

*Sandwich Downs  
Celebrating 100 Years*



*1926 - 2026*

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## Introduction

There is a unique peace that comes from returning to the same view of Cape Cod Bay from our rocky beach, anchored by groynes and lined with dunes. Although the landscape of the beach and houses has changed over the course of its existence, the grounding that Sandwich Downs provides us is unaltered. The pages that follow are a celebration of the land that has drawn people back for 100 years, so whether your footsteps are new or old, we hope that this book encourages you to treasure the history and tranquility of Sandwich Downs.

Many thanks to all of the people who contributed to this book, and to the committee who worked for endless hours behind the scenes to make it happen: Bud Schermehorn, Frank and Donna Hartwell, Skip and Kathie Reynolds, Jeanne Lesperance, Pete Thalmann, Ilana Weiss, and Heather Hoganson.

# History of Sandwich Downs

**The Hannah Legacy: A Narrative History of Sandwich Downs by Mark Hannah**

The Vision of Samuel Dudley Hannah (1867-1945)



Samuel D. Hannah (1867-1945)



Samuel D. Hannah and daughters (Lib and June) -1942

In the rolling hills (downs) and salt marshes of East Sandwich, Massachusetts, where Scorton Creek winds its way to Cape Cod Bay, a vision took shape in the mind of Samuel Dudley Hannah. Born in 1867, Samuel came from distinguished lineage—the Hannah family traced their ancestry back to early Massachusetts settlers, with connections to the first two Governors of Massachusetts and later to Governor Winthrop and Governor Dudley. The family had a tradition of principled stands and public service that would manifest itself in Samuel's later career.

Samuel served as an officer in the Army during World War I, bringing military discipline and organizational skills to his later business ventures. As Sandwich historian Russell Lovell documented, Samuel Hannah was "a unique figure in Cape Cod history," whose business acumen was matched by his strategic vision for real estate development.

Samuel's education in real estate law at Ohio University prepared him well for the complex world of Cape Cod land development. In 1893, he formed a marketing company called Homestead Trust, which became his vehicle for ambitious development projects. Among his real estate peers, Samuel Hannah had established a sound reputation as an expert in construction economics and mortgage finance. His innovative "Hannah construction mortgage" was adopted by major financial institutions. The Homestead Trust had remained alive and had even acquired property for Coonamessett Ranch in 1919. Hannah's largest Cape Cod investment was a 745-acre tract in North Truro along the outer beach at Pilgrim Springs, purchased for about \$90,000 in 1921. Within a matter of a few years, he had become known as an authority on real estate history of Cape Cod.

Of great assistance to Hannah in his research efforts on proprietary history was his son, Edwin Hannah, who like his father had an uncommon desire to resolve Cape Cod's complex land problems. He emphasized that if Cape Cod land titles could be cleared up, "Cape Cod's land boom will come back and come back to stay." His vision extended far beyond personal profit—Hannah believed that resolving these ancient title questions would benefit the entire Cape, bringing increased property values and tax returns to all communities.

By the late 1920s, Samuel had assembled substantial landholdings in what would become his legacy development. His Homestead Trust acquired a large tract formerly in the Wing family on Scorton Neck, where he laid out Sandwich Downs lots in 1926. His advertisements in Boston

newspapers at this time referred to "a wide range of Cape Cod acreage for investment or development, from one to one thousand acres, none with doubtful titles"—a promise that reflected his deep expertise in Cape Cod land law and his commitment to providing clear, legally sound property ownership.

The newspaper profile captured Samuel's innovative approach to real estate development: "Mr. Hannah's idea is to simplify methods of building loans and at the same time introduce features of security to all interests involved." His "Hannah construction mortgage" system had already been successfully tested in major developments, and he believed this approach could revolutionize Cape Cod development by making construction financing more accessible and secure.

Through his Homestead Trust marketing company, Samuel began the careful development of what he christened "Sandwich Downs." His vision was both ambitious and accessible—initial lots were priced at just \$300 for a 50-foot parcel, making Cape Cod living attainable for middle-class families. Some lots were sold for as little as \$100, and Samuel even compensated surveyor Gifford Hartwell with several lots on Wing Boulevard West in exchange for his surveying services.

The centerpiece of Samuel's acquisition was the historic Edward Wing House, which he purchased in 1931 from the Blake family, moved in after his wife died in 1933, selling his Buzzards Bay property. This handsome Georgian Colonial, built around 1757-1761 by Edward Wing on his marriage to Mehitable Russell, would become known as Wing Scorton Farm. The house carried with it the weight of Cape Cod history—Daniel Webster is reported to have been a visitor, and the house may have been a stop along the Underground Railway, given the political leanings of the Wing family and a ten-foot-long narrow space behind a fireplace.

Samuel made his home in this ancient Wing house on Scorton Neck, and the fireplace referenced in the historical commission report was noted for its great size.

The 1930s brought personal and financial challenges for Samuel. After his wife died his correspondence with Sandwich Town Clerk Frank Howland indicates cash flow problems during the Depression, as notably lots in Sandwich Downs were taken for non-payment of taxes.

Unfortunately, his later attempts to revive ancient proprietorships through questionable legal theories proved controversial and unsuccessful, leading many to doubt his judgment despite his otherwise substantial contributions to Cape Cod development. Samuel's scholarly pursuits culminated in a posthumous publication: "The Proprietary Lands of Plymouth Colony and Cape Cod" by Samuel D. Hannah (1867–1945), edited by Stephen Connolly and published in 1980, just after his daughter Junia's death. This work preserved his extensive research into Cape Cod land law and colonial history, cementing his legacy as both developer and historian.

### **Edwin "Brud" Hannah: The Builder's Touch**

Samuel's son, Edwin Jameson Hannah (1899-1962)—affectionately known as "Brud" to family and friends—inherited not only his father's vision but also the practical skills to bring it to life. Like his father, Edwin/Brud had "an uncommon desire to resolve Cape Cod's complex land problems" and would continue the family tradition of principled engagement with land policy issues well into his later years. Edwin/Brud Hannah was a master builder whose architectural sensibilities were perfectly attuned to Cape Cod's vernacular traditions. Beyond construction, he took responsibility for maintaining the development's infrastructure, personally overseeing the upkeep of Sandwich Downs' characteristic sandy roads.



Edwin Jamison Hannah - 1943

Edwin/Brud Hannah's building career in Sandwich Downs was prolific and methodical. Over the course of two decades, he constructed at least ten houses that would define the community's character. His systematic approach began in the 1950s with a series of cottages that demonstrated his evolving architectural philosophy.

The first house (Glen/Gary) located at 2 Mall, was originally built for Freddy/Pricilla Warren (later replaced). This was followed by what became known as the 'Rose Cottage' at 94 Wing Boulevard West, then 92 Wing Boulevard West, and the cottage at 89 Wing Boulevard West that originally housed Horace "Skid" Schermerhorn. In 1952, Edwin demonstrated his craft when he built the cottage at 87 Wing Boulevard West for the MacIlray family (Elizabeth Perkins, later McIlwraith). As Richard Hall would later recall: "Your grandfather Edwin Hannah had built it for my aunt in 1952 along at the same time he built what was to become Schermerhorn's."



'Rose cottage' 94 Wing Blvd West

Edwin's innovation extended beyond residential construction. At 25 Beachway, he built the neighborhood's first house with a swimming pool—a luxury that marked Sandwich Downs as a premier destination. He also constructed a special "honeymoon cottage" at 5 Beachway West for his wife upon their marriage, which was recently tastefully rebuilt by the new owner Chris Downs. In the 1960s, he expanded his work to include two properties directly on the beach: 8 The Gridiron and 12 The Gridiron, showcasing his ability to adapt his designs to waterfront settings.

The crowning achievement of Edwin's residential work came in 1953-54 with the construction of the Hannah Family House at 10 Wing Boulevard East. Built on seven lots with 350 feet of street frontage, this substantial home commanded views of the marsh and represented the family's deep commitment to the community they had created. The timing was significant—the family moved in just eight days before the birth of their third child, Jeff, making the house a symbol of both architectural achievement and family milestone.

Prior to building their permanent home, the Hannah family had lived during the 1930s at the Lighthouse Cottages on East Sandwich Beach, demonstrating their long-standing connection to the area's coastal environment. Edwin's work extended beyond Sandwich Downs proper to including cottages in the adjacent Scorton Shores development. Edwin's architectural philosophy emphasized harmony with the natural environment and practical New England craftsmanship. He sourced his building materials from Eldridge and Bourne Lumber yard in Buzzards Bay, ensuring quality construction while supporting regional suppliers.

### **The Golden Years: Community and Character**

Through the 1950s and 1960s, Sandwich Downs flourished as Edwin Hannah's vision of a Cape Cod retreat came to full fruition. The development attracted a mix of year-round residents and seasonal families who appreciated both its proximity to Boston and its sense of timeless tranquility. The Hannah family themselves were central to this community life, with Edwin's wife Marjorie Grace Holland bearing "a striking resemblance to Katharine Hepburn" and their home serving as a gathering place for neighborhood children.

The community that emerged was characterized by both diversity and cohesion. Year-round residents included Bill Hendy, a World War II veteran with children Ralph, Bill, and Barbara (Bill served as a commander at Buzzard Bay Military Academy), Russell Carroll, and Richard "Dick" Ladenburg.



Dick Ladenburg, June, Edwin/Brud, \_\_\_\_\_, and Samuel D Hannah -1942

The seasonal residents brought energy and tradition, with families like the Johnsons (Lexa, Randi, Craig, and Evan), the Downs family (Chris and Greg), and neighbors like Doris McKay, Penny and Marsha Johnson, Doc Norcross, and the Cook family (Cathy and Peter).

The wartime years brought a particular intensity to community life. Stories abounded of residents wearing armbands and walking the beach during World War II in search of German submarines. The sinking of one submarine in Cape Cod Bay added urgency to these civilian patrols, creating a shared sense of purpose that bonded the community together.

Edwin's sons—Jamie, Stephen "Pip", and Jeff—grew up fully integrated into this close-knit environment. Jamie attended Sandwich Schools but found that his closest friendships were with other Sandwich Downs children rather than with the "townies" from Sandwich Village. This distinction reflected the unique character of the development as a place apart, with its own rhythms and traditions.



Jamie, Stephen "Pip", Jeff and Mom Majorie Holland Hannah

Richard Hall's memories capture the essence of this era: "When Sandwich Downs was Edwin Hannah's Sandwich Downs (my childhood Eden), it was rough sandy roads, chilly fall nights in the off-season at my aunt's cottage at 87 Wing Blvd West, and happy memories of spending the night at the 'big' house with the two-car garage and grand piano in that pine-paneled living room."

Grandmother Hannah's promise of "there will be popovers in morning boys" to children staying overnight became a cherished memory for many. Edwin himself was remembered as someone who "treated my brother and me as if we mattered" and was "as genuine as they come" with his "snowy white hair and smiling face."

For the Hannah boys, Sandwich Downs provided an idyllic childhood backdrop. Jamie's first fishing experience became family legend—casting his line from the beach, he experienced a massive backlash in his reel just as a large fish took the bait. With the reel hopelessly tangled and the fish running, young Jamie had to walk up the beach to land his catch, turning what might have been a fishing disaster into a memorable triumph.

Edwin shared his love of fishing with his sons, taking regular trips out into Cape Cod Bay in a small rowboat rented from Waldo Bemis for five dollars a day. These expeditions yielded skates, dogfish, tautog, perch, and cod, providing both recreation and sustenance for the family. The children also found summer employment with neighbors Amy, Catherine, and Annie Carlton, who offered blueberry picking jobs at fifteen cents per quart—honest work that connected them to the area's agricultural traditions.

Edwin's commercial ventures complemented the residential development. He built and operated a motel on Route 6A, which held special significance as the place where Elizabeth Perkins and her new husband "were invited to spend their wedding night there and in doing so became the first occupants of that once wonderful old motel." The motel's swimming pool became a afternoon gathering place for local children during hot summer days.

### **Preserving the Vision**

The Hannah family's commitment to preserving the character of their development extended beyond their own construction projects. As Hall noted, his aunt and uncle "bought both back lots in Sandwich Downs and the two across the road in Scorton Shores in a vain attempt to protect that view in perpetuity." This collaborative approach to development reflected the Hannah philosophy that individual property rights should serve broader community interests.

Edwin's architectural legacy can be seen not only in Sandwich Downs but also in the nearby Scorton Shores development, where he built three "charming Nantucket-esque cottages"—one for each of his three sons: Jamie, Stephen "Pip," and Jeff, including the cottage at 15 Captain Cole Road. These cottages continued the same design principles that had made Sandwich Downs so successful, extending the Hannah family's architectural influence throughout the broader East Sandwich coastal area. His sisters, Junia Curtain and Elizabeth Potter/Ladenberg, who lived at what became the Scorton River Motel, documented Edwin's early years in a book known as "The Blue Book," preserving family history for future generations.

This motel would later be renamed the Spring Garden Inn, where the current owners have named one of the rooms the "Hannah Suite" in honor of the family legacy.



Scorton River Motel and Hannah Realty Office -1965

The family business ensured continuity of vision and maintenance of community standards across the decades. The business model combined residential development with ongoing property maintenance, creating a sustainable approach to community stewardship.

## Transition and Legacy

Edwin Hannah's death in 1962 at the age of 62 marked the end of an era for Sandwich Downs. As Hall observed, "When he died and she eventually became Mrs. Snow, it seemed that the old 'feel' of an intact Sandwich Downs was lost." Yet the fundamental character of the place—the careful integration of architecture and landscape, the sense of community fostered by thoughtful design, and the preservation of Cape Cod's natural beauty—remained intact through the work of Edwin's children and the families who had made Sandwich Downs their home. The Hannah building tradition continued into the next generation through Edwin's sons Stephen and Jeff, who carried on the family's commitment to quality construction in Sandwich Downs from the 1970s until 2002. Their work maintained the architectural standards and community character that had distinguished Sandwich Downs since Samuel's original vision.

Edwin's legacy extended beyond Sandwich Downs to encompass the broader Hannah family tradition of principled engagement with Cape Cod land policy. Right up until the end of his life, he continued his father's work of addressing what he saw as injustices in government land takings, working alongside his sisters to petition federal officials about the inadequate compensation received for the family's Truro properties when they were taken for state park and eventually National Seashore purposes.

The historic Wing Scorton Farm, Samuel Hannah's first and most significant acquisition, continued to serve the community in various capacities. In the 1960s, 11 Wing Blvd. was used for several years by the Hopefield (Riverview) School as a staff house. Later restored as a bed and breakfast, it stands today as a testament to the Hannah family's commitment to preserving Cape Cod's architectural heritage while adapting it for contemporary use. Mark Hannah



Samual D. Hannah (1867-1945)



Wing Scorton Farm 1757 - 1761 (11 Wing Blvd - John/Holly Cook now)



Wing Scorton Farm 1757 - 1761 (11 Wing Blvd-John/Holly Cook now)

### **The Enduring Vision**

Today, visitors to Sandwich Downs can still experience something of Samuel Dudley Hannah's original vision and Edwin Hannah's masterful execution. The development's roads retain their intimate scale, many of the original cottages survive with their characteristic charm, and the relationship between built environment and natural landscape continues to exemplify the best traditions of Cape Cod development.

The Hannah legacy extends beyond bricks and mortar to encompass a philosophy of development that honors both history and community. In an era when Cape Cod faces increasing pressure from inappropriate development, the story of Sandwich Downs offers a model of how vision, craftsmanship, and respect for place can create environments that endure across generations.

As historian Russell Lovell, author of the definitive history of Sandwich, documented the town's evolution, the Hannah family's contribution represents a crucial chapter in the ongoing story of how Cape Cod's landscape has been shaped by those who understood its unique character and potential.

The sandy roads that once echoed with children's laughter, the cottages that framed perfect views of Cape Cod Bay, and the sense of community that made Sandwich Downs "a truly magical time"—all remain as testament to the Hannah family's lasting contribution to the Cape Cod we know and cherish today.

### **Additional Area Historical Information.**



Wall Map, 1857, Courtesy Sandwich Town Archives

Sandwich Downs is located in the section of Sandwich formerly called Scorton Neck. Old deeds refer to it as an area in the northeast corner of Sandwich bordered south and west by Scorton Creek, north by the Bay, east by Sandy Neck and Great Marsh in Barnstable. Indians had inhabited this area. The last encampment of the Scorton Indians (part of the Wampanoag tribe) was on the dunes at Carleton Shores. Arrowheads have been found from time to time in the area. A Spanish doubloon was also found. There were some who believed the coin to be part of a pirate treasure trove, however no other evidence of this stash was ever found.

Three large farms took up this area. The Nye farm encompassed the current Wingscorton Farm and Sandwich Downs. The Armstrong farm was the present Meadow Springs Farm and the development to the beach. The H. T. Wing farm, which had belonged to the Wing family since the 1670's, was about 200 acres and is now Carleton Shores. It included the area now known as Long Hill and Beachplum Circle. This farm was bought by Hiram Carleton in 1881 for his son John Fisher Carleton. John Carleton had wanted to be a farmer. His father Hiram

Carleton, a minister, promised him that if he went to Harvard, he would buy him a farm when he graduated from college.

The farm was crisscrossed by stonewalls. An early picture shows these walls and a much more open landscape than is now seen. This is true of most of the Cape. In 1900, the land was cleared for farming with the timber used to fuel the glass works fireplaces and for heating of private homes. With the advent of central heating and the passing of small farming, much of the land has gone back to trees. In spite of development, the Cape has more woodlands now than 100 years ago. The road (the current Route 6A) was unpaved and ran only as far as the marsh at the edge of Scorton Creek. At that time, one had to go over the bridge on Jones Lane to old County Road in order to ride to Sandwich or Barnstable.

In 1930 the road was paved. The state bought up the stonewalls on the nearby farms for \$1,000 and crushed the stones with a steam crusher. The state workers also opened the sandpit on the west side of the hill which slopes toward Jillson Way. They took gravel and sand for a road foundation. At that time the bridge over Scorton Creek was built. It was rebuilt in the 1930's. There are still a few wood pilings left from the temporary bridge which was put up at that time. These can be seen to the left of 6A as one drives toward Sandwich.

There was a large old house on the H. T. Wing farm when it was purchased by Hiram Carleton. It was very close to the present road. There were also several barns on the property. The oldest was built in the early 1700's. It is now incorporated as a garage into the house at 613 Rte. 6A. The house dated from the 1670's. It burned on February 2, 1900. The fire began in the chimney and burned downwards. Had help been near at hand, the house might have been saved. But the men pulled out as much as they could from the lower floors and had to watch helplessly as the fire burned the house down. The Carleton family, which then consisted of four girls, a boy, and a baby on the way, went to stay with the Armstrong family at Meadow Springs. A new house in the foursquare style was built and ready for the family to move back to the farm in June, just before the last baby of the family was born. This house, with additions in 2000, still stands on the rise above Rte. 6A. John's great-granddaughter Cynthia Jillson Myers and her husband Mike live there now. Credit: Carlton Shores Website

# Family Stories – Past and Present

## **Bortolussi, Minkwitz Family – 55 & 59 Wing Boulevard East**

My (Christen ‘Bortolussi’ Minkwitz) history at Sandwich Downs began in a playpen in the backyard at 59 WBE. My grandparents, Dan and Bertha Carey were building their small retirement home. It was 1968 and the beginning of many fun-filled summers for my parents Polly ‘Carey’ and Fred Bortolussi, my brothers Stephen and Jay Bortolussi, and myself, Christen.

The beach community was much smaller in those days and the number of neighborhood kids much fewer. We still managed to connect and find many creative and fun things to do.

Eventually, my grandparents purchased 55 WBE from the Johnsons who lived on Beachway at the time. After enjoying 25+ years living at the Downs, my grandparents’ health began to fail. They sold 59 to the Behans, deeded 55 to my parents and moved off Cape.

As time went by, my brothers and I married and started families of our own. It was 1994 when my parents decided to build at 55 WBE. That year, they also welcomed their first grandchild with 8 more to follow over the next 12 years.

Polly and Fred were so happy to share their home and beach community with their large family and many friends. Four generations of the Carey, Bortolussi and Minkwitz families have enjoyed the endless fun and activities that Sandwich Downs has to offer: boating, kayaking and paddle boarding; fishing off the beach; long walks to Sandy Neck and Scorton Creek while picking up treasures along the way; swimming lessons with Mrs. Schermerhorn; swimming and diving off the jetties; building sandcastles and challenging the tides; beach picnics, games, bonfires and fireworks; and just enjoying the sun, surf, sandbars and spectacular sunsets!

My husband Russ and I have been looking to buy in this beach community that he has grown to love and appreciate as much as I do. In August 2025, Kelly Darmon, owner of 59 since 2015, asked if we were interested in buying since she knew that the home had sentimental value to us. Without hesitation, we made an offer. Now, it’s back in the family after 31 years! We are so happy and are looking forward to share our newly acquired house and beloved family estate with many future generations to come! Christen ‘Bortolusi’ Minkwitz for the family.



