

Now and Then



Magazine

May – June 2017

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Front and Back Cover Paintings
By Janice Dorchester

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NEW RESIDENTS

February 2017	John & Eleanor Cunningham	253AL
	Patricia Hall	322W
March 2017	Carlton & Lilly Hulteen	261AL
	Adam & Phyllis Livingstone	141AL
	James Markewicz	362AL
April 2017	Angela Kaiser	265AL
	Bob & Susie O'Brien	273AL
	Margaret Tita	360AL
	Donald Whitney	264AL
	Diane Woodward	121W

MEMORIAM

Lida C. Briggs	February 15, 2017
John Russell Haley	February 26, 2017
Gloria Jane Boyd	March 23, 2017
Pricilla H. Davis	April 13, 2017
Eleanor "Ellie" Gouger	April 16, 2017

“DEM BONES”

By Sylvia Marble

Sometime in the 80's and before we moved from Nantucket, my husband received a strange request. Two men, whom he knew, but not very well, approached him and asked if they could “use” a corner of the big field out behind the old barn. At that time the field was not being used so he asked them what they wanted to do.

It was autumn and we had recently survived a big nor'easter. Two men found a beached whale on the western end of the island. They had pulled the whale further up on the shore and intended to remove some of the bones. They didn't dare leave the bones there for others to find, so they thought that the end of our big field nearest the south shore would be a safe place for them to dry out and lose their very pungent smell.

Ralph told them to give him a few days to think about it. We talked about it and decided to tell them to go ahead as long as they used the area Ralph indicated. Every now and then for a few weeks we would notice a truck way out in the field. Late in June, one of the men came to our door and said that they were going to start moving the bones out of the field, and if Ralph wanted any, now was the time to come and look them over. I'm not sure just how it was decided but they left 5 ribs and a vertebra. The rest they hauled away.

When we headed out to Utah the following fall, two ribs went with us to be placed at the end of our driveway where there were two stone posts for them to lean against. Later two ribs also went with us to Salt Springs, Florida and, a few years later, a rib and the vertebra went to Prince Edward Island, Canada. Strangely enough, two ribs are still with me here on the Cape.

ARTISTS IN THE SCENE: JANICE DORCHESTER

Interview by Pat Loan

Jan Dorchester's love for drawing began when she was a first grader in Windsor, Connecticut. She would spend many hours at her desk in the front room first drawing a house, then cutting up cardboard and using paste until she had created a small model of the one in her drawing.

Even as a senior in high school she continued to design house plans to scale and make models of her designs. She often told her Dad that she intended to go to the Rhode Island School of Design to become an architect. His reply was always the same, "You can be a school teacher, a nurse or a secretary. Take your pick." Then one day she noticed an ad in the Hartford Times about an architect teaching a class in architectural drawing at Hillyer Junior College in Hartford. Dad made no objections, and soon she was taking the bus from Windsor to Hartford to attend Hillyer. She was the only girl in the class and struggled with algebra and geometry. Her teacher suggested she transfer to a secretarial school like Katharine Gibbs in Providence, Rhode Island, and eventually find work as a secretary in an architectural firm. Unfortunately, this all occurred after Pearl Harbor and during the years of war she couldn't find an architect who needed a secretary.

Some years after the war ended, and now married and living in Stonington, Connecticut with Doug and their children, a friend mentioned to Jan that one of the neighbors was a watercolorist. So Jan and her friend joined the artist's class. This was her introduction to watercolor painting. She has produced hundreds of paintings over the years. Many have been sold, some were gifts to others and many are displayed in her apartment or packed in boxes under her bed.

The picture on the back cover is of her great grandfather's barn. The barn was his workplace and storage facility, as he was a craftsman who did repairs and woodworking for people in the town. The scene also captures the area where the family lived. The family house is further up the road near the church. Jan's Dad used to take the family by car to Woodstock, Connecticut to see the family homestead. One day in 1975, Janice sat across the road and painted this picture of the homestead. You'll notice that this painting combines her love of architecture as well as her considerable skills as a watercolorist.

