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Remembering *Betty Costa*

By Betty Steele Jeffers

From late spring through early autumn, one of Provincetown's best ambassadors could be found holding court from her porch on Carver Street. Always ready to give directions or expound a little on Provincetown and its history, Betty Costa; sitting on her porch, iced tea at her side, a book in her hand, was in her element. During the summer months, late afternoons and early evenings were the best times for chats with neighbors, tourists, and anyone else who wandered up and down Carver Street. She was frequently joined on the porch by her husband Warren. They would talk about the day's local happenings with a little gossip thrown in for good measure and muse on the folks trudging up the hill.

Provincetown is not a very big town and Betty had lived in the neighborhood a long time. She had grown up in a house on Prince Street across from Saint Peter's Church and had a lifelong devotion to her Church and her religion. She attended Mass daily. In inclement weather, she drove to church in her large white sedan – her head just about peeking above the steering wheel.

She lived on Bangs Street briefly when she was first married but Carver Street was home. From her porch, she watched it gradually transform from a street of family homes to one of guesthouses and condo apartments. She accepted the changes with good grace and counted among her many friends the owners of these properties. And in fact, she outlasted many of the owners as a resident of Carver Street as properties continued to change hands. For years, she and "the guys across the street" had a friendly competition about who grew the best tomatoes. Another neighbor who owned the guesthouse next



door frequently enjoyed the leftovers from the Costa's dinner table.

Loyal to her friends, devoted to her family and proud of her community, Betty faced her challenges head on bolstered always by her faith.

Content to be active in community affairs from the sidelines, she was passionate about her causes – The Cape End Manor being one – the Portuguese Festival and Annual Blessing of the Fleet another. For many years, Betty was an active member of the Festival committee. She wrote and also edited articles for the booklet. She loved the energy and sense of pride the Festival brought out in Provincetowners, native born and wash ashore alike. Picture her in the booth at the corner of Ryder Street and Commercial Street handing out booklets and giving a short history course on Provincetown and its heritage – talking and gesturing at the same time – talking being something she truly enjoyed.

Although her passing leaves a void for so many of us, there is a certain comfort in knowing that on her final evening she was at a party surrounded by friends, food, and fun celebrating the Fourth of July with Festival cohorts. ♦



Manuel Furtado with trawl line and friend "Skatey".

Manuel Furtado

Grand Banker, commercial fisherman, ship's carpenter, expert boat builder, renter of sailboats and skiffs. Builder of rental cabins on his wharf, one fashioned from a small cruiser cabin. Creator of imaginative floats with a nautical theme for Provincetown parades. Resident of 11 Conant Street in Provincetown's West End.

Manuel Furtado was born in St. Michaels, the Azores in 1898 and came to Provincetown when he was eighteen years old. He started off as a fisherman and became a skilled craftsman who started repairing and renting boats from the Grozier's Park area (The Boatslip today) on the Provincetown waterfront. He was so successful that he was able to buy the wharf

continued on page 10



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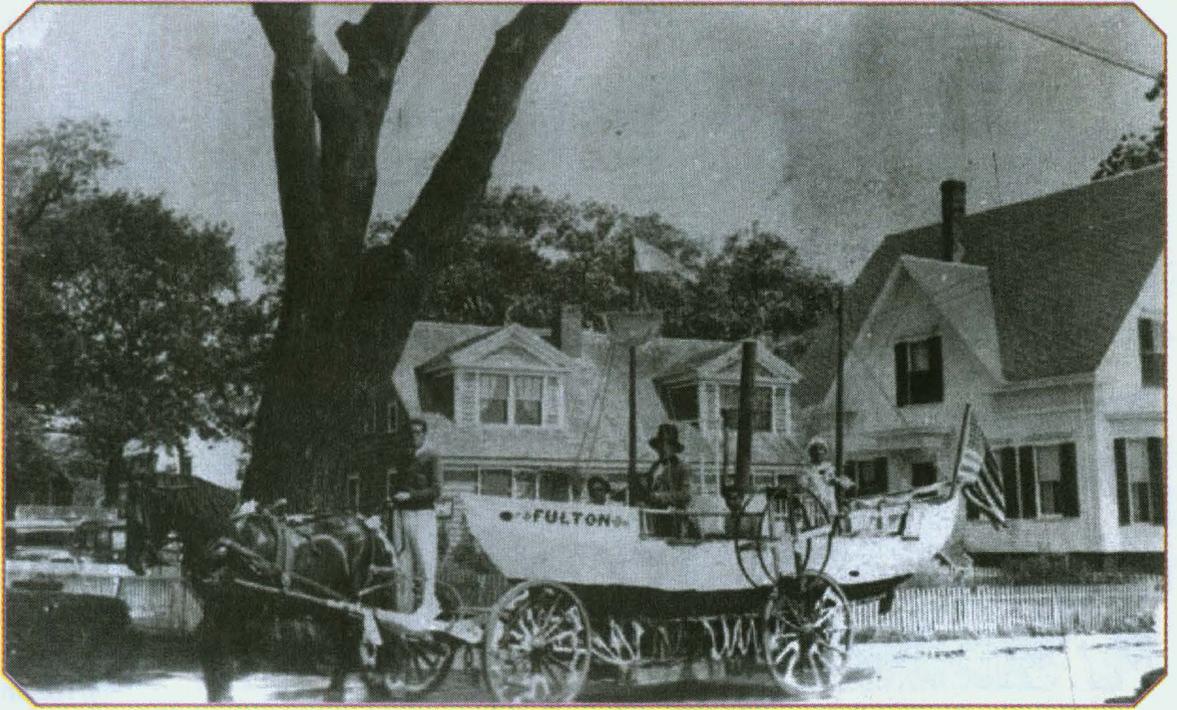
This "taste of Provincetown" is the opening night food event on Thursday, June 24, at the Bas Relief.

We would like to thank the 31 Outer Cape food establishments that donated signature dishes last year. They were...

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July 4, 1938-39 Francis Marshall drives the "Fulton" with Manuel Furtado wearing a stove pipe hat in one of the elaborate parade floats which he constructed over the years. The side paddle wheels are being manned by a young Joseph Andrews.

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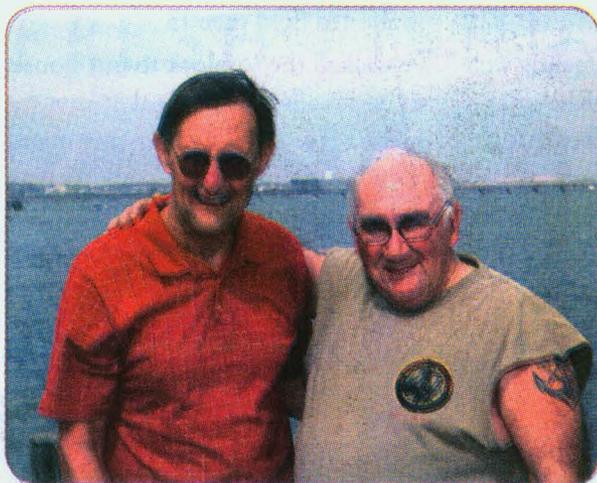
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continued from page 11

Cook due to his position on the whaleboat. Joe, as a young boy, worked to help his family earn money. Viola Cook took in laundry to wash and iron and Joseph pushed a wheel barrel throughout town to pick up and deliver it. His labor brought five cents a week into the household and because he worked, his mother gave him one hard-boiled egg along with his supper. Siblings didn't get an egg if they did not work but Joseph always shared the yolk with his younger sister.

Joe was 15 when his father passed away so he took a full time job at Perry's Market at 93 Commercial Street, a few minutes walk from Creek Road. Marion "Burt" Perry put him to work in the fruit and produce department and he soon became know as "Cookie" the boy that drove the horse and wagon throughout town delivering fruit and produce. He learned the grocery business and became a master meat cutter enabling him to have steady employment. Provincetown men are fishermen and tradesmen but



*Johnny Fields and Peter Cook...still West End pals.
May 2, 2010*

we all have a seaside that makes us fishermen at heart. My father left the grocery store business to take a site on a dragger because it was the height of the fishing industry in Provincetown. Fishing is in our blood.

