

Mainsheet

The Newsletter of the Woods Hole Historical Museum
P.O. Box 185, Woods Hole, MA 02543
www.woodsholemuseum.org

Fall-Winter 2020

Director's Message

Greetings to you all. It is hard to believe the holidays are almost upon us, but we're happy to begin the celebration! Mark your calendar for our members' holiday party on December 18, at 5 PM, with a special trivia contest. (Registration link is on our website.)

Obviously, this past summer at the museum was different. But there are positives that have come along with these changes.

The pandemic has led us to further develop our digital presence. Colleen and I have been busy writing our Weekly Dispatches that have had a tremendous response from many people. They have attracted new members, and inspired former members to renew. We have learned a lot, too, and even though we have now cut our working hours back to our winter schedule, we continue to write them, although on a bi-weekly basis. If you have topics you'd like to suggest for upcoming Dispatches, please let us know. This project reminds us of how much interesting information we have in our archives!

Using Zoom, we have been able to greet each other during the opening party in June, conduct our annual meeting, participate in trivia contests, and listen to thought-provoking talks on diversity and inclusion in Woods Hole by George Liles, and the history and overview of pandemics by Dr. Donald Burke. Our most recent was a talk on Thanksgiving from the Wampanoag perspective by Steven Peters of the Mashpee Wampanoag tribe.

We have a number of upcoming museum conversations scheduled. Check out the calendar on page 8 of this Mainsheet.

While we have been able to offer in-person historical tours of the village, we also have a virtual tour on our website for those who might not be able to come to Woods Hole. Our gift shop is also online, with options for mail delivery or curbside pick-up.

Special thanks to our interns, Griffin Kerstetter, Dory Amon and Vito Pampalone, for doing a super job of maintaining our outdoor presence during the summer; to Becky Mountford for keeping the gift shop well stocked with popular items; to Rob Blomberg for leading the walking tours, and to Griffin Kerstetter (again!) for her computer expertise.

See you at the holiday party!



One of our most popular Weekly Dispatches was this one on the Eel Pond bridge. All our Dispatches are online, woodsholemuseum.org

Please join us for our annual Holiday Party
Friday, December 18, 2020 5 P.M.

New Steering Committee Member

New Steering Committee member Charlotte Emans Moore was introduced to Woods Hole through her husband Will, a descendant of a scientist and the local Veeder family.

An art historian, she has worked professionally for art museums, historical societies, and libraries where she has drawn on her expertise in eighteenth and nineteenth century American paintings, and more specifically portraiture, to contribute to more than twenty publications and several exhibitions. She served for six years as a board member of the Children's School of Science where she held the position of president during the School's centennial celebration in 2013. She has delighted in spending many hours conducting research in the WHHM's rich archives, most notably in her capacity as editor and contributor to *Wet Sneakers & Nets: The Children's School of Science in Woods Hole, Massachusetts Celebrates 100 Years of Summer Science Education, 1913-2013* (2013), and then as author of *"The Ladies of Woods Hole Never do Things by Halves": The Woods Hole Woman's Club, Self-Improvement, Community Service, and Fellowship, 1914-2014* (2015).

Charlotte looks forward to working with the Museum's staff, volunteers, and our community of engaged members to celebrate the region's diverse cultural heritage through support of the institution's extraordinary special collections, exhibitions, publications, and public programs.



Woods Hole Historical Museum

*A Division of
The Woods Hole Public Library*

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Mainsheet

Published by the

Woods Hole Historical Museum

P.O. Box 185

579 Woods Hole Road

Woods Hole, MA 02543

www.woodsholemuseum.org

Written and Edited by

Deborah Scanlon, Colleen Hurter

Designed by Colleen Hurter

Remembering Al Lunn

Al Lunn, whose expertise and passion for boat building inspired the museum's boat shop for years, died August 28 at age 91.

A lifelong Woods Hole resident, he grew up on the Whitney Estate on Church Street where his father was caretaker. He attended Lawrence High School, where he built his first boat in shop class. After graduation, Al took a boat-building course at Barnstable Trade School, and worked in local boatyards until joining the Coast Guard in 1950.

