



ORLEANS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OrleansHistoricalSociety.org

PO Box 353, 3 River Road, Orleans, MA 02653

508-240-1329



History lives here

SUMMER 2014

THE LIFE-SAVING HERITAGE OF ORLEANS

Ron Petersen

This summer, the Orleans Historical Society pays tribute to the “Lifesavers of Orleans”, those hearty souls who served as surfmen and keepers at the Orleans Lifesaving Station between the years 1872 and 1915 under the United States Lifesaving Service (USLSS). How the USLSS came to be in Orleans is quite a story.

Shipwrecks and lifesaving are an important part of the heritage of Orleans and date back nearly four hundred years, well before our Town incorporated in 1797 after separating from Eastham.

During the harsh winter of 1626-1627 the vessel known as the *Sparrowhawk*, carrying passengers bound for Jamestown from England, wrecked on the sandbars in a violent storm in the waters off what is now Orleans. Notified by local Indians, Governor William Bradford of Plymouth Colony personally led the first rescue in the first documented shipwreck on the dangerous Cape Cod coastline, and it happened right here in Orleans. Bradford and his crew crossed Cape Cod Bay by water, landing at Namskaket Creek, and travelled by land to the site of the wreck.

After an attempt to repair the *Sparrowhawk*, a second storm did the ship in, and the crew and passengers were taken to Plymouth. Remarkably, no deaths are evident in the record of the first Orleans lifesaving mission.

For nearly two centuries after the *Sparrowhawk* rescue, there were no organized efforts to aid those who were involved in shipwrecks in the dangerous waters off Cape Cod’s shores. Those who found themselves cast up on the shores or sandbars were at the mercy of whoever found them, if anyone did. Most victims who made it to shore would have found a desolate shoreline with no one around.

As Civil Society developed in Massachusetts, the first organization that tried to provide relief

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Orleans Life-saving Station

to shipwreck victims was the Massachusetts Humane Society, which was founded in 1786 for the purpose of “the preservation of human life and the alleviation of its miseries.” One of the Society’s first projects was the construction of rough huts along the coast where a shipwreck survivor who made it to shore could find some shelter and survival supplies. Some of these huts evolved into early life saving stations, equipped with boats and manned by volunteers. A

report submitted to the Humane Society in 1802 indicates that one of these stations was located in Orleans “a mile south of the entrance of Nauset harbour. Timothy Bascom Esq. of Orleans was the volunteer who undertook to inspect this hut.

During the Humane Society years, efforts by the federal government in supporting lifesaving operations were largely ineffective, marked by inefficiency and corruption. That all changed in 1871 when Sumner I. Kimball was appointed Chief of the Treasury Department’s Revenue Marine Division. Sumner studied

the problems plaguing the lifesaving efforts. In what seems like lightning speed by today’s standards, Kimball went to Congress, obtained appropriations, and established professional lifesaving stations along the east coast, including nine on Cape Cod. One of these first stations was here in Orleans. This station was located on Nauset Beach, just about opposite of the south end of Ponchet (now Pochet) Island. Once again, Orleans appears at a crossroads in the story. The remarkable Sumner Kimball, while born in Maine and

serving in Washington with the Treasury Department, spent time here teaching school in his earlier years.

Kimball appointed Benjamin C. Sparrow of Orleans as the first Superintendent of USLSS District 2, which encompassed all of Cape Cod. Another remarkable man, Sparrow was a Civil War veteran with the Army of the Potomac and a former Eastham schoolteacher. Sparrow was known for what we now call “hands on management” appearing personally at most of the rescue operations in his district during his more than thirty years of service.

The first Keeper of the Orleans Lifesaving Station was Solomon Linnell, who served from 1872 to 1881. In another irony of history, it was Solomon Linnell who discovered the remains of the *Sparrowhawk* while walking on Nauset Beach on May 6, 1863. Other Keepers of the Orleans Station were Marcus M. Pierce and James H. Charles. The lifesaving functions of the USLSS became a part of the United States Coast Guard, which was established in 1915.

Learn more about this incredible story of bravery and dedication at the Orleans Historical Society this summer.



