

An interesting meeting of the Research Club was held in the Caucus Hall on Wednesday evening last with the president, Mrs. Anna Young, presiding. The selectmen and their wives had been invited and after the business meeting the following program was rendered:

Reading, "The Wreck of The Somerset" by Mr. E A Grozier—Miss Elsie Long.

"Woodman Spare That Tree"—Miss Phebe Freeman.

Paper on Historical Society for Provincetown — Mrs Gertrude DeWager.

Remarks by Selectman, Mr. Clarence Snow.

A social hour was enjoyed and an opportunity given to examine personally the many valuable articles which have been added to the Historical Collection, which this Club has undertaken. Punch and crackers were served by the hostesses, Mrs Harriet Johnson and Mrs. Gertrude De Wager.

An Historical Society for Provincetown.

"The old order changeth yielding place to new" is a quotation that verily applies to Provincetown. New people come in our midst, new thoughts are introduced, the old order gives place to the new.

All this is as it should be, it means, many times, progress. But we, who have always lived here, who have listened to parents and grandparents tell, and retell, stories of our dear old town, feel sometimes like putting up a protest. We can realize something of the feeling that stirred George P. Morris to write,

"Woodman, spare that tree!  
Touch not a single bough!  
In youth it sheltered me,  
And I'll protect it now."

We visit other old towns in New England. We find in these Museums and Historical Societies filled with old time relics. We find old homes that have been rescued from modernism, and left to speak, to present and future generations, something of the homes of long ago.

The Research Club has long had the desire to establish an Historical Society in Provincetown. It is but a little over a year since we started to collect for it. It was plain to all that much belonging to local history was being bought up by strangers and carried away to be placed in Museums both private and public. So without any definite plans in view we started to collect. The selectmen of our town kindly consented to our placing

two cases in the Caucus room of our Town Hall.

Without much advertising we have filled these cases to overflowing, in fact, things are now being put in them so closely that it is almost impossible to tell what is there. There is no more room for other cases here, and we can think of no other place where things can be safely stored. We believe if we had a house we could fill it very quickly, and if we could obtain such a place it would soon be self-supporting.

Of course we want an old house. One with old open fireplaces, brick oven, and windows with tiny panes of glass, in fact, a house where there is great possibility of depicting the Cape Cod home of a hundred and more years ago.

We have such a house in view now. It seems to be beckoning to us. It is a home that has been in our midst for many generations. In fact, it is stated to be the second house that was built in Provincetown.

I refer to the Chapman Homestead. We want this house, and if we can get it, it will remain a memorial to our pioneer settlers, a little colonial home right in the heart of the busy thoroughfare. If others buy it, the old house must go to give place to a modern home or a business establishment. We believe all Provincetown will be pleased to help us preserve and protect this old house. Our history is as old, yes, older, than any other New England town, so why should we sit quietly down, while other towns are proud to be busy with this kind of work? We have our Mayflower memorials of which we are justly proud, now, "If dear to our hearts are the scenes of our childhood" we ask everybody to help us secure this old Cape Cod Home.

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Provincetown's Historical Museum, filled with rare relics associated with the town's long history, and a special collection of Far North exhibits contributed by Commander Donald MacMillan, is open for the summer. Miss Elsie Long is curator and Mrs. Mary Sparrow assistant curator.



The Old Ben Lancy House about 1923 - Now the Historical Museum