It's 1955. I'm on my way to 4th grade class at the West End School. It's a few minutes walk from my house. The school is a big gray building located at the Corner of Tremont and School Streets. With a nickel I can stop and buy a candy bar at Kermit's Market, located at 14 Bradford Street (in front of my house), but I must save 3 cents for school milk money. I'll keep an eye for my friend Johnny J.B. Brown. His pockets are filled with small pears from a tree in his yard and anyone within throwing distance is a good target.

Trick or Treat! It's early Halloween evening. My mother Grace and other parents wait as we kids knock on doors and welcome candy gifts from friendly neighbors. Unknowingly I had spent my last day attending the West End School. "Mom I'm not
continued on page 14

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continued from page 13

feeling well." We walked the ½ block to our house. Rheumatic Fever began a long struggle that kept me bed ridden for a year. My recovery was slow but once I was able to be up and about my therapy couldn't have been better. Mr. Russell delivered block ice for our icebox. "Grace I'll take Peter with me on my ice route and bring him back at the end of the day." I rode in his truck and at delivery stops I nibbled on ice chips. A different day of the week Kenny Alves delivered milk to our house. "Grace I'll bring Peter along with me on the milk route." I spent the day riding in the milk truck listening to its squeaky brakes and drank chocolate milk from small containers. Mr. Alves never walked. He ran and I ran right along with him carrying the basket filled with milk bottles.

After a year of sickness, convalescence and recovery it was necessary for me to repeat 4th grade. School life would be different for this little West End neighborhood boy. The new Veteran's Memorial School had been built next to the high school, far away from our neighborhood. Thus far everywhere I walked took 10 minutes or less to get there. West End School was a 5 minutes walk, A&P Store at 120 Commercial Street 5 minutes, First National Store at 142 Commercial Street is less than 10 minutes. Flyers Beach, at the foot of Mechanic Street, was just a few minutes walk from my house and it's where we learned to swim, row, sail, run power boats, and water ski. Tourists could rent a rowboat for 50 cents an hour.

I spent summer days playing at Galeforce Farm located on Bradford Street a five minute walk from my house. I loved the farm with its big vegetable garden, cows, pigs, sheep, horses, hayloft, and wonderful barnyard smells. Kids weren't paid but got free milk and vegetables to bring home. After a little experience, I was allowed to hitch up the two draft horses, Pete and Bill. I drove the team and delivered wagonloads of manure about town. Joe Cook was just a boy when he delivered fruit and produce with a horse and wagon. Years later, but at about the same age, I delivered manure with a team of horses and wagon. The apple and the tree.

The fish packing plant was a hop, skip, and jump away. Kids loved to play around the fish plant. We

dove and swam around the wharf. Fishermen kept their dories moored close to the pier and they gave kids plenty of fish and spawn to bring home for dinner.

Neighborhood pals were close and if you saw David Perry, Tommy Russe, Johnny Fields or me you always saw one with another. Johnny's house was half a dozen houses from mine. His father Ralph worked as foreman of the cold storage fish plant and worked at the end of the long wharf operating a hopper unloading fish into waiting carts of the fish train. Francis "Molly" Joseph was engineer of the fish train. It ran on tracks and hauled the fish carts back and forth the length of the long pier. On return from the far end of the pier the fish got dumped into a second hopper. This hopper was operated on an overhead track and hauled up to the second floor of the fish factory. The cart full of fish clicked and clacked on its way to be dumped onto cutting tables.

Workmen didn't mind kids playing around the fish factory but they cautioned us of trailer trucks entering and leaving the yard. Johnny and I got into our share of mischief but we were careful when we ran behind a moving fish trailer to hop on the back and catch a ride up Franklin Street Hill.

Johnny Fields and I found a piece of rope one day and kept it with us looking to put it to good use. We found an umbrella and knew we could use it as a parachute. Johnny had a short, white dog named Toy and the three of us, along with the rope and umbrella, were on the second story porch of his house. We wrapped the rope around Toy's fat round body and tied the other end to the umbrella handle. His mother caught us just before our experiment. We explained we were going to jump off the deck but needed to test it with the dog first. The next day Johnny said "hey Cookie! Let's tie your dog Shaggy to your bike and he can pull you down Franklin Street." All went well until Shaggy ran off to the left chasing a cat, the bike went off to the left and I went straight down face first onto the tar road cutting my chin open.

But summer is over and I must begin at the Veteran's Memorial School located far away. Winslow Street is at least seven streets from Mechanic. I'm sure it's going to take me a ½ hour to walk to school, depending on my lollygag. It's a new world for me. ♦

FRESH FISH! FRESH FISH!



Mr. Morris, Grace Person Hayes (on right) and her sister Priscilla Person Day standing in front of their house in the East End.

Mr. Morris - Street Vendor

“Fresh fish! Fresh fish! All alive with the heads cut off” was the call that echoed throughout the streets of Provincetown in the early 1900’s. It was the voice of Manuel Morris as he pushed his specially designed cart that he filled with freshly caught fish and kept cool using ice harvested from local ponds during the winter months.

Mr. Morris was a tall and dignified gentleman who sported an impressive mustache. He was always impeccably dressed with a tie and straw hat cocked at a jaunty angle - all offset by bib overalls. He knew how to impress the “summer visitors” who succumbed to his charms and made him a successful street vendor.

Success did not always follow Mr. Morris,

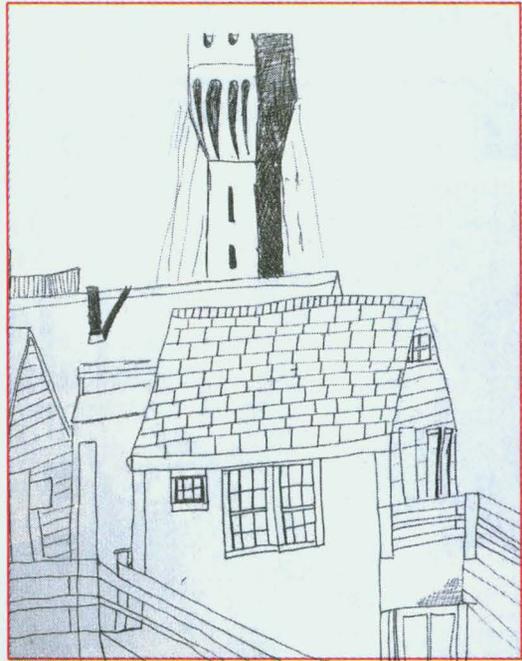
however. John A. Francis, a local realtor and staunch supporter of local writers and artists had rented a small cottage at the foot of Lewis Wharf to Mr. Morris. He ran a fish store at this site. When Mr. Francis sold the wharf to local writer Mary Vorse O’Brien in 1916, he warned her that the rent for the fish market run by Mr. Morris was three months overdue. Before Mrs. O’Brien had to take action, Mr. Morris took to the streets with his cart and became one of the many street vendors who peddled their wares throughout Provincetown.

“Fresh fish! Fresh fish! All alive with the heads cut off” joined the chorus formed by the many street vendors in Provincetown at this time. ♦

Student artwork was created as part of ART REACH, a free program offered by the Museum School of the Provincetown Art Association and Museum for Provincetown High School students. We would like to thank Christine McCarthy, Director of the Art Association, for her encouragement. Lynn Stanley and Liz Carney were the enthusiastic coordinators of the program.