ORLEANS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Chairman's Newsletter

Board of Directors 2014

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Vice-Chair

Beverly Fuller

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Alan Keener

Secretary

Ron Petersen

alphabetically

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Phil Marshall

CG36500 Ops Manager

Richard Ryder

Historian/Building Committee

Bonnie Snow

Excursions

Bobbie Thomsen

Membership

Marie Wells

Museum Director

Tamsen Cornell

Immediate Past President

Hank Ritchie

Summer 2014

If you recall, in our Spring Newsletter, I wrote about the importance, and value, of volunteers. Following up on that theme, the Board of Directors have spent this past spring refining the Orleans Historical Society's mission that will be used as our "road map" to enhancing the O.H.S. to our members and the town we love.

As the mission evolved, it became clear to the board that we need board members with Marketing and Fundraising experience. When we outlined our long term goals, the importance of having these talents represented on the board became critical. While we have been in contact with a fundraiser, our desire is to seek, and hopefully find, this and marketing talent within our membership.

My plea goes out to all readers of this newsletter in hopes that you will step forward and become involved. The following are the two positions we are hoping to fill:

Marketing Board Member:

A board member with marketing experience, could assist our Museum Director in marketing events and museum exhibits to help us reach a wider audience – particularly during the summer season. We are also looking for a fresh approach in how we handle our membership drives. This position needs to give guidance to the board on how to market the Society to its members thereby enriching the member's experiences.

Fund Raiser Board Member:

As the board embarks on its expansion plans, guidance on how to approach donors to delineate ourselves from other causes within our community who will also be seeking funding. This new board member would work closely with the new Marketing board member to cohesively approach each of these important needs.

The Orleans Historical Society offers its members unique opportunities, which the board and I will work hard to enrich. To mention a few, you'll learn how we plan, through the direction of board member Ken Fern, to expand our concerts for the benefit of our members and Society. Also, board member Dick Ryder has current reports about the Coast Guard 36500 and its importance to the Society. (By the way, did you know, as a member, you are eligible to be taken out on the 36500 for one of its tours of Cape Cod Bay?) Finally, our biggest asset and historical draw is the Meeting House which we must continue to maintain and strengthen this bona fide gem.

Recently, the board approved upgrading the electrical system within the Meeting House bringing it up to today's building codes; they also approved the installation of an air-conditioning system, making events held during the summer months that much more enjoyable. And finally, we are purchasing more comfortable chairs to help our derrieres enjoy all events as well. These major enhancements are being provided by a benefactor.

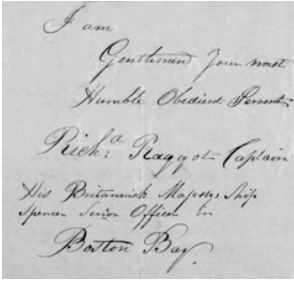
In closing, without a strong, sustainable membership and a dedicated volunteer pool, we could not be the notable organization we are. I pledge to continue to see that we remain sustainable for years to come, but we need your help, so on behalf of the board, I am asking you to please step forward and give us a few hours a month of your talent and experience for the benefit of the Historical Society; I guarantee that you'll feel gratified by the experience.

As always, thanks for allowing me to be your Chairman,
Mark E. Carron, Chairman

In Memory

The OHS will miss the following members who have passed,
 Carl Hevert, Rita M. Kneeland, William P. Quinn, George A. Webbere,
 We are most grateful for ongoing memorial contributions.

War of 1812 Ransom Note



The Adams National Historical Park in Quincy, Ma has requested our “War of 1812” ransom note for a special summer exhibit at their U.S. National Park site. A high resolution, digital scan of the original note made by Bob Korn Studio was sent along with a transcription. The original letter penned by Captain Richard Raggot of the *HMS Spencer* demanding “one thousand dollars” is in the OHS permanent collection.

Captain Raggot’s threats and harassments in September, 1814, were followed by more incidents that December when Captain Lord George Stuart of the *Newcastle* sent armed militia ashore at Rock Harbor to threaten civilians and burn vessels and saltworks in the area. Local Militia quickly formed a resistance killing one of the British marines.

