QUARTERBOARD
CUTTYHUNK HISTORICAL SOCIETY
www.cuttyhunkhistoricalsociety.org
Serving the Elizabeth Islands Since 1978 ▪ Summer Telephone 508.984.4611
P.O. Box 181 ▪ Cuttyhunk, Massachusetts 02713

A newsletter of the Cuttyhunk Historical Society and Museum of the Elizabeth Islands **Fall 2026**

Museum of the Elizabeth Islands and Cuttyhunk Historical Society ~ Summer 2026!









(top left clockwise): Board member Ho Garfield and grandson visiting; Milo,Sonja, Jaime at the Art Fair; Lauren Wolk and young fan; Art Fair; Deaf visitors; Cindy Elder holds up an example from her book

















(top left clockwise this section): *Raquel Reis and Lila Jones hold down a table at the Art Fair, Shallop visitors and crew; a last minute bachelor party stop for some sailing and history fans; Cindy Elder signs books in the museum. Middle photos are of the Paul Cuffe film* **Cutffe:Taxed**, *in the Cuttyhunk Church with director Anita Allison and actor, Tyson Brown*





The Museum of the Elizabeth Islands had a remarkable season! We kicked off the summer with a terrific **Opening Party and Annual Auction** with over 200 people. Landing on July 4th this year, the event followed the midday parade and Tower Hill festivities. In, addition, updates and new objects freshened up the exhibit this year and we added our newest publication, *Island As Muse*, edited by Tammis Croft and Bob Smith, to the Museum Store.

We had a wonderful author series (funded by the Gosnold Cultural Council) with *Beyond the Bright Sea* writer **Lauren Wolk**, and historical fiction writer **Cindy Elder** later in July. They both answered questions and signed books for enthusiastic readers of all ages.

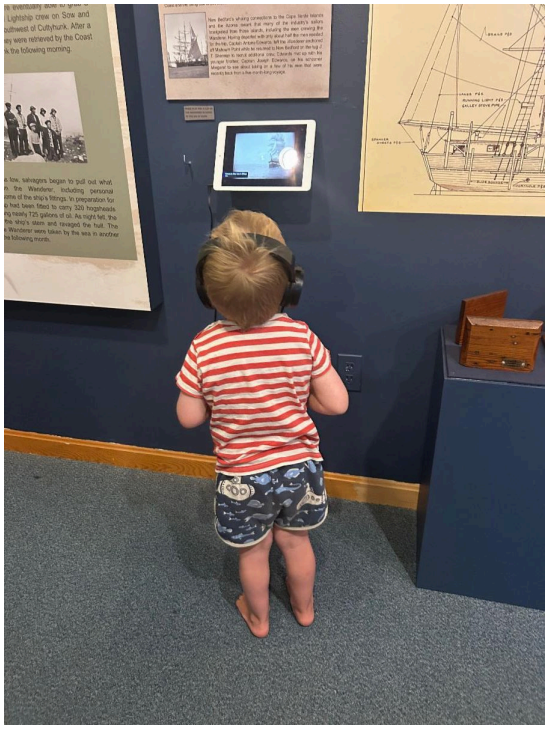
We welcomed many groups into the museum as well, including yacht clubs, wedding guests, a deaf sailing crew, and even a bachelor party! In lieu of the street fair, local artists and makers had the opportunity for the community to see all the wonderful work they do at our first ever **Art and Makers Fair** on the lawn! Artists and patrons alike had a great time showing and buying original artwork. We hope to make this an annual event.

In August, Cuttyhunk celebrated its part in America's 250 Anniversary Celebration by highlighting the life and legacy of our own Paul Cuffe, a Cuttyhunk native. The **Blockade Runners Shallop Tour** was the historical event of the season. There were period

costumed sailing crews, talks on the dock, potlucks, island walks, a film at the church, and drumming/singing on the lawn. We anticipate some of these visitors returning to build on our indigenous roots history as well as connecting and learning more about this part of our islands. Thanks to all who helped on this three-day event, especially Betty Slade and David Cole, Rachel and Wyatt Garfield and Nancy and Dave Twichell!

We were also fortunate to receive four grants this year: The Gosnold Cultural Council (author series), Mass Cultural Council (facility grant), the Gosnold Community Fund (yard project), and the Beech Tree Trust (organizational/exhibit/staff). If you know of grant opportunities or business/corporate sponsorships we should look into, please be in touch.

Thanks everyone for a terrific season and year so far!



