

# CHEQUAQUET LOG

Newsletter of the **CENTERVILLE  
HISTORICAL MUSEUM**

**CHM is named #1 Hidden Gem Museum in Massachusetts.**

## WHAT'S HAPPENING - COMING EVENTS

The Centerville Historical Museum Presents

### Eat, Chat and Learn

*yummy soup, mingle with friends or make new ones, expand your horizons*

Join us for lunch, bring your curiosity and get ready for a fascinating conversation!

This month, we're thrilled to welcome author and historian, Nancy Viall Shoe-maker. Nancy will be presenting "Women of Barnstable," her recent book that will focus on the accomplishments of over 200 female residents of Barnstable and West Barnstable, including women who lived in the 1700s up to the more recent residents who have made notable contributions to our history.



**Wednesday, June 11th, doors open at 12 noon.**  
**Suggested Donation. Limited capacity, so come early to get your bowl of delicious soup and a seat at the table.**

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This month, we're happy to welcome coach and educator Ed O'Toole. Ed will be presenting *Making Friends with Shakespeare*. Ed is a Cape Cod Community College Drama Instructor and former Barnstable High School Drama Club coach.



**Wednesday, July 9th, doors open at 12 noon.**  
**Suggested Donation. Limited capacity, so come early to get your bowl of delicious soup and a seat at the table.**

## 1950s SOCK HOP

Let's go to the Hop!

Time to dig out your poodle skirt and saddle shoes and return to the 50s. Travel back with us for a nostalgic evening, a fun party with 50s music, song and dance.

Elvis impersonators welcome.



**CENTERVILLE HISTORICAL MUSEUM**  
**Saturday, June 21, 6:30 to 8:30 PM**  
**Music, hors d'oeuvres, beer & wine provided.**  
**Reservations required by June 14th. (508) 775-0331**  
**513 Main Street**  
**Centerville, MA 02632**

About the author:

Referred to as the "Balzac of Boston History" by the Boston Globe, Anthony Mitchell Sammarco is a noted historian and author of many books on the history and development of Boston. He lectures widely on the history and development of his native city.

He commenced writing in 1995, and his 89th book, published in 2024, was *The History of the Christmas Tree Shops*. Among his published books *Lost Boston*, *The History of Howard Johnson's*, *Jordan Marsh: New England's Largest Store*, *The Baker Chocolate Company: A Sweet History*, and *Inferno: The Great Boston Fire of 1872* have made the bestsellers list.



**Author Anthony Sammarco talk  
on  
THE HISTORY of the  
CHRISTMAS TREE SHOPS**

**Friday, July 11  
3:00 to 5:00 pm**

**Suggested donation**

CHM is hosting a talk and book signing with Author Anthony Sammarco.

**centerville historical museum**

**513 Main Street  
Centerville, MA 02632**

# I N T H E C O L L E C T I O N

## NEW TO THE COLLECTION

These hats have recently been given to the museum collection. When potential donors offer us hats, we are very selective in what we want and if it will enhance the existing collection. These hats are clearly 1960s style fashion, but also unique in type. This decade was the start of the decline in ladies' hat wear. The new generation perceived hats as formal and outdated and not relevant. That is not to say hats stopped being produced, but this was the decade when hat wearing started to decline. After this decade ladies hats never made a strong comeback and were not produced in the same quantities as they had been in the preceding years of the 20th century.

When was the last time you saw a hat shop? The decline in popularity can be attributed to several factors. During the 1960s there was the relaxing of head covering requirements in church, interior climate controls became more widespread reducing the need for hats to keep the head warm, changes in fashion trends which moved away from accessorizing with a hat and hairstyles emphasized natural hair more. These are only a few examples that contributed to the waning in hat fashion.

Hats will never disappear. Like most trends hats will come into and go out of style. At present hats are 'coming back' but certainly not in the manor they were in the past.

For the museum's purposes the hats we take into the collection will need to be very unique and preferably not mass produced. If they come from a recognized millinery that wouldn't go amiss either. The hats illustrated here are not

on display but we can pull them out and show them off if you wish to see them. If hats are your thing, keep in mind that we currently have over sixty on exhibit, representing three centuries, including a section on loan from a private hat collection.

### TOP

Red feather hat. Hat has no interior frame or structure. It pulls over the head and conforms to the head shape.

### LEFT

White tulle gathered round hat with a velvet band and netting gathered over a stiff brim. Grosgrain sweatband, stiff dome shape net forms hat shape.

