

Woods Hole Historical Museum Archives  
P.O. Box 185  
Woods Hole, MA 02543

REGISTER  
John Valois Collection  
1765-2014

1 box

## HISTORY AND SCOPE

John Valois, born in Brookline, Massachusetts, 1927; died in Woods Hole, January 28, 2014. He grew up in West Roxbury, and summered in Wings Neck, Pocasset (Bourne). He graduated from Roslindale High School and joined the U.S. Navy, becoming a flight engineer during World War II. After his discharge he attended Boston University and did graduate work at Tufts while teaching high school.

During college, he began his 41 years at the Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole. He spent his time collecting marine specimens, then became a full-time year-round employee in the Supply Department. He became its manager in 1970 and remained as such till he retired in 1990.

John had many scholarly and personal interests. He often wrote about them, gave talks about them and enjoyed sharing his interests with everyone.

He gave numerous talks (Conversations for the Woods Hole Historical Collection and Museum) on Spencer Baird, founder of the U.S. Fish Commission, and Woods Hole fish market owner Sam Cahoon, with whom he was obsessed. Another obsession was Rachel Carson.

John was also a talented sailor. During his summers in Wings Neck, Pocasset and initially learned to sail a Rookie, a small wooden sailboat meant for teaching children sailing skills. Later he sailed Cape Cod Knockabouts and his own sailboat, *Myth*, which he slowly built at home with his wife, Frederica (Freddy) Valois.

John was also an avid ice skater on local ponds.

This collection includes donated material and also notes on various subjects in John's own handwriting and transcription form.

### 1. Spencer Baird material

- this collection contains handwritten notes, xerox copies of John's notes, newspaper clippings and articles from various publications
- also contains material on maritime history (Gosnold), ships and other related early explorer history

### 2. Isaiah Spindell

- handwritten notes on Captain Isaiah Spindell ("Mystery Man") and the fish market's history, including material on Charles B. Coombs, owner before Sam Cahoon. Xerox copy.

### 3. Rachel Carson

- extensive handwritten notes on Rachel Carson and John's recollections of her
- newspaper clippings and xerox copies of articles on Rachel Carson

4. MBL Supply Department.
  - typed letter from R.W. Fielden to John Valois, February 22, 1974, about his memories of the Supply Department. Xerox copy.
5. Emperor Hirohito's Visit, 1975
  - a. Newsclippings, Falmouth Enterprise, 1975.
  - b. MBL Newsletter, Summer 1975 (includes announcement of Hirohito's expected visit).
  - c. Letter from Homer P. Smith to MBL Personnel, October 8, 1975, thanking them for their participation in the Emperor's visit.
6. Woods Hole Yacht Club, Corrected History, 1996
7. Manuscript. A Study In Benthic Biology at Horseshoe Shoal by John Valois, Arthur S. Gaines and Jack Pearce, n.d.
8. Letter (draft) about Buzzards Bay oil spill, written to *Spritsail* editors, 2008
9. Sailing a Rookie, 2009
10. Photo collection
  - a. 4 ½ x 6 ½ b/w prints in 7 envelopes – mostly MBL scenes
  - b. large prints (in folder), including sailing photos
12. Obituaries
13. Miscellaneous