Her painting on the front cover is of her cat Tommy. Jan's son Don brought Tommy home one day as a rescue mission. The neighbors had two cats and obviously only wanted one, as they were neglecting this cat. He had many unhealed wounds, was malnourished and in need of medical attention. It was Don who named the cat "Tommy." Once he was on the mend he became everyone's favorite, and the neighbors were very happy to have someone else care for the cat. Tommy was good company for Janice when all the children were off to college. On rare occasions when Doug was away, the cat liked to sleep in bed with Janice. But most often he slept in "his" chair in daughter Marcy's room and no one else was allowed to sit in that chair.

Over the years creating watercolor paintings has given Janice many hours of joy and contentment. In addition, she has also drawn the architectural plans for two homes built on Martha's Vineyard - one for her and Doug and one for Doug's mom.

GLAMOR MANOR

By Dot Healy

During my early years I lived in Arlington, Massachusetts. There were six of us in the family: Mom, Dad, three daughters and one son. We were living on the second floor of a two-family house, with two bedrooms, a living room, dining room, a kitchen, one bathroom and a porch. It was tight quarters for six people.

One morning my mother decided that the two-bedroom apartment was too small for a growing family, and she went out looking at real estate. When my dad came home from work she told him about the perfect house she had looked at. He thought we were fine where we were currently living and said, "You'll put us all in the *Poor House*." But they went ahead and made a deposit. When they went to pass papers, she discovered she had bought two houses. In addition to the Manor House, to her surprise, there was also a Carriage House in the back as well as a garage on the property. Now Dad thought she was a very smart woman.

The house was beautiful and my twin sister, Mary, named it "Glamor Manor." It was in a very nice Arlington neighborhood on Jason Street, and within walking distance to schools, shopping and public transportation. This was quite handy as we never owned a car. The basement had a furnace with so many arms on it that we called it an octopus. It also had a laundry and a big safe which was locked. Some years later, my brother-in-law, Bill, discovered a way to open it and found a number of gold coins inside. The first floor had a large kitchen with a call button to all four bedrooms and the library on the second floor. The third floor also had two bedrooms. To us kids, it certainly felt like a very grand place to live, with more room than we could ever have imagined.

During WWII, in addition to the family members living there, my younger sister Kay's friend stayed as well. I was not there at this time because I was a nurse in the Navy.

After the war, I lived in New York City having taken a job with American Airlines. But once my sister Mary became pregnant with her first child, I came home to live and be with her. I did stay on with American Airlines, but my home base was now Boston.

One day turned out to be quite special; my cousin Jim came to visit and asked me to come with him to a party to which he and his friend had been invited. On the way there we stopped to pick up his friend Dan Healy. As I was about to be introduced to Dan and his parents, Jim said, "Meet your future daughter-in-law." The rest is history. Dan and I were married on April 24, 1948 - sixty nine years and still counting.

Many parties, both casual and formal, were held at the house on Jason Street. Every New Year's Eve we had a formal dinner party with each man in a tux and each lady wearing an evening gown. Also, all us girls held our wedding receptions at home, and every major holiday was always celebrated with a themed party.

After Dan and I married, we moved into the Carriage House. But once our first child Danny was born, we needed more room. So we swapped houses with my parents - they moved to the Carriage House and we moved to the Manor House. Now that we were the ones with the expanding family, it was decided that Dan and I should buy Glamor Manor from my parents. So papers were signed and we became the owners. Eventually the Healy family grew to seven: one son and four daughters, along with Dan and me.

Once our children were grown and on their own, we split the deed into two parcels. The Manor House was sold and the Carriage House was deeded to my brother. We moved to our summer house in Chatham on Cape Cod, which then became the new focal point for the Healy family gatherings. From there we moved to Thirwood.



Glamor Manor, circa 1943

TIM LEE

By Frank Hynes

Having lived long enough to remember the latter years of the great depression, World War II and the post war fifties, I sometimes wonder and marvel at how we survived without the modern inventions and conveniences that make everyday living so much more pleasant and comfortable. Today we take for granted and never give a second thought to household appliances, processed foods, transportation modes and, yes, even everyday garments and fabrics.

