

AND A-WHALING WE WENT

It was a terrible night, weather wise, but we had an excellent turnout for our program on January 10 featuring Sheila Callaghan from the New Bedford Whaling Museum, with a talk on "Life Aboard a Whaler." It was an excellent talk, and a part of our success was due to the publicity sent out by Paula Bacon. Part was due to the fact that Don Bacon, our resident chanty man, had agreed to warm us up to the subject with a few whaling chanties. Don was equal to the task, and we all joined in the chorus of chanties which reflected the history of the whaling industry as it ranged from Greenland's icy mountains to the paradise of Hawaii. Mrs. Callaghan then presented slides and stories which traced the lives of the average crewmen aboard a whaling vessel, including the de-humanizing ordeals which these intrepid sailors endured. The Board presented Don with a crystal plate etched by Dan Stewart with a representation of the Bacon home, as a token from the D.H.S. for his 2 years as President, two years which added a new dimension to the Society with the completion of our slide show and the great success of our education program. Don's career as a chanty man came about from his willingness to make a positive contribution to our school field trips, and from these humble beginnings Don has become an expert in the history and development of the sea chanty, a skill which he shares with many groups, and always as a part of Dennis Festival Week, at the Jericho House. Thanks, Don, for your unique contribution to our effort to preserve ancient arts, and for your good-natured leadership over your two years as D.H.S. President.

THE LEGEND OF CAPTAIN PADDOCK AND CROOK JAW

While we are speaking about whaling, let me tell you but one more tale about Captain Paddock. Those of you who disbelieved the tale of the lost and found harpoon in last month's edition will doubtless find this one even more incredible. I tell it not for its credibility, but, as it deals with the Paddocks, it emphasizes that family's importance in the development of the industry. It also is a good example of what months on a whaling voyage can do to a whaleman's imagination. This legend is about "Capt. Paddock" and I will assume it is Ichabod himself. It has many versions; one, I have recently discovered, for children. This is mine.

In the early days of whaling, Capt. Paddock was well known and respected among the whaling people of the Cape. His "greasy luck" made it an easy matter for him to sign on a good crew. But, like the more familiar Capt. Ahab, he had met his life's great challenge in one old sperm whale. He called the bull Crook Jaw. This old beast was scarred and ugly, and he seemed to delight in circling near Capt. Paddock's vessel, wherever in the world he might be. When the small boats were lowered, he would swim leisurely within sight. But when the harpoons were thrown, they either bounced off his tough old hide or shattered into pieces. After years of pursuit, Capt. Paddock's sole aim in life became to capture old Crook Jaw, who was big enough to make a hundred barrels of oil, if he'd make a thimbleful. On the very next voyage, just off the Handkerchief Shoals, there was Crook Jaw, sunning himself in the shallows. The boat was lowered stealthily, and, with Capt. Paddock in the bow, they quietly rowed towards the basking mammal. But old Crook Jaw was as determined not to be caught as Capt. Paddock was to catch him. As the boat neared, he flicked his huge flukes and upended her, spilling all into the sound. Quickly, the crew swam to grab their boat for safety - all save Capt. Paddock, who swam furiously toward his adversary, as crazed. The crew gazed with awe as the whale opened his huge, crooked jaw and Capt. Paddock disappeared within. The whaleboat crew was rescued and sadly reported the loss of the Captain. Meanwhile, the Captain was not a little surprised to be thus removed from the water. He was even more surprised to see a light in the dim and damp interior. Sloshing towards the light, he could see a small cabin, where two people were playing cards. One was a fascinating young female, with hair the color of Eastham corn, cheeks the color of beachplum blossoms, and eyes as green as an eight-fathom sea. The other was the Devil. As Ichabod neared, the Devil slammed his cards on the table, murmured a curse, and shouted, "Again, I lose the hand!" With that he vanished. The Captain, somewhat taken aback, apologized for intruding, but the lovely maiden laughed and said, "The game is over." "And what," asked the Captain, "were you playing for?" "Ah," replied the maiden, "you were the stakes, dear Captain, and I am the winner." (continued next time.)