A Place for Everyone

Robyn Weisel, *Executive Director*

Shipwrecks are fascinating! From young to old we have seen visitors engaged with the the stories, objects, and all of the information we have put into our *Hidden Histories* exhibit. There really is something for everyone, and that's important when we plan, research and design exhibits. We also think about different ways people learn and take in information. Some like to see or touch things while others like to listen to a story or take a deeper dive into one area. We strive to be multifaceted so that everyone can enjoy learning. We usually keep exhibits up for 2-3 years, but I promise, there is always something new to learn or see that you might've missed before, so come in again and expand your mind and experiences.

Exhibits and other info can be found on our website at:
https://www.cuttyhunkhistoricalsociety.org/exhibitions



Volunteers Needed!

Get high school/college volunteer credit hours and museum experience at CHS!

What better place to be in the summer than a couple of hours chillin' in the AC with cool museum info? Just a couple of hours each week gives you credit, but even better, helps the museum in many ways by freeing up staff to continue their work and research! Each

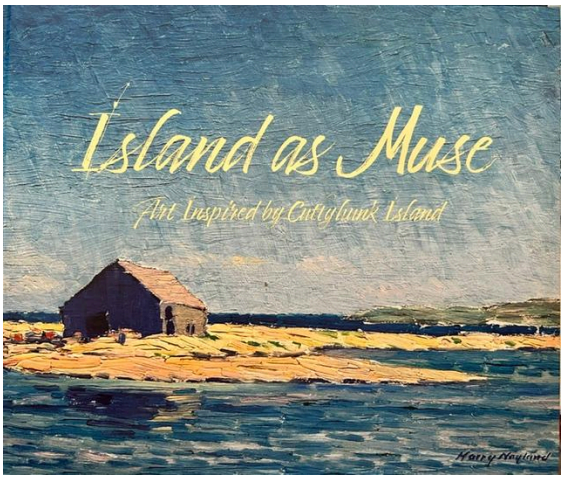
summer we also offer an internship program to learn and practice museum work. If volunteer credits or a summer internship interest you, let us know!

We also need volunteers of every age and skill to help with office jobs, gardening, greeting visitors, events, fundraising, and other things that make us a truly volunteer-driven organization. For more info, contact us at cuttyhunkhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

Island As Muse

Hardcover Publication

Our first-ever hardbound, coffee table book covers our last exhibit by the same name, *Island As Muse*, by co-curators and editors Bob Smith and Tammis Groft. Not only is this an exceptionally beautiful book about the many artists of the Elizabeth Islands, but it makes a terrific holiday gift! Let us know if this is something you would like to add to your giving this year! ($70 + shipping costs)







Thank You!

CHS Volunteer-of-the-Year

Laura Mali-Astrue!

We recognize volunteers who go the extra mile. Laura Mali-Astrue is just that -someone who goes beyond the job description, the event, the usual parameters. She has supported CHS and the Museum in just about every role you could have- as President, Vice-President, Committee Member, and B&G work team.

She and her husband, Michael, have given their house to staff, board members, and curators to help further the mission of the museum. She has been generous with her time, talent, and her support of CHS through her many contributions, skillful editor's-eye, and her even temperament making the organization a better place. We thank you so very much!!

Our Season in Numbers

- **2786** Summer Visitors
- **16+** Private Tours or Groups
- **520+** Event Participants

