



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 2025

CHS Annual Summer Fundraising 2025!

CHS's biggest fundraising event is the Summer Opening Party and Auction. This year we had so many incredible donors that donated their beautiful artwork, wonderful hands-on experiences, field trips, and amazing homes to the auction that earned us the most successful of all of our auctions to date, raising close to \$23,000!

The summer begins with a kick-off party that has become the season opener for families, friends and visitors. All of the support, both in-kind and through winning bids goes directly to running CHS and the Museum. This year the *Hidden Histories: Shipwrecks of the Elizabeth Islands* was a multigenerational success. Thanks to a dynamic team of researchers, authors, educators and historians, CHS was able to collaborate their expertise into a beautifully engaging exhibit led by Executive Director, Robyn Weisel and Curator/Archivist, Sam Poirier. By supporting CHS in a variety of ways, you invest in the culturally rich history that both educates and motivates more learning and exploration. The current exhibit runs through 2026. Check out our website for more information, a (coming soon) virtual tour, and a book culminating the current show.



Thanks Charlie!

Thanks to our youngest auctioneer ever this year, we generated an exciting and motivated crowd of bidders. We love having some of the young islanders participate in whatever ways makes CHS stronger and more fun.

We appreciate Charlie Anderson stepping up to the plate and leading CHS to one of the best fundraising events to date, bravo!



Original Artwork of *Wanderer* Raffle Winner!

The beautiful artwork of the *Wanderer* by Paul Huntley was won by the raffle winner and our own "Doc-on-the-Rock" Dr. Joe Li!! He was thrilled to be the winner and CHS was similarly happy raising over \$1000 that benefitted our annual fundraising event.



July 4th Parade!

This year, CHS participated in the always outstanding July 4th Parade. Along with a decorated cart and a front porch bubble machine, everyone had a blast playing along the route.

Pictured: top left, CHS golf cart, decorated by the Cuttyhunk Youth Theater, an exhibit chalk drawing by our very own Samantha Poirier, and Director Robyn Weisel with resident Rebecca "Quinnie" Hornbach.



CHS Executive Committee Letter

To All in the Elizabeth Islands Community:

Another blockbuster season has closed on the Cuttyhunk Historical Society and the museum. Over 2,900 visitors came through the museum to absorb and wonder at the powerfully evocative exhibit, ***Hidden Histories: Shipwrecks of the Elizabeth Islands***. Incredible artifacts and lost treasures tell the story of a busy Buzzards Bay and Vineyard Sound and the shipping, commerce, and community in the early 1900s. The exhibit will run through summer of 2026, so don't despair if you missed it this year.

The Opening Party, Annual Auction, and Painting Raffle was a resounding success, raising an unprecedented \$22,000+ and providing an evening for community re-engagement at the start of a beautiful summer season. We have so many donors, volunteers, and buyers to thank for such largesse!

Thanks to a generous donor, we were able to bring back Samantha Poirier, our collections person who worked with Robyn on island during September and October, and in November will work remotely documenting our collection and making updates to our website.

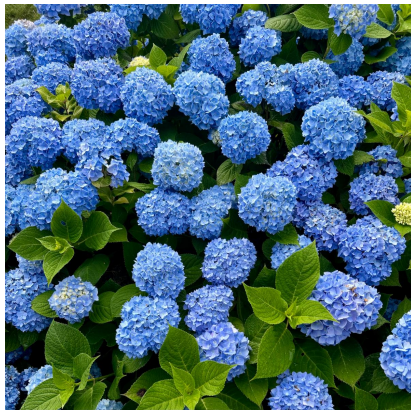
And here's a sneak peek at an exciting change happening next year: under the expert horticultural guidance of board member Annie Hinson and her team of landscape experts, CHS's lawn and surrounding plantings will be refreshed and renewed to become a more inviting space for visitors and islanders to enjoy. Some bushes and trees have already been removed (thank you, Allen Berry!) and will be replaced next spring by new plantings which we hope will have the effect of creating a more unified, spiffed-up place for people to congregate.

At the Annual Meeting in August, the Board elected new leaders, and in a creative act of governance, decided to endow its Executive Committee of five board members to act as President. This shared leadership allows for a sharing of new ideas and unflagging energy to move CHS to meaningful engagement with our island community.

With wishes for a healthy and vibrant autumn,

Your CHS Executive Committee

Kass Ardinger
Mark Jackson
Gretchen Kidder
Kate Parker



Thank You! *CHS Volunteer of the Year* **Tess Goodwin**

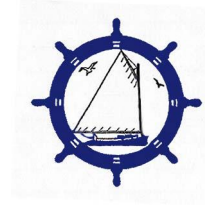
We recognize volunteers who, in our eyes, go the extra mile. This year we needed someone to support our new treasurer, Gretchen Kidder, so we asked a former CHS treasurer for help...and help she did! She met weekly with Gretchen and our bookkeeper, Michelle Carvalho, assisting them in organizing the finances and navigating Quickbooks technology. As Gretchen observed, "she did this with patience, professionalism, dedication, kindness, and of course her wonderful sense of humor. She just kept popping up on those weekly zooms, always pointing out something we had overlooked or questioning things we hadn't considered. It is clear how much **Tess Goodwin** cares about stewarding CHS into the next generation." OUR DEEP APPRECIATION AND THANKS TO YOU TESS!

Our Season in Numbers

- **2,894** Summer Visitors
- **26+** Private Tours
- **2** Interpreted Tours
- **320+** Event Participants
- **1,476** Emailed Quarterboards and virtual publications

Did you know? CHS has approximately 6000+ objects in its collection and over 500 original works of art!