2025 – Bortolussi/Minkwitz Family Estate – 55, 59 Wing Boulevard East



2011 – 4<sup>th</sup> generation – Bortolussi and Minkwitz children – (left to right)  
Jason, Calum, Nathan, Heather, Jessica, Cameron, Matthew,  
Noah and Jenna (holding Brit)

## **Ashley - Dodds - Fox Family - 12 Gridiron - 'Fair Winds'**

Our maternal grandparents, Donn and Nancy Ashley, enjoyed life-long connections to Cape Cod. Both grew up in Waban, Massachusetts but spent their summers on the Cape with their respective families. Nancy, of the Keith family, in a beautiful, gleaming white victorian house in Sagamore, and one at Pear Tree Farm on Old County Road in Sandwich, where his father was President of the Sandwich Historical Society for some time. Donn and Nancy married in 1946, had two children, Lainey and Philip, and spent their family life living all over the world, courtesy of the United States Navy. In between assignments and for visits back to the United States, Cape Cod was their soft and comfortable landing spot.

After retirement from officer life, Donn and Nancy settled in Miami, Florida, but they continued their tradition of spending summers on the Cape, this time around with their daughter Lainey and her three children, who were living in landlocked Indiana. Donn was bound and determined to ensure his only grandchildren would know and love Cape Cod just as he and Nancy did. By this time, their old family homes on the Cape had been sold, so they became renters, trying out a few options in neighborhoods along 6A, until finding the Beekman cottage in Sandwich Downs, where they rented for a couple years in a row. One summer in the early 1980s, our mother Lainey went for a walk and saw a real estate agent pounding a For Sale sign into the yard of a nearby house. She ran back to Beekman to tell her parents she'd found their dream Cape house. In what seemed like the blink of an eye, they toured the house, put in an offer and closed on 12 The Gridiron. Donn named the house Fair Winds, after the traditional nautical blessing, "May you have fair winds and following seas."

We Indiana kids enjoyed many summers with our grandparents and mother, frolicking in the surf after a big storm, throwing our favorite frisbee on the low tide flats and racing to the canal to see big ships up close. We have great memories of the shaving cream fights at the annual picnic, playing ghosts in the graveyard and wiffle ball with neighborhood kids, climbing on the massive rocks of the jetties and counting the somersaults our grandfather would attempt at high tide.

We lost our grandfather in 2000, and then our grandmother in 2015. We talk of them often, sharing their history and the stories they us told one thousand times (and more) with our own children and grandchildren. We reminisce about all our own fun and loving memories with them and remind our young ones why they have access to this most beautiful and serene beach. We are all better off for knowing and loving Cape Cod, and we have our grandparents to thank. In the Spring of 2025, we lost our mother Lainey. A few months later, every one of us gathered at Fair Winds to celebrate her life and lay her to rest next to her parents and her brother Phil in a nearby cemetery.

Each sunrise we get to experience on the Cape is a reminder of the legacy left to us. Though our family is now scattered across the country in Indiana, Florida, Minnesota and Colorado, it is Cape Cod that remains our soft and comfortable landing spot. The place we come to remember, to grieve and to celebrate, to rest and then reset. We are among the lucky few who get to call Sandwich Downs home, for it is indeed the place where our hearts reside.

Jennifer Dodds Fox, on behalf of her siblings Rebecca Dodds, Christopher Dodds and their respective families.



Beach view from deck

## Downs at the Downs - Paula and Chris - 5 Beachway Family Memories 1956-2026



Evan Johnson, Chris and Greg Downs-1960



Harry and Babs Downs, son Greg and dog Pups-1961

Harry and Barbara (Babs) Downs first visited Sandwich Downs in 1956, invited for a long weekend, away from kids, by their New Jersey friends and neighbors, Armond (Swede) and Terry Johnson. Harry and Babs' oldest son, Chris, was in nursery school with the Johnson's son Evan. The Johnson's had just purchased 9 Beachway West the year before. Whether it was the beautiful beach, the fresh steamers and cherry stone clams you could find in Scorton Creek, the spectacular views or just the name of the place, the Downs were hooked.

Each summer for the next 13 years, the Downs family returned, with sons Chris and Greg and their dog Pups. Initially, the Downs rented "Bayberry" Cottage from "Mitty" Bemis, (now the small cottage owned by Harry and Barbara Gaumond on Bemis Rd.) and then 5 Beachway West, first from the Washburn family and then from Florence Haley. In 1970, 5 Beachway West was happily purchased by Harry and Babs and now, after 55+ years, is hosting a third generation of our family, Chris and Paula Downs' daughters Christine and Kathryne.

For Chris and Greg, in the early years, there were many great memories. To summarize just a few:

- Building forts in the bushes on Shark Hill, the largest hill on the beach to the East, now occupied by a very, large home. There were many related cases of poison ivy!
- Spear fishing for Tautog on the site of an old wreck off Shark Hill with Frank Hartwell, Stephen "Pip" Hannah, Bud Schermerhorn and Evan Johnson. We stayed in the water for hours with wet t-shirts to protect our backs from the sun. We had to watch out for an occasional, aggressive goosefish.

- Catching large whiting fish with our bare hands on the sand bars one evening as a school of larger fish chased them ashore. Our dog “Pups” actually, caught one! We had fished all afternoon to no avail and then, the fish just came swimming to us!
- Running with my mom down the beach towards the creek as a pod of killer whales cruising towards the canal approached my brother Greg and Craig Johnson fishing in our 9-foot dinghy. Fortunately, Greg saw them coming! A quick reaction and a couple of pulls on the old, reliable Johnson Sea Horse 3.5 HP engine got them moving at “lightning” speed towards shore.
- Many hours water skiing behind the Johnson’s 17-foot, state of the art, fiberglass boat with a 35 HP Gale engine. One day we had both families loaded on board, heading to the bars off Sandy Neck. Swede Johnson approached what he thought was a sun fish off Barnstable Harbor. To the dismay of all onboard it proved to be a very, large shark that subsequently gave us all a big, toothy smile as it passed under what then, felt like a very, small boat!
- Falling asleep, watching the stars on the old Marine Corp blankets as our parents and their friends partied away by the beach fire. Then, to our surprise, waking up in bed, back at the cottage the next morning.

The Downs family loved Sandwich Downs as a place to relax, enjoy the company of friends and rejuvenate before reentering the frenetic pace of life back in New Jersey. Babs, in particular was a true beach bum. She loved swimming the “Jetties” with Joss Schermerhorn and was an expert at finding beach (“sand”) glass on many a long walk when no one else could. Recently, I was up early, walking our dog down the beach towards Sandy Neck. The morning sun was still low, as was the tide. A cooling breeze blew off the water. I ran into Alicia and Julia Chimento and we continued our walk together. I found a piece of aqua beach glass and we all talked about how much more difficult it was to find well, worn glass these days. Alicia commented on how the aqua colored glass seemed to be the most difficult of all to find. And then, amazingly, before our walk ended, we all had beautiful pieces of aqua glass. I know my Mom was there, watching over us, helping us, sending a message along with my Dad and my brother Greg. Their spirits are alive and well and most definitely here! Below-Greg and Chris.



## Joan Emery - 76 Wing Boulevard West “A Quiet Winter”

I bought my cottage in August of 1975. I lived and worked in Cambridge, but came down for weekends. In 1978 I took a new job with a computer company and was sent to their California headquarters for training. I was to be there for the heart of the winter. My plan was to close the cottage in the fall for the winter and open in late spring. Then my friend Sue asked if she could use the cottage with her boyfriend on the weekends. I had known Sue since second grade as well as sharing an apartment with her during our first year out of college. I trusted her. She promised to pay the utilities and keep the cottage heated. I gave her the key and left for the fall. All must not have been well because by Christmas they had broken up. Evidently the boyfriend had made a key for himself and promptly moved down from Wellesley into the cottage. I did not know any of this at the time. But I began to get odd messages from him—such as—“I have buried a bottle of champagne in the yard for you”. I hoped for the best and decided to ignore the situation since I was so far away. Six weeks later I received a message from Bill and Janet Unger-- call us immediately. They told me that the boyfriend had been hauled away by the police and sent to a ‘drying out ‘place in Vermont. The house was a mess—littered with party debris and dog poop. Meanwhile Bill and Janet filled 18 bags with trash. They found guns in the house and called the police. The guns were then safely locked away. The boyfriend had quite a time, getting himself a puppy, throwing parties, living the high life, but not cleaning up. After hauling away all the empty bottles, rotting party platters and unopened liquor, Bill contacted a rug cleaner and was told “don’t touch the dog mess--I can clean completely”—which he did.

When I returned in April the house smelled strongly of disinfectant, but it was clean. Before I left, I disconnected the telephone and stored it away in the attic space. Of course, the boyfriend found it and had service reconnected. When I heard from the Ungers, I wondered if the heating bill had been paid and what awaited me. I contacted Sandwich Gas to learn that it had not been paid, but they could wait until I returned in April, when the telephone company would send a bill. It was very quiet in the Downs then; few residents stayed for the winter. Most of the homes had been closed in the fall and then reopened on Patriot’s Day. My neighbor Pearl, was around with the Glynns, Hannahs, and Ungers. Meanwhile all sorts of stories about this guy began to circulate—people sending me notes. He was very sociable –not only did he throw numerous parties; he was very much about town. For instance, when he first arrived, he went to the police station to introduce himself as a former counterspy (??) He went to the post office and neighboring stores as well —introducing himself and chatting with anyone who would listen and befriended Walter whose father owned a bait shop.

When I returned to the Downs I began to receive telephone calls daily regarding the boyfriend and his bills. Evidently, he had accumulated debt and some broken hearts. I learned he had a father living in Wellesley and I called him. He was very gracious after I explained my concerns. He asked me to collect the bills and send him a letter with them included. I did so and the father paid me back the \$1000 covering the telephone, heating, electricity and rug cleaning bills. This gesture was very important to me as I only earned \$12,000 a year back then. Everywhere I went that spring---whether the post office, Colonial Market, drug store, gas station—I heard stories of the ‘boyfriend’. According to Pearl, my next-door neighbor, “He made a dull winter more interesting”.

## **Nicole Falciano + Erik Baldovi Family – 56 Wing Blvd West**

Our family has reached the 5-year anniversary since we purchased 56 Wing Blvd West (Three Peas and a Cod cottage) and moved in with our triplets, Lenora, Carina and Valentina and younger fourth daughter, Nicolina. When we first arrived, they were 5 years old and the little one had just turned 3. It has been such a wonderful adventure watching them grow up with a love for our special beach and develop lifelong friendships in the neighborhood.

Some of our fondest memories from the past half decade include finding a baby starfish on our beach, discovering a 300 pound Ocean sunfish or Mola mola fish that washed ashore, watching the meteor showers at 1am in the back yard last summer, seeing the Northern Lights three times in the past couple of years, expanding our sea glass collection with hundreds of pieces, discovering several dozen purple amethysts, surviving a full cottage remodel, and being gifted a photo of our cottage from when it was built in 1950.

This past year, we were honored when a family friend, Elisabeth, crown princess of Belgium, came to stay at the cottage (along with her Belgian Secret Police detail of course). She enjoyed having a real Cape Cod experience. I wonder if this was the first time a European Royal has visited Sandwich Downs? The girls thought it was quite funny she used their princess beach towel on the beach. When she is Queen in a few years, we will be able to say a reigning monarch once enjoyed our special beach.

We hope the traditions that we all have enjoyed will continue on for many years. Our family always looks forward to the annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade, admiring the fireworks on the beach, summer sunsets that align with low tide sandbars, annual cookouts with various neighbors, boat rides and treasure hunting at the tide lines after big storms.

The girls will surely remember kicking the soccer ball under red and orange sunsets, kayaking up to the Creek, doing gymnastics cartwheels down the beach with friends from the neighborhood, jumping into neighbor's pools, chasing bunnies in the yard and collecting raspberries from the garden.

We are grateful to have wonderful neighbors on all sides who have shared decades of stories, garden vegetables and plants and also generous and welcoming neighbors throughout Sandwich Downs who have passed along so many children's toys including a vintage dollhouse. We are blessed to have made countless friends that are very much part of our memories already, many with children the same age.



Valentina Baldovi and Omar El Zein



Nicolina, Nicole, Carina, Erik, Lenora, and Valentina



Noora El Zein, Carina, Valentina, and Nicolina

## **Ferris Family - 45 Beachway Road**

Moe and the Ferris family became acquainted with Sandwich Downs in 1980 and were instantly awed by the location. Our first rental property (Bayberry Rentals) was the site of the current Mehta home on Bemis Road which had a spectacular view of the bay. We rented there for five years.

In 1986 we received a tip that the 'little brick house' at 43 Beachway was for sale. We purchased it from Dante Marcoldi, a bricklayer from Needam MA. All of his bricks were from the 'Old Sandwich Glass Works' buildings. He was a magician with bricks! The family added a new room for comfort and a septic system. In 1993 after seven enjoyable years at what we called 'The Little Chipmunk', we bought a lot directly across the street from Tom Johnson's mom. The construction of our new home began in February 1993 and was finished in July of that same summer. It was a very special and pleasing construction project done by Bill Ricci, a private and sincere person.

Since 1996 many neighborhood events have taken place at 45 Beachway such as a 'Kiddies Field Day' with Skip Reynolds and myself officiating 20 plus kiddies. I also organized the MFI Golf Tournament from 1999-2018 and we enjoyed many fun Sandwich Downs block parties from 2010-2015.

For the past 39 years we have experienced many happy and pleasant days in Sandwich Downs.

The world should have more neighborhoods such as this. Our many memories have been etched in our minds and God willing many more will come.

## Hartwell Family - 71 Wing Boulevard West

The Hartwell family has been in residence since 1932, when a lot at 65 Wing Blvd West (WBW) was purchased by Alice Bemis (cousin) for Gifford and Maybelle Hartwell for \$100. In 1933 Gifford obtained additional lots from 61 to 69 in exchange for surveying services done for Samuel D. Hannah. Between 1934-1948 three cottages were built from recycled lumber from a rabbit farm and coal shed to establish 'Hartwell Acres'. We always joked that the road should be named Hartwell Road because at the time their cottages were the only ones on the road! In 1957 David and Nina Hartwell had a prefab cottage and a one room office erected at 75 and 73 WBW. Two of these structures still exist at 65 and 73 WBW as of 2023. More recently in 2001, Frank and Donna had a cottage built on 71 WBW. They are so pleased to enjoy year-round family time with their friends and family, including six grandchildren who represent the 6<sup>th</sup> Hartwell generation on the property!

Sandwich Downs has always been a special place for the Hartwell family. Frank has been coming each year since 1948. He fondly remembers helping lay the foundation for their cottage when there was a clear view of Scorton Creek and the canal from their property. This magical place will always be an enjoyable place for friends to enjoy waterskiing, rowing on the bay, spearfishing, fishing, hiking, and so much more, especially in the summertime.

The beach has always provided relaxation with family gatherings, walks, and beachcombing for special finds. Some of our treasures include an original wood decoy, numerous wood lobster pots/buoys, sea glass, 'angel wing' shells and special stones. We cherish the times when family gather to enjoy being together, maintaining traditions, and soaking up all the natural beauty of Cape Cod. We hope and pray there will be many more special times together in the future.

The neighborhood has changed in many ways, including new homes and families moving in, but the friendly, historic and charming atmosphere has not changed. As we celebrate 100 years of history...may it continue to be so.

"Let the sea and everything in it shout His praise! Let the earth and all living things join in." — Psalm 98:7



c1950 WBW Hartwell Acres from 60 WBW



2022 - The 6<sup>th</sup> Hartwell generation children: Luke, Carter, Ella, Klara, Hannah, Sofia with Frank and Donna.

## Hartwell Family - 73 Wing Boulevard West



Our dad, Allan, spent summers at Sandwich Downs since before the cottage at 73 (*left*) was built by his parents, David and Nina Hartwell, in 1957. Dad spoke fondly of helping to dig for the cottage foundation as a 12-year-old, and to build the cottage itself. He also fondly remembered time with the Bemis side of our family, who built the original waterfront cottages on Bemis Road. Allan married Janice in the 1970's, and as our family grew, we were able to vacation at both 73 and 71 cottages for a couple of weeks each summer, thanks to our grandparents, typically with one long weekend overlapping with our cousins, Matt and Heather. We recall many fun beach days and BBQs with the extended Hartwell family, including hammock time and competitive badminton in the yard. Although we don't currently reside on the Cape, with 90+ years of family history in Sandwich Downs, it is definitely in our blood.

Our dad was an avid photographer, and became a geologist and oceanographer, in part due to his time in Sandwich Downs. Allan spoke of clam-digging, long walks to the creek, even waterskiing behind an 18-horsepower Johnson where they had to bounce one foot off the sandbars to help the boat get up enough speed. Our mom loved fishing, picking blueberries, and all the natural beauty of this unique place.

Together (*right*) we went fishing, swimming, snorkeling, and sailing on the open ocean in the Sea Witch. We sky-hunted for satellites under very dark night skies. We also fondly recall floating, jumping on, and rolling each other down the beach in old truck innertubes, searching for perfect skipping stones, Uncle Frank's oversized red sweatshirts used as improvised wetsuits, Grandma's long swims up and down the beach, and the time Uncle Giff swamped the rowboat, Surfer Bird and us cousins all had to swim to shore.

As we turn toward the future, we look forward to more beach time and togetherness with our extended family, friends-made-family, and our newest friends in Sandwich Downs. May every resident of this magical space and their guests feel welcome, regardless of their histories here, and may our shared spirit be kind.



4 Hartwell Generations (1977)

**Maybelle Hartwell (Great Gramma) and her sons**

**David** with his wife, Nina, and their sons:

**Allan**, with his wife, Janice and children Douglas/Kimberly

**Frank** with his wife, Donna and children, Matthew/Heather

**Gifford Jr.** with his wife, Ginny and their children-Joan and Joyce with her husband, Larry and their first-born child-Janee

*Douglas and Kimberly Hartwell, with love and gratitude to those who came before, and heartfelt wishes to those who will follow.*

## Hendy Family - 59 Beachway

Back in the 1930s, while vacationing in Eastham, MA, my grandparents, William R. Hendy Sr. and Irene, along with their children, Ralph Hendy, William Hendy, and Marilyn Boyson, drove down the main road, which is now called 6A, and saw a sign that said “Land for Sale.” They followed a dirt road and discovered what would become our family’s future home at 59 Beachway Road. They bought the land and, eventually, an old Army barracks to start with. Years later, they added on a living room, kitchen, bedrooms, and a garage. When they first purchased the land, they often mentioned how you could stand in the backyard and see the canal.

My grandfather retired from the City of Medford and worked with the Hannahs, building and maintaining the roads in Sandwich Downs. My grandparents loved it here and lived here year-round. My Uncle Ralph built a home at 22 Beachway and lived there for years until his death, and my Uncle Bill and Auntie Judy built homes across the street from our family home.

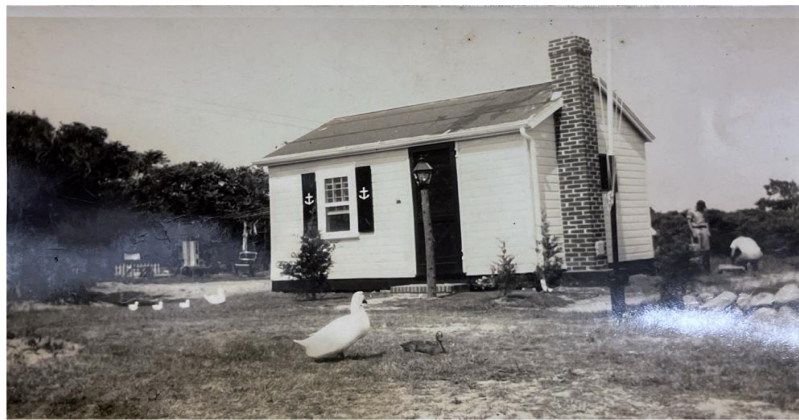
My grandfather loved his yard. He always had beautiful flowers and vegetable gardens, and he created so many fun things for us to do. You always knew you had reached our road when you came upon the big row of mailboxes at the entrance—and, of course, my grandfather had to have the biggest one. I remember visiting my grandparents as a little girl with my Uncle Ralph, and the bus from Boston would drive all the way down to our front door to drop us off. Simple times.