Monday was wash day when the weekly wash was separated, the whites from the colored garments, as the colored fabric would surely run and ruin the white shirts and underwear. The Thor wringer washing machine, with its big rollers that hung on a swivel arm that could be moved over the wash tubs to wring out the excess water prior to hanging out the wash on the backyard clothes line, was a godsend to the lady of the house, a far cry from the wash board of a few years prior. Tuesday was ironing day. While the kids were in school, mother would get out the ironing board and press out the white linens, shirts and anything else that needed ironing with a state of the art electric iron, probably manufactured by a company by the name of General Electric.

Prior to the Second World War and even into the post-war fifties and early sixties, wash and wear fabrics were virtually unheard of. About the only garments that could be hung to dry on their own were silk and satin, mostly things the ladies would own and certainly not the everyday shirts and bedding that were made from processed cotton. If you could afford it and were employed where it was necessary to wear a clean shirt every day, a laundry merchant was available to take in your laundry, do it according to your requirements and return it to you

on a given day. Every town of any size had at least one and, if large enough, perhaps one in different neighborhoods of the same town. These laundries usually occupied a small store front, with little or no decoration to attract your eye; you just knew where they were located. They were known as a Chinese Laundries.

I passed the Chinese Laundry in our neighborhood just about every day on the way to and from school. If you didn't pay attention you would miss it completely. It sat back on a small lot next to the local fire house, a small shop with a large plate glass window and a door alongside. The window announced the type of business and the owner in large print, "Tim Lee, Chinese Laundry." The shop was pretty plain, just a long counter across the front with rows of shelves along much of the back wall and a door to the back of the shop where you could see where much of the work of ironing and pressing the shirts and linens was done. I have no idea what kind of irons were used but they sure didn't look like anything my mother used on our clothes, as the irons hissed and steamed any time you entered the shop and Tim Lee was busy working in the back room. If you were dropping off a bundle of laundry, Mr. Lee would roll the clothes in one of the shirts, tie it closed with the shirt sleeves, tear off a ticket, put one half in the bundle and hand you the other half and tell you in halting English when the clothes would be ready. If you wanted the shirts done a certain way, with or without starch, Mr. Lee would make a funny-looking mark on the ticket before he stuffed it into the bundle.

To tell you the truth we didn't use the Chinese laundry that often. With four boys and a father in the house my mother did most of the ironing herself at home. There wasn't that much money available for such luxury as having the shirts done outside the house, but whenever

we did use the laundry, Mr. Lee would always remember you. When you came in, he would greet you with a smile, gather up your bundle and hand you your half of the ticket. On the way to school one day I noticed the shop was closed, with the shade pulled down on the door window with a sign turned to tell you the obvious. One light burned in the shop outlining the shelves with their tidy packages wrapped in brown paper, tied with string and a slip of paper with funny-looking marks slipped underneath. I heard later on that old Mr. Lee had passed away, but other than that no one knew much about the old man. I wondered how the people would get their laundry with the old man gone.

Occurrences like that only occupy your attention for a short period of time, especially a young person whose attention span can't last for more than a minute or so. You're on to something else and the closing of the Chinese laundry and the passing of old Mr. Lee gets pushed back in the memory file of our brain, perhaps never to surface again. Then one day as I walked home from school I noticed the lights on in the Chinese laundry, a customer standing at the counter with a bundle of shirts, a little Chinese man behind the counter writing marks on a ticket, tearing off half the paper, handing it to the customer and smiling as he took the bundle of laundry wrapped in one of the shirts and stuffed the other half of the ticket inside. As much as some things change, some things do live on.



MY SAILING ADVENTURES

By Louise Hanson

For many years our vacations were spent camping at a New Hampshire campground. One year, two of our camping friends, Arlene and Ray, asked if we and our two other friends, Judy and Gordon (our son-in-law's parents), would like to go sailing with them. Since the four of us had never sailed before, we decided to give it a try. We immediately became hooked on our first sail. We would fly to the town of Charlotte Amalie in the Virgin Islands and spend a few weeks each year.