Around the Museum this Summer



We had a bustling museum season with our largest crowd since 2019. Top L-R, Arne Carr talking about his shipwreck dives; the puzzle guys- finished the shipwreck puzzle in record time!; Colby testing the blocks; children's corner; Akin Research room busy all summer

What's going on in the CHS yard?



Landscape Revamp at CHS

After our season closed, the B&G team, headed by Annie Hinson, and some amazing volunteers began clearing out invasive, dead and overgrown vegetation from around CHS to make room for new plantings and improvements. Stay tuned!



Lots of B&G repairs and upkeep happen during the warm summer months. Pictured: Allen Berry, Parker Nagtegaal, Nate Horbach, not pictured; Annie Hinson, Roxy Leeson, Sally Purcell.



The CHS Collection

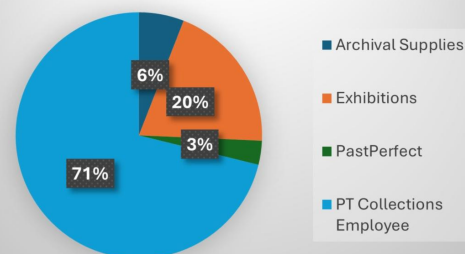


Curator Report *Sam Poirier*

October is National Arts and Humanities Month, an opportunity to highlight the contributions of the arts and humanities to our national wellbeing. This is particularly poignant as we witness the continued elimination of federal funding of many institutions—NEH, NEA, IMLS, PBS—that communities and organizations such as ours rely on for additional funding. The arts are an asset; they promote curiosity and facilitate agency and a sense of belonging. The humanities help to revitalize and strengthen ties to our shared cultural heritage. Those who work and volunteer in these fields see the value and importance of storytelling through creative expression and the exploration of the human experience.

As a cultural institution, it is an honor for CHS and its Museum of the Elizabeth Islands to maintain the community history of Cuttyhunk and the surrounding islands.

Average Collections Care Cost



Once objects are accepted for donation, they go through processing. This entails checking the condition of the object(s), assigning numbers to the object(s), and photographing for documentation. Historic photographs and documents are then put in protective envelopes and objects are placed in archival boxes and labeled. The protection of the items given to us for preservation is vital. Without physical objects, our interpretation of the past would fail in creating a full narrative of our community's history. Safeguarding material against deterioration caused by mold, pests, and humidity is an often overlooked but necessary part of collections care. And along with that physical care is a digital component. As many of you know, we have been updating PastPerfect for the last three years and we have finally reached a point where we believe that there is enough information to make it available to the public.

Since attempts at receiving federal grants are limited, we are reaching out to our members and community partners for

Through the efforts of paid staff, board members, volunteers, and outside collaborators, we have been able to present incredible exhibits, events, and research. We also continue to receive material donations from locals who wish to share in the storytelling experience of island history. Unfortunately, our desire to create a space that adequately preserves and showcases this history is often held back by budgetary constraints.

additional support in preserving our collection and making it more accessible to the public. We know that the history of these islands is important to you, and we are grateful to this community for entrusting it to our care. Our hope is to be able to do so for many years to come. Any further support you can offer at this time is greatly appreciated.

In Memoriam...

Mary Low Schenck
March, 14, 1930-August, 2025

Donald Adair Wilder
May 23, 1944-September 1, 2025



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



The Cuttyhunk Youth Theater Camp celebrates its second successful season!

Henry Weisel creator and director of the CYTC

They say you can make people come to your first show easier than your second. In true Cuttyhunk fashion, the mold was broken and the community showed up with overwhelming support! Seriously, we broke a few fire codes that night! I have the easiest role in all of this - any and all success is owed to the bravery, joy, and work ethic of this ensemble and to the greater community of families and friends of which this program is a mainstay. We hope to see you next season!

**CYTC Performance of the Not-
So-Big Mermaid**[Click HERE](#)



QR Codes and Monograph Links

Next summer expect to see these QR code plaques (pictured left) around the island where you can find out more information about a particular Cuttyhunk icon, object or place that will directly link you to a CHS website monograph where you can read more. (Using your smartphone camera to link to the website page)

Of course, anyone can go directly to the CHS website and read over 60+ monographs about many historical subjects, objects and stories.

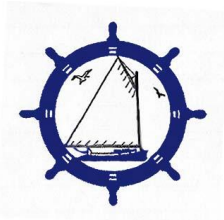
(www.cuttyhunkhistoricalsociety.org)

Look for these QR links that will start this history project: the Cemetery, Fog Bell, WWII Bunkers, the Avalon and Fishing Club.



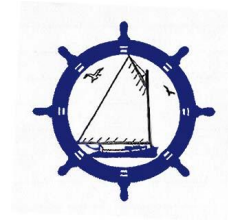
Makers Fair for Artists and Crafters 2026

Get your creative inventory ready this fall/winter/spring in anticipation of our first **Makers Fair** on the CHS lawn next summer. Artists and makers of all kinds are invited to set up a table (nominal fee/donation) to sell their creations both in July and August. We hope to have some food/beverages and music to celebrate all the wonderfully creative people in our greater community!



CHS Staff & Board

Robyn Weisel
Executive Director



**Cuttyhunk Historical Society
& Museum of the Elizabeth
Islands**

~
Serving the Elizabeth Islands

Samantha Poirier
Curator/Archivist/Collections

Anna Nagtegaal
Museum Assistant & Social Media
Michelle Carvalho
Bookkeeper
Ben Sadler
Winter Custodian

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**Lolly Schenck**  
**Bev Snow**



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**23 Tower Hill Road**  
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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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*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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