To mark the 200th anniversary year of Orleans’ direct confrontations with the British Naval blockade during the War of 1812, the Museum has a limited number of poster size prints of the Raggot Ransom Note. Prints are available at the museum and online for \$10 each. Framed and ready for display are \$45. Order now while they last!

WHY DO I VOLUNTEER?
 Marie Wells, Membership Chair

Why do I volunteer as much of my time and talents to the Orleans Historical Society as I can? It’s all “relative.” I volunteer at the OHS because all history is family history. On a New Year’s Eve too many years back to mention, my parents lived in a little house at what is now 91 Gibson Road that they’d bought from Eugene Fulcher. They chose to celebrate that New Year’s in a particular way – let’s just say that nine months later, there I was! Thus my connection to Orleans was cemented into my DNA literally from my conception. Nor does it hurt that my mother’s heritage stretches back to the very beginning of Orleans – then part of Eastham – when Nicholas Snow and six other families moved from Plymouth Colony to settle here in 1644. Snow’s wife was Constance Hopkins, daughter of Mayflower passenger Stephen Hopkins. With those bona fides, it was only natural that I would eventually come home. And once here, it was only natural that I would end up a member of the OHS because of my love for the town where my roots run so deeply.

I started volunteering at the OHS within days of arriving back in Orleans. Not only have I served on the board

since that time, I am computer nerd, online research and genealogy specialist, general factotum and all around busy-body. If something needs to be done, why not do it? Even if – no, especially if! – it’s something I haven’t done before, the sense of personal satisfaction is enormous. Then there’s this: there’s always too much to be done, not enough people to pitch in, and never, ever enough money to throw at any of our projects. Unlike several other historical societies on the Cape, the OHS receives no support from the Town of Orleans. We are totally dependent on membership dues, the occasional grant (which are shrinking or disappearing altogether thanks to the continuing sequestration), and the generosity of donors. So again, if something needs to be done, it’s all up to us.

History lives here. How much of that history is yours? Come join us as a volunteer and find out.

The Balcony Bulletin

Recent donations: Bonnie Snow, Records of the Orleans Red Caps, Orleans Fire Dept. Women’s Auxiliary; Barbara Spillane Mina, digital images of Cornelius Spillane and biography (available for viewing on our website); Unknown, Oracle Newspaper 24 July 1952 #154; Norman Martin, Vernon Smith painting, hand-painted silver chest, book Orleans Centennial, political meeting poster; Anonymous, 1974 zoning map of Orleans; US flag with 37 stars.

Orleans Historical Society Museum Volunteer Opportunities

Busy people like you can volunteer and make a difference at anytime. Even if you have an unpredictable schedule, you can volunteer for your favorite OHS cause, including: fundraising, building maintenance, school programs, presentations and classes.

If you have a particular skill or interest that might be beneficial to a museum or cultural environment, you could offer this as a one-time or frequent volunteer occasion.

Volunteer at Your Convenience

OHS understands that it may be difficult to commit to any volunteer activity that requires a specific time commitment – which is characteristic of most traditional volunteer opportunities. We understand that there is enormous, untapped kindness available from well-meaning, "would-be volunteers" like you, who yearn for greater fulfillment through helping others. So if you have just a little or a lot of time to volunteer, call and we can work something out that fits your volunteer schedule.

If you are like most talented, busy people...Your schedule is hectic and unpredictable. You'd like to be able to help. But, you can't commit to being available at any particular time each week. Whether you can volunteer a few hours per week, or just this week, there's a lot you can do to make a difference.

Summer volunteer opportunities

Museum docent: Greet visitors, offer exhibit information, sell Museum Store merchandise, encourage membership and support, log daily data. Late June – early September, Thu, Fri or Sat 10:00 am – 1:00 pm


High Tide Dock Docent: See next page.