My brothers, Steve Boyson and Scott Boyson, and I, Kim Bertazzoni, were so lucky to spend our summers here—from the last day of school until Labor Day—with our cousins Billy Hendy, Judy Hendy, John Hendy, and Tom Hendy, who still lives here full-time on the land where my Auntie Julie lived for years. I remember, as a child, when the telephone would ring we would wait to hear how many rings, since we were on a party line. One ring meant it was ours; two rings meant it was for a neighbor. We had many cookouts and backyard parties while playing our golf tournaments on the course my grandfather built for everyone to enjoy. There were so many great memories at the beach—jumping off the huge sand dunes and enjoying the annual beach party that always ended with a big shaving cream fight. Years ago, my brother Steve brought fireworks to the beach on the Fourth of July and set them off, while my mother worried that us kids might get hurt. It’s wonderful to see the fireworks display continued every year at the beach, and to see the new Fourth of July parade that we all would have loved when we were younger.

My son, Nick Bertazzoni, and my daughter, Danielle Bertazzoni, along with my niece, Crystal Boyson, my nephew, Cody Boyson, and my great-niece, Aleah, continued the tradition of spending summers here and making great memories with family. Nick worked down here for a few years and was able to live here full-time. The house is still very much the same as it was years ago, and with Nick’s help in maintaining it every year, it remains our family’s piece of paradise—one we are lucky enough to have called home for all these years. Kim Bertazzoni



William R. Hendy Sr., Irene Hendy, Ralph Hendy, Marilyn Hendy, William R. Hendy Jr., 1944



59 Beachway Road Original house 1947



William R. Hendy Sr.'s Massachusetts Maritime Academy Doctorate Graduation, 1986

## Joy and Pete Hastings - 54 Beachway Road

In 1980 Pete's mom, Dorothy, was retiring and wanted a place near her family and by the water...luckily, through friends, a cottage was found and purchased from Janice and Steve Hannah at #37 Wing West in Sandwich Downs. Dot lived there for 27 years and became grandmother of the Downs caring for the Hannah boys and Julie and Jessie Sears—they would come to #37 after school for snacks and homework time. Dot also really enjoyed the beach and could often be found walking. At the time, there were only about 75 cottages/houses so it was easy to meet and get to know the people. Most residences were part time—mainly in the summer. Dot also became involved with the association and serviced in many areas as her contribution. Because Pete had always wanted a camp in the woods, one was built in 1970 in Smithfield Maine (near Waterville) on 160 acres. We loved skiing and Sugarloaf Mountain was less than an hour. We had friends and family visit very often—whether we were there or not!!! It was sold to friends in 2015---the care and responsibility became a bit overwhelming. To appease Joy and her wish for the ocean, in 1987 Joan Emery's cottage at #76 Beachway West was purchased—Joan was having Steve Hannah build her a house on Beachway East. My brother Bill and Pete added an outdoor screened porch to the cottage at #76. In 1997 Pete retired (I had retired four years earlier) and we decided to move from Hartford and buy land at the Downs from Signe Johnson on Beachway Road. #76 Beachway West was sold to Steve Schultz. Steve worked with Pete in Hartford and would come to the cottage off and on to go sailing. Meg and Steve were married in 1995 and she was just as delighted with the place. Pete knew Meg from the insurance business, so old friends were getting together. Steve and Meg left Norwalk, CT and moved here permanently in June of 2007. Our house on Beachway Road was built by Steve Hannah and completed in the fall of 1997, a screened in porch had already been added!! Shortly after moving in, Pete came to the house with a German shepherd puppy in a Heineken beer box!! How good could it get? We really love Sandwich Downs and quickly made it a point to get to know all the neighbors. At the time there were still only 70-75 cottages, and today in 2024 there are about 125. Also, many of the cottages have been rebuilt or added on to make permanent homes. It no longer can be called *'That fish shack place'*. Both Pete and I became involved with the responsibility of keeping the Downs in perfectly working order. We love this place and plan to be here a very long time. Pete was 80 in 2018 and passed away in 2025.



Pete's 80th birthday

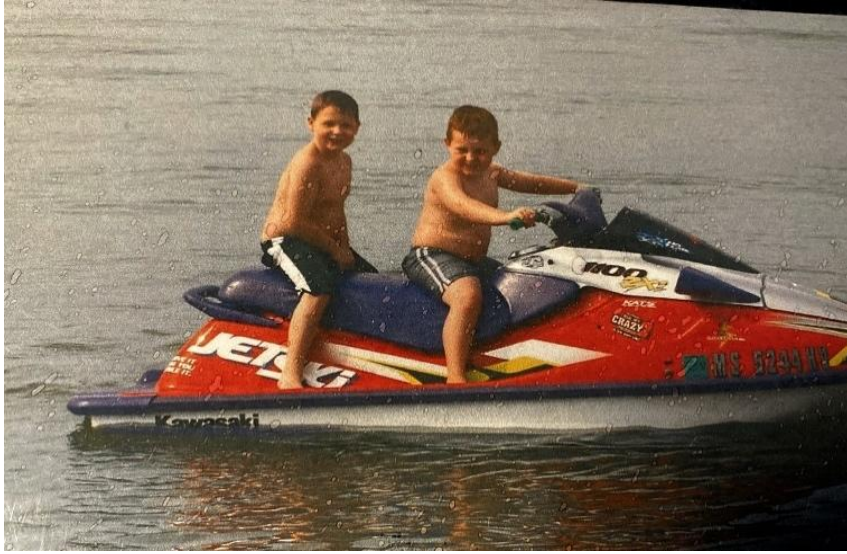
*Photomyne*

## Johnson Family - 58 Wing Boulevard West

It was in August of 1952 when the Johnson family began their event-filled time in Sandwich Downs. After renting from George Hay at #43 Wing Boulevard West, the entire family, along with our cat, Mittens settled into our small house at 58 Wing Boulevard West. Mittens immediately ran away but the family thrived and began logging many wonderful experiences, including:

- Lived initially on a dirt road with no homes further up the road
- Pumped our own water in the kitchen and buried our trash out back
- Lived in a cottage, which was one big room with a curtain
- Played baseball every day with the Perrys and Dodds in the side yard
- Weathered hurricane Carol in 1954 with my grandparents
- Enjoyed a perfect view of the Sagamore Bridge and beyond to Provincetown from the porch
- Observed many birds including abundant quail and pheasant
- Picked grapes and beach plums to make excellent jelly in the fall
- Searched through the old artillery range at Carleton Shores for treasures
- Picked blueberries near a house in Scorton Shores called the 'witch tower' until a man with shotgun chased us away
- Spent days on the beach, even able to drive onto the beach from Beachway West
- Shocked to see the beach patrol from Sandy Neck drive by our beach
- Scared by low flying radar planes at night, which would shake the entire house
- Looked forward to the Cushman bakery truck with delicious baked goods in the neighborhood
- Remembered the summers as the best, including fun times with friends waterskiing, dancing at parties and building giant fires on the beach
- Fortunate to have sons Jay and Chris spend many summers here and continue to do so-Loved the big sand bars with family and long walks to the creek-Surprised by a plane which flew over once to warn us to stay out of the water for fear of shark
- Visited the game farm near the creek, the fish hatchery downtown and the huge parade for the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sandwich
- Smelled the stink once when squid covered the beach
- Surprised once when blue fish covered the beach and people used baskets to gather them up
- Scared when a plane crashed into the bay...the police were all over the beach asking for information... a fishing boat (Tigger Two) rescued the pilot...and finally the plane was found (See Globe clipping below, 1991)
- Survived Hurricane Bob in 1991 with lots of trees and branches down, including a big tree which blocked Wing Boulevard for a few days
- Loved the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Beach parties, including tug of wars, shaving cream wars, and greased watermelon races
- Savored special family time with our two grandchildren, Matt and Chris
- Cleaned houses for the Hannah sisters and others and babysat for many of our neighbors.
- Enjoyed a golf cart to get around and a jet ski which our son even used to rescue a fisherman
- Surprised one year when police swarmed across the street to arrest a renter on an out of state warrant

These are just a few of the unlimited memories the Johnson family has had over the last 70+ years here in Sandwich Downs. How blessed we are to have these wonderful memories with many friends, neighbors and acquaintances. We look forward to many more.



Grandsons-Christopher (front) and Matthew.



Mom-Ardra, sister-Marcia, son-Jay, father-James, son-Christopher

## Larkin Family - 87 Wing Boulevard West

In 1989, Alicia and I decided it was time to look for a summer home on Cape Cod. We were living in NJ at the time, but I had a business trip to Boston in April and stayed over to a Saturday to look around for a summer place. Our preference at the time was the sound side as we had vacationed in West Harwich a number of times. I looked at several cottages in that area, including two that we had rented that were then for sale. So, since I had some extra time before flying home, drove along 6A, entered Sandwich from the east and stopped at the realty office at the end of Wing Blvd. I told the realtor my price range, she directed me to 87, but told me the house was estimated in my range but not for sale. It was exactly what Alicia and I had in mind: distance to beach, size, and yard.

I left a note in the door to the owner telling him if he wanted to sell the cottage that we would be interested in buying it. We did not hear from the owner, Richard Hall, until December when we received a card from him along with a note telling us about the cottage and adding that it was not for sale. The following Christmas, Alicia suggested we send a card back to him asking him if he would sell it to us. We got together and made an offer that he accepted and we bought it on Valentines Day of 1990 - I called Alicia from O'Malley's pay phone and told her she was getting something better than roses.

We moved in that May and from that time forward spent as much time as we could at Sandwich Downs. At the end of the century, I took an early retirement, sold our NJ home, moved into the cottage while we put an addition on the cottage to make it a permanent home. It was the best decision we could have ever made. What a great neighborhood and what great neighbors! We made new friendships that continue to this day. And while the landscape of SDA has changed and some neighbors have moved or passed on, we still find it to be the best place we could be and hope to stay here for years to come.



Paul and Alicia with 2 grandchildren Ethan and Faith



87 Wing Blvd West - Paul and Alicia Larkin

## Jeanne Lesperance - 43 Beachway

I ended up in Sandwich Downs in the fall of 2001 because I was really noseey. While working for a CPA firm in Chestnut Hill, I prepared tax returns for a client who had a huge Sandwich property tax bill. Curiosity set in, and Frank and I ended up in a neighboring association looking at a very nice oceanfront vacation home. Returning to 6A, we saw a yard sale sign and spent 50 cents on Wing Blvd. East. The neighborhood was immediately appealing; we drove around, and sure enough there was a For Sale sign in front of a small brick cottage. I had been looking for a 2<sup>nd</sup> home for several months along both Cape coasts.

The realtor accommodated my work schedule, and I purchased #43 via fax on 4/17/2002, from Florida, where I was helping my dad after my mom passed. Dante Marcoaldi, a mason from Needham, built the brick cottage in 1940, or 1944, after purchasing a single corner lot from Samuel D. Hannah. I later learned that he got permission from the Board of Selectmen to haul away bricks from the abandoned Sandwich Glass Works (1825-1888) on Factory Street. His wife Martha hated her weekend job of cleaning the bricks. He built a nice central fieldstone fireplace inside, as well as the stone wall out front. He and Skid Schermerhorn built a few fireplaces in the Downs. Dante later bought another single lot on Wing Blvd. West. There were marital problems, then a divorce; Martha got the brick cottage as well as a new hubbie. The granddaughters have stopped by, giving me firsthand accounts and some pictures. Moe and Pat Ferris were the 4<sup>th</sup> owners, and I'm the 6<sup>th</sup>. In 2021, I completed renovating the original cottage, added on, later sold Pinehills, became a permanent Sandwich Downs resident and never looked back.



Original brick cottage at 43 Beachway Road on the left

## **Milton - Fisher Family (1971 - Present) – 8 & 10 Beachway**

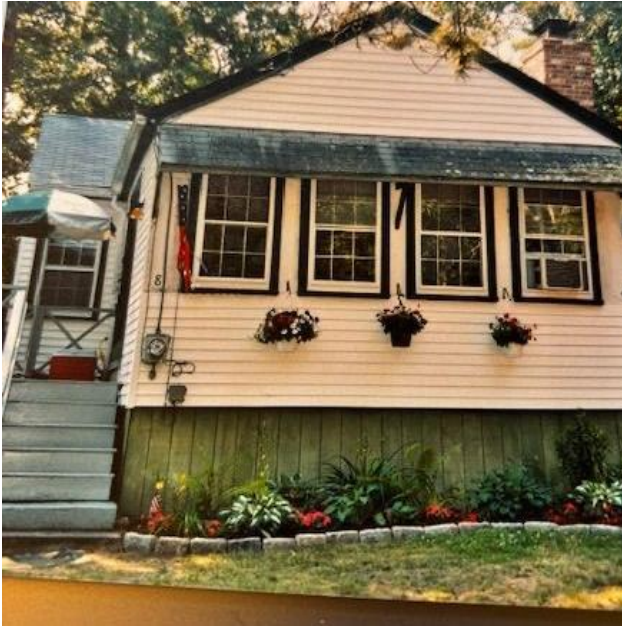
Time is a funny; when you're young, you're in a hurry to get to the next place, to meet new people, to reach your next goal. But time in Sandwich Downs has always been different: slower, more chill, the looking back as wonderful as the looking forward.

It was 54 years ago that our parents, Betty and Bernie, along with our grandparents, Bill and Anne Milton, bought 8 & 10 Beachway, where Lisa (14), Tracie (12), and Bruce (9) grew up. The cottages were built by a German man, Mr. Bennett. #8 was the sturdier cottage with what creature comforts were common in the mid-1950s and #10 was for the "kids," a cottage more like a camp with a one-foot crawl space and exposed 2x4s. The cottages remain mostly original on the outside, but with major interior renovations. Another welcome change has been the addition of #6 to our family compound.

In the early years Mom ran the house and kept tabs on us until Dad arrived for the weekend. We weren't hard to keep track of – we never left the Downs. The beach was our playground with the Schermerhorns, Hannahs, Johnsons, Cooks, Crowells, Youngs, Kellys, Phillips, Niensens, and Blackburns. As we grew older, some of the faces changed but the fun never did. We learned independence: boating, fishing, and lobstering on the Bay. Dad had the temerity to build a 10' sailboat that spent as much time on the beach as in the water. We rode Brian Cook's Suzuki 250 dirt bike on the beach. We drank rot gut at beach fires (Boones Farm Apple Wine and Sloe Gin with 7-up). We sang along with anyone who brought a guitar. Betty and Bernie welcomed all our friends. The cottages were small so it wasn't unusual to find kids sleeping on the porch floor! Dad regaled friends with stories of the Navy, his days in the secret service and his duties and adventures on the southern border. Mom relentlessly pulled poison ivy and cut back briars. Bruce worked building houses with Jeff and Stephen "Pip" Hannah, Lisa waitressed at the Mill Hill Club and I served coffee and pancakes on the late shift at the IHOP in Hyannis. These were our early forays into adulthood. Lisa got married and moved into a lovely home on Hyannis harbor. Bruce married and spent summers with his young family in Falmouth with his wife Nancy's family. I've always spent summers in the Downs: it is the only summer home my son, Griffin, has ever known.

No matter the inevitable changes, our Sandwich Downs cottages are part of the fabric of our lives and lay claim to our hearts. To Lexa (35), Zach (25), Lilah (24) and Griffin (24), it is now your turn to welcome family and friends to our little bit of paradise.

With love and best wishes for the next generations, Tracie Milton (May) Fisher



10 Beachway  
Ready for summer



Griffin age 7  
Ready for summer games in 2009



Lilah (7), Griffin (6) and Zach (8) in 2008

## Murray Family - 21 Wing Boulevard West

My parents bought their house at 87 Wing Blvd. West when I was 16 years old. It was a tiny cottage back in the 80's and not winterized. As a high school student and then college student in Pennsylvania, I had little interest in spending the summer on Cape Cod and preferred to stay in New Jersey for work during the summers (out of the watchful eye of Paul and Alicia!).

After I graduated from college, I began to spend more of my summer in the Downs. I was teaching fourth grade at that point and had many weeks of summer to spend at the little cottage. Tim asked me to marry him in 1994 and we started planning our wedding. We ended up choosing to get married on the Cape and my parents hosted our wedding brunch at the cottage.

We had our first baby, Ethan, in 2000. That was the year Paul and Alicia finished the addition to the cottage. We spent almost the whole summer on the beach from his birth until, well, now! Faith came along in 2003 and by 2006 the Murrays moved to Bahrain.

Every June we would rush back to America and the little cottage at 87. Coming to the Downs was what kept Ethan and Faith anchored to the United States. They played freely, met lifelong friends and spent every summer running around the neighborhood and precious time with grandparents and family. The childhood that my children were able to have as a result of living in this community is not only rare, but just precious. These kids were safe and could be outdoors all the time. They played whiffle ball, running bases, kick the can, volleyball, and they even made up several creative outdoor games. They had fires on the beach, camp outs under the stars, and amassed amazing collections of sea glass. They made friends that will be lifelong friends, forever friends. Watching my children grow up without screens and with this freedom was a gift that I will never be able to repay to my mom and dad who let us stay in their cottage every summer for 10 years while we lived overseas. I am eternally grateful that they opened their home to my family every summer.

I had been pestering Tim for our own spot in the Downs for a couple of years as Ethan and Faith were moving into adolescence and the cottage was getting a little cramped. The year before we left Bahrain, I received an email from my dad that 21 was coming up for sale. We immediately contacted the owners. On February 14 Tim gave me the one and only valentine he has ever given me...my house in Sandwich Downs.

We moved in to 21 for our first summer in 2015 and since owning the home, have made several changes to the interior and exterior. The finished basement has been both a blessing and a curse...as the teenage years might have caused some, er, consternation and noise and mayhem in the hood.

Along with having my family in the neighborhood, we have wonderful neighbors (some that I have known since I was a teenager). We have made lifelong friends and we continue to just love that when we walk around this special place, we stop to say hello to everyone we encounter. Memories continue to be made in this special place. May we each remember what it is to be a good neighbor as we reflect on how this amazing neighborhood has impacted our families.



Tim and Shana Murray



Murray Residence - 21 Wing Boulevard West

## **Barbara and Dave Myers - 31 Wing Boulevard West Just Listen - It's the Universe!**

Vacationing on Cape Cod in the summer has been regular part of my life. I am a full-time resident in Sandwich Downs with my husband Dave, and our overly exuberant yellow lab named Lucy.

The truth is that we didn't get here on purpose; we didn't set a goal or make a plan. In fact, we had never even talked about it. Without my permission or knowledge, it seemed the universe had a plan and somehow, over the course of several weeks, led us here. We had not decided to live here, but we did embrace the choices that were being put in front of us.

In April of 2015 we bought a small condo in the same town we were living in. On June 5<sup>th</sup> we put our house in NH on the market, and it was taking longer than expected. The company that I had worked for most of my adult life was being sold and that meant it was the perfect time to retire and to start planning for our next chapter.

The first week of October 2015, for no reason at all, and on a whim, we took a drive to the Cape where we suddenly found ourselves looking at houses with sales signs. We drove around looking for houses that were for sale from Wellfleet all the way to Orleans. It only took a couple of hours for reality to sink in. Every house that we liked met the stringent standards of my furniture maker/builder husband while being close to a beach.

For two people not planning to move to Cape Cod, our drive home was very somber as we digested the sting of finding nothing. What little conversation took place was badly disguised as proof that we would never consider moving to Cape Cod, while at the same time having the distinct tone of disappointment. The dreams we did not have were crushed. In early October, we started talking about doing a summer rental and decided on finding a two-week rental. I took on the task of finding one. I didn't make a list of rental properties, or check a million websites, or even contact a rental realtor. I looked at one rental advertisement and I made one phone call. The rental was in East Sandwich, which was an area that we hadn't even considered as an option. I didn't know it then but making that call would change our lives in so many ways. This is where the magic started. I called the number and was introduced to the friendly and engaging voice of Janice Hannah. I didn't know her, and she didn't know me, but we spent 45 minutes on the phone as if we were old friends. Our conversation was light and easy, and I felt like we had been friends forever. After talking for some time Janice told me she had two sons who had land in East Sandwich, one in her neighborhood and one in a nearby neighborhood she laughingly described as fancier. We both agreed that we wouldn't be interested in "fancier." She explained that it wasn't for sale, but her son Jamie would be putting it on the market in the spring. She provided his name and number and said it wouldn't hurt to call him. We called him and drove down within a couple of days to see the lot, and without a word, or any hesitation, we looked at each other and agreed to buy the lot. After shaking hands on the deal, we drove home, both wondering what we were

thinking, how we would pay for it, and most importantly, where we would work and live while the house was being built. Now, we were worried. It didn't end there, within just a few days of that call, we got the word that there was an offer on our house! It seemed that the course was set; we were moving to Cape Cod.

We visited the neighborhood a couple of times before we closed and each time, I had the feeling that somehow, I knew it. The next time I went through the neighborhood, I looked at it with a more detailed eye; the beach, the homes, the market at the end of the street and finally realized that I had been there many times before. My earliest recollection was from 1997 or 1998 from a summer stay in a blue house that had white trim and a white deck and was close to the beach. A more recent memory over several years with the last in 2016, was at a small white cottage with a white picket fence, and beautiful flowers. I was not the renter; it was a friend that I have had since third grade in Millis, Massachusetts; we were always invited to come down for a few days. She remembered coming here with the Holden Family in the 60s when they would bring their horses here and ride them on the beach.