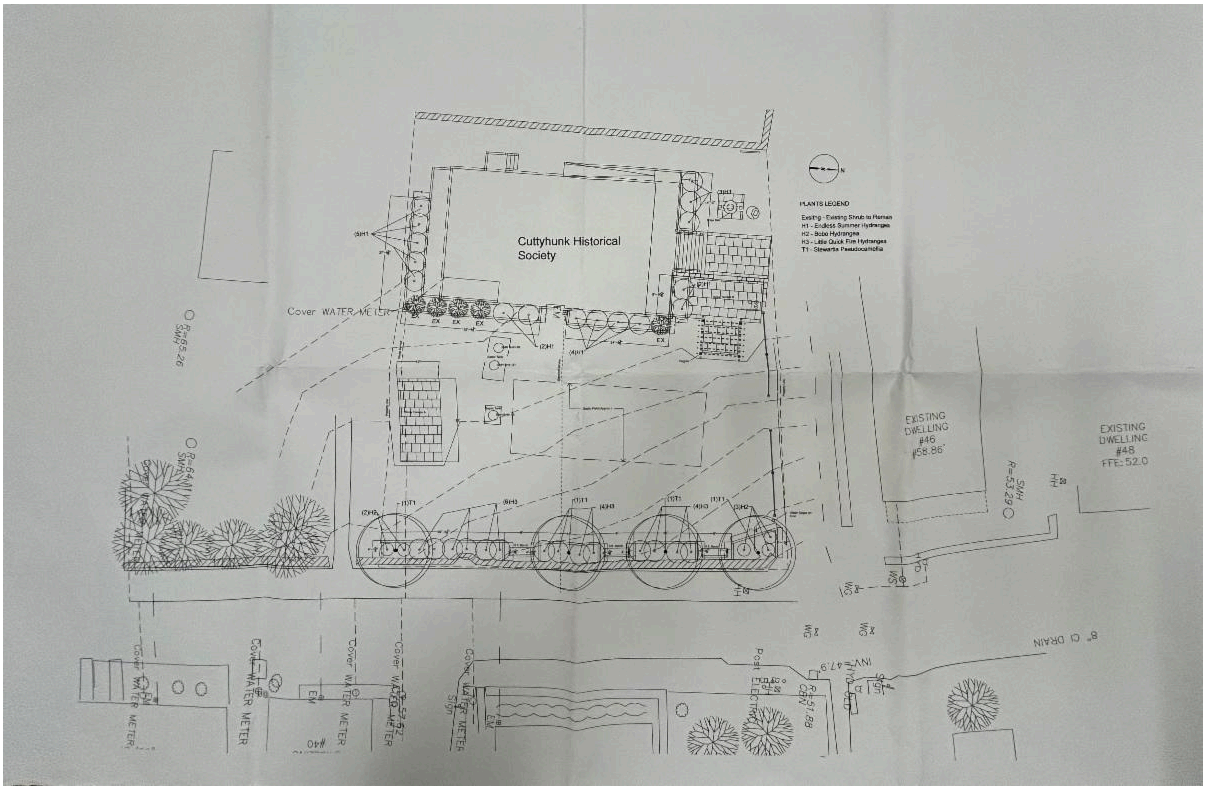
Did you know? CHS has approximately 10,000+ objects in its collection and over 600 original works of art!

- **1,646** QBs and virtual publications





What's Happening on the CHS yard?



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Kate Parker

The Summer of '26 has left us with warm memories, starting with a 250th national celebratory opening party on July 4th. Over 200 people came to enjoy each other's company and to bid on special items donated to the annual auction. CHS also hosted several yacht clubs and a significant visit from the folks who brought the Shallop Tour to Cuttyhunk. These were especially memorable occasions because they all took place on a renovated CHS lawn, surrounded by new plantings of hydrangeas and flowering trees.

Thanks to some incredibly generous donors and the sweat equity put in by master gardener and board member Annie Hinson, our outdoor space is becoming a welcoming platform for visitors to rest and enjoy the sunny views of the island and Vineyard Sound, to take in a musical presentation by visiting artists, and to browse the wares of island artists and engage in art projects of their own during a seashell-painting class.

These wonderful uses of our yard are just the beginning of what we hope will become a tradition of the community gathering to celebrate so much of what islanders know as “Cuttyhunk Magic,” whether it is to learn about the history of the Elizabeth Islands through all types of presentations or to participate in fun events designed to draw in passers-by.

This fall the lawn improvements continue, with the building of two flagstone patios, an entry pergola and a split-rail fence to define the yard from Tower Hill Road. Our hope is that come next spring, the vision of a beautiful community gathering place will have been completed, and that many more people will find their way to the Museum of the Elizabeth Islands!



cuttyhunkhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

Looking Ahead: Opening Party & Auction 2027

We are looking for items and experiences to offer at our auction next summer: vacation homes, boat excursions, gift certificates, classes or lessons, professional services, a unique adventure, special access, or something interesting!

The CHS Collection

Samantha Poirier, Curator/Archives/Collection

This year, we accessioned 8 items to the museum collection. Robert Smith donated a scrimshaw tooth with a depiction of the *Wanderer* and two black-and-white photographs of the *Wanderer* and the *Charles W. Morgan*. For the exhibit, Jon Johansen donated a porthole recovered from the wreck of the *Vineyard Sound Lightship* and a photograph of his uncle Brad Luther’s boat, *Wreck Master*. We received three watercolor paintings, one by Wilfred Tilton (donated by Carolyn Powers) and two painted by Norman Fortier of catboats and the *Alert* and the *Shenandoah* (donated by Christine Fairchild). These items are available to view on the museum’s website.

A lot of curatorial work has been accomplished this summer. A plan to scan and rehouse all photographic materials from the office file cabinet to Room 2 is in progress, while objects are being re-boxed to make additional space in the attic. Marieke Van Damme from Historic Cambridge graciously donated 5 large textile boxes that their organization no longer had use for. These preservation boxes were greatly needed for some late-1800s outfits and handmade quilts. Our new intern, Jamie Frothingham, was instrumental in documenting textiles in the collection, including 12 pieces of clothing, 2 uniforms, 3 American flags, and 37 F.I.S.T. flags. He has spent the summer developing his curatorial skills and learning how to navigate the museum database system. With Jamie’s help, we were able to scan and add approximately 460 images to PastPerfect. Additions will continue through August.