T.K. Dabill ~ participant in PAAM ART REACH



Jared King ~
participant in PAAM ART REACH



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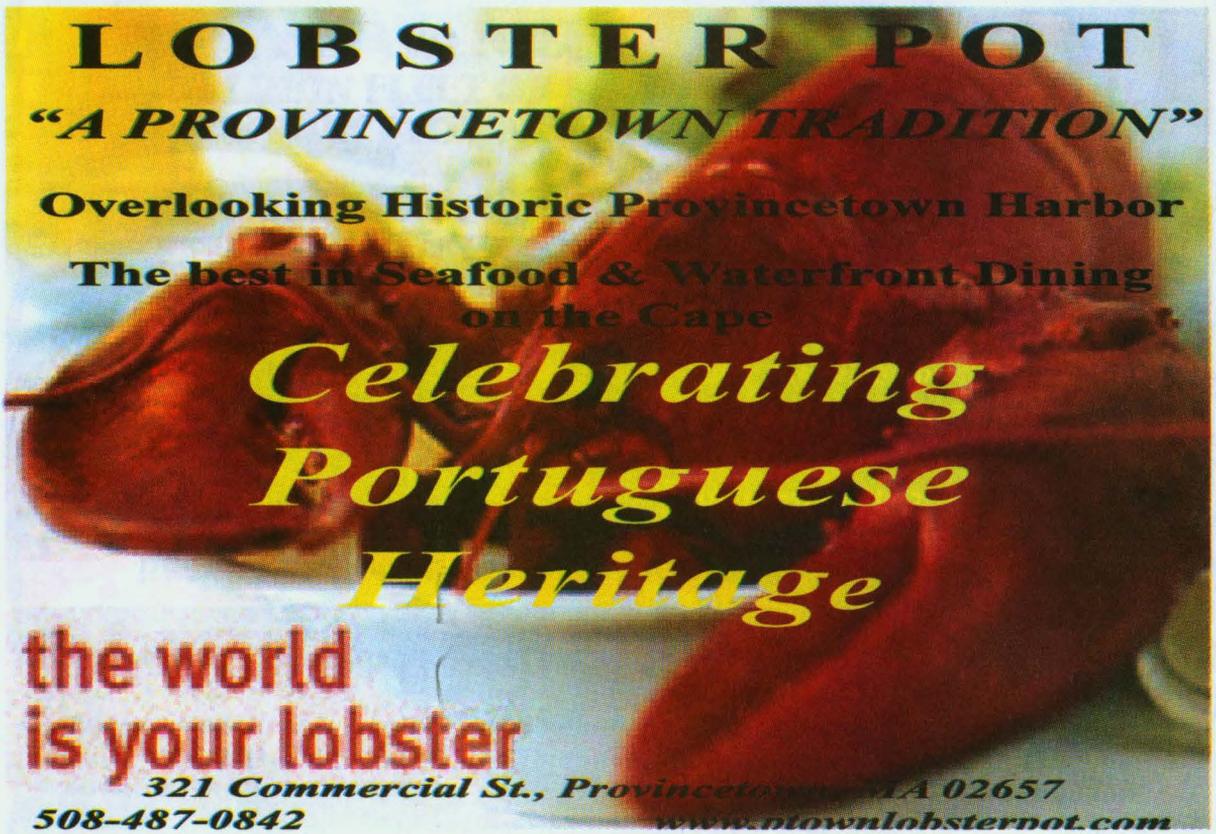
Growing up on *Conant Street*

By Miriam Collinson

We were so fortunate to be born in Provincetown but the bonus of growing up on Conant Street was the best. It was a real Portuguese neighborhood. Many families had members of different generations living together in the same household. They took care of one another and shared what they had, getting through both good and bad times. My connection to the neighborhood began in 1903 when my grandparents, Manuel and Amelia Martin, purchased 23 Conant Street for seven hundred dollars. My father was born in that house

in 1912. I was born there and was delivered by the local midwife, Angie Prada. My brother Stephen was born in Hyannis Hospital, ending an era of home deliveries. It was a neighborhood where you were never alone and could just walk out your door and find someone to play with or listen to your problems. We always stuck up for one another, no matter what. We would play 'till dark and always felt safe. It was a neighborhood of close family ties and good friends. To this day we are still closely bonded to one another after all these years. Some families still live in the homes they were born in.

continued on page 18



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continued from page 17

Conant Street was a been a bustling Portuguese neighborhood with children playing in the street, neighbors talking to each other over their fences or sitting in their front yards relaxing at the end of the day, enjoying the fruits of their labors. I remember... widows dressed in black mourning the loss of their husbands, some lost at sea. Reggie Enos delivering fresh fish, lobsters and crabs on Fridays. Within minutes of the crabs being delivered they were in the pot and the table would be covered with newspapers. Everyone would be up to their elbows in the feast. The smell of kale soup, squid stew, linguica and morcela (blood sausage) cooking. Skully Joe (salt cod) drying



The original owners of 23 Conant Street purchased for the handsome sum of \$700, Manuel (Martins) Martin and his wife Amelia Rego Martin who immigrated to Provincetown from Sao Miguel, Azores in 1891.

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“Quem vê caras não vê corações” “He who sees face doesn't see heart”

on the clotheslines in our yards permeating the air.

We organized all of our own sports and activities. We knew how to entertain ourselves with simple pleasures such as jumping rope, playing hop scotch, roller skating (our skates needed a key to clamp them on to our shoes), jacks, marbles and hide and seek. The boys played baseball and football on the field at the end of Conant Street which extended to Crawley's, Watson's, Jimmy's and Clapp's Ponds. After a ten cent Saturday matinee at the movies (Whaler's Wharf today), the boys would play war games with wooden guns made by Ray Martin, the neighborhood carpenter - re-enacting what they had seen. They also played cowboys and Indians and rode the local pigs like bucking broncos.

When the noon whistle blew, we headed home for lunch. At 5 P.M., we went home for dinner. If we were late for either meal our mother's voices could be heard all over the neighborhood, beckoning us to get home.

Each season of the year had its own celebration. In March, when the wind always seemed to blow, we made kites out of paper bags and newspapers at the kitchen table. Glue was made from flour and water.

At Easter the girls were decked out in new Easter Bonnets, dresses, patent leather shoes and white gloves. We decorated doll carriages and pushed them around the neighborhood. Good Friday was always a very solemn day. Schools were let out at noon and no music or playing was allowed in observance of the crucifixion. On Holy Saturday we would go to church and get our Holy Water bottles filled so our homes would be blessed for another year. It was essential that we made our Easter Duty. As a special part of this holiday, massa sovada (Easter Bread) was baked.

May 1st was Bertha Meads' May Day Parade. We prepared for the event for weeks by making hundreds of crepe paper flowers. We carried arches made from

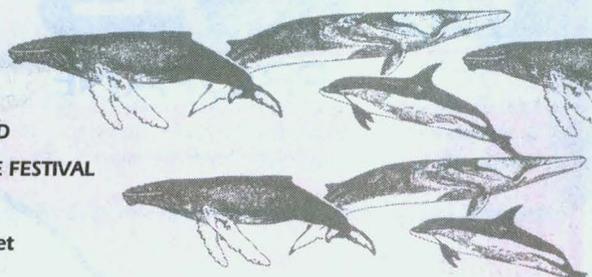
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continued from page 19

fish barrel hoops decorated with streamers and paper flowers. We also decorated crowns to wear on our heads and wore long dresses as we paraded the street shouting May Day! May Day! We would dance and sing around the May Pole, which was gaily decorated.

On Memorial Day weekend we would go to the parade and march with the Provincetown Band. We had quite a wonderful group of musicians from all walks of life in our town who practiced faithfully at the Conant Street School (It became the VFW and later was torn down - only a parking lot remains). It was located behind the former Bonnie Doone Restaurant (now Muscle Beach gym). After the parade we would head to the West End Breakwater for our first swim of the season.

The Blessing of the Fleet was the official start of the summer season and the fishermen hauled, painted, repaired and decorated their boats for the festivities. We had quite a fleet of draggers back them. I have many fond memories of boarding the boats, eating great food and diving off of them into the wonderful sea. We are all so happy that the Blessing of the fleet



Stephen Martin, Peter Leonard and his brother John Leonard with home made "Tommy Guns" crafted by Ray Martin

and Portuguese Festival have continued to focus on our Portuguese heritage.

In the lazy days of summer we spent many hours at the beaches at the end of Conant and Montello Streets, and at Grozier's Park (The Boatslip Motel now), where there was a great seawall to dive off at high tide. When it was low tide on the bay side or

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CAPE PHOTO OF THE WEEK



A TRADITIONAL EVENT, the annual May Party was revived in Provincetown after an absence of many years. The party included costume aff'airs, a parade and refreshments. Youngsters are shown as they formed for the parade in front of the home of Mrs. Bertha Meads, 29 Canant Street

we knew that the surf was up at New Beach (Herring Cove Beach now), we would ride our bikes out and have a ball in the surf. We would come home with our bathing suits full of seaweed and stones. What fun! We would also go to the town pier and entertain the tourists by diving off the wharf for coins. As well as being fun, it was very lucrative. We also went to the Cape Cod Cold Storage Plant and jumped off the pier

into the gurry filled water. Sometimes the beach was loaded with squid that had washed ashore and our bathing suits would be covered in black ink. Sewers used to empty into the harbor where we swam and when we heard it coming down the pipes we would shout, "Watch out". In spite of all this pollution, we were pretty healthy kids. Barefoot, the soles of our feet

continued on page 22

continued from page 21

hard as rock, with cheeks of tan. We would stay in the water until we were wrinkled and blue. We were quite the tourist attraction and were asked many times to pose for their photographs.