We are living in a home that I never dreamt about and in a beautiful community that brings back feelings of afternoons from an earlier time. We met some extraordinary people and enjoy their friendships whenever possible. Our amazing experience happened because of a series of unexpected and incredible events and with the simple, yet wonderful actions of some very special people. Our thankfulness and gratitude are infinite. As if there needed to be icing on the cake, our closing was one of a kind and something never to be forgotten. As I was signing documents, I held Jamie and Kelley Hannah's newborn baby in my arms. The sweetest end to an amazing journey.

My husband Dave started building in May and we moved into our new home in Sandwich Downs just in time to celebrate the New Year of 2017. We call this time, this place, this house, our life here Chapter 3 and we can't wait to see what else will be written here in Sandwich Downs.



## **Peltz Family - 98 Wing Boulevard East**

The Peltz family became members of the Sandwich Downs community when they bought Irene Lembo's cottage in 2009 at 100 Wing Blvd East. They loved the proximity to the water, the way the cottage was slightly hidden from the parking area with native growth, birds, a small shed, and buoys lining the fence separating Weiss's property and hers. Irene loved this cottage, and we've been told spent her time painting, fishing and being with her women friends on the beach at 3 pm summer afternoons. We never knew Irene, but her legacy is a positive presence on this property.

Peter Peltz grew up in Sandwich in the 50s and 60s and in the 1970s moved with his wife Cacky to Vermont and raised two children, Aysha and Alex who still reside in Vermont with their children. After the death of his parents, Peter and his sister, Shawnee, sold the home on Main Street in Sandwich but sought a connection to the Cape. When Irene's property came on the market, they knew this would be a wonderful Cape retreat and they had good friends in Sandwich Downs, Nancy and Rick Serodio. Rick and Peter went to the H.T. Wing Elementary School together in the 50s and they remained friends until their passing: Peter in 2022 and Rick in 2025.

Peter, Cacky, children, and grandchildren began coming to the Cape regularly after purchasing the cottage and their son Alex and his wife, Ana were married on the Sandwich Downs beach. After years of squeezing into Irene's small cottage, dinners under a tent on the lawn and tender care of the old septic system...the termites won and Peter and local contractor, Bob Iodonisi razed the cottage. They built a new home closer to the parking lot with room for the whole family to gather easily.

The Sandwich Downs community is just a few hundred feet down the road from the Bird Barn where Peter's father, Peter Peltz Sr., carved birds for nearly 50 years. Peter Sr., wife Betsy, and their two children, Peter and Shawnee, moved to Sandwich in 1952. Peter Sr. spent a few years doing various jobs on the Cape but in 1958; while chaperoning his son's boy scout trip, he had a conversation with Edwin/Brud Hannah about his desire to open a place to sell his birds. The next day the Hannahs agreed to sell Peter Sr. a piece of their property along 6A in sight of the Scorton Creek Marsh. Peter found a weathered barn for sale in West Falmouth and had local contractor, Burt Rose, move the building to this property in 1953. The original Bird Barn still sits in this same location and continues to be a place to make and sell art. It is now owned by a local artist who uses it as his studio and shop.

Peter (junior) passed away in 2022, not long after his last family vacation on the cape. He loved and cherished his Sandwich roots often regaling the family with stories from his youth. Cacky, his children and grandchildren continue to gather yearly for two weeks around the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, and during the fall/winter and spring; they rent their home weekly during the peak summer season.



Bird Barn c1960s



Peter Peltz Sn. Bird carvings c1970s



Peltz family - Lylia, Ana, Alex, Calder, Cacky, Peter, Todd, Maeve, Aylsha, Willi

## Reynolds Family - 68 Wing Boulevard West

I was first introduced to Sandwich Downs in early spring of 1985. My best friend from high school, Paul Guthrie and his wife Nancy, bought a renovated cottage at 9 The Mall. I represented them in their purchase. The closing was held in Mashpee, and after signing off on all the paper work, Paul asked me to go with him and Nancy to see their new vacation home. I had never been to the bay side of the Cape. The cottage was at the end of a country-like, rustic road, a prototypical Cape. From the deck at the back door, the view of the bay was amazing, less than a football field away. We walked the short distance to the beach. The high, deep blue cloudless late March sky and the shimmering, crystal-clear water was mesmerizing. I was a fish out of water in my business suit, necktie, and wing tips. I could not resist kicking off my shoes, rolling up my pant legs, and wading up to my knees. Now, I was a fish in the water, caught up hook, line and sinker, and wanting nothing more than to return with my wife Kathie, to show her this magical place.

We visited Paul and Nancy that summer, and Kathie was as enamored of Sandwich Downs as I. We rented the cottage for two weeks in July for several summers, always keeping an eye out for a property in Sandwich Downs to come on the market. In August of 1993, a broker whom we had consulted to help in our search called to tell us that he “may” have something of interest. The owners of 68 Wing Blvd. West were planning to build a home in Truro. The property was not officially listed, but with the right offer, (although not listed, they did have a set, firm price in mind), a deal could be made. We made four offers, bumping up the price with each. Rejected all! Frustrated, we gave up until a late October afternoon when I became emboldened (driven) and called the agent to tell him that we would offer full asking price.... But I needed a concession. The sellers would have to leave the washer, dryer and refrigerator. We drove a hard bargain for these over 15-year-old appliances! Our offer was finally accepted and we passed papers in December 1993.

During our first winter, in February 1994, my parents came to see our purchase. It was the coldest winter on record, as attested by the six-foot-tall ice floes on our Sandwich Downs beach (picture attached).

Our three children, Mark, Chris, and Kate, enjoyed spending summers in Sandwich Downs. While in college, they had summer jobs on the Cape. All three still love coming to this special place. In February, 2021, Kate and her husband Paul purchased the wooded lot next to us and built their own home.

Many more winters and summers later, in July 2015, Kathie and I retired to our newly renovated house as our permanent residence. Sandwich Downs is a unique and beautiful place, shared with our children, grandchildren and friends, a small piece of tranquility and calm. There is no grander feeling than that of crossing over the Sagamore Bridge, driving on to Route 6A, over Scorton Creek, and turning left onto Wing Blvd., and on to our home on 68 Wing Blvd. West. Skip and (Kathie) Reynolds.



68 Wing Boulevard West all decked out for 4<sup>th</sup> of July



Jim Reynolds (Skip's father), Mark and Chris - Beach Iceberg - Feb 1994

## **Schermerhorn Family – 89 & 16 Wing Boulevard West**

The Skid, Jocelyn, Bud (age 5), and Rick (age 4) Schermerhorns arrived in Sandwich Downs in 1955 as the new owners of 89 WBW. The cottage had an ocean view enjoyed at the kitchen table picture window. Ma Bell Telephone was a six-member party line with a four digit/letter phone number. The ring sounded four short times. Eavesdropping did occur, but was frowned upon by Skid and Jos. Named “Number 4,” the cottage was the fourth of six built by former owner Edwin/Brud Hannah. Skid and Jos became lifelong friends with Brud and his wife Margery. Hope (March 1957) and Tom (March 1960) came along to complete the family.

The Schermerhorns became weekend warriors in the Fall and Spring. On Fridays, Skid was picked up in Boston after work. He would announce the sighting of the Sagamore Bridge (from Rt. 3A) by stating that we would have to go over the top of the bridge to get to the Cape. When he was away, Jos had no car and had to rely solely on careful planning for food and necessities on the weeks that Skid worked. Emergencies were not allowed. Sandwich Police came through rarely and the volunteer fire department had to come from downtown Sandwich. The Dainty Maid Ice Cream man and Gibbs Rubbish (Dottie Gibbs was a friend) were frequent visitors to the Downs.

The Schermerhorns summered in Sandwich Downs leaving school in June and returning to Wellesley in September for the new school year. Jos held down the fort during the first part of the summers as Skid would vacation the month of August. She spent many hours on the beach. She gave swimming lessons to a number of locals. Jos hated inflatable rafts as the prevailing Southwesterlies would blow the passengers out to sea. Her warnings were frequent and forceful. Skid took great pride in the cottage. He built a bedroom and then an apartment connected by a breezeway. The children (like dogs did back then) ran free in the Downs and on the beach. Skid and Jos held suppers together in the evening: the children were never late or absent. The children worked at summer jobs locally: Cannings, Colonial Market, Sandy Neck Grill, Horseless Carriage.

Skid and Jos loved the neighborhood. They became very involved with other owners and were integral in helping to create the Sandwich Downs Association. The By-Laws and operation of that organization are testimony to their involvement over the years. He was president, vice president, roads chair and director; she held down the treasurer’s slot and their children went on the hold positions for the decades that followed.

The Schermerhorns loved the Downs. Growing up here created and developed the freedom that made the family independent and self-assured. These days, the families of Bud, Rick, Hope and Tom have been augmented by wives and husbands, grandchildren and great grandchildren (these were called bonus babies) who live in the Downs and frequent the beach. Finally, these relatives have a lifetime of love for Sandwich Downs and this is demonstrated most recently by the efforts of Melanie (Schermerhorn) Lehman who created the Annual Fourth of July Parade for Children of All Ages. We feel blessed to call Sandwich Downs our home.



Grandmother Muzzy, Tom, Hope, Skid, Rick and Bud Schermerhorn -1965



Schermerhorn Family with dog, Lancelot at 89 Wing Blvd. West c1950s

And a word from a next generation of Schermerhorns...

Back in the 1950s, when our grandparents (Jos and Skid Schermerhorn) bought 89 Wing Blvd. West, they had no idea of the impact it would have on generations to come. As a family of four that quickly grew to a family of six, this vacation spot came to mean so much more to all of us. My grandparents raised four children in Wellesley and spent every summer here in the Downs. This sparked a love for the ocean, the beach, and everything in between for our entire family.

My two sisters and I cherish our childhood memories here spending the summers enjoying the beach, bonfires, walking around the block, sandbars and body-surfing, or just sunbathing all day. In addition, we were all married on the beach at Deborah Wing Park and are passing on this legacy to our children.

When we pull into the neighborhood, life just seems simpler. A deep breath happens, and we feel like everything is easier here. Our kids can roam free like we used to. What I love about being here is that we all share the same memories but in different ways. I'm humbled to see photos posted by neighbors or hear the memories they share, and it's amazing how much this place means to all of us. We have shared this place with many, and many have acknowledged what has been built here. It's not just about a house or a beach—it's a feeling of togetherness and the making of memories that are so important. As many in my family have said, it's about making a memory, and that is what Sandwich Downs is about: making memories with the people we love.

I am thrilled to celebrate 100 years of this incredible place and I am honored that my entire family and extended family get to be a part of it. Cheers to 100 more!

With lots of love,

Jocelyn Dellicker and my sisters, Kayt Kitt and Melanie Lehman - daughters of Jill and Tom



Jocelyn and Matt  
September 20, 2014



Melanie and Cole  
August 29, 2020



Kayt and Alex  
July 20, 2013

## Serodio Family - 8 The Mall: My Happy Place

Sandwich Downs is and always will be my happy place. Most of my favorite childhood memories stem from this neighborhood. Summers on the Cape as a child were filled with memories that I can still hear, smell and feel. But Sandwich Downs is something extremely special. As a child for me, there was nothing better than spending the entire day at the beach. I thought the walk down to the beach was so long, even though we lived at the top of path. And then I forgot, if you got so excited, you forget your shoes. Trying to traverse the small patches of grass on the way down made the trip even longer. But once you were at the beach it was truly perfect. It was playing house on the rock jetty, jumping off the jetties during high tide and looking for sand dollars and crabs at low tide. It was playing with the cousins and friends, making friendship bracelets and collecting rocks to paint later. It was lunch time that always included a tuna sandwich on white bread and Cape Cod potato chips while sitting on the large flat rock that was part of our “house.” It was working on your beach feet to get over the rocks and trying to get into the frigid water while waiting for your legs to go numb before going in further. For years, it was beach games of tug of war, shaving cream fights and a greased watermelon. It was getting home and being so excited to paint the rocks you collected, and play whiffle ball in the yard while your parents bar-b-queued or figured out where to take all of us for dinner. It was kids riding their bikes and at times joining in those whiffle ball games just because they rode by. At night it was gathering around a bonfire while having smores. It was the fourth of July. The most perfect time in the neighborhood. The peak of summer and the beach crowded with friends and family.

Growing up and continuing to come back we have seen so many good times. Weddings, graduation parties, birthdays. Both of my parents moving there permanently. And some not so great with the passing of my father, Rick in 2025. But overall, I feel that truly not much has changed. As my generation has gotten older and have had their own children, bought homes here and even had good friends buy homes in the neighborhood, the magic lives on. Watching the kids play on the beach, hitting whiffle balls across the yard, riding bikes to friends’ houses and their cousins’, and getting so excited for the Fourth brings such joy to my heart. And while these kids might not consciously recognize the significance of all of it, they are absorbing and perpetuating the unique spirit of this neighborhood that will live on for generations to come, just as we did as kids.

8 The Mall will one day become my permanent residence, and I look forward to spending my time there with family and the younger generation, showing them what makes Sandwich Downs so special. Forever my happy place. Carly Serodio

Christmas family gathering



4<sup>th</sup> of July



Cousins



## Smith Family – 43 Wing Boulevard West

During the summer of 1989 Ann and I attended my cousin’s wedding in Osterville, with the reception at the then Round Hill Country Club (Sandwich Hollows). His parents had rented a house “on the beach” in East Sandwich, and invited us back after the reception. We fell in love with the place and the beach it faced. Almost 10 years later, Ann and I decided we wanted to buy a cottage, ideally in East Sandwich. With nothing affordable available at the time, we began looking in the Town Neck area. After a second look at a small ranch in the Town Neck neighborhood, our realtor informed us that a small cottage in East Sandwich just came “back on the market” and suggested we take a look.



To say it was love at first sight might be a bit of an overstatement, but we saw through the broken shutters, overgrown, weed-infested lawn and intense smell of moth balls inside to see the ultimate potential of the cottage. We jumped at it and in early July of 1998 we purchased 43 Wing Blvd West. It wasn’t until our first day at the cottage that we walked to the beach and, seeing

the corrugated pipe protruding from the dune, recognized the beach, and the Chimento’s home as the place that ultimately drew us to East Sandwich in the first place. During our first year of ownership, we arrived at the cottage one day to find the photo of the original “fishing shack” inside our front storm door. It is apparent that this must have been one of the first structures built in the area – One room with galley kitchen and stone fireplace. On the back of the photo was written the following: “photo taken approx. 1924. Purchased by Mrs. Elizabeth Geisler (maiden name Parkhurst), Husband Rev. William Geisler was the Methodist minister at church on Main St. Osterville.”

During our first summer at the cottage, I asked Ann if she thought anyone might be interested in coming to the Cape for the 4th of July. We put out a few emails and word of mouth, and 80 people showed up. Since then, our family and friends have come to truly enjoy the 4th of July celebrations in Sandwich Downs. Particularly the incredible fireworks on the beach. We also were extremely fortunate to have our daughter Vanessa’s wedding on “our beach” with the reception in our yard.

We consider ourselves so very fortunate to be part of the very special Sandwich Downs community and spent summers from 1998 through 2007 at the cottage before finally taking it down in favor of our current home.

Extended Smith Family

2024



## Thalman Family - 6 The Mall

In 1944, family scout, Carl Thalman (Peter's dad), discovered Sandwich, via Camp Edwards. Decades later, in 1983, the present-day Thalman's first bought in Sandwich Downs. Four generations have summered in their seasonal cottage (circa 1928 - built by *The* Edwin Hannah). Besides beach time, epic Whiffle ball games and homerun derbies, we cherish several other traditions, some quirky. These photos capture a few such memories: the annual family photo on July 4th, the kids beach pyramid, the family drone shot mounted on a spinning wheel, kayaking the headwaters of Scorton Creek, and the "Cairn Challenge" (tower of flat beach rocks — the 2024 record stands at 85 stones). And of course, our beloved PFC Carl Thalman approves.



## Weiss Family Earle, Vicki, Josh & Ilana - 8 Beachway East



Christian, Adina, Aylee, Kayla, Greg, Ilana, Earle,  
Josh and Talya

Our history here in Sandwich Downs started in the mid-70s. My father Earle was serving in the reserves at Otis Air Force Base. He and my mom Vicki would come down to the Cape every year for 2 weeks and rent different cottages in the area. They eventually discovered Sandwich Downs and were renting Maxine's house across the path at The Gridiron when our little house came up for sale. The Hannah's owned the property at the time and offered it to my father for purchase. He told them he didn't have the money that they were asking and so it sat vacant for a year. They called him back and asked him what he could afford and he said \$40,000...SOLD!!! And so, it became our summer home. My brother, Josh and I spent every summer here in Sandwich Downs. My mom would pack up the car from our year-round home in Natick and vowed that once she crossed the bridge she wasn't going back until Labor Day. My dad would hold down the fort at home and come down every weekend.

The most treasured memories of my youth reside here. It was a time of laughter, golden hour sunsets and time spent with visiting relatives from Canada, where my mom was from, who loved to visit iconic Cape Cod. There were a small handful of kids in the neighborhood back then, nothing like today. It was still a sleepy retirement community. Our summer childhood

friends were the Merlins, the Bordoluccis and the Balsers, all names not many people here know anymore. I remember so many neighbors now gone, The Hendys, the Litkes, Irene Lembo, Mrs. Richite, Mrs. Moran, and Ann Bates. She, fortunately, is still with us! Nights of bonfires, baseball on the sandbar, picking blueberries on 6A, lobster dinners, walking to the little Christmas Tree Shop at the end of the street, swimming lessons every day in the ocean with Mrs. Schermerhorn and, of course, the highlight of the summer, The Barnstable County Fair. Then... the sparrows started to line up on the telephone pole wires signaling another summer coming to a close, packing up the car to head home and holding another summer of memories in our heart until the next year.

I have now lived here full time for 7 years. My husband and I recently married in July 2024 on the beach in front of our home where my dad, at the time 91, was able to celebrate with us. The next generation of Sandwich Downer's, my 3 beautiful nieces and nephew expand our family and our memories continue. We are grateful for all the wonderful friends and neighbors here in The Downs and are honored to be a part of this special milestone in its history.

# Personal Memories

## Neighborhood Stories

### Short story quotes from neighbors about Sandwich Downs- Why we came to Sandwich Downs and much more.

- When we first moved here, I was out front and Jocelyn Schermerhorn came over and introduced herself. She welcomed me to Sandwich Downs and said, “Frank, you’ve moved to a little bit of heaven.” I think about that often and realize how correct she was. Frank Pannorfi
- I always wanted to own in Sandwich Downs but my husband Dick was known to say “We will own when pigs fly!” Thus, when we finally became residents at 50 WBW, I had a weathervane made with a flying pig which to this day still is flying. Anne Spencer
- A cranberry bog does appear on the old map to the west of Bemis Road, so I wonder about the “road” placement and cranberry bogs were ruled as “sand rights” which would follow in the deeds...that means that a bog owner could harvest sand from adjacent properties as his wants.
- While many storms have affected East Sandwich, the most destructive hurricanes were: Hurricane Bob in 1991, the Great New England Hurricane of 1938, Hurricane Carol (Cat-3-100 mph) in 1954, and The Great May Gale of 1967. These storms caused significant damage due to high winds, coastal flooding, and storm surge. I (Frank Hartwell) remember being in our cottage for Carol at 73 Wing Boulevard West when the eye of the storm came right over the Downs!
- Patrick and Angela Murphy lived at 99 Wing Blvd. West for 25 years. Pat was an Irish immigrant and loved by all in the Downs, especially as the ultimate handyman!

## Sandwich Downs History, 1926 - Present

Samuel Dudley Hannah was a real estate mogul who knew what he was doing when he bought a great deal of land in different parts of Cape Cod, as well as in Revere, Sudbury and Bourne. He was very much aware of the changes happening on the Cape after World War I and capitalized on the eternal appeal of Cape beaches. Means of travel were changing from boats and trains to cars and airplanes. Tourism was replacing many old Cape manufacturing businesses. The Cape Cod Railroad had been extended from Middleboro to Sandwich in 1948 and a few years later to East Sandwich, then to Hyannis and beyond. From the 1930's to the 1960's The New Haven Railroad ran the "Day Cape Codder" along their tracks. Cars needed better roads. The Hannah brothers' Homestead Trust bought Blake Farm, formerly Wing land, on Scorton Neck in 1916. This was the same year Crow Farm began business. The earliest Sandwich Downs maps were drawn up in 1923 and 1924, then finalized in 1926. Formerly pastureland and farmland, roads were laid out and **278 single lots** in Blocks A-F, on about 77 acres, were plotted out. Only the Edward Wing Home, barn and outbuildings existed. The extensive Wing home history includes hiding runaway slaves and housing teachers when the forerunner of the Riverside School owned it. Sandwich Downs lots were sold through the Hannah family's many Land Trusts to individuals, and varied in size from a single lot, approximately 50' wide by 115' deep or 0.138 acre, to seven lots. Blocks A-H were shown on the 1926 map and our deeds contain that reference. There have been references to the "fishing shacks" in the Downs but these were the early cottages, often added on to as families grew. Building permits did not come into existence until 1961, after zoning by-laws had been adopted the year before. The permits cost \$1.00; the fine for not having one was \$20.00.