Next year will focus on two major projects, exhibit deinstallation and inventory of the collection. As *Hidden Histories* will be in its final year, we will be designing the 2028 exhibit and then returning current objects on display to storage at the end of the summer. We will simultaneously work on scanning photographs and adding objects onto PastPerfect that correctly reflect their home locations and condition status. This will be an ongoing process.

2026 Season in Numbers

New Accessions

8 objects from 4 donors

- 2026.1 ▪ 2026.1. 1 - Scrimshaw whale tooth with depiction of the WANDERER and an unidentified lighthouse
- 2026.1.2 - B&W photograph of the WANDERER at the dock in New Bedford
- 2026.1.3 - B&W photograph of the CHARLES W. MORGAN at Round Hill
- 2026.2 ▪ 2026.2.1 - Porthole recovered from the VINEYARD SOUND LIGHTSHIP
- 2026.2.2 - Color photograph of Brad Luther's boat WRECK MASTER
- 2026.3 ▪ 2026.3.1 - Framed Rocky Shore watercolor by Wilfred Tilton, ca. 1953
- 2026.4 ▪ 2026.4.1 - Framed watercolor of the ALERT and the SHENANDOAH by Norman Fortier
- 2026.4.2 - Framed watercolor of catboats by Norman Fortier

PastPerfect (*as of 7/30/2026*) **Accession Records (Museum Database)**

Total: 1,295 Categories, Records, Images, Individual Objects

Total:

2,357 Records

1,321 Images



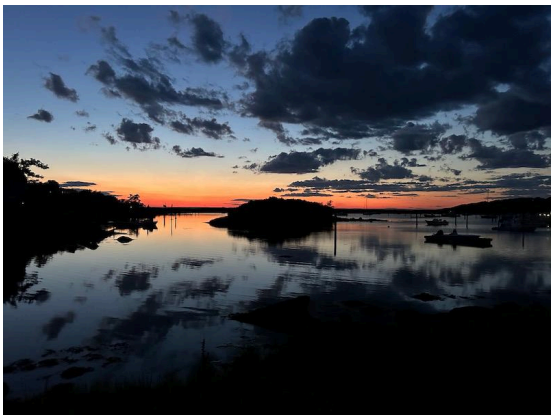


In Memoriam...

John Jamieson Bancroft, 1941-2026
Florence Alice Smith 1930-2026
Carmen Dressler Ward 1932-2026

~

"Our memories of the ocean will linger on, long after our footprints in the sand are gone."





CYTC Performance of the Lord of the Fleas HERE

The Cuttyhunk Youth Theater Camp Celebrates Its Third Successful Season!

Henry Weisel, creator and director of the CYTC

The CYTC returned for its third season this summer. A parody of *Lord of the Flies*? They said it couldn't be done, but 10 brilliant young actors proved them wrong! It was another successful year of inside jokes, meta humor, face paint, sword swinging, and dance parties. A big congratulations and thank you to everyone involved, both on and off the stage. We hope to see you next season because, we're going to need a bigger boat...

CHS Staff & Board

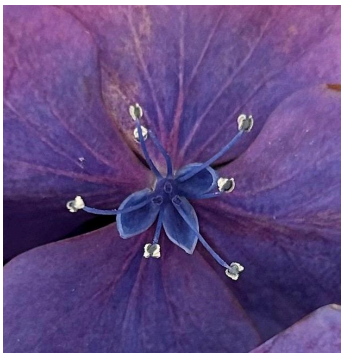
Robyn Weisel
Executive Director
Samantha Poirier
Curator/Archivist/Collections
Anna Nagtegaal
Museum Assistant & Social Media
Jaime Frothingham
Summer Intern
Michelle Carvalho
Bookkeeper
Ben Sadler
Winter Custodian

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Museum of the Elizabeth Islands

Cuttyhunk Historical Society

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Serving the Elizabeth Islands
PO Box 181
23 Tower Hill Road
Cuttyhunk Island, MA 02713
508-984-4611

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The purpose of the Cuttyhunk Historical Society is to record and preserve the history, traditions, and artifacts of Cuttyhunk Island and the Elizabeth Islands of Massachusetts, and to engage the community and public through education, exhibitions, and outreach.

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All CHS photos by or collected by Robyn Weisel

~
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Mark Jackson
Gretchen Kidder
Peggy Lovell
Bert Nagtegaal
Lolly Schenck
Bev Snow

Quarterboard is the newsletter of the Cuttyhunk Historical Society and is published twice a year.

Visit our website for membership, donations, and information. Click HERE!

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