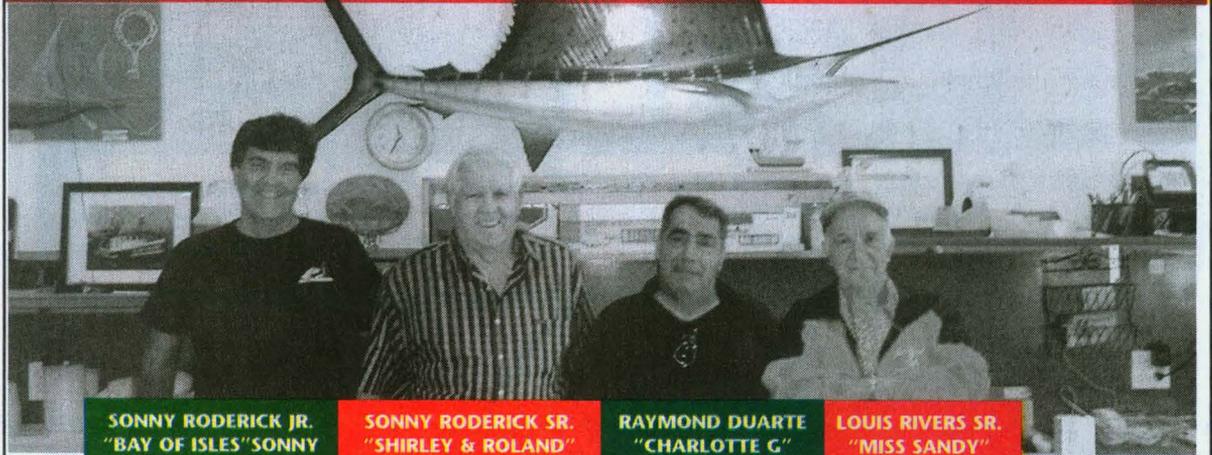
We would gather "conkerwrinkles" (periwinkles) from the wharf pilings or breakwater and bring them home to steam. We would sit outside to eat them with the use of a large safety pin. MMMM!!! Delicious. The "eyes" of the Conkerwrinkles were peeled off to make freckles on our faces.

As our folks worked, we were responsible for our siblings. Everyone worked two or three jobs to earn money to get through the winter months. My mom rented our rooms to tourists in the summers (Martin's Homestead) and took in laundry (I remember the old ringer washer and the large galvanized tubs filled with bleach and blueing). She was also the personal cook, housekeeper and friend of the Arctic explorer Admiral Donald MacMillan and his wife Miriam. All the other moms worked various jobs as well in order to

supplement their husband's incomes. My dad would go bass fishing at night on the back shore and at Wood End and when I woke up many summer mornings, our lawn would be covered with 40-50 pound striped bass, which he would sell for extra money. My father's first car was a Model A Ford bought from Paige Brother's garage (the Aquarium Mall now) for \$200. That car became our "beach buggy" and we spent many wonderful hours driving all over the dunes and picnicking at the various beaches.

We were entrepreneurs in our own right. Early in the morning or after dinner, we would go blueberrying and sell them to the Bonnie Doone Restaurant for twenty-five cents a quart to make money to go to the Carnival. We had to make sure the berries were clear of all green stems or the quart would be turned back with no pay. We also painted seaclam shells and rocks and sold them on the corner of Conant and Bradford Streets. Janice Meads and I would collect returnable bottles from one end of New Beach to the other and along the road leading

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to Race Point. Lenny Enos, Bob "Dousha" Silva, Bobby Keller and Billy Gordon collected pond lilies at Crawley's Pond and after one successful day decided that selling sea clams and blueberries was more profitable.

We were very lucky that Provincetown was a popular tourist area and artist's colony. It afforded us the luxury of "on the job training" at a very early age and gave us the opportunity to try various jobs. The restaurant, tourist and fishing industries were our training grounds. It gave us a great work ethic and exposed us to the arts and diverse ways of life. Not only did we benefit from the artists but we also reciprocated with warmth, free fish and support during lean times.

The Fourth of July was always very special and exciting. There was a parade with fire engines, fireworks and the Carnival arrived in town.

The sounds of summer were those of Jimmy Peak calling "strawberries, strawberries" from his

continued on page 24



November 18, 1938 Wedding Day photograph of Rose (Rombeiro) Enos and Raymond Martin. Taken in the yard of 23 Conant Street.

The Dwyer Family is proud to support
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Share the Heritage



continued from page 23

truck as he passed slowly through the town. We would run and try to pick the best basket and make fresh strawberry shortcake. Yum! The organ grinder played music and was accompanied by his monkey that wore a red hat and did tricks while attacking all the girls. The ice cream vendor in his little truck rang his bell to let us know he was in the neighborhood. The scissor and knife grinder sharpened our household tools and utensils. The ice delivery was a major event because we would chase the truck around the neighborhood hoping for pieces of ice for our drinks or a cool, crunchy treat.

At the end of Montello Street was Bessie Tyler and Madelyn Snow's candy and ice cream shop and at the end of Conant Street was Herman DeSilva's ice cream, soda and comic book shop. We were frequent visitors to both establishments. Every night in the summer my Dad and I would take our three beagles for ice cream cones. He raised the beagles for hunting during the winter. We often would ride Mr. Cote's bus from one

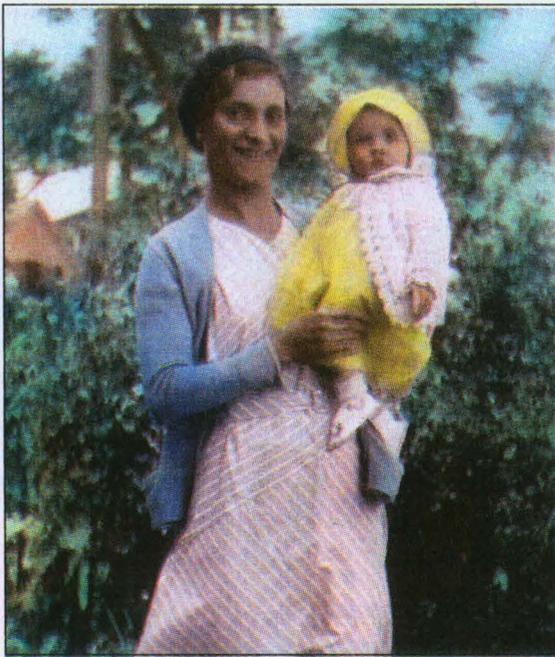


Miriam Martin playing with a favorite doll in the yard at 23 Conant Street

end of town to the other on summer evenings - for five cents.

August was the time to pick beach plums for beach plum jelly. Labor Day marked the end of summer and going back to school. The sidewalks were literally rolled up and all the tourists were gone. We had our town back and, most importantly, we got our bedrooms back.

In September we started back to school at the West End School that had grades one to four and was located at the corner of Tremont and School Streets (now a parking lot). We began each day with the pledge of allegiance, the Lord's Prayer and the singing of God Bless America. In the fifth grade we went to the Governor Bradford School (the Community Center now). This is where the East End met the West End. We found out that those East End kids were not so bad! After school we would never come home to emptiness, there would always be someone there to greet us and ask about our day. If a parent



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continued from page 23

truck as he passed slowly through the town. We would run and try to pick the best basket and make fresh strawberry shortcake. Yum! The organ grinder played music and was accompanied by his monkey that wore a red hat and did tricks while attacking all the girls. The ice cream vendor in his little truck rang his bell to let us know he was in the neighborhood. The scissor and knife grinder sharpened our household tools and utensils. The ice delivery was a major event because we would chase the truck around the neighborhood hoping for pieces of ice for our drinks or a cool, crunchy treat.

