to the sick, advocate for women's rights, Shaw enjoyed her summers in her cottage by the ocean on Cape Cod. Her intellect, heart and life were dedicated to the betterment of all. In September 1915, in front of Hyannis's Universalist Church, a reasoned speech left men and women both, some who agreed and some who disagreed about her beliefs, going home with a better knowledge of what all her efforts working for women meant to her, to women and to the country. The audience, it is said, was mesmerized.

Sadly, Anna Howard Shaw passed away in 1919 at the age of 72. If she had lived one more year, she would have seen her life's work become law. The 19th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified in 1920 and eight million women voted in their first presidential election. Ironically, she had not lived quite long enough to be able to cast her own first vote.

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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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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."*

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