He served on weather patrol out of Boston on the North Atlantic ship Dexter, then transferred to the Woods Hole Coast Guard base where he operated a 36-foot life boat. After his three-year service, he returned to the boat-building business and also had his own charter boat, Kingfisher, taking fishing parties out on Vineyard Sound and Buzzards Bay. He also helped his father build a dock and marine railway on Little Harbor.

Al married Joan Smith of Taunton in 1958. That year, he began a new job as head of maintenance at the Marine Biological Laboratory's off-site housing campus on Devil's Lane and Memorial Circle. He worked there until 1996.

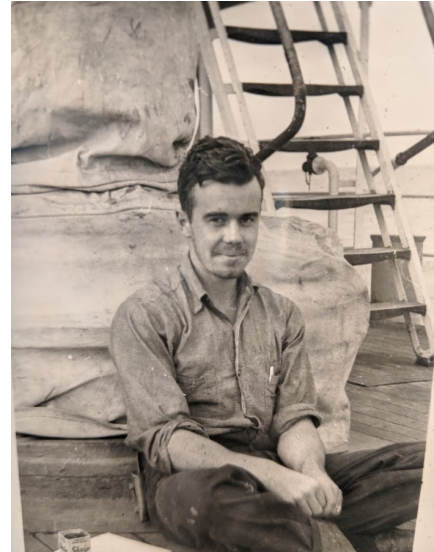
He continued to build boats, both full-size and small scale replicas, and joined the museum's Small Boat Restoration Program (aka, the boat shop) after his retirement. Former museum director Jennifer Gaines remembers that Al and Buzz Martin built the original boat shop structure.

Boat building, he told a Falmouth Enterprise reporter in 2013, "requires four specific traits: You need to have the eyes of an eagle, the patience of a saint, the hand skills of a surgeon and the ability to curse like a sailor."

Bob Leary of the boat shop remembers that Al was "one of the original senior members of the boat shop, and every Saturday came down with his handmade wooden toolbox that contained a few of his favorite hand tools like his Yankee and some planes. He loved to tell his stories and always had this half hidden smile on his face when he told them. He had a great sense of humor and could come up with a poem or lyric on the spur of the moment when something we happened to be doing inspired him."

"He was very nonchalant about his skills and the things he had built and repaired throughout his life - no brag, just fact. For me personally, I miss him just dropping by the house. As he'd walk through the door his greeting was always the same, 'Say Bob, I got a question for you.' "

When Paul Ferris Smith wrote about the history of the boat shop, he noted that "Al Lunn, one of the original and most faithful teachers, said 'Boat building and repairing boats is a disease



Al on the Coast Guard ship he served on in the early 1950s

Al was also a member of the Museum's steering committee and exhibits sub-committee, and in 1999 he donated a boat built from local cedar wood to the boat museum. In 2002, he presented a museum conversation on "Building an Aleutian Seal Hunter's Kayak of Cape Cod Material"

And, as part of festivities marking the quadricentennial of Bartholomew Gosnold's landing in Cuttyhunk in 1602, the museum exhibited his replica of Gosnold's ship, the Concord, which he built that year, 400 years after the landing. He also repaired the model of the Charles W. Morgan on MBL's Candle House.

Al's wife died in 2013. He leaves three sons and their wives, Peter Lunn and Lynne Francis-Lunn of Beverly, James and Susan Lunn of Marion and Jeffrey and Randee Lunn of Medfield; and five grandchildren, Steven Lunn of Beverly, Mya Lunn and Corey Lunn of Marion, and Thomas Lunn and Cameron Lunn of Medfield.

Fortunately for us, Al shared memories of his career and life in Woods Hole when he was interviewed by former steering committee vice chair, PK Simonds, in September 2019.

At Al's Sippewissett Road home, amid ships' models and photos, PK asked about the model of the Dexter, the 311-foot Coast Guard Cutter that Al served on in 1950 on North Atlantic weather patrol.