At the end of Montello Street was Bessie Tyler and Madelyn Snow's candy and ice cream shop and at the end of Conant Street was Herman DeSilva's ice cream, soda and comic book shop. We were frequent visitors to both establishments. Every night in the summer my Dad and I would take our three beagles for ice cream cones. He raised the beagles for hunting during the winter. We often would ride Mr. Cote's bus from one



Miriam Martin playing with a favorite doll in the yard at 23 Conant Street

end of town to the other on summer evenings - for five cents.

August was the time to pick beach plums for beach plum jelly. Labor Day marked the end of summer and going back to school. The sidewalks were literally rolled up and all the tourists were gone. We had our town back and, most importantly, we got our bedrooms back.

In September we started back to school at the West End School that had grades one to four and was located at the corner of Tremont and School Streets (now a parking lot). We began each day with the pledge of allegiance, the Lord's Prayer and the singing of God Bless America. In the fifth grade we went to the Governor Bradford School (the Community Center now). This is where the East End met the West End. We found out that those East End kids were not so bad! After school we would never come home to emptiness, there would always be someone there to greet us and ask about our day. If a parent



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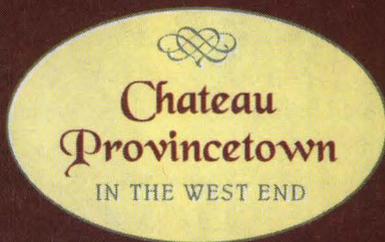
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The Ice Business In Provincetown

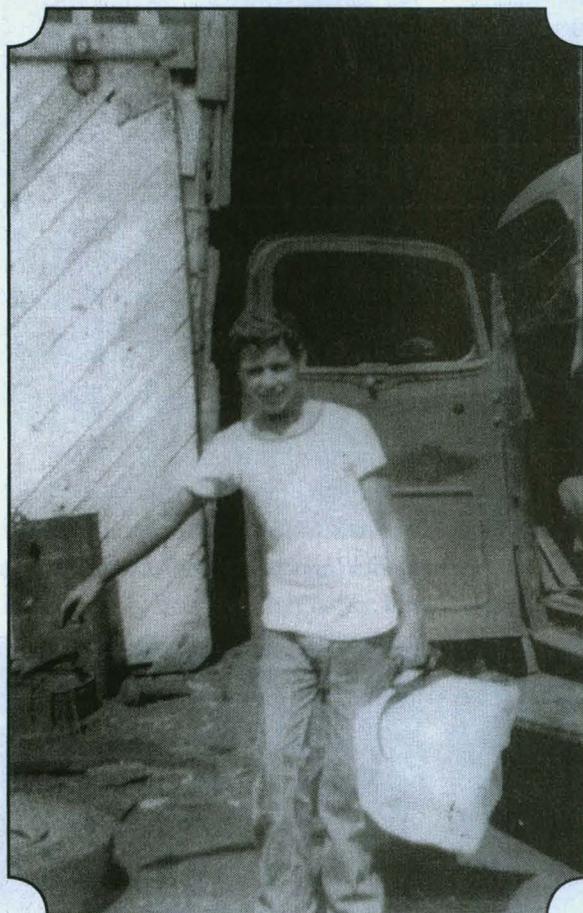
From *The Provincetown Advocate* – 1918

“**A**bout two hundred tons of ice was cut at the East Harbor (Pilgrim Lake) pond a few days ago to fill a spare corner in the DeRiggs ice house. That ice was twelve inches thick, no matter if it did come from a part of the pond that had been cut over only a fortnight earlier.” February 7

“Ice-cutting gangs worked in the keenest air of the season on Sunday. At three p.m. the temperature was ten degrees above zero and workers on all ponds were quite badly chilled. At knocking off-hour at East Harbor (5:15 P.M.) men were suffering real inconvenience from the cold, the rigors of which were augmented by the strong wind. Teddy Wilkins fell into the water at the DeRiggs cutting scene and was badly chilled on arrival home. Sylvester Francis was struck a glancing blow by a cake of ice that fell from the elevator at the East Harbor pond and hurled into the water.” January 17

How many people suggest going to the “ice box” for food in 2010? Those that do are more than likely of the generation who remember when the “ice

continued on page 33



Charlie DeRiggs Jr. making a delivery of a block of ice with tongs.

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continued from page 31

man” would come door to door delivering blocks of ice for the “ice box” as the weather warmed. With the exception of ice produced at The Consolidated Cold Storage in the East End (and sold by the Marcey Ice Company), local ponds yielded ice for the year during the winter months. February was the month most of ice was cut and stored in icehouses – large rectangular or square shaped buildings of three or four floors. This ice was packed in salt marsh hay and lasted through the heat of the summers. Anthony Jackett recently reminisced about those days and talked of delivering ice for the DeRiggs Ice Company with a horse and wagon when he was around 14 years old. He had the East End route and rode from house to house, making deliveries when an ICE sign was placed in a front window. His job was to place blocks of ice of varying sizes into iceboxes using large metal tongs, shaping the ice blocks with ice picks when necessary. Some businesses and restaurants required daily deliveries. His salary was twelve dollars a week. The DeRiggs Ice Company was founded

in 1897 by Joseph DeRiggs and was located at 194 Bradford Street. Their icehouse and cutting pond was located at the west end of East Harbor (Pilgrim Lake). The icehouse building blew down during a storm in 1944 and the cutting pond was filled in with the construction of Route six. During the days when the ice was being cut at East Harbor, Mrs. DeRiggs would trundle a cart from the East End of Provincetown to East Harbor with food for her husband Joe.

The Anthony Ice Company, Crawley Ice Company and Russell Ice Company, Bennett Ice Plant (started cutting in 1870) and the Russell Ice Company were also active during this time. Each company had its own crew and icehouse on various ponds. Only a crumbling vestige of the foundation of the icehouse on Shankpainter Pond remains.

Anthony Jackett, the retired Captain of the Liberty Belle, has wonderful memories of this time in Provincetown’s history. Alberta DeRiggs lent the photographs of her grandfather, Charles Senior, on his vintage ice truck and her father, Charles Junior, delivering a block of ice as a young boy. ◆



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Ice Harvest

BY FRANK GASPAR

*I know little
about that cutting season
of gray silence
when the men, my mother's
favorite uncle William among them,
walked out on the deep
brindled ice with their long-
handled saws and dark
hooks that curved
like the necks of winter geese,
for my mother was only the girl
in the corner of the photograph,
a thin-faced kid, bundled
in kerchief and coat,
frozen stiff-shouldered,
the look of all the rest
of her life in her eyes.
But I knew the pond
in another time, the old
icehouse a crumbling ruin,
its deep vaults open
to the indifferent sky,
and the bridge like a rib-
cage bleaching, collapsed*

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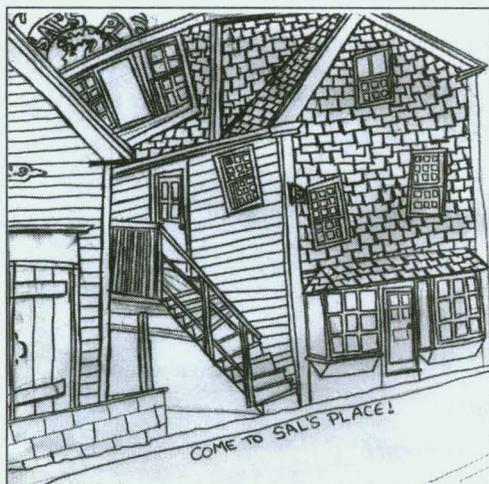
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Cape Cod Cold Storage About 1910

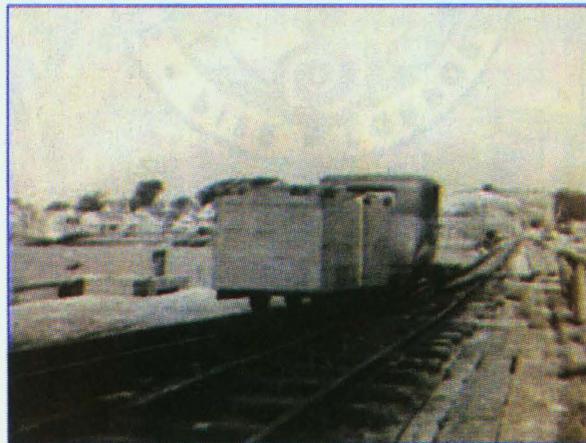
1. Bill Days, 2. John "Peacey" Cook, 3. Joe Days, 4. Frank Days, 5. John "Partsy" Silva, 6. Jim Callahan, 7. Chic Roderick, 8. Albert Silva, 9. Frank Silva, 10. Manuel "Pooper" Silva, 11. Steve Perry, 12. Charlie Rich, 13. Leon Rogers, 14. Manuel Prada, 15. Justin Veara, 16. Tony Bent (the carpenter), 17. Jesse Meads, 18. ??? Cabral, 19. ??? Paine