On one particular sailboat trip with our friends Judy and Gordon, we were headed to Culebra Island. Dick, my husband, had been stationed there as a Marine from 1946 to 1948. The sea was very rough that day and our gas tank went over the side as our boat slid down one side of a huge wave and then up on the other. Our friend Judy went over the side to fetch the tank. As we all watched, Dick yelled as a submarine coning tower popped up out of the water. It was a Canadian submarine! Due to the rough sea, we had strayed into the international shipping lane and into the middle of their military maneuvers. As quickly as possible we sailed out of there toward calmer water and continued on our way to Culebra Island.

Another interesting adventure happened while sailing on the historic stern-wheeler steamship Delta Queen from New Orleans, Louisiana to Cincinnati, Ohio. There were sixteen in our group on a thirteen day trip up the Mississippi River. One day I had just finished shampooing my hair. So that it could dry in the air, I went back to the stern to sit. There was a woman sitting there who looked vaguely familiar to me. It wasn't until later that I realized she was Rosemary Clooney, the singer!

The steamship stopped many times so we could visit various Plantations along the way. It was great to discover so much about the southern lifestyle and culture. One evening, on the night before the Kentucky Derby, our bartender made mint juleps for all of us in celebration of the upcoming race.

When we finally arrived in Cincinnati, the city was flooded. There had just been a heavy rainstorm that day which had caused the flood. It was a very eerie sight, the only illumination came from streetlights, and you could see dead animals floating in the water. Needless to say, our steamship sail had been a most memorable trip.



Delta Queen

“TO GRANDMOTHER’S HOUSE WE GO” *

By Jane Waters Nielsen

Well, this is not exactly my favorite song as Grandma wasn’t exactly my favorite relative. She looked the part: short and stout as the proverbial teapot, her hair white and worn in a knot at the nape of her neck. She wore long dowdy dresses, heavy stockings, and sturdy shoes and usually had an apron encompassing her front. This seemed a bit unusual as I never recalled her doing housework other than turning the handle in a huge glass churn to make butter. I was disappointed that she wasn’t jolly - she rarely smiled and never laughed.

To show the respect she deserved and put her in a more admirable light, I quickly add that the lady had borne seven children, my mother being the youngest of four sons and three daughters. She also brought home her eldest son’s baby when his mother died in the influenza epidemic. A few years later, when her brother’s wife died leaving several children, she brought home a niece who grew up as a beloved sister to my mother. As I grew into my teens I was impressed that she enjoyed reading contemporary novels. I cannot recall ever having a real conversation with her, and she always brushed off my requests to tell me about olden days. Strange to me, she referred to her husband as “Mister Howell.”

My grandpa died when I was about six years old. I remember mostly his handsome white mustache, and the frightening knowledge that he lay ill in one of the downstairs bedrooms with a tube in his stomach that was supposed to drain out his sickness. His funeral was at the house. We children sat on the staircase to the second floor while adults filled the downstairs area. His burial was in the field beyond the lot, in a little iron-fenced cemetery. At the burial I was puzzled as to why some of the men wore little aprons and other strange pieces of clothing. I had

no idea Grandpa was a member of the Masonic order and that this was part of their ritual.

My grandparents' house was not a mansion but in my estimation qualifies as a plantation. In style it resembled many a house still found in Virginia: two-story clapboard with brick chimneys at each end, with double front doors opening on a center hall to catch the breeze. It also had a name, Sycamore Level, as many of those tall trees fronted it. A detached old kitchen was one of the out buildings, as was the smokehouse, annually filled with hams and sausages.

The attached kitchen housed a huge black wood-burning cook stove, a sizable wood box, a sink, drain board and minimal workspace. Annexed to one end was a screened-in pantry with barrels of flour and lard and shelves for staples. In winter there were wooden shutters, to close it in. On the porch as you entered from the main house, there stood an electric refrigerator and, next to it, a pie safe with pierced tin doors. Outside the kitchen door to the porch was a table which, among other things, held the large pail for kitchen waste, slop for the hogs. I held my nose when I had to pass by.

