

CHEQUAQUET LOG

Newsletter of the **CENTERVILLE**
HISTORICAL MUSEUM

CHM is named #1 Hidden Gem Museum in Massachusetts.

2025, IT IS HARD TO BELIEVE!

A new year is always hard to believe; it causes one to reflect on where the time has gone. It was seventy years ago the Centerville Museum first opened its doors to the public. The Centerville Historical Society, established in 1952, were determined to preserve the significant histories of our 19th century maritime village. Before Mary Lincoln passed away it was agreed her house would be used as a historic house museum after her death. In the summer of 1955, the Centerville Historical Society opened its doors to the public, exhibiting its nine hundred and forty-one objects and family histories in a six-room historic house museum.



Seventy years later we have in our possession approximately seventeen thousand eight hundred objects in which we present histories of our past within a fourteen room museum. Much has changed here at the museum, in Centerville and around our world. History is our mission to preserve and protect. We do not live in the past, we cannot, as a museum, we must also change, grow, adapt and improve but never let go of why this museum was established and its fundamental purpose.

This past year speaks about those changes. As most of you are aware, the museum lost the function of two of its four HVAC systems. Back in the day seventy years ago the museum didn't have a HVAC collection protection system. If it is too hot - open some windows, if winter, shut off the water, close the doors and see you next summer. The collection is the reason we are here. It is the primary asset that must be protected and preserved. The wonderful realization is that our members and supporters all rallied to raise the 26 thousand dollars needed to fix the problem – to protect the collection – to preserve our shared histories.

So, for us, 2024 was a successful year in several ways. In one way we were designated as the #1 Hidden Gem Museum in Massachusetts, in itself an honor. Another way and as important, we have a constituent base who knows and who believes what we do here is important to them, and we know they'll do what is needed to keep it protected.

Thank you all for a successful 2024.

NEW TO THE COLLECTION

A NEW ACQUISITION TO THE MUSEUM

The beautiful silk gown belonged to and was worn by Sarah Jane (nee Turner) Ivy/Kiser (1837 - 1897). Sarah was the great great aunt of the donor Kathleen Grogan Kocaba. The gown was willed to Sarah's sister, Eugenia Turner Gathright, the great grandmother of the donor. The dress was custom made in about 1895 for Sarah Jane while married to her second husband, Marion C. Kiser. They resided in Atlanta, Georgia.

The bodice of the outfit is black silk with cotton lining and has hook and eye closures and 11 metal stays. There are black grosgrain bows on each sleeve and grosgrain cuffs capped with lace. The back of the dress features a fanback ruching design. The black silk skirt has an additional polished cotton lining and hook and eye closures. Both the skirt and bodice, however, have a shaded blue within a white circle Polka dotted pattern on a black background.

An interesting history of Sarah Jane Kiser was found in an 1890 Georgia newspaper society page.

December 3, 1890, Columbus Daily Enquirer (Columbus, Georgia)

A NOTABLE WEDDING

THE LOVERS OF THIRTY-FIVE YEARS AGO UNITED

"A notable wedding ceremony was performed here tonight. It united Major Marion C. Kiser, one of Atlanta's most prominent and wealthy merchants, and Mrs. Sarah Turner Ivy. Thirty-five years ago, Mr. Kiser and Miss Turner were engaged to be married. The wedding day came, the bride and minister were ready, but the groom-elect did not appear. Naturally there was no wedding. Since then, Miss Turner married Mr. Ivy and Major Kiser in the meantime has had two wives. Some months ago, Mrs. Ivy lost her husband and later Major Kiser's second wife died. The old love was renewed and now it is Mr. and Mrs. M.C. Kiser."



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

CHARLES DREW CAHOON, CAPE CODDER, ARTIST



The Centerville Museum will again feature a Cape Cod notable as we've done in the last two issues. In this issue we feature the artist painter Charles Drew Cahoon. Cahoon was born in Harwich in 1861. He and his brother Bert were raised under the watchful eyes of his grandfather, sea Captain Alvin Cahoon, a successful shipmaster and cranberry grower, his father Captain Alvin Cahoon II, also a successful sea captain who sketched and painted for his own enjoyment and his mother Tabitha Cahoon, a rigorous captain of the household.

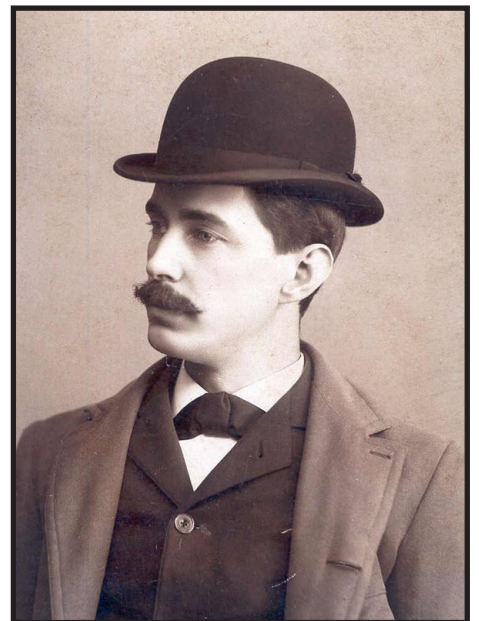
Charles went to sea with his father from age fourteen until his father died at sea in 1882. At age twenty-one Charles started on his career journey into fine art painting. In his youth he often copied drawings his father created; while at sea he made many sketches of his observations. From 1882 to about 1900 Cahoon pursued various artistic endeavors like photo retouching and refining his own drawing and painting skills until about 1901 when he became a successful full-time painter and maintained a studio in Boston.