The Cape Cod Cold Storage and Freeman's Wharf

By Mel Joseph

Over the years I have relayed the fact [to anyone that would listen] that the ambrosia of my childhood was "Gurry" and there was no finer example of that than the beaches surrounding the old Cape Cod Cold Storage here in the west end of town. The trucks making their way through town dripping fish laden brine from every crack and crevice leaves the nose to sort out the sweet smells from the pungent ones. I don't remember this smell as ever being offensive. To say that this aroma was sweet would be like comparing it to the late afternoon smell of cow

continued on page 40



The Model A trolley driven by "Molly" Joseph heads back to the fish plant with a load of fish.

continued from page 39

ding to a Midwestern farmer. To each, the smells will be sweet remembrances for life.

In the early to mid 1950's my family lived on 28 Cottage Street. This was a time when you picked up the phone and the operator said, "number please?" Our phone number was 123J and to a small boy having to remember that number it was sure easier than 617-487-1137. It was also a time when the ice box was filled by the "ice man". Baked goods and milk were delivered to your door. If you were outside when the "Bunny man" or "ice man" was delivering their wares you might get a sampling from a damaged package of hostess cakes or ice chips on a hot summer's day.

In the west end of town there would have been no bigger employer than Atlantic Coast Fisheries. Many of the town's hardest men worked at the Col' Storage for pennies an hour and it took a hard woman to work beside them and probably for much less pay. My father (Francis "Molly" Joseph) worked at the Col' Storage in the west end for some 20 years. He drove the trolley... from the tram at the trap house to the end and back,

day after day. The old Ford Model A body was fitted with train wheels to fit the rails with several carts in tow. This might seem today to be tedious work, but what a view of Provincetown, its harbor and "The Point". When my father was in failing health in 2006 he and I discussed how blessed he was to have lived his entire life with the view of this harbor as his backdrop.

It was a hard crew that worked all the different floors of this expansive fish plant. "Harmanaka" (Louis Jason), Ralph Fields who lived on Franklin Street, my father's brother George "Mealy" Joseph... "Crapoo", Manny "Blan" Souza to name just a few that worked the 3rd floor. Women like "Amela" Burr, Mary Jason and Flo Souza ran the butterfly machine on the first floor. The flash frozen fish were packed on the second floor. Joe "Sax" was the mechanic, Ernie Irmer was an engineer. Manny "Boy Blue" Santos worked the freezer and Joe "DidIt" Jason was the floor manager. These are the names I remember as a little boy listening to his father living and working in a harsh, grownup world.

Around the evening supper table my dad would
continued on page 43



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The Cape Cod Cold Storage depicted in an early post card



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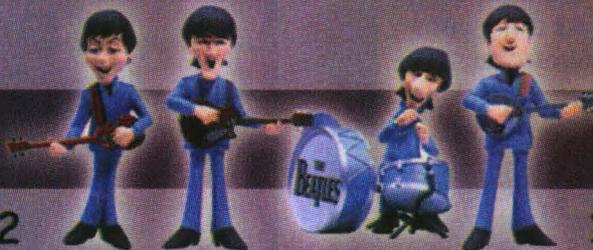


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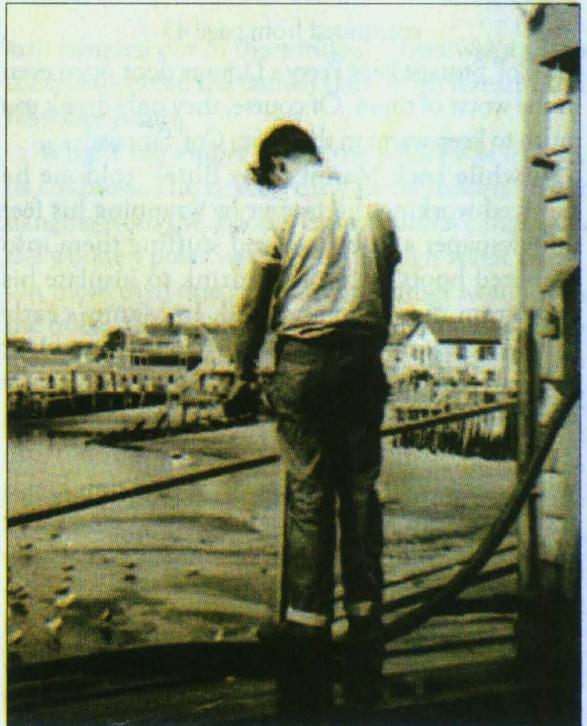
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continued from page 40

complain about the floor manager, Joe "DidIt". He would gripe that Joe "DidIt" did that or Joe "DidIt" said this. How Mr. Rowe hopped in the trolley that day and shared his pint on the way down the wharf to off load the Jimmy Boy, Shirley and Roland or Charlotte G and more. Mr. Rowe was there (most likely) to make his point to the captain of the boat tied up at the end that his price was the best price and there was no need to go anywhere else. I had a conversation recently with Cap'n Joe Roderick (Jimmy Boy) and he alluded to maybe making a bone head or more likely a bull headed decision to off load in Boston or Gloucester only to come back to the Col' Storage. "Frank Rowe was all business", Cap'n Sonny Roderick had told me "and he'd throw away business rather than give in to any boat captain's demands."

Working at the Cold Storage was hard work for short pay and did nothing more than cause fights between my mom and dad. She couldn't put food on the table on his meager pay and his penchant for spending too much on a pint or two from Perry's Liquors didn't help. It could be said that the crew at

continued on page 44



Francis "Molly" Joseph in a moment of reflection during a hard day's work at the Cape Cod Cold Storage

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continued from page 43

the Col' Storage kept Perry's Liquors door open even in the worst of times. Of course, they only drank too much to keep warm in the damp Col' Storage!

A while back Manny "Boy Blue" told me he survived working the freezer by wrapping his feet in newspaper and burlap and stuffing them into oversized boots rather than drink to insulate his body from the damp and cold. In Manny's early days working in the freezer he had a freak accident when a Freon pipe burst and his legs were instantly flash frozen like a whiting fillet. The fast action of the Cold Storage crew saved his legs from amputation. Quickly, "Harmanaka", Ralph Fields and "Blan" put Manny in a barrel of chilled water and loaded him in the bed of a pickup truck. My father and "Harmanaka" stood up in the bed of the pickup holding Manny, immersed in the barrel, all the way up old Route 6 to the Cape Cod Hospital. The doctors told Manny that the quick action of his friends saved his legs. My father never told me this story, it was Manny himself that recounted this story to me at my dad's funeral and my mother confirmed

it with many references to my dad's modesty.

On more than one occasion my mother would tote me along with her on a Friday, around noon, down to the pay office of the Cold Storage on Commercial Street. The bookkeeper's name that comes to mind is LCokroff who I believe was Al Corkcroft or Al Crocker? But, I'm spelling it like it sounds and might be off by a letter or two. Yet, who can blame me for misspelling any P-Town characters names. For my entire life I heard my father speak of "Crapoo" and "Alboo", "Harmanaka" and "Bottles." "Ti Joe" was a constant around the Col' Storage and the shoreline picking up dead fish and burying them on the beach... for the town...for short pay. I heard my father refer to him by a different, less complimentary name. But, I know my dad well enough to know that he would never have thought less of him for whatever affliction was described by that name.

After my mother would beg a few dollars from my father's pay envelope we'd go across the street to the A&P and buy whatever the meager pittance would afford. My mother would then wait for the wrath of my father later that evening when he'd come home

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with his remaining pay envelope and adjusted pay stub. The dollars didn't go far, but I knew the love of my mother would always keep food in my belly and protect me from harm.