The dining room table seated eight to twelve persons, and there could be two settings for Sunday family dinners and usually a children's table. The chairs were bentwood style with rattan seats. A large roll-top desk, sideboard, china closet and built-in cupboard with screened doors completed the furnishings.

Susie worked for my grandmother everyday; more cook than housekeeper, though she might wield a broom occasionally. As a cook she was the epitome of southern culinary arts. Another woman came to do the laundry on the weekly washday, which involved a huge black iron pot in the side yard heated by a wood fire beneath it.

Midday dinner was the main meal of every day, and naps were customary afterward. After dinner, the foods were left on the table covered with a white cloth to be unveiled at suppertime with additions. Susie went home for the day after the dinner dishes were done.

Next to the old kitchen was a chinaberry tree, just inside the fence which enclosed the door yard. Climb the fence and you could easily ascend higher into those welcoming tree branches. A few feet away stood the large woodshed, and just outside it a sturdy block served for beheading the many chickens the household consumed. My observation post for this activity vividly etched “running around like a chicken with its head cut off” in my memory. Not pretty.

Under the brick foundation was the entrance to the cellar where potatoes were stored in the entry way area (light came in through the staggered bricks). They were laid out on the earth with lime sprinkled over them; I thought they got their name *white potatoes* from this. Beyond, down a step or two, was the dirt-floored storage area with many shelves of canning jars containing the vegetable garden’s bounty. The cellar was a dark and frightening experience for two reasons. First, only a single bulb hung on a cord to light this whole area, and second, my mother had told me the house had been used as a hospital during the Civil War (War Between the States) and I KNEW there had to be bodies buried in this dimly lit area and, of course, their spirits hovered nearby.

Fields of cotton, corn, peanuts and tobacco surrounded the house on all sides. One entered the side lane to the house through the fields from the paved road some distance from the house. When the peanuts had been dug and the vines stacked like so many haystacks, the hogs were let into the fields to forage for peanuts the pickers had missed. On these occasions all field gates were closed, and it was my joy to be allowed out of the car to open and shut them.

Not to be ignored in this cataloging of Sycamore Level was the old outhouse, no longer in service, which was situated in the back garden. A modern bath had been installed on the first floor. The upstairs bedrooms, where my mother and I shared a bed when visiting, were serviced with a chamber pot and bowl and pitcher on a washstand. I can remember the delight of a feather bed, as well as my mother's lighting a fire in the little wood stove on a bitterly cold morning.

All in all, it wasn't much fun for a little city girl to visit. I picked blackberries not heeding my grandmothers warning "You'll get chiggers"; peeled off strips of that wonderful sycamore bark and tried to write on it with a pen I fashioned from a chicken feather, using poke berry ink that I had made.

I remember once when a boy came and gave us cousins a ride in his goat cart, and other times having a ride with Uncle Tom Murphy, an old man who lived on the farm, in his mule cart. He was fun because he called it a "kee-yart." Chasing butterflies and June bugs, leaning over the fence just watching the hogs wallowing in the mud were pass-times, as were exploring the barn and its loft, and poking through old books upstairs on rainy days. I was sorry there were only homely old mules in the barn stalls for I wished for a horse, having heard the stories of my mother and her sister driving their horse, Trixie, and the buggy to high school in town. Sometimes I would gather eggs, but was afraid of the chickens and wouldn't put my hands under one on the nest. My aunt gave me a lesson in milking a cow with little success. But she did pay me a penny a pound to pick cotton one day, and I earned ten cents, or that was what she paid me. It was hard work. I was allowed, at my request, to attend a hog-killing early one cold morning which turned into a bloody horror for me.

Always driving the forty miles for Sunday visits, my father never complained. I never asked how he felt in this alien world, as an outlander among his farming in-laws. In summer, my mother and I would go on the Seaboard train for weeklong visits, and he would drive there to bring us home. While I did not particularly “like” going to Grandma’s house as a child, I cherish now the experience it gave me to see this other world which no longer exists in our country.