He exhibited his art widely throughout New England, was sought out for commission work and made a good living with his paintings until the Wall Street crash of 1929. He eventually moved back to Harwich and focused on painting the region's landscapes and seascapes. Charles died in Harwich in 1951. He was a prolific painter, producing several thousand scenes of Cape Cod.

Cahoon painted very quickly and precisely in a representational style. He was recognized for carefully detailed, peaceful landscapes and seascapes of Cape Cod. Today his works are appreciated for his ability to capture the mood and feeling of early 20th Century Cape Cod.



USS Constitution at full sail. 1938
Doane's Creek at the Saquatucket marshes. 1930
Photographic Portrait Charles D. Cahoon.



THOUGHTS FROM OUR WRITER

THE CENTERVILLE HISTORICAL MUSEUM AND ITS IVORY OBJECTS

Of the close to 18,000 items in the Centerville's Historical Museum's collection, it is fair to say that there are some true standouts that are exquisite, rare and treasured. There are sextants with inlaid ivory, plus cameos, glove stretchers, necklaces, fans, parasols, hair combs, snuff bottles, and pens. All are worth their own special display in the museum.



Ivory comes from the tusks and teeth of animals such as elephants, walruses and other mammoths. It is derived from dentine, a type of tissue that contains mineralized collagen, a protein that gives the structure strength and elasticity. Elephant tusks are really elephant teeth that are connected to the skull, like humans and, like teeth, have nerve endings.

Ivory has long been valued for the beauty, durability and suitability of its carving. Ivory carving has been around since ancient times. It has been used in the creation of art, jewelry, religious artifacts and musical instruments. Today this use of ivory is at the heart of environmental debates due to illegal poaching and animal cruelty.



Conservationists, with the help of new laws, are fighting poachers who kill rhinos and elephants just to harvest the animals' tusks in order to sell them on the global market. African elephant ivory is prized due to its unique colorization. Ivory is also very strong and light in weight.

In the eighteenth century, ivory was prized for its decorative abilities. It was used so much in the decoration of furniture and jewelry that by the end of the nineteenth century it was almost entirely gone from the marketplace. International bans on ivory trading were established in the early twentieth century.

Elephant ivory was used to make jewelry, figurines and other decorative objects. Narwhal ivory

came from a small arctic male whale with a long spiral tusk. It was made into walking sticks, canes and sword handles.



In Japan, ivory was valued and used for ceremonial purposes and intricate carvings. In China, ivory was fashionable for fans and boxes.

Today, due to the near extinction of African elephants, killed for their ivory tusks, trade has been completely banned. However, it still retains its spiritual and cultural significance with the realization that the respect for nature must be upheld and maintained.



The CHM newsletter writer.

Hair comb. 1890
Cameo. 1880
Necklace 1910
Snuff Bottle. 1868
Cribbage Board 1865
Knife and Sheath 1870

INTERESTING HISTORY

A SHORT HISTORY OF CAPE COD

Cape Cod is a sandy peninsula of beach and land formed during the Ice Age. It is shaped like a fishhook, is seventy miles long and one to twenty miles wide. The Wampanoag Indians lived here for thousands of years and were the Cape's first true settlers.

The first white explorers to discover the Cape were those seeking gold, fur, spices and anything else that could bring wealth. Among them may have been Vikings, but that notion has not been proved. However, in 1602, an Englishman named Bartholomew Gosnold searching for gold, landed near what is now Provincetown. Instead of gold, he found cod fish in numbers so enormous that he named the area Cape Cod.



By 1620, the Pilgrims, those seeking religious freedom and trying to reach Virginia, where earlier English settlers had established Roanoke, were instead buffeted by the ocean's winds and landed much more north of where they were headed. They were able to land at an area they named Plymouth, and they chose to settle there.

Plymouth, however, was not a lucky find. The land was much too sandy to grow good crops. Leaving some of the settlers at Plymouth, others sailed across Cape Cod Bay to what is Provincetown today and then slowly spread southward and westward.

The Pilgrims' first homes were wigwams, copied from those of the Wampanoag Indians. As they moved further inland, they had skirmishes with the Wampanoag, who thought these strange looking white men were trying to steal their ancient grounds.

The Pilgrims stripped the land of its forests to make farmland and graze sheep. They built their own homes, the salt-box and the Cape Cod cottage, a design still popular today and copied all over the country.

The Wampanoag helped the settlers by showing them what crops to grow and how to strip and process caught whales of their blubber. In time, the number of whales in the area lessened. Slowly, tourism made its debut, especially after the railroad made its way to the Cape in 1848, superseding the stagecoach and the packet boat.

It was not until 1914 that the Cape Cod Canal was built, although the idea to build one had surfaced as early as the 1700's. Added to the canal was a railroad bridge and two bridges for traffic. All were built in the 1930's.

First the railroad and then the bridges contributed to making tourism the largest industry of today's Cape Cod. The Mid Cape Highway, built from east to west marked a huge boom of the tourist industry.



V O L U N T E E R O P P O R T U N I T I E S



museum volunteering

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



*Museum Guides
Lectures
Event Planner
Exhibits
Collections
Conservation
Gallery Talks
Decorating
Social Media
Education Programs
Volunteer Coordinator
Fund-raising Events
Research
Silent Auction
Website*



do you have a talent or interest we have a place for you

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

Four Seas Ice Cream, Centerville

Hy-Line Cruises, Hyannis

Joyce Frederick Art, Centerville

Long Dell Inn, Centerville

Margaret and Carl Hill, Centerville

Scott Peacock Building, Inc, Osterville

Talin Bookbindery, Yarmouth Port

TD Bank, Centerville

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
email: chsm@centervillehistoricalmuseum.org
address: 513 Main Street, Centerville, MA 02632
Phone: (508) 775- 0331