"Before they had satellites...we'd go out to different points in the Atlantic and stay on station for a month at a time."

"We got in a hurricane off Hatteras – that was something." He tells about cleaning up paint from a paint locker that broke up during hurricane. "Everybody had to give up an undershirt to use for rags to wipe it up."

He got transferred to the Hornbeam out of Woods Hole and was on that for a couple months until they needed someone to run a rescue boat. He was asked if he "knew the waters around here, and I said I knew every rock and reef." That was convincing enough to bring him to the base to run the rescue boat.

Here are some highlights from a few of the topics that Al and PK discussed. The interview was recorded and has been transcribed and is available at the museum.

Lightships:

They used to bring in the lightships into Woods Hole for maintenance and so forth and uh, it was really funny—there are still people around Woods Hole who remember this. They used to blow the foghorns you know, ha ha. All the dogs in town barked! And it sounded like a humongous grunt!

I did some work on the Nantucket Lightship in East Boston... They had the Nantucket Lightship down in New York. They were going to scrap it, and he [Bob Densmore] was instrumental in saving it. They got the Moran Company to tow it up to Boston. We took it up to East

Boston, hauled it out and scraped the bottom and did a complete paint job and overhaul there. I said to the guy who was onboard there, “Have you guys ever tried the foghorn?” He said they had to repair the compressors first. When I asked him later he said, “We fixed the foghorn and then we tried the foghorn and broke the glass in the marina and had every dog in East Boston barking!”

Growing up in Woods Hole:

So, I grew up on the Whitney Estate in Woods Hole—my father was a caretaker there, you know. There were some funny experiences. Well, the Whitney’s farm took in both sides of the road there and I was on the harbor side—that was where the all the flower garden was and everything and on the other side there was a farm and they had a guy there who was the farmer named Jim Hallett and he took care of the farm and raised all the vegetables and everything and he had some cows down in back of the cemetery, you know. They had a horse cart, and they had this big old black horse, and they had this cart just for general maintenance around the farm you know, and they used to pick up like brush and grass and stuff like that and they’d drive the cart up to the edge of the bank on Little Harbor, it was quite high bank there--and dump it over the bank, that went on for years, and there was a lot of growth down around there. So one time they backed the cart up to the bank, dropped the gate and the horse took a step back and the whole thing went over the bank—down to the beach. I figured the horse would have had a broken leg or something, but nothing happened to the horse, but how the hell do you get it out of there? ... What they ended up doing-- they waded the horse all the way down to the end of the harbor down to the corner where my boatyard used to be—and they came out there.

“When I was a kid we used to go down to the fisheries dock and fish down the dock. Some men came by and said “Hey, sonny what are you catching? If you really want to catch something good, what you need is a rig that runs deep.”

So what we did is we got some old chicken wire from the farm and put half a cement block on either end, and rolled it out down there. We always managed to catch something, but we never retrieved the lure. We thought we should get a grappler and we would have had enough to start a fishing school.

“Well, I went to Falmouth High School and I never was a very good scholar, but the only thing I was interested in was Shop course. First, I built a piece of furniture and then I said I wanted to build a boat and they said “A boat! Why do you want to do that? No one has ever done that! What makes you think you could do that!” I built a punt out of some pine my father had lying around ... Then I built a sea kayak--no one ever heard of a sea kayak back then ... It was made out of cedar and framed up with some oak.

PK: “What did your father do that he had some lumber lying around?”

Al: “Well, that’s another story! He was caretaker on the Whitney’s Estate but he also had another business. Do you know where Crabapple’s restaurant is?



Model of a Basque whaler built by Al

PK: Yeah.

Al: Well, he owned that at one time and he had a nursery there. The land ran from there all the way back to Lawrence's gravel pit, which if you went up Rogers Road you'd get pretty close to it there. My father had a big chicken farm up there. That was during the war and so he did well since everyone wanted meat and it was at a premium and it was a good business.