I was 4 or 5 years old when my mother would take me and my one year old brother Kenneth (in the stroller) up Cottage Street, across Bradford. Pick up a stick and rattle a white picket fence to entertain myself as we made our way down to Commercial (across from Perry's Market). It was then only a short 150 yard walk to the Col' Storage. The narrow sidewalks I see today didn't seem so narrow back then to a 5 year old.

As is the case throughout town, narrow walkways to the beach abound between every building and the sandy alley way between the Col' Storage and a small white house with red shutters was our egress to the beach.

My mother would take my brother out of the stroller and instruct me to carry him down to the beach while she'd fold up the stroller and carry it down. We'd lay out a blanket for my mom to sit on and she'd do her crossword puzzle and I'd play out on the flats using my hands and feet to dig quahogs or clams. My father would stop the trolley on his way down or back to yell out to me, "whad'ya got?" I'd hold up my shellfish find so he'd be proud. He'd remind me, "smash it against a rock...". There's no better way to open it when you are too young to work a knife. He'd stick his bare arm out the trolley window and wave to my mother on the beach then buck the Model A's stick shift into gear. Many years later as I stood on the deck of The Boatslip waiting to depart to "The Point" for a Swim for Life event I stared off to the west and could see the trolley pulling its way down the wharf with my dad's bare

arm hanging out of the window. There was a sharp contrast between the tanned skin on his forearm and his white T-shirt.

What I remember about the wharf was its size, its coldness. The rickety, rusty metal ladders barely hanging from the pylons. Black mussels clinging to the wooden poles just below the high water mark. On more than one occasion, my father would stop the trolley on the way down and yell for me to climb the ladder up to the wharf so I could take a ride down and back. These rides in the trolley were as frightening as they were fun. Wide gaps in the wharf planking and the gentle rocking and swaying made the trip out and back seem precarious to me ... but they are fond memories. It was quite a view of the town from what seemed like a mile off shore with the grand Monument lordling over the town, casting that long shadow all townies came to find comforting.

All the Cold Storages had their own fleet of trap boats. One name I was reminded of in a talk with Cap'n Sonny Roderick was the Minnie M. One of continued on page 46



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continued from page 45

these boats owned by Atlantic Coast Fisheries was run by “Nonnie” Fields and “Bottles.” I’m not sure if it was the Minnie M? Now, I could venture a guess as to what “Bottles’ ” real name was but I believe there was more than one person that had that moniker hung on them so I’ll leave it at that. The scows that serviced the traps would later become playgrounds for any kid adventurous enough to swim out and spend the day swinging on the block and tackle, not to mention lounging in seagull poop.

The trolley’s day was one of backing up all the way down to the end where the boat crews off loading them. The trolley made its way back to the tram where my dad would turn a large turnkey so that some contraption would rise up and open the carts bottom and the fish would drop down a level into a hopper. He’d climb down a level and pull a gate up and the fish would drop into the “basket” that would be pulled up the tram to the third floor. The fish would be dumped onto a conveyor that had a spinning basket that spun the scales off. I was young and what I remember was a lot of moving pieces, noise and sharp objects. When

in there, I never ventured too far from my dad’s side. I asked Manny “Boy Blue” if they joked around and played practical jokes and had fun...he said, “there was no fun, it was too dangerous and things happened too fast to have fun.” In light of Many’s flash frozen adventure I am not surprised by that statement.

This was hard work, for a hard crew.

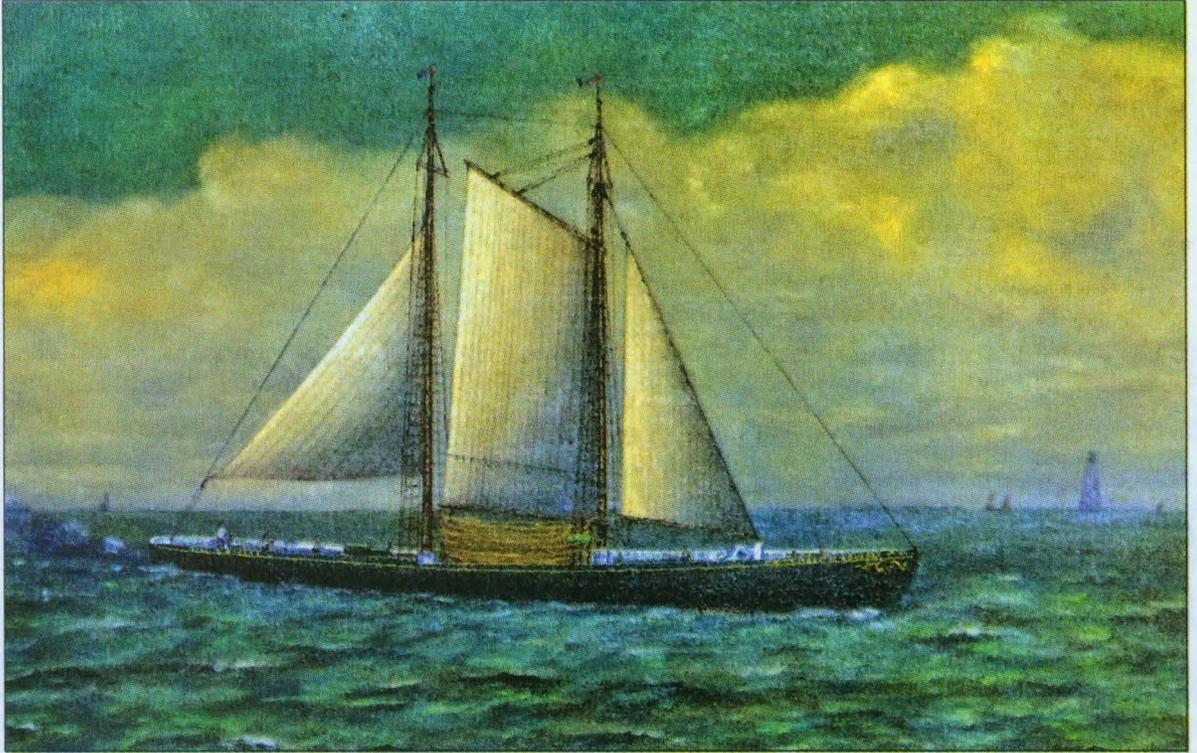
Cap’n Joe Roderick (Jimmy Boy) recounted to me this list of Cold Storages from the early 1900’s through the end of the ‘60’s:

The Consolidated, 501-503 Commercial Street in the west end, Damn Frank’s at the bottom of Johnson Street (I only have a recollection of the remaining pylons at the waters edge, this would now be the parking lot across from Johnson Street), The Colonial, next to and including the Marine Specialties building (with the old Treasure and Trash building being the front street office). Matheson’s at the foot of Court Street (next to pumper #4), Fisherman’s, 183-185 Commercial Street (next to old Grozier’s Park, the ill fated Puritan at 131 Commercial Street and the Cape Cod Cold Storage at 125- 129 Commercial Street. ♦



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*Provincetown's last Grand Bank Schooner - The Mary P. Goulart.
104 feet in length, sold in 1938. End of an era.
Courtesy of the Town of Provincetown Art Collection Artist: A. Agores*

Mary P. Goulart

(Having taken place in the year 1930 or 1931)

As related to Helen Valentine
by Francis "Flyer" Santos *

Captain Manuel C. Santos, owner of the "Mary P. Goulart", was known as the "Cod Fish King" of the Atlantic fleet.