To set the stage for this era, after World War I, and the Pandemic of 1918, people were rejoicing. The Roaring 20's had hit Sandwich. The Flappers were flapping; the Charleston was being danced at the Casino and in the Grange. Sandwich had a train station, Town Hall, several churches, post offices, banks, a Quaker establishment, grocery stores, meat markets, and gas stations, but no Scenic Route 6A or the Mid-Cape Highway, Route 6. Electric cars were losing favor as people wanted to go further than a charge allowed. The closest hospital had been established in Hyannis in 1920. East Sandwich had its own train station, post office, and center. There was a school near the intersection of Jones Road and the old Palmut/Nauset Indian Trail that became 6A. The Wing School consolidated the town's schools into one building for grades 1-12, and opened in 1927. A few years later there were 19 teachers (7 men, 12 women) whose combined annual wages were \$55,000. We don't know how many children from Sandwich Downs were in school. If children were over age 7, they had to go to school. Back then there were school nurses, school eye doctors, mandatory vaccines, and required home stays for communicable diseases. Many of the original owners in Sandwich Downs came from the Boston suburbs seeking a beachside community for relaxation, swimming, fishing and boating while others came by train from New York City and mid-west states.

Not everyone had enough money to buy one or more lots from Samuel Hannah's Homestead Trust or his brother Henry's Cape Cod Builders Trust. These Trusts offered mortgages to finance buying the property, obtaining building materials and paying contractors. Electricity wasn't everywhere, nor was indoor plumbing, which is why our deeds specify no outdoor privies. Many folks had to work to make mortgage payments. Employment opportunities had changed from shipbuilding, rope making, fishing, whaling, logging, glass making, and brick making to cranberry farming, grocery store workers, truck and auto sales and

repairs, bankers, realtors and serving in the military. Women, some previously employed in the closed down glass manufacturing establishments as painters, and now mostly housewives, were often involved in the arts, jewelry making, teaching, and nursing – after all, they got the right to vote in 1920!

Recorded town records from the early 1900's were destroyed by floods. It is difficult to determine exactly how many lots were sold by the Hannahs during the 20's, 30's and 40's without researching each deed. Sandwich Downs did not escape the havoc of the times. The Great Depression forced many people into bankruptcy. In 1933, the Tax Collector put 184 lots here up for auction because property taxes had not been paid. The total due for all those lots was \$193.60, or an average of \$1.05 each! It is difficult to determine exactly how many homes had been built because some owners bought more than a single lot. In 1930 a quart of milk cost 15 cents, and a bushel of potatoes at Crow farm went for \$1.50. Does that mean a lot of land could have been purchased from the town for less than a bushel of potatoes?

From scanning the Sandwich newspapers of the 20's and 30's, Sandwich Downs owners were required to destroy Gypsy Moth eggs in creosote and cut off and burn branches infested with Brown Tailed Moths. If not taken care of the town came in and charged the homeowners. People could come to East Sandwich by railroad or motor coach. Car brands included Durant and Star. For major entertainment there was the Idle Theater (1911) in Hyannis, or the Cape Cod Playhouse and Cinema in Dennis (1927). Whist or square dancing at the Grange were popular, in addition to seasonal parades and local sports competitions. If so inclined, you could go to Scorton Neck and rent a shooting stand and buy ammunition for hunting waterfowl. Years before wolves that plagued sheep had been eradicated. The Downs had been an apple orchard, and peaches were grown in the area. Turnips did not turn out to be a profitable wartime crop. In 1930 the Army ariel sprayed for mosquitoes. In 1938 two homes burned in the Downs; 38 Beachway Road and 5 Wing Boulevard West. Back then there were no street numbers on the homes. Arson was suspected and the homes were later rebuilt. East Sandwich opened its first firehouse in 1954; previously a firetruck was kept at Cannings Garage (1948). The Cannings owned properties in the Downs, and mortgaged them to finance the business.

The Second World War directly involved Sandwich Downs. It is hard to prove if any residents were actively involved in rum running before the repeal of the Prohibition Act in 1933 but there were profitable floating stores off our beaches and much knowledge of the shore was gained. By 1941, when the US entered the war, Germans had acquired land on Martha's Vineyard and their submarines were off our beach. The Coast Guard set up Beach Patrols to rescue men from sunken vessels, to police the coast, and to report anything strange. The Army was to defend beaches, the Navy to protect our ships and shipping lanes, the FBI was to find evidence of attempted landings and the Coast Guard had stations, towers, lookouts, lighthouses, and lifeboats. Our "Coast Guard House" at the end of Bemis Road, then owned by Jane Weeks, was occupied by the Coast Guard for a while and military dog kennels were set up. Trained handlers usually had German Shepherds, but Dobermans and Airedales were also at the top of the list of 18 breeds used. Patrol units of 2 men were selected from neighborhoods because they knew the areas; if warning shots didn't work, they had orders to shoot to kill. Phone lines were set up and beaches were identified by code names and jack box numbers. There were Bell telephone poles, field phones with cranks, buried beach wires, metal phones and battery circuits. The jack boxes were 1,200'-1,500' apart; patrolmen had portable handsets to plug into the jack boxes. Later there were 2 armed mounted patrolmen 100' apart reporting in every quarter mile.

This involvement ended in 1943. There was a dirt road connecting our beach area with the artillery range on the Carleton Shore beach.

After the war there again was relaxation time and beach communities were growing. Bayside Cottages on Bemis Road were built between 1950 and 1958. Samuel Hannah had sold that land he had bought from the Blake heirs in 1916, to Lucien Weeks in 1923. His wife Jane sold it to Waldo and Florence Bemis in 1948. Waldo was a carpenter and built 6 cottages, not including the current Mehta home. All the Hannah deeds specified that hotels, restaurants, lounges and places for entertainment could be built on beach front properties; signs could be put up on the Grand Old Highway (6A) which was paved in 1930. The state had considered taking over Sandy Neck as a refuge for herons. That area had also been proposed to be a Nantasket-type amusement park.

After WWII associations were formed to bring together folks into a group with common goals for their community; many returning military folks were involved. Sandwich Downs Association was incorporated in 1956 from a group of “permanent owners” to promote camaraderie. The written intent was to improve the Downs, to promote standards of good conduct, to acquire property if necessary, and to represent the members in town affairs. The original Board consisted of a President, a Treasurer, a Secretary or Clerk, and 7 Directors. At the time the document was drawn up and certified, those 11 members plus 10 others were listed. Not all actually were permanent residents; many came from eastern Massachusetts. Their Downs street addresses were not listed but William Hendy, Edwin Hannah and Russell Carroll listed Sandwich Downs as their addresses. There were 45 homes here then. It is difficult to determine exactly what folks did then. Town records include a 1947 listing by name without addresses. In the 1967 Sandwich Board of Registrars Report our streets were listed only as “Sandwich Downs Association, Sandwich”; “Bemis Road, East Sandwich”; or “Wing Blvd., East Sandwich”. Males (12) and females (9) were listed separately and an asterisk indicated a registered voter. Male occupations were mostly listed as “retired” but there also was a teacher, an import-export merchant, a college student, a realtor, a carpenter, a fund raiser and an electrical engineer. No occupations were listed for the women. It is assumed that these were year-round residents, all but 4 were registered voters. By-laws drawn up in 2002 have been modified.

It is difficult to follow the exact growth of Sandwich Downs. It seems that there were 72 empty lots in 1960 and 64 in 1967. We know what has transpired since those years. Over time many original homes were torn down and new residences were built. Many older homes have been renovated. We do not have town services such as water or sewers. The town would only provide that if we widened Beachway Road to 75’ and made our beach public. We do not have town trash pickup. As an association with private roads we are plowed out after the town streets are taken care of. We do have mail delivery; prior to 1968 mailboxes were at the RFD mailboxes at the 6A/Wing entry. We do have police and fire services. We supposedly have the highest taxes on the Cape.

Our Sandwich Downs community has grown to about 125 homes and there is very little room left for further growth. Volunteers fill our Association “jobs” and deserve gratitude for their service. Time has marched on and currently we find ourselves involved in expensive legal matters; hopefully there will be resolution soon. There is lots more history that could be added or included, especially more recent, but “history” is “history”. Jeanne Lesperance

## Sandwich Downs Treasure Hunting

And so, the good people of Sandwich Downs first walked our beach in the 1920s at the dawn of radio, before movies, and pre-television. Sounds great. Some of those pioneers might have read Treasure Island, got “that feeling” and headed to the beach on a never-ending search for treasure.

That was then. Today, some of you neighbors might recognize “Hey you guys!” as the iconic call to adventure from the classic treasure hunt movie, “Goonies.” For those families, Goonies likely stirs “that feeling” and with that feeling they too scurry off to the beach seeking treasure.

But what is a treasure? I suspect, we only know when we see it. Treasures are subjective and perceived in the eye of the beholder — and some visions are more liberal than others. The treasure could be an animal, a sight, a sound, a washashore, or nothing. The walk and the hunt is the treasure and discoveries the bonus. Here’s a sampling of one family’s found treasures:

A tangerine sunrise, an amber sunset, a flaming red sky, a foggy-gray hooded horizon. The sound, the fury, and salty spray of a joyous sea and the quietude of its placid partner.

A boiling mass of peanut bunker (juvenile menhaden) leaping into the air and launching onto the beach while being blitzed by striped bass below and birds above as stealthy seals devoured the stripers.

A baby seal resting at the wrack line, a coyote on morning patrol, a Scorton River otter lounging at the waterline. An Autumn starling murmuration and gannets diving, 60 mph into schools of fleckless baitfish.

A bundle of weather balloon instruments with these curious instructions: “Do not return.”  
A plastic 2-inch green Army Man: thank you for your service to that child who misses you.  
A driver’s license to be mailed to its careless owner.

Two 20-dollar bills: shopworn and nearly transparent from well-spent time frolicking at sea.

A message in a bottle: none better than this wild prophecy in the spring of 2004: “This is the year the Red Sox will win the World Series.”

Fishing lures: some seemingly lost after a single cast, others wooden and barely recognizable.

Wooden lobsterpot parts: fewer every year, some with curious holes drilled in the opposing ends.

The everywhere colorful and chaotic beach stones: skippers, striped wishers, purple amethysts, swirly agates, red jaspers, and every child’s favorite: bright white quartz.

Sea glass: rarer with each passing year. To those of you with collections: uranium infused glass (pre-WW2) glows under black light — greater treasures might lurk undetected in your jars of sea glass. Misquoting John Muir, with apologies: “I am learning nothing in this trivial world of men. I must break away and get out into the *beach* to learn the news.” Pete Thalmann

## An Ode to the Local Golf Cart

On Christmas Eve of 2000, the first golf cart, a two-seater, arrived in the neighborhood. A 1990 something gas-powered Yamaha “convertible,” color, cream, completed the journey from Maine to Tricia Schermerhorn’s front yard in the rear of a pickup as the “best Christmas present ever.” That cart cost \$900 and would last almost twenty years. This event marked the start of what was to become a paradigm shift in the Downs and we, as a neighborhood have never looked back. What followed has been a challenge, a convenience and a joy.

The numbers grew slowly at first and then neighbors started to see the carts parked at the Beachways and cruising the roads. A common sight was to witness Clampett Family sized loads headed to the beach. Neighbors visited each other via the carts. The most recent “add-ons” to the carts have been roof racks giving more flexibility to the sun-worshippers.

With the new conveyance came a variety of “episodes” of note. Late-night cruisers and returnees from the beach entertained the neighborhood by singing at the top of someone’s lungs, blasting music and creating other nocturnal noises which may have interrupted sleep and startled the night owls. Kids were noticed cruising the roads without any adult supervision. A passenger rolled by lying prone on the roof of a cart flapping his arms like a gull on take-off much to the joy of the other passengers. Cart surfing was attempted, but this act did not catch on. After all, the carts do travel 15 to 18 miles per hour which may not seem dangerous, but try running as fast as you can into a tree with your hands in your pockets. One cart tipped over at the right-hand turn from WBW toward Beachway with no personal injuries but a bruise to someone’s pride, lucky moments indeed. One adult driver allowed her 10-year-old guest to drive her cart and they disappeared in the bushes on BWW. The boy’s reaction to the incident was, “Let’s just keep this our little secret.” Thankfully, no one was hurt that time.

Such “episodes” prompted the SDA to invite Sandwich Police Officer Brian Bonderick to speak at the annual meeting. Officer Bonderick was clear about the legal responsibilities of cart ownership and made a positive impression. Since then, golf cart rules are clearly listed in the SDA Rules and Regulations available on line and in general folk lore. We seem to have received the message.

The summer of 2023 has arrived with over fifty carts in the neighborhood. Silver ones, gold ones, red ones, rescue carts from golf courses, carts with decals, carts with bumper stickers all travel the roads. Carts now sport the SDA parking permit and make for real convenience at the entrance to our beaches. Our lives have changed since that first cart and that is really neat.

Of note, a cool six-seater at Five Star Golf Carts in Bourne now goes for over \$17,000. Life is good in the Downs. Bud Schermerhorn

## Not Sleeping on the Beach

My smart watch thinks I am sleeping when I am on the beach in my neighborhood. Never did I dream about living in a place like Sandwich Downs or having such beauty all around me through the seasons. How this happened is a story of its own and one of my favorite examples of “gifts from the universe.” perhaps a story to be told another time but cherished by me every day. Going to the beach is different than going to the yard or going to run errands or even going to take a nap. A trip to the beach requires little planning and for me, little thinking. Instead, it is a journey of the senses that serves to quiet my thoughts. It allows my eyes to see the trees, flowers, picket fences, squirrels, and rabbits. My sense of smell is awakened by the briny smell of the sea and my skin feels the ever so tiny drops of mist that float through the air and land gently on my skin. Together, these senses blanket me in happiness and bring back the feelings I had over decades of beach vacations to Cape Cod.

Sometimes, I sit and read as if I am the only person in the universe and what I am feeling is a gift, just for me. Sometimes, I walk on the beach in search of the perfect piece of sea glass or a rock shaped like a heart and without any effort on my part, I find my mind wandering and thinking about nothing and everything at the same time. It is meditative for me.

At times, I sit with my book in hand, but unable to read; not because of a lack of interest in the book, but more of a total interest in watching the day unravel before me. People come and people go, children laughing and crying, grown-ups having conversations and calling out to the children who are playing in the sand or at the water’s edge. As I listen and watch, I feel compelled to shut my eyes and just listen. With my eyes closed, I hear the life of a day at the beach. I hear lunches getting prepared, popping drink cans, crinkling snack bags and then the subdued sounds of people quietly enjoying their favorite beach food. I hear the love between children and their parents or couples walking hand in hand. I hear the tones of vulnerability, kindness, joy, and sometimes even frustration or anger. Laughter floats effortlessly in the sea breeze, coming from every direction bringing a smile to my face and teasing me to open my eyes. I don’t, as the sounds are so beautiful on their own, and they settle me. These are the sounds of life being lived.

My breathing is slow, I am still. I am feeling the warmth of the sun and the ocean breeze, and my body is relaxing and releasing any tension or worry that I may have felt before I got here. I am not asleep; I am floating in happiness and comfort in my body and mind. I am tremendously grateful for this special place called Sandwich Downs and for how it nourishes my mind, body, and soul. Barb Meyers

## The Story of Laurie

Had we roamed these lands 10,000 years ago, we'd be strolling atop a mile of dirty ice; but you likely knew that. Mother Nature designated Cape Cod her dumping grounds for the Laurentide Ice Sheet: a.k.a. "Laurie" and Laurie was no lady. During a global cold spell, Laurie was a rough and tumble conveyor belt delivering all variety of stones and boulders, sand and silt, from near and far to its crumbling southerly melt-edge: the "cowcatcher" on a creeping Cape Coder Garbage Train. Eventually, the oceans rose as the glacier melted and receded during the next several thousand years. About 3,000 years ago, Cape Cod reached a stable state with today's waterlines.

Here in East Sandwich, the beaches are blessed, some say cursed, but certainly festooned with stones: billions, maybe trillions of glacial mementos. Many stones provide a hint at major geologic events when rocks boiled and differing minerals merged in beautiful and random fashion. These stones capture a snapshot of earth-reshaping chaos from millions of years past. And there's more.

Conducting our research into the origins of Cape Cod, we consulted the "bible" and left a five-star review: "These Fragile Outposts" by Barbara Blau Chamberlain — out-of-print but usually available on the internet. We uncovered many nuggets including this: Ms. Chamberlain claims some Cape Cod beach pebbles include parts of beryl (as emeralds) and corundum (as rubies and sapphires). Restraint please, this is not a get rich scheme as most stones are quite commonplace.

For the last 3,000 years, the sea delivered an endless procession of lapping shore waves rolling and smoothing the stones and pebbles as they took their shift on the beach surface. The erosion of each stone is relatively fast acting as demonstrated by the Sandwich Downs groynes installed less than 100-years ago to slow the eastward march of the beach sand. Those boulders were once sharp edged but now are smooth and slippery.

Even when smooth, the so-many-stones of East Sandwich discourage modern day human footfall. Today's tenderfoots prefer sandy beaches and they know where to head. Since the Great Recession (of the glacier), down-current drifting sands, formed nearby neighbor Sandy Neck — a relative newcomer to Cape Cod. Many of today's pampered beachgoers prefer the sands of Sandy Neck leaving hardscrabble "Sandwich Downers" alone to enjoy each other's company. So, you ask, with continued erosion will the beaches of Sandwich Downs become rock-free, sandy havens? Maybe, maybe not, because the erosion of beach stones might be impacted by rising seas.

Shorter term, the loss of the Greenland ice sheet could add 20+ feet to sea levels and within 2000 years the additional loss of Antarctic ice could rise sea levels by 200+ feet reducing the Cape to a smattering of highland islands, each island maybe inhabited by the last Hartwell, Schermerhorn, or Hannah. Now for the good news: Most experts believe man's ongoing impact on global warming will prevent or at least delay future ice age cycles. Maybe. The only certainty is this: Nature always bats last.       Pete Thalmann

## The Animals of Sandwich Downs

One of our roads is called Skunk Path. A reason existed for this moniker. Dusk around the Downs was a favorite time for the plentiful number of skunks that called our neighborhood home. One could pretty much count on an encounter from sundown to sunrise. The skunk, when it feels threatened, raises its tail, stands on front paws and delivers a stream up to ten feet away. The evening air would waft with the odor and folks hoped that the smell was not a surprised pet who would return to the house choking, drooling and frantic. A solution of tomato juice and soap might help, but only time really erased the smell. One dog who lived on WBW was a victim two times each summer for his seventeen years of life...he never learned. We don't see (or smell) skunks too often these days, and that is too bad.

Downs dogs have a stellar history. "Back then" dogs roamed the land. They would go out in the morning and return at supper time. They slept most of the day, some under cars. Others nuisanced (sic) themselves around Downs. One dog (the same as above) often used a neighbor's lawn as a latrine and was physically chased off that neighbor's property. The dog returned the next morning and parked "one" on the doorstep. Dog fights were loud, bloody and frequent. Lancelot, Hootmon, Bootsie, Goldie and Chuckie repeatedly tussled with outcomes being a visit to Doctor Daniel Leach in Marstens Mills. Dog Moms and Dog Dads had to drag combatants off the beach many times. Folks did try to control the dogs, but stuff happened. We have become more civilized and enjoy seeing Captain, Shilo, Lucy, Wheezy, Ned, Oliver, Rudder and a host of others. Many of these Downs dogs now are frequent golf cart drivers and passengers enjoying an outing.

Wing Scorton Farm (presently Cook's) sheltered a variety of live-stock: cows, a llama, a donkey, sheep, goats, chickens. Owner Dick Loring spent one afternoon trying to corral Teddy Loo and Genevieve who had escaped and were clopping down WBW at a gallop. Loring was ten minutes behind the duo and did ask folks he encountered along the way if they had "seen a llama being chased by a donkey." The farm was also home to some enormous porkers whose pen was at the intersection of Beachway Road and WBW. The sty was at the farthest point of the property and upwind of the prevailing breezes. Even these days, one can occasionally "nose" the memory of those pigs. Loring enjoyed people coming on the property and he offered up the chance to buy fresh eggs in the warm confines of his barn; children loved this feature.