### RIGHT

Beige white faux fur cloche like hat, green velvet headband and faux branches with variegated red and pink fabric petals in back.



# A C A P E C O D N O T A B L E

## AMY BEACH, COMPOSER, PIANIST



Amy Marcy Cheney (1867 – 1944) was born September 5, 1867, in Henniker, NH. It appears she inherited her musical talents from her mother, who was a fine singer and pianist. Gifted with absolute pitch and an accurate memory, as a child she constantly surprised family and friends with startling feats from the time she was one year old. It was said at the time she could accurately sing 40 separate tunes. She began piano lessons at four and started composing little waltzes for the keyboard at the same time. By the age of eight, the strength of her gift was so evident that her family moved to Boston to enable Amy to study with composers Ernst Perabo and later with Karl Baermann.

In 1883, Amy was a 16-year-old virtuoso piano prodigy when she made her debut with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. She performed Beethoven's Concerto No. 3 along with a cadenza she had composed. Her first public solo recital was at Chickering Hall, Boston in January 1884.



In 1885, Amy married Dr. Henry H. A. Beach. The next twenty-five years she devoted her time to her marriage and to composing. Following her husband's death in 1910, Amy resumed her concert career by spending several years in Germany. There her reputation continued to grow. In 1914 she returned and settled in New York. She gave concerts in the east and midwest, spent winters on tour and summers practicing and composing in Centerville, MA. Amy summered in Centerville for 45 years and made many local friends.

Gaelic Symphony or Symphony in E minor, Op. 32 was written by Amy Marcy Cheney Beach in 1894, when she was twenty-seven years old; it was the first symphony composed and published by a female American composer. The symphony debuted in Boston with the Boston Symphony Orchestra on Friday, October 30, 1896, to "public and journalistic acclaim and considered the first important symphony by an American." Beach drew inspiration for the large orchestral work from simple old English, Irish, and Scottish melodies; thus, she subtitled the work 'Gaelic.'



Dr. Henry and Amy Beach, c.1885

Amy and Marcella Craft, Prima Donna of the Royal Opera of Munich, c.1913

Amy with friends, c.1934

Signed Photographic Portrait of Amy Beach, c.1939

# THOUGHTS FROM OUR WRITER

## INSTEAD OF IRONS THERE WERE LINEN PRESSES

A linen press was an important part of the household in the 17th and 18th centuries. Yet, few of us know exactly what the words “linen press” or the words “napkin press” mean. One type of linen press was a cabinet, either small, or of a good size and made of oak, walnut or mahogany. The early versions of linen presses were plain, but as time went on, their designs grew more elaborate and decorative styles included veneers and intricate wood in-lays. They were placed in bedrooms where they stored clothing or in dining areas where napkins, tablecloths and centerpiece materials were stored for easy access. Other names for linen press included linen cupboard, laundry cupboard or airing cupboard.

A second type of linen press was called a napkin press. It was simple in design and was used mostly for napkins and handkerchiefs and other small items. These smaller linen pieces were placed, pieced by piece, on a stand with a flat board at the top. That flat board was fastened to a screw that put pressure on top of the cloth in the press. Better looking napkin presses, meant to be displayed, were placed near dining room tables to show how beautiful the family linens were and how they were cared for. Less impressive napkin presses were relegated to a pantry or laundry room.

The word “napkin” is from the Old French language and was first used in the 14th century. The word “nape” was a cloth placed on a table to protect it. The word “kin” as added later. It meant “little or small.” However, the word “napkin” also had a slightly different meaning than it does today. Napkins then were plain pieces of cloth or paper used at mealtime to wipe lips and fingers to protect clothing. The linen press cabinet was narrow. Doors opened to rows of rods on the inside. The rods held the linen and when the door was shut, the cabinet pressed the linens, smoothing them.

Another name for a napkin is “serviette.” Cocktail napkins are also known as “serviettes de collation.” There are many ways to fold cloth or paper napkins. Some are simple, some are quite elaborate and imaginative. Books that demonstrate how to fold napkins are available, with some foldings considered works of art. However, a simple folding is the easiest and the most preferable to do; even good paper napkins can be folded. Most napkins are placed to the left side of a place setting or at the top of it. Rolling a cloth napkin and putting it through a napkin ring is a very stylish alternative.