Events and programs assistance: Arrive early for setup (chairs, tables, lighting), greet participants, manage tickets sales when applicable, help Hospitality if refreshments are offered at the program, see to any needs of the presenter, record event data, cleanup after event (chairs, tables, lighting, trash removal)

Volunteer management: Review upcoming events and programs for staff requirements, call or email volunteers required one or two weeks prior, remind volunteer staff already committed. Plan a volunteer appreciation event.

Gardener Assistant: Help digging, planting and grooming the grounds.

If any or part of the above offerings appeal to you call the Museum office and speak with Tamsen or fill in and return by mail the form below!

Name: _____ 

Phone/email: _____

Address: _____

Type of volunteer work you are interested in: _____

Special skills or talents?: _____

Days and hours you are most available: _____

If uncertain of your availability may we contact you when an opportunity arises? Yes/No _____

An act of kindness, no matter how small, is never forgotten. Thank you for your interest in making a difference!

Motor Lifeboat CG 36500 
cg36500.org

Summer berth, Rock Harbor, Orleans, MA :: Winter berth, Nauset Marine East, Orleans, MA

Ship Shape Volunteers!

The CG36500 is back at Rock Harbor for the season. Needed are “High Tide Dock Docents” to greet visitors at the harbor. Times are flexible to whatever you can offer. Duties might require history of the boat interpretation, membership and support recommendations, sales of small items such as hats, burgees, pins, etc.

Links to support the boat, become a member of the OHS or shop for CG36500 swag on the “Keep Us Afloat” page on the popular CG36500.org website!

**FINANCIAL & IN-KIND
SUPPORTERS**

Agway of Orleans

*Fred J. Brotherton
Charitable Foundation*

By The Sea

Cape Cod Five Bank

Cornell Carpentry & Remodeling

Mark Farber Design

Friends Marketplace

Hess & Helyn Kline Foundation

Nauset Heights Association

Nauset Marine

Nauset Disposal

Orleans Community

Preservation Committee

Orleans Chamber of Commerce

Jonathan J. Page Pianoforte

Pleasant Bay Boat & Spar

Snow's Home and Garden

Stop & Shop

wcpDesign.com

Mark T. Wendell Tea Company



BUSINESS MEMBERS

Agway of Orleans

Cape Cod Five Cents Savings Bank

Captain Linnell House

Coastal Engineering Co., Inc.

Coughlan Realty

*Dan Davis Custom
Building & Remodeling*

Foreign Affairs of Orleans

Jon R. Fuller Locksmith

Hot Chocolate Sparrow

Land Ho!

Lower Cape Dental Associates

Nauset Beach Club Restaurant

Orleans Inn

Ship's Knees Inn

Starfish Radiator

*The Karlson Group
at William Raveis Real Estate*

Thrifty Car Rental

Vlachich, Mitchell & Co., P.C.

Wilkinson & Associates Real Estate

Comedy-Musical Cabaret

With Sandy and Richard Riccardi

Tuesday, June 10, 7:30 pm



The Riccardi's satirical songs commenting on a variety of social, political, and personal issues have received well over 3 million hits on YouTube and earned them engagements across the country.

Tickets \$25

Seating is limited - Call for reservations

Len & Jean Tomat School Outreach Programs

4th Grade History Day

Wed, June 25, rain date Thurs, June 26

5th Grade Heritage Day

Mid September - TBA

The Way We Were Exhibit

OES 5th grade creative interpretations exhibit of their local Orleans history

TBA

Includes holiday displays, Mrs. Claus and refreshments.

Historic Main Street Walks

with Bonnie Snow

Friday, June 27, 10 am

Friday, July 25, 10 am

Friday, August 22, 10 am

Cemetery Walks

with Bonnie Snow

Friday, July 11, 10 am

Friday, August 8, 10 am

Friday, September 5, 10 am

Annual Member's Reception

Friday, June 27, 5 - 7 pm

OHS Meeting House Museum

Join us as we launch our summer exhibits .