MID-WINTER FESTIVITY LUNCHEON

We will meet at the Brass Kettle in Dennis Port for a social hour at 12 and luncheon at 1 P.M. on Saturday, Feb. 18. You will have a choice of Scrod, Chicken, Chopped Sirloin, Seafood Medley, Fried Clams or Scallops, served with a cup of home-made soup, vegetable, potato, hot bread and butter, dessert and beverage. The cost per person, \$7.50. For a reservation, please send a check and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Joshua Crowell, P.O. Box 963, Dennis, MA, 02638. We will show some of the prints that have been made from the glass negatives recently obtained, and copies may be ordered. We will also display the logo designs we have received. Virginia Van Vorst will speak briefly about the efforts of the South Side Civic Association to revitalize Dennisport. And to crown the afternoon, we will present the first cup plate to Elinor Slade, Town Clerk, for display at Town Hall. Cup plates will also be available for sale, at \$7 plus 35¢ tax. There will be door prizes, one of which will be a trip to the Boston Flower Show, courtesy of Bacon Tours. Get your reservations in early as we are limited to 50 people in the Post Office Room.

CALENDAR

- Feb. 2 7:30 P.M. Board Meeting, Nancy's House
Feb. 4 or
Feb. 11 1-4:30 P.M. Winter Carnival at Scargo Lake. Listen to WQRC for announcement.
Feb. 18 Mid-Winter Festivity Luncheon at Brass Kettle, Bennisport.
See article.
March 4 3 P.M. Dennis Senior Citizen's Center. South Dennis Memory Day.
March 25 3 P.M. Carleton Hall. Dennis Village Memory Day.

D.H.S. ISSUES ITS FIRST CUP PLATE

Many of you who are not collectors may wonder what a cup plate is. In days gone by, tea was served in a cup with a deep saucer. The tea was then "sauced", that is poured into the saucer to cool a bit, and the cup was placed on a small, flat plate called a cup plate, while one drank his tea from the saucer. Perhaps some of you can tell me when and for how long this method of tea drinking was in vogue. At any rate, although cup plates are no longer a necessity in our tea service, commemorative cup plates have become highly collectable. A committee consisting of Jean Dunham, Gertrude Lailey, and Elinor Crowell have been working on our cup plate project since August of 1982. The design was selected by the Board, and drawn by Nina Sutton of Sandwich, well known to cup plate collectors for her work in the Thornton Burgess series. The design was cast into a mold by master craftsman Alvan White and has been pressed in clear leaded by Pairpont Glass Co. of Sagamore. It will be displayed for the first time and will be for sale at the Mid-Winter Luncheon on February 18 (see article). It may also be purchased at the Town Hall on Feb. 22, 24, 27 and 29. For mail orders, address Mr. Joshua Crowell, P.O. Box 963, Dennis, MA, 02638. The cost is \$7 plus 35¢ tax; add \$1.50 for mailing.

WINTER CARNIVAL

Our present plan is to aim for Saturday, Feb. 4, with Feb. 11 as an alternate date. Lots of activities are planned, some depending on ice conditions. Hot cider and donuts along with good outdoor winter fun can be counted on, even if the ice is not ideal. Really good ice will bring out figure skaters and ice boats. Broom hockey will be played and other activities are planned. Do come to the Dr. Lord's South Town Beach at Scargo Lake from 1 to 4:30 for a fun family afternoon.

ART EXHIBIT OF INTEREST TO D.H.S.

An exhibit of the works of Donn and Nan DeVita will be held in the lobby of the Cape Cod Conservatory of Music and Art, West Barnstable, from Sunday, Feb. 5 to Feb. 17. Among the paintings are 4 portraits by Nan DeVita of the Shiverick vessels Revenue, Hippogriffe, Belle of the West and Kit Carson. Try to see these carefully researched portraits of some of Dennis' most famous vessels. The first two have been reproduced as lithographs and are available by calling Warden Hall Art Gallery, 385-9289.

AN INTERESTING PLACE NAME

I've been puzzled by the name Wrinkle Point in West Dennis, which many have told me was a corruption of periwinkle. But I think I have a more plausible explanation. West Dennis commercial fishing is now reduced to one lobsterman and a summer party boat. Once it was the home of many sail and cod-fishing schooners. The hand-lining Cod fishermen used mussels for bait - not the popular gourmet blue mussel, but the common river mussel with scalloped shell which is found in abundance along the banks of Bass River. The fishermen called these mussels "Wrinkles", no doubt because of the wrinkled shell. I'd be willing to bet that hundreds of buckets of Wrinkles from Wrinkle Point were gathered to tempt many hundreds of codfish, which fed not only hungry Cape Codders, but the entire Cape economy for many years.

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