Linen presses and napkin presses are terms barely heard these days. A lovely linen press’s interior can be converted for other uses and their story told as their purpose is admired. Perhaps we are too busy to sit down at a dining room table, using place mats and paper napkins instead of the fine linens once so proudly displayed. Our lives have become increasingly hurried and the times of sitting at a table discussing and enjoying others’ company is sadly becoming merely another note in history books.



The CHM newsletter writer.

# NEW EXHIBITS

## *Mary Lincoln House Dining Room*

### MAIN MEAL OF THE DAY

The 1880s dinner on Cape Cod consisted of clam fritters, tripe, oysters, fish cakes (Haddock and Scrod), beef, veal, pork and chicken. The vegetables were white and sweet potatoes, tomatoes, cabbage, spinach, peas, corn and beans. Desserts consisted of rice pudding, baked apple and peach dumplings, lemon, pumpkin, mince, blueberry and coconut pies. Pies were always popular, so whatever was left from the previous day was enjoyed the following morning. By the mid-1890s, pie was going out of fashion for breakfast, because Americans were traveling abroad. They were noticing that other countries were eating what were called "Continental breakfasts." The drinks were tea, coffee, milk, ale and porter cider.

To preserve some foods, Cape Codders had straw and ice in their cellars to keep food items cold. They also salted, pickled or dried a variety of foods, especially meats and poultry.



## *Mary Lincoln House Parlour*

### AN EVENING IN 1875

Step back in time to an evening in 1875 at the Centerville Historical Museum and see what daily life was like with Clark Lincoln, his wife Abigail and their daughter, Mary. Clark was born in 1821 and died in 1902. Clark's first wife, Elizabeth Matthews, died in childbirth along with their infant son. His 2nd wife, Alexina Richardson, died of consumption and his 3rd wife, Abigail Wheldon lived to be 74. She and Clark had 2 daughters, both named Mary. The first died in childbirth, but Mary Edward, born in 1869 lived to be 86 and died in 1955.



# **museum volunteering**

Enjoy the camaraderie with others - Help us support a great museum.

## *SEWISTS WANTED*

### **What are we looking for?**

We are seeking one or two people to join this important project. There are a few important requirements. You would be meeting on Tuesday afternoons. It would be great if you have hand sewing experience but if you are willing to learn we are happy to teach. You must absolutely believe volunteering is an honorable avocation. Give us a call 508-775-0331 or stop in on a Tuesday to meet the group.

### **Some background information.**

In 2019 the museum's collection committee finished its third assessment of the costume collection. This last assessment identified garments that needed minor and major repairs and or restoration to better protect them and make them viable for exhibiting. Two hundred sixty three garments, accessories, and other textiles were flagged.

In October of 2020 CHM secured two qualified volunteer conservationists to head up two teams of three sewist each. These two groups have been meeting weekly since November 2020 and have repaired or restored 130 garments, accessories and other textiles with various complex issues. We've received several grants from the Cape Cod Antique Dealers Association and several private contributions to support this ongoing project for the supplies needed to restore the object. For example: special threads, needles, netting, specific silks, tulle, period pattern cottons, beads and linen fabrics are all vital when restoring historic objects.



# S U P P O R T E R S

## *Centerville Historical Museum BUSINESS MEMBERS*

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

**1856 Country Store, Centerville**

**BK Real Estate Inc., Centerville**

**Bernard Lebow / Swg, Inc, Centerville**

**Cape Cod 5 Saving Bank, Centerville**

**Cape Cod Package Store, Centerville**

**Capt. David Kelley House, Centerville**

**Carol Travers Lummus Prints, Barnstable**

**Daily Paper Restaurant, Hyannis**

**Daniel Lewis Architect, AIA, Centerville**

**Daniel Schwenk, CPA, Osterville**

**Dewey Gardens, Centerville**

**E.J. Jaxtimer Builder, Inc., Hyannis**

**Fair Insurance Agency, Inc, Centerville**

**Hy-Line Cruises, Hyannis**

**Joyce Frederick Art, Centerville**

**La Tanzi, Spaulding, & Landreth, Orleans**

**Long Dell Inn, Centerville**

**Margaret and Carl Hill, Centerville**

**Scott Peacock Building, Inc, Osterville**

**Talin Bookbindery, Yarmouth Port**

**Twins Plumbing, Marstons Mills**



**Become a member, get the benefits, support a great museum.**



See what we are doing: On You Tube, and Pinterest under centerville historical museum and on Instagram under centerville\_historical\_museum.



website: [www.centervillehistoricalmuseum.org](http://www.centervillehistoricalmuseum.org)  
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