Grandpa at Sycamore Level, circa 1933

*Traditional Thanksgiving Song; “Over the River and Through the Woods”

MY **MILITARY** CAREERS (PART THREE)

Jeff Davis

I recently realized that I have a total of 63 years in the “military” service. No, I didn’t retire as a general or admiral from one of the armed services. Actually, I’ve had three military associations – two years with the US Army Corps of Engineers, forty years with the Acton (MA) Minutemen and 21 years as a volunteer with the US Coast Guard Auxiliary.

2016 US COAST GUARD AUXILIARY 1995 – 2016

My wife and I retired to Cape Cod in 1992. This resulted in my participation in another military volunteer organization. This time I joined the Coast Guard Auxiliary as a member of the flotilla attached to Coast Guard Station Chatham.

The major activity of the Auxiliary is recreational boating safety. When I joined, the US Coast Guard had 35,000 members, and the Auxiliary had 40,000 volunteers. Currently, with more missions added, the Coast Guard now has about 40,000 members, while the Auxiliary membership has declined slightly.

My activities have been as boat crewman doing safety patrols and assisting boaters in trouble; as a vessel examiner performing checks on vessels to assure compliance with safety items required by federal and state regulations; as a liaison to marinas and other organizations; and as “keeper” of Chatham Light.

There have been lots of interesting events during those years.

As a boat crew trainee on my first patrol, we spotted something bobbing in the water about a mile off Harwich. I was asked what I thought it was. Since it was a dark color, I didn’t think it was an

overturned boat. As we got closer, my guess was ok - it was a dead whale.

My most interesting case involved one of our crewmen announcing his spotting two people in the water about a half mile off Monomoy Island waving for help. It turned out that they had been diving on the wreckage of the Pendleton (remember The Finest Hours). They had surfaced and their dive boat was gone. It was an easy rescue, but the possibility of their loss was real because the current was pushing them away from the coast at perhaps a mile per hour. Imagine the dive boat returning to the scene to find nothing. The Auxiliary saved what could have been an expensive and possibly a fruitless air and sea search.

One other rescue was routine, but served as an example of how local Auxiliary members' detailed knowledge of local waters can pay off. On a day during which a heavy fog rolled in, a boater called for help when he ran out of fuel. He could tell us of landmarks in Harwich Port he had seen before the fog closed in. That gave us some clues, but still left us with a sizeable area to search. Our coxswain asked for the depth of water where he was anchored. That was a major clue, so our vessel got to that depth and moved slowly in the direction of the distress. Sure enough, after slowly cruising for a couple of miles, there was the boater appearing as a shadow about ten yards off to the side of our vessel. Situations like that made us feel good about providing a service for boaters.

My ten-year stint running the Chatham Lighthouse activities has been rewarding. During that time, we hosted nearly 50,000 people and three seeing-eye dogs as visitors. Yes, we allowed blind visitors to climb the 44 steps to the first landing. Since the Auxiliary "adopted" Chatham Light in 1994, we have been host to nearly 100,000 visitors with not a single accident. We celebrated the 125th anniversary of the present

light in 2002, and the 200th anniversary of the first Chatham Light in 2008. There have been a number of amusing memories. One was when a couple called from Maryland asking where we were located because they couldn't find Chatham on their map of Maine. Another was a summer visitor who called from Yarmouth for directions. After giving directions the lady said, "Oh, it's near the water!"

Age has caught up with me, preventing me from safely continuing some of those activities, so in December 2016; I completed my 21 year career with the Coast Guard Auxiliary and permanently retired from the military.

So much for my 63 years of serving my country, reliving history, and making our waters safer for boaters. Lots of fun. "Thanks for the memories."



Flotilla Commander
Jeff Davis



Chatham Lighthouse

*(Part one is in the Nov. – Dec. 2016 issue;
Part two is in the Feb. – Mar. 2017 issue.)*