The Downs has been host to a variety of non-traditional and often exotic animals. Many years ago, two families had pet raccoons living in their homes. Those guys, Bandit, Henry, Ranger and Silver were house-broken and shared space with dogs and cats alike. More recently, Ragnar (tigu), Esmerelda (tarantula), Winter Rose (hedgehog), and Lucie & Leia (ferret sisters) and Heidi (pig) joined the neighborhood. Currently two Bengal cats, Minksie and Floyd patrol WBW. Recently, a fox with apparent mange was seen, recorded on social media and brought to the attention of the local Animal Control.

The Downs has had a wide variety of other visitors. Turkeys parade the grounds. Fox and coyotes make tracks in snow and dash across yards and roads. Deer crash through thickets and bound into the bushes; sometimes they are seen on the beach. We have had seals rest on the beach. Owls hoot at night. Years ago, we heard a screech owl screeching over and over in the

wee hours of the morning. A neighbor's voice actually roared "Shut Up" to the owl. Reports of a great horned owl have surfaced over the years and as recently in the late summer of '23. Looking up, one can see red tailed and cooper's hawks, buzzards, ospreys and even the rare American Bald Eagle. An otter was seen on the property at 3 Beachway Road. We could hear the spring peepers at the end of March and see frogs in the little streams on the Beach Ways. Fireflies light the summer nights, mosquitos buzz the ears, gnats drive one crazy and horseflies hurt. Years ago, we heard Bob White quail, saw ring necked pheasants; these days it's crows, cardinals, chickadees and blue jays with the robins intermixed. And if you have Styrofoam lobster buoys on your shed, look for two-inch holes in them...it will reveal the nest of a downy woodpecker. In the '60s, a humpback whale washed up on the beach half way to Scorton Creek. It was buried on site. When one walked on the spot, it actually bounced a bit. Again, in the '60s, an 8-foot tuna washed up at the BWW cut.

Many of the animals are long gone now. The Downs had fewer homes, less pavement; lawns were smaller and less complicated. It was darker then. We used to say the Downs was the darkest place on the planet, magical even. One could feel the wildlife. Yet, today we see the resiliency of the wild animals and the joys of interacting with our four and two legged friends. Those were and continue to be good days in the Downs. Bud Schermerhorn

## Sandwich Downs Roads

Sandwich Downs roads provide access to its homes and to the beach. Taken for granted, these conveyances have a dynamic and startling history. What follows will not address the many challenges, both legal and personal, that have generated a wide variety of passionate intrigue. What does follow is a chronicle and recording of myriad gems along our common way.

The entrance island to the Downs welcomes owners and guests with a quarter board sign, the second such marker since the early sixties. To the right of the island, as many as fifty mailboxes (mail was not delivered to individual homes until the early eighties) lined the east side of WB. The stand of boxes was knocked over several times. Frank Hartwell remembers his grandfather, Gifford Sr. knocking down the entire mailbox posts with his car in the 1950s. "All of us laughed hysterically as we moved the mailboxes back and leaned them up against some trees". It was rumored that 'Old Man (Edwin) Hannah' raced by in his rusty white truck, astonished that somebody had stolen the mailboxes!

The main road (Beachway Road) was the first "paved" road in the Downs. The pavement was accomplished by spraying used motor oil on the dirt road and then covering the oil with sand shoveled from the back of a truck. Yearly coats built up the hardened surface. On hot days, one could dig into the surface with a big toe and push up a glob of the "pavement."

The Blvds and lower roads remained dirt until late in the seventies. After winters, lower BWE had potholes that would damage undercarriages and wheels. Nicknamed the "wheel knocker-offer," travel was limited in that area. The upper WBW was referred to as "the Baja," a steep sand pit that ran from the dip in the road up to the left turn toward Beachway Road. Many newly licensed drivers took on the Baha and left partial exhaust systems in the tracks of that passage. Others simply abandoned stuck cars and trucks. Common to all was the summer-time dust that swirled on the roads. Windows had to be closed during heat waves of July.

Sandwich Downs demographics have changed dramatically. In the fifties, sixties and seventies, year-round residents were few in number. The summer vacationing population could put up with poor road conditions as they stayed here for only ten weeks and over weekends in the spring and fall. The dirt roads were a source of entertainment; youngsters played baseball in areas where the roads interacted with the yards in fronts of homes. Heavy rains would cause actual road rivers where kids could make dams and play in the current. Pets roamed free and did not worry about moving vehicles. The Ice Cream man would jingle through the neighborhood much to the joy of all hands. A car or truck passing by always raised heads and hands in a wave.

As a more year-round population relocated or moved into the neighborhood, the road conditions needed to match that growth. As one premise of the SDA is "...To maintain and improve, to the extent feasible, the roads," the Executive Board held many meetings about bringing the access to the Downs from a "country flavor" to a more serviceable and safer passage. In 2002, the Board developed a \$250,000 project to bring our roads into the twenty-first century. Home owners would contribute \$2000 over a period of four years (at \$500 per year) for the following: grade and pave WB, grade and pave Beachway Road, grade and pave WBE and WBW, grade and pave The Mall, and grade and place stones on the remainder roads,

BWE, BWB, The Gridiron and Bemis Road. One neighbor negotiated a ten-year payment plan and finished up a year early in 2012. This proposal was accepted and paid for by 123 of 125 homeowners in the neighborhood. Work started in 2003 and finished in 2007. One highlight, The Silent Auction was a fundraiser that made \$9,300. The neighbors auctioned a trip to Ireland (\$700), quilts, hand-crafted furniture and many items of interest and value. That auction was well attended and a hit for all. The reality was that this was our finest hour. The neighborhood was united in one mission and we should be grateful for what was accomplished.

Since 2007, our roads have been sealed, patched, rejoined at cracks, bermed (sic) and cared for as the SDA has lived up to its purpose. Many homeowners have added attractive cobblestone aprons to driveways at the edge of the road. Yet, a “however” does exist. With the improved roads came increased vehicular speed. One has to remember that our roads are very narrow and we have some driveways that are even wider than the roads. Because of this in 2010, attempts to slow the drivers included the seasonal placement of speed bumps reminding our drivers to safely navigate our roads. Sometime later in the 2010’s, a number (at least eight) of stop signs were installed at what might be dangerous intersections. They went away and then returned (three) in 2020. One accident occurred when two vehicles collided in a head-on encounter on the corner at the upper end of WBW. Another occurred when a driver did not use care in backing out of his driveway and struck the side of a passing truck. Reports from drivers, walkers, bicyclists and runners suggest that near misses are all too common and continue today. Clearly, we need to adhere to the 15 MPH signs that are placed around the Downs.

On the other hand, our roads provide resource for pedestrians, kids and runners. Greetings are many, from passers-by and from porches and yards. An owner who built his own house was an attraction during the process. Folks stopped by to check in as he raised a roof or side-walled the house. Chance encounters with neighbors high-light one’s day. Walkers watch over each other’s property, a source of comfort for those who are away. And if you are an early riser, you might glimpse a golf cart driver escorting his dog for a run around the neighborhood.

The roads stretch out almost two miles in the Downs. A walk around the perimeter roads will yield a bit over a mile. Runners looping the figure eight will travel one and a third miles. The Fourth of July Parade of Children of All Ages travels about three quarters of a mile. We are all within a quarter of a mile from the beach, our greatest feature. We are certainly blessed in Sandwich Downs to call these roads part of our home. Bud Schermerhorn

## The Bounty of the Heart – Seaside

I couldn't remember his name, but I remembered his story as if it were my own. He was born and raised in a small town on Cape Cod. The name doesn't come to me but I when I visualized it, it reminded me of the many towns I had visited in the past on the Cape. White and gray shingled houses, brightly painted doors, sheer white curtains blowing in the wind, colorful varieties of giant plants and flowers, and cardinals everywhere you looked. His family, though not wealthy lived a great life there; they enjoyed all that nature brought them from weather to food.

He told me about lobsters as sweet as honey, clams by the pound, oysters wrestled out of their shells and fish, fresh from the afternoon trip to the beach. His family was blessed with love that had passed from generation to generation and enjoyed over the many and memorable dinners eaten at their table.

Fishing and shell fishing were a regular part of their lives; as common as a trip to the market for milk and bread. They would laugh and tease their way through the marsh and mud until they found their spot. There, they would talk about everything, giggling sometimes and throwing a dig here and there. "Remember the time Harry fell off the boat?" would cause everyone to double over laughing. "I wish Granny Elizabeth was still with us" would cause a momentary pause until the next joke or story was told. When he told the stories to me, he would have this look on his face, as if he was seeing a movie playing in the window he was looking through. I was never sure if it was longing for those times that were long past or if he was finding some joy in the memory itself.

He told of the time when he was 7 years old and came upon something in the backyard apple tree. It looked like a Chinese lantern, round and feeling like it was wrapped in tissue paper; like a present he would get on his birthday. He laughed the most beautiful and genuine way and then explained what happened when he smashed it with his hands. "Wasps," he said. "Lots and lots of wasps." His stories were filled with animals he befriended, trips to scavenge on the beach, pulling lobster traps and fabulous family get-togethers full of large and small personalities, jokesters and pragmatics, young and old. He had lived here, with these people for his whole life, leaving temporarily to go to war and returning the moment he got out.

He fell in love; just once. She was his soulmate, in every way; always on his mind and in his heart. He loved her for 10 years before she was taken from him. He vowed to never love again, refusing to believe that what he felt could ever exist again. There could be no other for him. He still yearned for her 60 plus years later. He could remember every detail about her, that wildly curly hair pointing in every which way during the summer, the way she looked as she took that first sip of coffee in the morning, the way she sang as she happily pulled weeds from the garden and the way she looked at him, as if he was the only person in the world. He was happy that she stayed with him, clear as if she was standing here in front of him. Sometimes he felt like he caught just a whiff of her perfume. He told me these stories as I made his meals on the day I was scheduled. I looked forward to those days. He would eat and I would listen, envisioning the place, the smells, the colors and the people. We would laugh and cry together, and I would leave looking forward to the next time.

It was easily 40 years ago; he has long since passed. Here I sat, thinking about him; still not remembering his name. He was one of so many that I cared for in their final days, but none as memorable or made me wish that I had been a part of his life so much earlier than I was. I wondered why I so easily could repeat these stories, still feeling them deep in my heart and yet, no name.

Perhaps that was his gift to me; what I was supposed to remember. Maybe these stories, so rich and beautiful, were more important than a name; remembered so that my life would be enriched. Maybe, I am just old and forgetful. Barb Meyers

## The Lobster Episode

The father was a sailor...the early years as a boating enthusiast and in World War II as an Ensign in the Pacific. So...when he arrived at Sandwich Downs, he felt the need to return to the sea. Skid, for years, dragged washed ashore wooden lobster traps and stored them in the back yard for the right moment to arrive. When his son was ten or twelve, it was decided that they would go into the lobster business.

One fine and clear morning, white and blue striped wood buoys (Two originals hang from windows at 89 WBW.) were attached to the traps with sixty feet of line. Traps were taken to the beach where Skid, his son and Frank Hartwell set off with two boats, ten traps and high hopes. Franky's boat, with Skid in the bow, towed the second craft which contained the son and the traps. They found the perfect spot off Scorton creek near Scorton Ledge.

"We're here," the father called out, "Throw 'em over."

The lesson learned that morning was the traps needed to be waterlogged before they will sink to the bottom. Three or four bobbed around the second boat in a tangled mess.

"Now what?"

"Bring 'em in," he called, and some of his next words cannot be printed here.

The traps corralled, the trio headed back to Sandwich Downs. It was then that the motor conked out. So, there they were: two boats, ten traps, three souls at anchor a half mile from the beach. At that point, the wind came up blowing offshore from the Southwest and created a small chop...not enough to up-set a single craft, but enough to scare the willies out of three mariners.

Skid attached an orange life jacket to an oar and waved it at a USAF Constellation Radar Plane that flew a mile overhead. The futility of the gesture brought waves of tears and laughter. Into the fourth hour of the adventure, a boat arrived to tow them to the beach. They walked the boats back from the Creek and offloaded the traps.

The adventure completed and with heads hanging, the three made it home.

The story has a bright conclusion. The traps were left in the water and a week later they were set at the Ledge. Many wonderful hours were spent catching bait and tending the traps. In the days and summers to follow, Franky and I would go out fishing solo and more often than not, we caught lobsters too...not bad for a couple of youngsters.

As to my Dad, one pea soup foggy day, he and I set out to tend the traps and using a compass, he found those white and blue buoys. I figured he redeemed himself for the original episode. These days, I think of his foresight and the opportunities that he gave us as we grew up. Indeed, we were lucky to have been from the Downs. Bud Schermerhorn

Post Script: Frank Hartwell offers the following: Bud and I thought we needed rotten fish to use as bait...so I remember catching fish at the canal, loading them into a bucket which we hung from a tree to ripen and then using them to bait the traps! I also remember the last day when we found all our blue and white buoy lines cut (we assumed by the commercial lobstermen). The end of a fun era!



Schermerhorn's loading wooden lobster pots into their boat, The Flying Dutchman

## Reflections From the Beach at Sandwich Downs

Quotes on the beauty of water emphasize its mystery, power, and role as the source of life. Popular themes include the clarity of still water, the strength in its flexibility, its essential nature for all living things, and its ability to reflect the soul.

- "We are tied to the ocean. And when we go back to the sea, whether it is to sail or to watch it, we are going back from whence we came" - John F. Kennedy
- "The ocean stirs the heart, inspires the imagination and brings eternal joy to the soul" - Robert Wyland
- "A smooth sea never made a skillful sailor" - Franklin D. Roosevelt
- "How inappropriate to call this planet Earth when it is clearly Ocean" - Arthur C. Clarke
- "The sea, once it casts its spell, holds one in its net of wonder forever." - Jacques Cousteau
- "The sea is a desert of waves, a wilderness of water." - Unknown
- "The sea does not like to be restrained." - Rick Riordan
- "Sometimes in the waves of change we find our true direction." - Unknown
- My passion for the peace of God led me to live on Cape Cod. The sacredness of the vast blue inspires me. I contemplate the creator's hand in the immense waters surrounding me, in the whales and their babies, in the dolphins, in the changing colors of fish, starfish and turtles in the creativity beneath the water. Its lessons are eternal. - Rachel Carson
- "You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf." - Jon Kabat-Zinn
- "The ocean makes me feel really small, and it puts my whole life in perspective." - Unknown
- "The voice of the sea speaks to the soul." - Unknown
- "Eternity begins and ends with the ocean's tides." - Unknown
- "The ocean is everything I want to be. Beautiful, mysterious, wild and free." - Unknown
- "Little drops of water make a mighty ocean" - Unknown.
- "You can't cross the sea merely by standing and staring at the water" - Unknown
- "We dream in colors borrowed from the sea" - Unknown
- "There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number - living things both large and small." - Psalm 104:2
- "May you have fair winds and following seas." - Traditional nautical quote
- What is your favorite quote? Frank Hartwell

# Creative Perspectives - Poems, Artwork, and Unique Representations of the Downs

## The Flame-Keepers by Ned Handy 86 Wing Boulevard East

The Flame-Keepers is a WWII memoir describing life as a POW in Germany's infamous Stalag 17 written by Sandwich Downs neighbor and author, Ned Handy. Ned's remarkable book notes countless moments of companionship, hardship, horror, humor, hope, and survival. Much of his book is devoted to planning escapes. It is entertaining reading but the hidden gems emerge unexpectedly between tunnel digging and German guard encounters.

In his book (page 65), Mr. Handy describes a curious breakfast of imaginary omelets, cooked by fellow-prisoner and griddle-master Axel Jack. The hungry, bone-thin men of Stalag 17 gathered around their chef, a human flagpole, closed their eyes, moistened their lips, and drooled as Chef Jack prepared 'a big, beautiful, fluffy omelet.' The author took two glorious pages to set the unbeatable scene-of-all-scenes. Ned, a newcomer to Stalag 17, didn't yet understand the impact of an imaginary meal, the result of the many stages of hunger. Eventually, Ned understood and, on a writer's roll, he delivered a second unforgettable imaginary meal (page 170). It's been said, "The best thing about fishing is, you don't have to do it to enjoy it." (Robert Ruark). Likewise, prisoners of war know a thing or two about imagination: a powerful survival technique.

Mr. Handy also understood the impact of misdirecting the reader with a "gotcha-tale" showing the power of humor during times of horror. On page 230 of his memoir, a prisoner, Beast spins a story of his uncle's pet dog Bodie. Storytelling, especially about childhood pets was a beloved pastime among the Stalag 17 prisoners. Briefly: Bodie is a black lab retriever known to love duck hunts, especially the families annual "Big One." Although heavy with pups, Bodie would not be denied. When the blazing shotguns finally went quiet, Bodie leapt from the bow of the boat and swam into the marsh to retrieve the many downed ducks. But Bodie never returned. After a lengthy search, Beast's uncle turned the skiff toward home declaring "no dog is worth missing supper for." But of course, the story of Bodie doesn't end in that swamp — as you will discover when you read Ned's book. (See EBAY, often \$8 with free shipping, every beach house should have a copy.)

Ned was a proud member of America's greatest generation with a story that needed telling. He provides the rare example of what so many of us wish our own ancestors had done: yes, Ned took the time to write his memoir. Lacking your own ancestor publishing a memoir, I recommend you adopt neighbor Ned Handy and read his story; it's a beauty.

As a postscript, Ned was honored by Sandwich High School when, in 2007, The Flame Keepers was selected to be the Summer Reading for the entire school. Ned spoke at a schoolwide assembly on his service to our country and his book. The Flame Keepers was a town-wide reading choice at book clubs in Sandwich that summer. Pete Thalmann

# HOXIE POND

There.....  
Nestled aside an olden cranberry bog  
It sits, a small, lone pond of ever time  
all about is stillness  
save the occasional sound of a passing Cape Cod train,

Children for years have found it there  
crossing old dirt paths long before motor cars  
on foot  
walked by so many and yet so few,

Summer suns pushes patterns through ancient tree canopies  
standing in silence  
watching indifferently  
as winds rustle through playful leaves  
but nodding below as days slip endlessly by,

Listen to hear the laughter of children  
the love croak of that old bullfrog  
atop those large fluttering lily pads  
the soft call at night of one lone loon seeking,

Time never waits!  
where are you rushing to?  
as ever  
cranberries are turning  
as autumn chills summer air  
redder turn bogs nestled nearby,

In stillness, through the darkest of nights  
through the coldest of days  
frozen in defiance,  
my pond rests always waiting  
in solitude  
with moon and my stars  
as eternal companions,

I am the lily pond of youth forever  
come take of my embrace  
I am always there  
awaiting  
simply stroll  
down that dusty summer lane  
sit by my bramble shore  
I will ever be there as ever  
for just you.

A poem penned by Ilana & Earle Weiss

# Her Beach

## Change

Seaglass here,  
Stones to skip.  
Lobster claw,  
Whiskey nip,

Driftwood art,  
Striper tag,  
Fishing lure,  
Bait bomb bag,

Jingle shells,  
Wash ashore.  
Whirling grass  
Leaves a score.

Fresh rain drops,  
Pocking sand.  
Whipping winds,  
Smooth again.

Waves refresh,  
Sands abide,  
Rolling rocks,  
Tide-to-tide.

Webbed footprints  
Come and go.  
Two barefeet:  
She bestows.



## Temper

As steel needs temper,  
She walks, her winter beach,  
Windward, hood up, head down,  
As Grammy, did teach.

Winter is her odd companion:  
Not a foe, not a beast,  
Though she'll concede,  
It's winter she loves, least.

She longs for summer winds,  
To cool the hottest day,  
When gulls glide without flap,  
Over surf and her at play.

Winters seem to linger longer,  
As she takes her daily dose,  
Until summertime, which,  
She savors, more than most.

Pete Thalmann



## Sandwich Downs through the eyes of our future generation



As we celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our wonderful neighborhood, we'd be remiss not to consider its future. Much of the joy we share in Sandwich Downs is carried in the hearts of our children and grandchildren as they ride their bikes through the streets, capture hermit crabs as fleeting pets on the sandbar, or hunt for treasure on the beach. We celebrate the past 100 years while looking forward to the next 100 and celebrating the youth who will carry the torch. It's in this spirit that we chose to let loose our children's creativity and ask them to represent what they love so much about Deborah Wing Park on a canvas.

We held an art workshop at the annual neighborhood gathering at the Cook property in August 2024. The kids learned how to mix and blend color and were guided to create their representation of the Sandwich Downs beach inspired by three templates: Ocean View Sunset, Beach View Sunset, and Sandbar. They were invited to embellish their creations with treasures that they found themselves on the beach and bring them to life with scenes of what they enjoy doing. Their beautiful creations have each of their individual markers and embody the spirit of our neighborhood and what makes it special.