The 1944 Hurricane:

Al: You know where the beach houses are along Shore Drive? There was a small new beach cottage there. It got swept across the road and across Salt Pond and ended upon the marsh.... I thought maybe I could find out some way I could salvage it. I found out who owned it and the owner had to get it out of there and he said, "If you can move it you can have it. But how are you going to do that?" That winter we had a really hard winter and the pond froze over and we had a foot of ice, and my dad had a jeep and I put some chains around it. They got a guy with a big trailer and he took it up Palmer Avenue to Rogers Road. Out in back where Crabapples is, it's the first house on the left. Free house.

Search and rescues in the Coast Guard:

Al: There was a 65-foot fishing trawler ran aground out on Red Ledge—down Woods Hole passage. So they sent me out with a motorized lifeboat. It was hung up and kind of heeled over a bit and I called back to the base and I said "Send another boat out and we have to put a line to the masthead of that dragger and have them pull"... I pulled from the other boat and we pulled it off. Down Woods Hole passage with two boats out there! Cut the line off and tied it up to the dock—it didn't really damage the trawler. Interesting experience.

As Al and PK talked, Al's cat, Purrey (Purr-cy) wanted to be a part of the interview. Al recited a poem he'd written:

"When I lay down to take a nap
I catch the cat on my lap.
She purrs and purrs her lullabies
And pretty soon I close my eyes.
If perchance you cannot sleep
Go get a cat that you can keep."

PK: Who wrote that?

AL: Me

PK: That's terrific. A great poem!



Al next to the model he built of the USCG Cutter Dexter

After an hour and a half, the interview was winding down, and PK said "It sounds like you haven't strayed far from Woods Hole," to which Al replied, "I've had a great life here and I would do it again! "



Summer 2020

Rob Blomberg, our historic Woods Hole walking tour guide, was filmed by Daisy Glazebrook and Sam Colt-Simonds for our online tour.

Falmouth's influenza data was included in epidemiologist Don Burke's talk on the history of pandemics, "Pandemics: Living Forward by Understanding Backward."

As for the course of the present pandemic, Dr. Burke said "Predicting how the virus will behave is the (relatively) easy part. Predicting how humans will behave is the hard part."

"Pandemics: Living Forward by Understanding Backward," Dr. Donald Burke Virtual Conversation

Records of Diseases Dangerous to the Public Health
Falmouth, Massachusetts, 1915-1919

Year	Months	Total Cases	Influenza Cases
1915	July-Dec	13	
1916	Jan-Dec	45	
1917	Jan-Dec	65	
1918	Jan- 4 Oct	65	
1918	5 Oct - Dec	529	523
1919	Jan-Mar	62	54



Nurse Ruth Newcomb visiting families in Falmouth, c1920. Photos are in Museum archives.



One of our three interns, Griffin Kerstetter, outside the boat museum where the gift shop was set up in the summer.

Photos of Woods Hole and Quissett were hung on Bradley House, the boat museum and the Yale Workshop.

Diversity and Inclusion Matters

The WHHM's new Diversity and Inclusion (DI) committee was formed in summer 2020 in response to recent events that have raised awareness of historic and ongoing inequities and injustices for people of color. The goal of the DI committee is to share untold stories and build inclusive programs that include exhibits and events highlighting the experiences and contributions of people of color, in Woods Hole and to an extent, Falmouth.

As a historical museum, we are interested in finding and sharing untold stories of diverse groups in Woods Hole and Falmouth. As we strive to create a more diverse and inclusive culture, the committee is viewing new exhibits, programs, and messaging, with an intentional DI lens to ensure the museum is representative and welcoming to all people and all groups.

A particularly exciting DI initiative is our **Call for Stories**, where we ask the community for untold stories, unseen photos, and unheard audio from under-represented individuals and groups to help us build a living online repository of the unique experiences and contributions of non-whites in Woods Hole.

Stories, photos, audios are welcome via email, snail mail, or voice recording. If you have a story to share about a person of color who lived, worked, or otherwise contributed to the rich history of Woods Hole—or you know of someone who does—please contact us at whhmdirector@gmail.com, 508 548-7270.