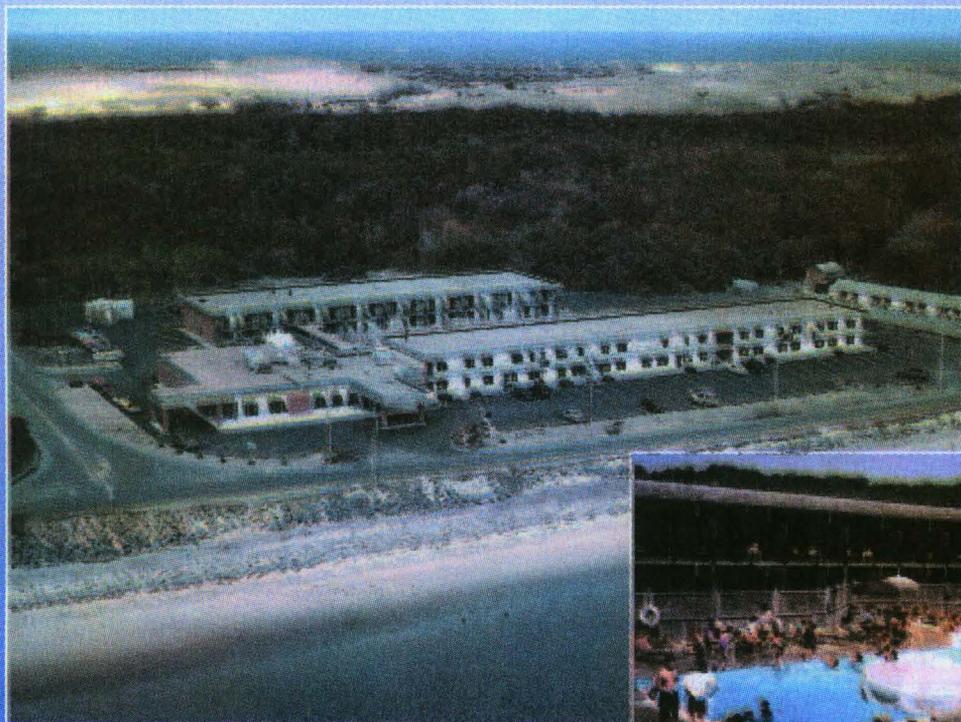
He and his crew of 26 men were on a trip on the Grand Banks when a squall came up. At that time, schooners were "on sail", meaning no engine, so no reverse. Captain Santos therefore sailed down the line of dories shouting to each, "cut the lines and get aboard." Two men to a dory with tubs of baited trawl.

Now, dory men John Santos and Bill Cabral had twice before experienced these squalls and, still feeling lucky, were not about to lose their catch. However, the weather worsened. The two men had to give it up. TOO LATE! The "Mary P. Goulart" was nowhere in sight!

Captain Santos and crew searched and searched the area and were about to give up when crew member Manuel Cabral, the father of lost dory man Bill Cabral, pointed a knife at the captain to "keep searching" for his son and John Santos.

continued on page 49

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continued from page 47

The DORY WAS FOUND upside down. The men had tied themselves one in the bow, one in the stern, so as to be found for proper burial. Barely alive and brought aboard, they were rolled over a barrel as water gushed out. THEY SURVIVED!

When the "Mary P. Goulart" was ready to sail again, all were aboard except John Santos. His family

locked him in the house. He then took a job at the fish processing plant the Cape Cod Cold Storage (Atlantic Coast Fisheries), now the Coast Guard Station. NEVER TO SAIL AGAIN. ♦

* The facts of this event were verified by "Flyer" Santos 1/16/2010

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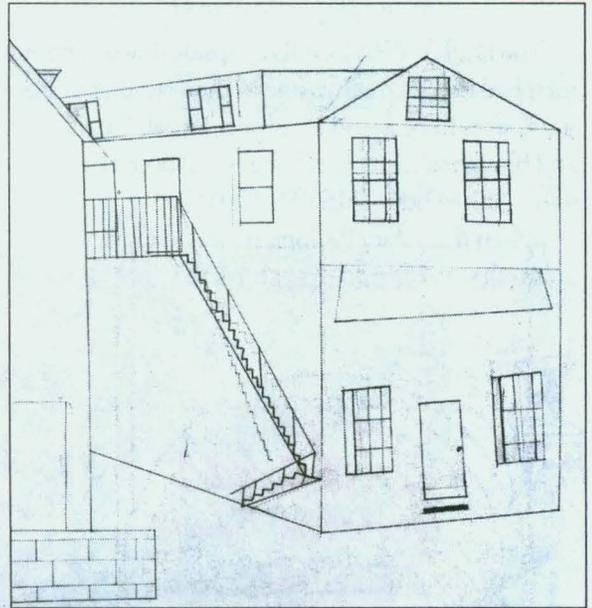
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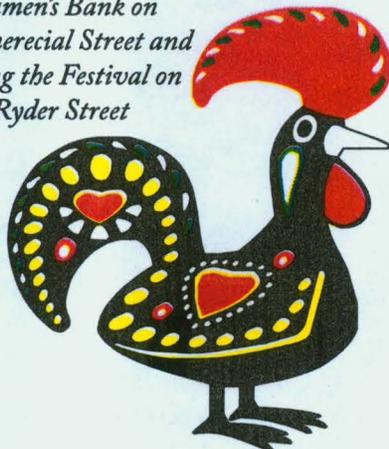
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Bruce McKain, *The Blessing*, courtesy of Provincetown Art Association and Museum



The Provincetown Tourism Office and the Visitor Services Board proudly support the Portuguese Festival 2010, celebrating the 63rd

annual Blessing of the Fleet. We also extend a very special welcome to everyone participating in this year's festivities. We are extremely proud of Provincetown's Portuguese heritage and history. The Portuguese Festival celebrates that heritage, and honors Provincetown's long history as a fishing port. Last year's festival was designated by the American Bus Association (ABA) as a Top 100 Event. This year the ABA also named Pilgrim Monument's 100th anniversary celebration as a Top 100 Event. Both of these unique and colorful celebrations, along with Provincetown's rich heritage and history have earned us the 2010 Distinctive Destination Designation by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

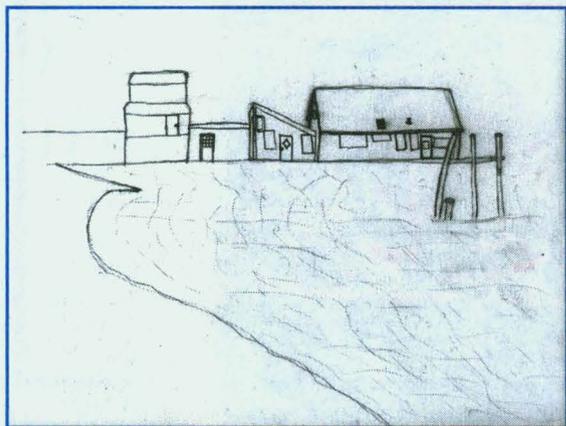
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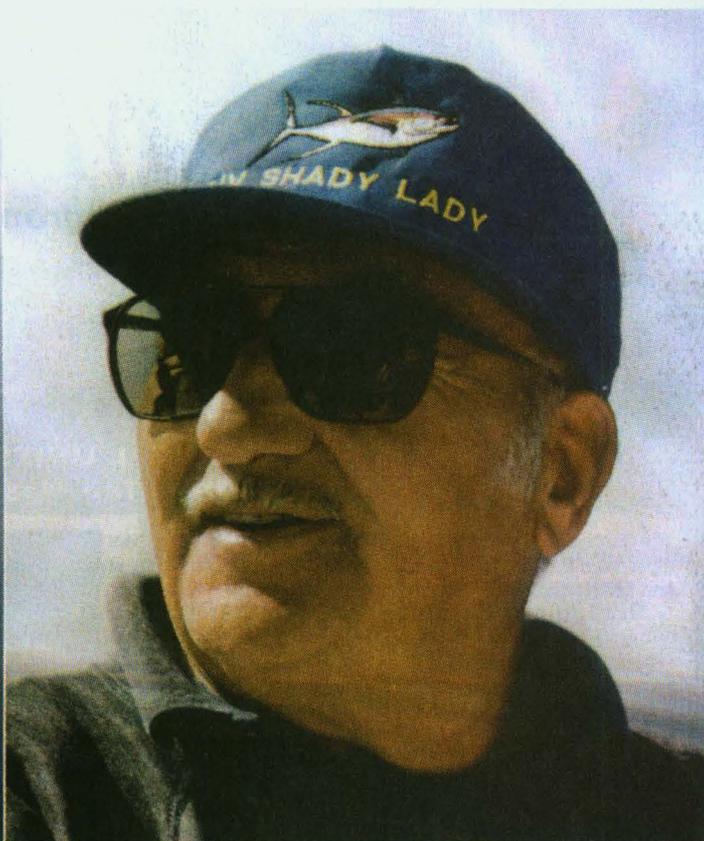
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