*– Laila Kassis (Mother to Noora and Omar Elzein, Wife to Mohamad Elzein, 51 Wing East)*







## Lori Mehta - 6 Bemis Road

I've been part of the East Sandwich community since December 1999, when my family and I settled into our home in Sandwich Downs, just in time for the new millennium. Each year since, we've returned to this place that's become so much more than a summer getaway—it's where we've raised our children and now watch our grandchildren create their own memories along the same beaches I've always cherished.

The light here on the Cape is unique, and it's the way it shifts across the landscape—especially over the beach—that inspires so much of my work. I'm fascinated by the quiet, fleeting moments that unfold on the sandbar, where children are lost in play or people are caught in quiet reflection. I paint these scenes not just to capture the beauty of the beach, but the peace it brings to all who visit.



*Page Turner*

*Head in the Clouds*

*Splash*

Most of my work is done in oils, and I try to keep it simple—letting the light, the gesture, and the mood speak for themselves. I love using soft blues, pinks, and warm neutrals to create a sense of calm. Whether it's a solitary figure on the shore or tossed aside cover up, I want my paintings to feel timeless, like a memory you can step right into.

## **Maxene Raymond - 2 The Gridiron A Cape Cod Vision in Pastel and Oil**

Maxene Raymond, originally from New York and now based on Cape Cod, has built an artistic practice deeply informed by her prior three-decade career in interior design. This background imbued her work with a strong sensitivity to color, space, and light. She often works on sanded pastel papers and uses innovative underpainting techniques with acrylics or oils, layering soft pastel on top. Her compositions are marked by impressionistic, energetic brush- and mark-making, employing bold color contrasts and ethereal atmosphere. While she started with landscapes and seascapes, she now embraces a broader range including interiors, portraits, figures, still lifes, and even digitally altered prints derived from her original paintings



On the Rocks



Who wins



Looking west to the canal on a cloudy day.  
Watercolor by Tracie Milton-Fisher c1980

SEPTEMBER APPLE PICKING AT CROW FARM SANDWICH

APPLE WALNUT DROP COOKIES (70)

400 degrees GREASED COOKIE SHEET 12-14 MINUTES  
(Do not double –too hard to handle)

MIX 2 EGGS                      ¾ CUP BUTTER (1 ½ STICKS)  
1 ½ CUP BROWN SUGAR    1/3 CUP CIDER (OR MILK)

---

¾ TSP NUTMEG                  1 ½ TSP CINNAMON  
1 TSP GROUND CLOVES    1 1/2 TSP BAKING SODA  
½ TSP SALT  
3 CUPS FLOUR

1 CUP CHOPPED WALNUTS (OR PECANS)  
1 ½ CUPS UNPEELED APPLES (ABOUT 3)  
1 CUP RAISINS

SIFT FLOUR & ADD DRY INGREDIENTS  
MIX EGGS SUGAR BUTTER LIQUID  
ADD ½ FLOUR MIX TO EGG MIX—  
THEN ADD NUTS & APPLES & RAISINS  
ADD REST OF FLOUR—DOUGH WILL BE STIFF  
PLACE BY TSP ON TO GREASED SHEET

---

GLAZE: WHEN COOL (CAN BUY WHITE FROSTING)  
1CUP CONF SUGAR    ¾ TBSP BUTTER  
¼ TSP VANILLA      ½ CUP MILK

**SUGGESTED RECIPES UTILIZING CAPE COD PRODUCTS**

**JUNE: RHUBARB AND STRAWBERRY CRISP**

(strawberries can be picked at local farms)

(Rhubarb at Farmers' Markets)

(375 degrees 3 quart baking dish-greased

35-45 minutes until crisp)

¼ lb butter

2 cups chopped rhubarb (1 lb)

4 cups strawberries

1 cup sugar

1 1/3 cup flour

1 tsp cinnamon

2 cups dark brown sugar

½ cup rolled oats

¾ cup pecans or walnuts

Combine rhubarb, strawberries, sugar 1/3 c flour into  
Baking dish

Combine remaining flour, sugar, oats, nuts & melted butter  
sprinkle over mix in baking dish

**NOVEMBER: CRANBERRY PICKING IN SANDWICH (ET AL)**

**WHOLE BERRY CRANBERRY SAUCE**

6 CUPS FRESH CRANBERRIES

1 CUP DARK BROWN SUGAR

1 ½ CUP CIDER OR JUICE; (CRANBERRY, ORANGE)

3 TBSP FRESH LEMON JUICE

½ CUP MAPLE SYRUP

1 CUP CHOPPED WALNUTS OR PECANS

COMBINE CRANBERRIES, JUICE & SUGAR IN A HEAVY LARGE STOCK POT AND  
SIMMER OVER MEDIUM-LOW HEAT UNTIL CRANBERRY SKINS BEGIN TO BURST—  
STIR IN LEMON JUICE AND CONTINUE TO SIMMER FOR 10 MORE MINUTES.

REMOVE FROM HEAT & STIR IN MAPLE SYRUP. COOL TO ROOM TEMPERATURE  
THEN ADD NUTS. SERVE

LEFT OVERS: DIVIDE INTO TUPPERWARE---FREEZES WELL.



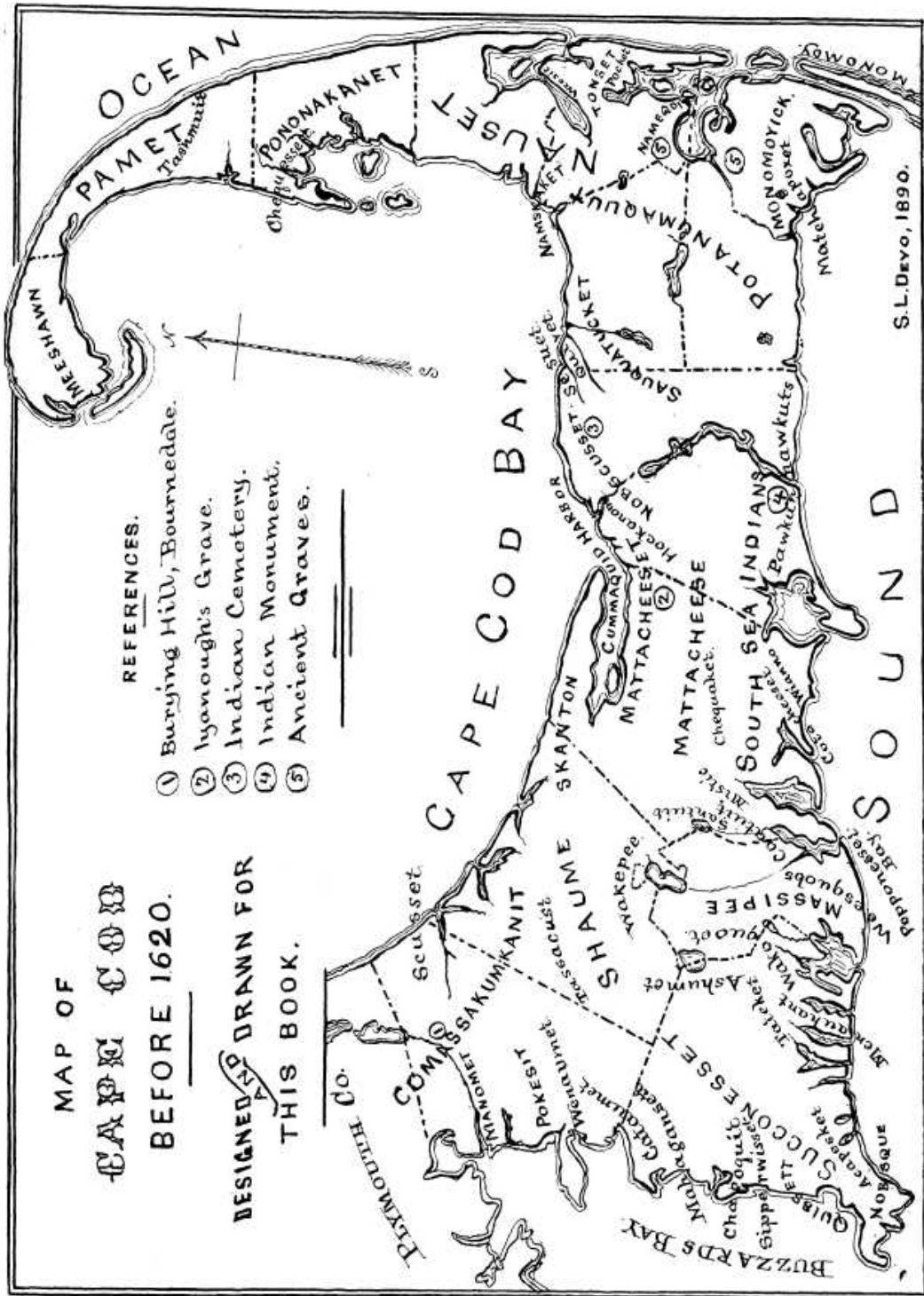
Skip Reynolds

Bud Schermerhorn wonders about: Stuff from Our Sandwich Downs Nature Habitat Past:

Where are:

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Starfish               | Sea urchins           |
| Quahogs                | Jelly fish            |
| Sand dollars           | Crabs                 |
| Tiny shrimp on seaweed | Horseshoe crabs       |
| Seaworms               | Bobwhites (quails)    |
| Flounder               | Ring necked pheasants |
| Goosefish              | Skunks                |
| Pipefish               | Earthworms            |
| Tautog                 | Horseflies            |
| Cod                    | Beach plums           |
| Mussels                | Today?                |
| Razor clams            |                       |

# Neighborhood Photos, Articles, and Maps



Pre-1620, Sandwich Downs was home to the “Skanton” tribe of the Wampanoag Nation



10 Academy  
 11 Proposed (See No. Ship Canal)  
 12 Old Glory  
 13 Ferry Station  
 14 Novelty Block  
 15 Central House  
 16 Post Office  
 17A Town Farm  
 18  
 19  
 20  
 21  
 22  
 23  
 24  
 25  
 26

2 Bridge (See No. 1) Spurr Road Here Here  
 3 Bay State Tack Co. Works  
 4  
 5 Howland & Lumber Yard  
 6 Town Hall  
 7 Sandwich Casino  
 8 High School  
 9 Schools  
 10  
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Sandwich Village 1887

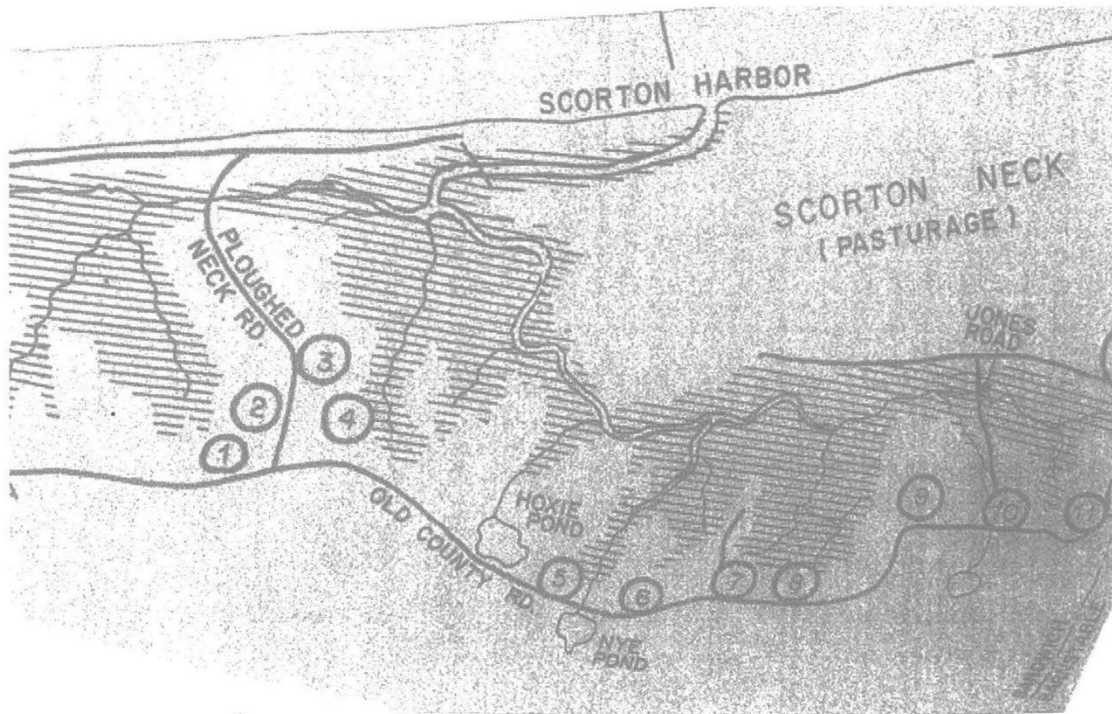
## The Evolution of Sandwich Downs

### In the Beginning: Sandwich, 1667

The 1667 plan reflects the "Pasturage" parcel of Scorton Neck. Sandwich Downs as we now know it was carved out of this parcel almost 260 years later.

Scorton Neck was important to the town of Sandwich as it was used as calf pastures during season. Cattle were driven over Scorton River at low tide.

An Indian chief by the name of Sckunk and his two sons held the title to Scorton Neck for seasonal residence and fowling until it was sold off in the 1680s, after which a special set of proprietors was set up to run Scorton Neck.



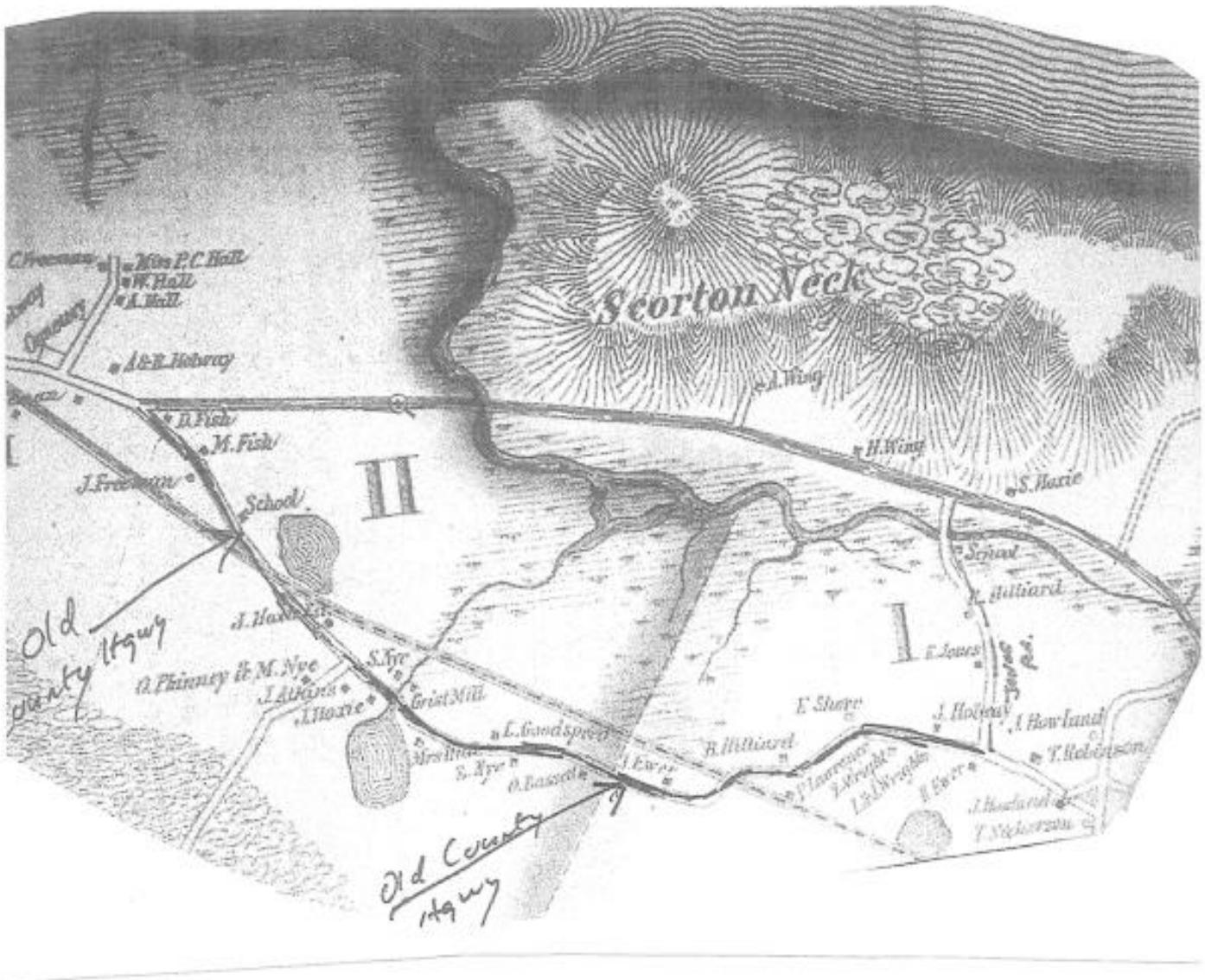
Sandwich 1667-----East Sandwich Homes

Locations of early settlers are 1. Thomas Landers, 2. Edmund Freeman Jr., 3. John Freeman (lived in Eastham but retained title to house here), 4. Jedediah Allen, 5. Mill of Benjamin Nye, 6. Henry Sanderson, 7. Edward Perry, 8. Thomas Greenfield, 9. Ralph Allen Jr., 10. Joseph Holway, Jr., 11. Robert Harper.

### Map of 1867 Plan

The 1857 plan reflects Scorton Neck unchanged and undeveloped. The only notable exception shows what is known as State Highway Route 6A. This connection from approximately the current East Sandwich Post Office to the West Barnstable line provided passage to all of Scorton Neck, which previously was only fully accessible by traveling the Old County Highway to Jones Road.

This construction was authorized in 1847 and included the crossing over the "tidal stream." It was accomplished by the construction of a 700 foot long crossing with a low dirt causeway and a timber bridge. (The bridge cost was \$650 and the road construction was \$3,000.)



### Map of 1916 Plan

The 1916 Plan reflects that portion carved out of the Scorton Neck Pasturage decided from Earl P. Blake to the Trustees of Homestead Trust in 1916. All of this acreage was unimproved land with the exception of the dwelling and barn known as the Wing Homestead.

The 14.29-acre parcel on the westerly side of the State Highway is now the Spring Garden Motel. The remaining 77.03-acre parcel will later be subdivided in 1923, the Bemis Road lots and in 1926, Sandwich Downs.



### Map of 1923 Plan

In 1923 the Trustees of the Homestead Trust granted to Lucian Weeks a portion of the land that had been deeded to them in 1916. This parcel was later deeded to Waldo and Florence Bemis in 1948 and subdivided into 8 lots accessed by Bemis Road, as shown on the 1963 subdivision plan on the following page attached.

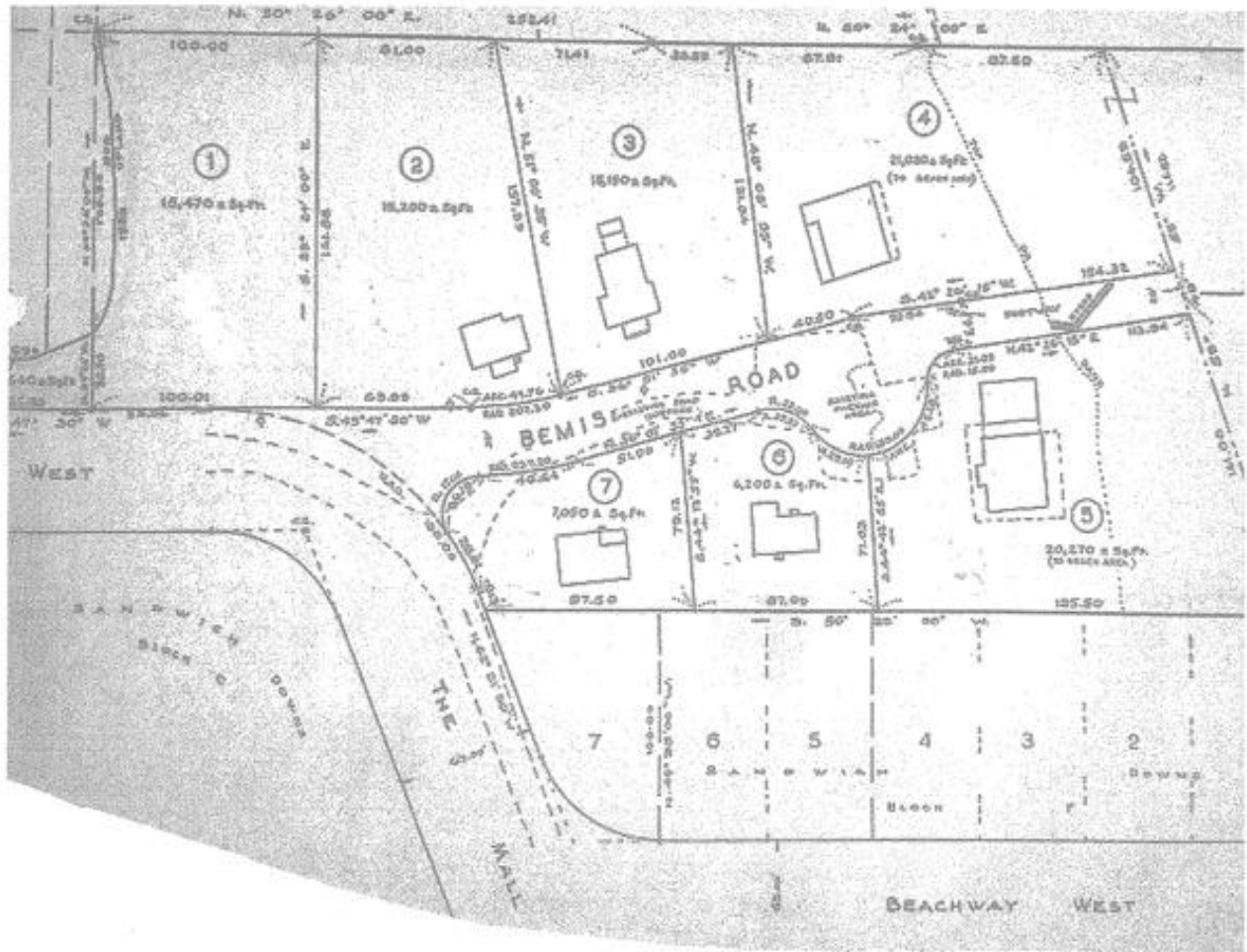
Included in this grant to Bemis was the right to build a public bath house (and charge a fee) and to erect a sign at the entrance of Wing Boulevard where it meets the state highway. The grant to Bemis further provided that "no business other than a hotel, boarding house, dining place, public bath or public parking be allowed."