CALENDAR

All events are on Zoom. Please register on the museum website.

December 18, **Holiday party and trivia night** with Rob Blomberg, 5 PM

January 13, Conversation on **Woods Hole Film Festival's 30th Anniversary**, Judy Laster, 7 PM

February 10, **Member Appreciation Party**, 7 PM

March 10, **Marine Biological Laboratory's 133 Years of Scientific Discovery**, MBL Director Nipam Patel, 7 PM

April 14, **Heather Goldstone interviews Philip Duffy, Director of the Woodwell Climate Research Center**, 7 PM

Gift Shop Online



Do your holiday shopping online and support the museum! We have the always-popular WHHM caps and T-shirts, wine glasses and tumblers, as well as new items like our aprons, which were recently restocked due to requests. You can have your order shipped, or pick it up “curbside” at the museum.

Go to our website, and click on “shop”. And you can give the gift of membership online: click “support” in the menu bar.

Message from the Chair

The Summer of 2020 was a very different summer for the Woods Hole Historical Museum. Our intrepid staff, Museum Director Debbie Scanlon and Archivist/Assistant Director Colleen Hurter, along with our very capable interns, had to innovate to find a way to continue to interact with the community despite the pandemic.

They created an intriguing display of historic photos, blowing them up large as oversized posters mounted on the side of our buildings. They also moved our popular gift shop outside for the summer. In this way, visitors could learn about the history of Woods Hole while staying safe and healthy outside on our grounds.

In addition, our tour guide volunteer Rob Blomberg gave Woods Hole Village walking tours throughout the summer. For those unable to get to Woods Hole, Rob collaborated with Sam Colt-Simonds and his father, longtime Museum Steering Committee member PK Simonds, as well as volunteer Daisy Glazebrook, on an excellent series of video walking tours of the village. Those are all now posted on our new Youtube page.

In addition, Debbie and Colleen have collaborated on frequent emails we call Dispatches probing our archives files for stories.

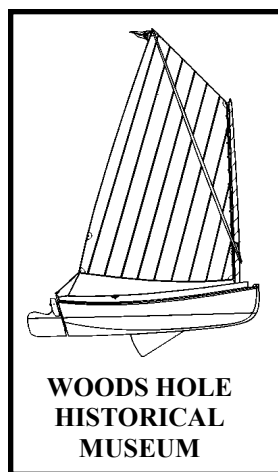
These innovations created in a time of crisis as the world battles the pandemic will enhance the museum for years to come.

New for 2021 and 2022, we will be working on the goals of our Strategic Plan, with a focus on enhancing the accessibility of our precious Archives.

As you can see from this summer’s activities, the Woods Hole Historical Museum continues to thrive because of the dedication of our staff and volunteers. We welcome your support as a docent, event volunteer or as a member of one of our committees.

Thank you most of all for being a friend of the Woods Hole Historical Museum. We appreciate your support.

Laura Reckford, Steering Committee Chair



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UNDER YOUR ADDRESS (above)
and contact membership@woodsholemuseum.org or call 508 548-7270 with questions.
Thank you.**

Woods Hole Historical Museum Annual Appeal

As we approach the giving season, the Woods Hole Historical Museum once again asks for your generosity in supporting our Annual Appeal. Since membership dues account for less than 40% of our revenue, we depend on gifts and grants to maintain the high levels of programming, publications, archival and facilities management, and staffing. Last year's Annual Appeal was very successful. We used these contributions to build our summer intern fund and support other needed expenditures. Please help us continue our important work in the community by including the museum in your year-end giving. Thank you for your generous support.

WOODS HOLE HISTORICAL MUSEUM ANNUAL APPEAL December 2020 Count me in!

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

_____ \$50

_____ \$100

_____ \$250

_____ \$500

_____ \$1,000

_____ other _____

*Please make checks out to WOODS HOLE HISTORICAL MUSEUM and mail to
Woods Hole Historical Museum, P.O. Box 185, Woods Hole, MA 02543*