Orleans Life-saving Station

*One of the first established stations
in the country, 1872-1915*

Wood Carvers

*As Harwich Historical opens the new
Elmer Crowell barn, we too celebrate
the carvers of Orleans*

Battle of Rock Harbor

*200 year anniversary of the British attack
on Orleans during the War of 1812*

Talks

Bonnie Snow - Local Bird Carvers

Orleans carvers of decoys and wild birds

Tue, Jul 15, 7:30 pm

Dick Ryder - Lifesaving Stations

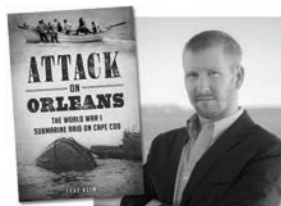
*Local Cape Codder, Dick Ryder, presents personal
and local history of the USLSS*

Tue, Jul 22, 7:30 pm

Jake Klim -

Attack on Orleans

*The WWI Submarine
Raid on Cape Cod*
Tue, Aug 5, 7:30 pm



Bonnie Snow - Battle of Rock Harbor

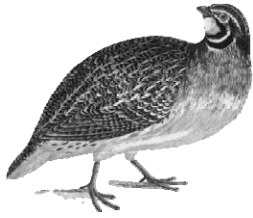
*200th Anniversary year of this historic
War of 1812 event*

Tue, Aug 12, 7:30 pm

ORLEANS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Antiques Show

Saturday, June 7, 9:00 am to 3:30 pm (rain or shine)



30+ quality dealers

3 River Road, Orleans, MA 02653

On the way to Nauset Beach

Admission: \$5 ~ 18 and under free

\$5 Antique appraisals by Henry Callan Antiques and other appraisal specialists

Proceeds benefit the Orleans Historical Society

ANTIQUES SHOW BAKE SALE TABLE

There will be an OHS Bake Sale Table with home-baked goodies! If you would like to donate baked goods please deliver Friday or Saturday morning. Cookies, pies, cakes, brownies - all are welcome. Please include a description of your ingredients to post with your goodie.

And don't miss this opportunity to purchase a goodie to bring home!

William Quinn, Sr.

June 29, 1926 - April 13, 2014



Memorial

Evening

Tuesday, July 29, 7:00 - 9:00 pm

Bill grew up and lived in Orleans all of his life with the exception of service in the South Pacific with the US Navy during World War II and his college years at Tufts. Bill was a founding member of the Orleans Historical Society and the French Cable Station Museum. After finding the Coast Guard motor lifeboat CG36500 deteriorating in the fields near Marconi Station, he took charge in gaining possession of the vessel for the Orleans Historical Society and restoring her as a floating museum. He was a major contributor to the cover photos for the Orleans Town Report and one of the first "Citizen of the Year" recipients.

Battle of Rock Harbor re-enactment
Saturday & Sunday, August 16 & 17

**200 year anniversary of the
British attack on Orleans
at the final month of the
War of 1812**

The Yarmouth Minutemen will stage a Living History encampment on the Village Green from Fri. Aug. 15 through Sun. Aug. 17. The event will include skirmishes between the Minutemen and British re-enactors from Rock Harbor through town where a major skirmish will take place on Eldredge Park.

The re-enactors camp Friday and Saturday nights on the Village Green by the Snow Library will be open to the public.

See our special 'Ransom Note' offer in this issue!

*This event supported by the Orleans Historical Society,
Orleans Cultural Council and The Massachusetts
Society of the Order of the Founders and
Patriots of America*

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We would love you to become a member if you are not already. Simply return the bottom portion of this page with your payment or use our PayPal service.



MEMBERSHIP IN THE ORLEANS HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Name(s) _____
 Address _____
 Winter address and dates _____
 Telephone _____ Email _____
 Date _____ Amount enclosed _____

A family membership includes two adults in household plus children under 18.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Dues for the current year

You can now make your payment directly from our website using PayPal.
orleanshistoricalsociety.org



orleanshistoricalsociety.org

	<u>Individual</u>	<u>Family</u>
Sponsor	\$25	\$40
Sustaining	\$50	\$100
Benefactor	\$100	\$200
Life	\$500	
Special gift	\$ _____	

A great way to hear about events, announcements and fun historical tidbits!



Clip and mail this portion with your check payable to the Orleans Historical Society.
 PO Box 353 Orleans, MA 02653

Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.