This was prior to zoning bylaws, a conservation commission, or historic district commission.



1963 Subdivision plan of the 1923 "Bemis" parcel, reflecting current layout of the 8 lots abutting Bemis.

From the Barnstable Registry of Deeds



## Bemis Road

This report documents the existence and history of a small parcel of land identified as Bemis Road (located adjacent to the west of Sandwich Downs). The property is located on a 1667 map within the "pasturage" parcel of Scorton Neck.

The property was part of a large parcel of land owned by Azariah Wing. A brief overview of the history of the land transfers is below:

<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Date</u>
Azariah Wing	Isaac H Wing	10/30/1857
Sarah M Wing (Isaac's wife)	Elenor V Blake	05/09/1900
Elenor V Blake	Earl P Blake & Hazel E French	10/28/1916
Earl P Blake & Hazel E French	Samuel D Hannah (Trust)	10/28/1916
Samuel D Hannah (Trust)	Lucian A Weeks	12/10/1923
Lucian A Weeks	Jane B Weeks	12/30/1927
Jane B Weeks	Waldo H & Florence Bemis	01/20/1948

Waldo Bemis purchased approximately 4.5 Acres of land located to the northwest of the area known as Sandwich Downs. When purchased in 1948, there were 3 houses on the property:

The oldest house (a.k.a. The Coast Guard House) was located on the northwest side of the parcel, abutting Cape Cod Bay.

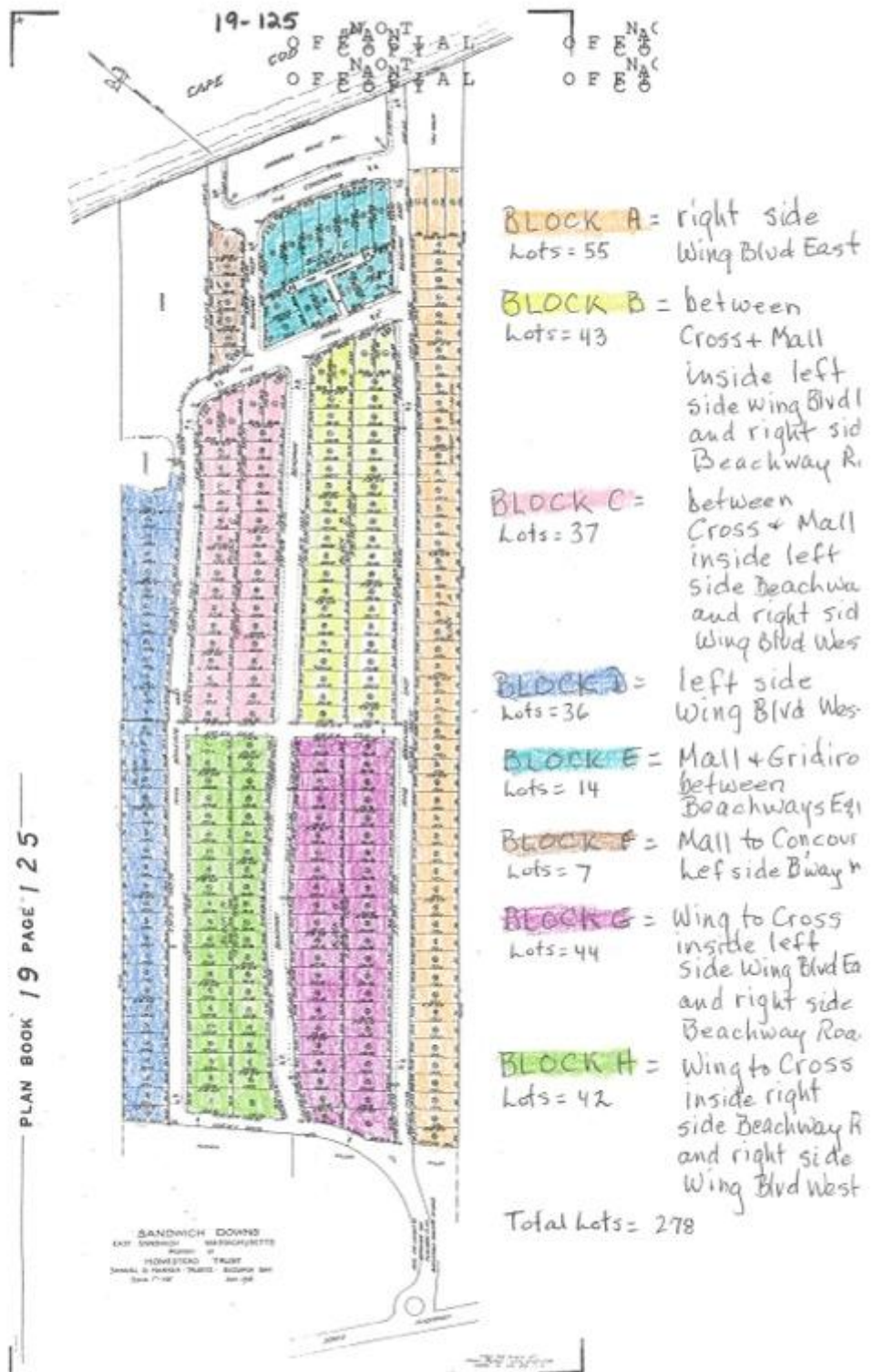
The second property (later known as The Apartments) also on Cape Cod Bay, was adjacent to the first, toward the southeast.

The third structure was south of the first house.

Waldo Bemis was a contractor from Northboro, Ma, and by 1953 he completed the building of three additional cottages with the intent of renting for summer vacations. Waldo Bemis was a detailed person. He insured that everything was available to the renters. As a result, the majority of the renters were repeat business.

In 1963, Waldo and Florence decided to sell the properties. They initially tried to sell the entire Bemis Road parcel as one unit with an asking price of \$72,000. Being unsuccessful, they subdivided the six cottages, and from a period of 12/13/1963 to 04/22/1966, all properties were sold. The first property was sold to a couple on vacation that saw a sign at the 6A entrance, "Cottage for Sale". It sold immediately. Four of the six properties were sold to their repeat summer renters. And, one property has been sold six times to date.

And now, sixty-two years later, there has been little turnover of the properties. The present owners of five of the six properties are only once removed from the first owners.  
Harry Gaumond



Colorized 1926 map showing 278 original lots  
Jeanne Lesperance

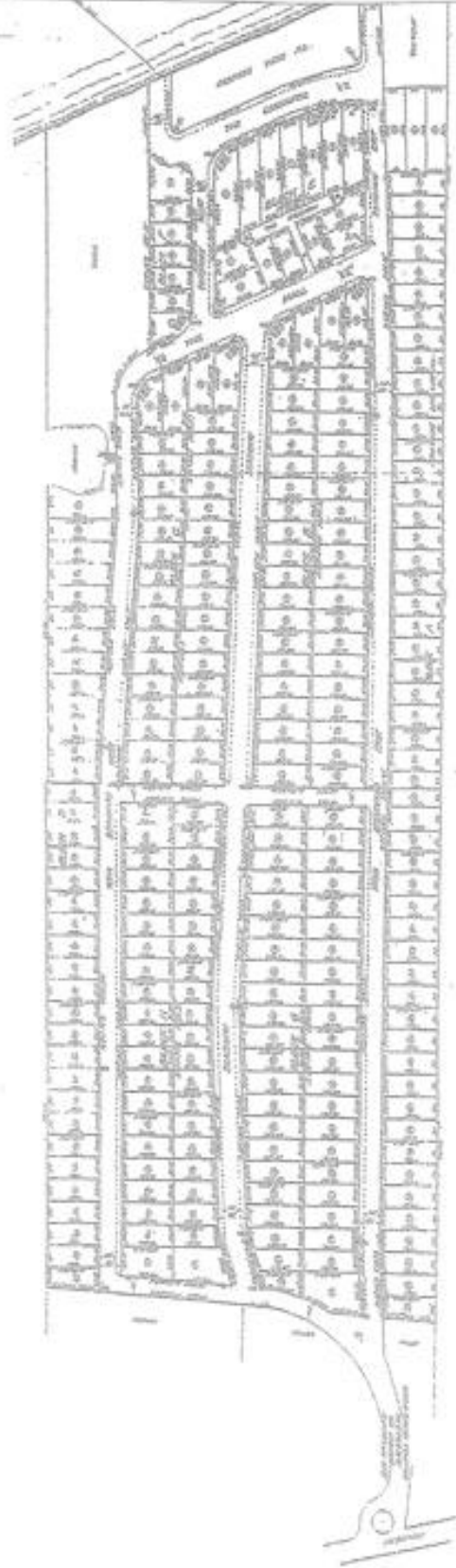
### Sandwich Downs Subdivision 1926

This is the plan of Sandwich Downs lots as we all know the neighborhood and as we celebrate its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Surely, trustee Samuel Hannah must have envisioned these lots for sale and development of seasonal, recreational cottages. He formed the marketing company, Homestead Trust, and had a great deal of experience as a land holder and developer on the Cape and elsewhere. Note the detail of the layout of The Mall on the 1923 plan as a 63-foot-wide way, with proposed planted medians down its center. Samuel Hannah was involved in the Revere Beach (MA) development and would have been familiar with work completed there under the supervision of a trainee of Frederick Law Olmstead. Olmstead was the designer of Central Park and Boston's Emerald Necklace, among many others.

Footnote: For a comprehensive look at Sandwich town history and the source of the above content, see:

**Sandwich, a Cape Town**, by R.A. Lovell, Jr., published by the Town of Sandwich, MA, Sandwich Archives and Historical Center, 1984



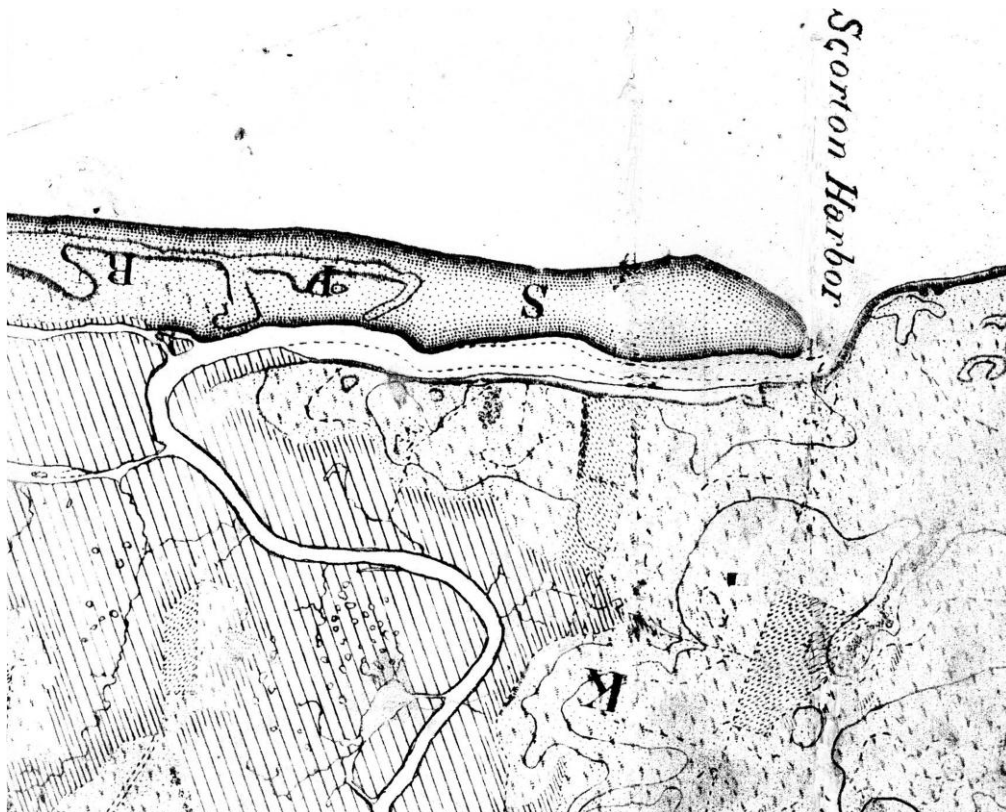
## Scorton Creek

Ever wonder why the Torrey Road homes are on a bluff overlooking a marsh far from the beach?

Read on:

The Scorton River (Creek) once ran along Scorton Neck in what is now a marsh with the outlet near the Torrey Road beach stairs. Slowly, shifting sands rendered the route too shallow for dependable passage. At the time, Scorton Harbor was an important location for fishing weirs and fishing traps — big business. In 1891, the Selectmen noted considerable new interest in permits for more fishing weirs. In December of 1885, a major storm caused great disruption to the usual fishing areas. In the early 1900s, the Scorton Creek outlet was moved to its present location with the construction of a 1000-foot new channel, 28 feet deep, and a protective stone jetty.

Without that change, our walk to Scorton Creek would be a very short stroll. The old creek route shown below:



# Homes for Sale

1941

**BARGAIN**—East Sandwich, 160 ft. on waterfront, fine beach, 2 bedrooms, beautifully furnished, flagstone terraces, outside grill, complete in every detail, all ready to occupy, price \$6000; half cash, balance easy terms; take Sandwich Downs rd. to water front. C. S. KIRKLAND.



At Sandwich Downs on Cape Cod Bay, we offer this delightful waterfront home for those who would appreciate a gracious summer home with a magnificent setting. The large, pine-panelled living room of Cape Cod design is tastefully furnished and has a fireplace. Modern kitchen. There are four large bedrooms with three baths. Two flagstone patios with outside fireplace, screened breezeway, attached garage, and large lot of land, make this home most attractive at only \$19,000. For appointment to inspect, or for further details, phone or write:

1956

1970

## SANDWICH



### Small Waterfront Estate

This delightful property at "Sandwich Downs," offers one hundred feet fronting on Cape Cod Bay. There are four bedrooms on the second floor, one of them a bunkroom, which is ideal for children and fair guests, plus 2 full baths.

You'll find a charming, pine panel Master bedroom downstairs, with a novel fireplace and private bath. There is also a living room with fireplace, dining room, another half bath, a modern kitchen with electric dishwasher, and two electric refrigerators on the first floor.

The garage contains an automatic washing machine and new electric dryer. A unique terrace faces the sea. This home is completely furnished and ideal for a large family. Priced at: **\$49,000**



# Beach Houses For Rent



1938

SANDWICH DOWNS—4-room cottage,  
private beach, \$18 week after July 10.  
Center Newton 0206-M.

SANDWICH DOWNS, 4 rm. cottage, priv.  
beach, avail. today, \$25 wk. Big. 0206.  
SuW au16

1942

1956

TO LET—2 cottages at Sandwich  
Downs, Cape Cod. avail. Aug. 11  
thru Labor Day, all conveniences,  
hot water, \$70-\$75. Milford 529-J.  
3t ap7

CAPE COD—Sandwich Downs, 4 rm.  
cottage, all conveniences, sleep 6,  
pvt. beach, \$70 wk. ST 3-3046.

1960

## 1938 — A Troublesome Year for the People of Sandwich

In a six-month span of 1938, three disasters struck Sandwich:

March 23, 1938: With extreme dry grasses and pitch pine forests, arsonists ignited three fires engulfing 1500 acres of Sandwich woodland burning two homes to the ground; both structures in Sandwich Downs.

April 27, 1938: An ill-trained WPA work force lost control of a fire while clearing brush for a Camp Edwards expansion project. To battle the spreading fire, the town firefighters established a backfire. But the wind reversed direction, trapping and killing three local men, and burned 3000 to 4000 acres (equivalent to an area roughly 2 mile wide by 3 miles long) as the inferno approached East Sandwich.

September 21, 1938: The Great Hurricane of 1938 ravaged most New England coastal towns, including Sandwich. The hurricane of 1938 remains the greatest New England hurricane since 1635.

Given this series of back-to-back-to-back calamities, one can imagine the residents of East Sandwich feeling quite vulnerable.



### Four Firemen Caught in Backfire Given Slight Chance to Live — East Sandwich in Danger — Dozen Towns Send Apparatus — Bad Southwick Blaze Finally Brought Under Control

Sandwich, April 27—(AP)—A two-mile wall of fire raced through Cape Cod woodlands tonight, threatening the village of East Sandwich and sending four volunteer firemen to Cape Cod hospital in Hyannis with burns so serious that none was given much chance to live.

All four were trapped when a backfire, started to save East Sandwich, shifted with the wind. Fire wardens atop towers in the burning area termed the conflagration "pretty serious" and said the village would be threatened "unless we get away with our backfiring."

# Villages Threatened, Volunteers Burned In 1938 Cape Cod Forest Fire

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Late tonight state police at Bourne said the wind had "shifted a bit," enabling firemen to begin to get the fire under control in the East Sandwich area. No losses of buildings were reported there, police said, although cranberry bogs were slightly damaged.

## Skirts State Forest

The wind change caused one fire to veer towards Barnstable and another towards Mashpee, both skirting the edges of the Shawnee state forest. Apparatus from a dozen Cape towns was marshaled to fight the fire, which also broke out in five other places between West Barnstable and Bourne.

A 45-mile southwest wind fanned the fires, and observers said there was no indication of its abating. Hospital attaches said the condition of Gordon King, 31, of Sandwich, was most critical. He suffered third degree burns. Names of Clarence Gibbs, 45, deputy fire chief at Buzzard's bay, Tom Adams, 42, of Sandwich, and Irving Draper, 32, of Buzzard's bay, also were on the danger list. They had second and third degree burns

## Sandwich Downs 1940s and 1950s

### **Fishman's Body Found on E. Sandwich Beach**

**EAST SANDWICH, July 20**—The body of a 35-year-old fisherman who fell overboard June 20, was discovered tonight on Sandwich Downs beach.

The victim was identified by police as Labon Phillips, 35 of Maratica, Va., who accidentally fell from the side of the 128-foot trawler Edward J. McKeever of Green Point, L. I., during a storm.

The body was taken to a Sandwich funeral home where Medical Examiner Earle H. Webster pronounced death due to drowning.

G. I. Warcup of East Sandwich, discovered the body while walking on the beach, police said. informed her of the accident.

Boston Globe 7/21/1950

## World War 2 Snippets from the Boston Globe:

### ***Camp Edwards***

## **198th C. A. to Give Shows Each Evening**

CAMP EDWARDS, Aug. 16—Flashing gunfire and powerful searchlights will present spectacular nightly shows for Cape Codders during the next 2½ weeks, when anti-aircraft guns begin their first night-firing next Monday.

Batteries of the 198th Coast Artillery (AA), coordinating searchlights and anti-aircraft guns, will blaze away at a sleeve target towed by a plane from the 101st Observation Squadron. The shooting will take place from the 36th Coast Artillery Brigade firing point at Scorton Neck Beach, East Sandwich.

Three-inch and 37-mm anti-aircraft guns, as well as 50-caliber anti-aircraft machine guns, will blast the sleeve target, and the flaming, roaring guns are expected to present an arresting after-dark picture.

Fishing vessels and pleasure craft are being warned of the new firing schedule, which sees the coastal defense batteries go into action at night for the first time.

## **Horsemen Sought by Coast Guard for Beach Patrol**

### **Riders Would Be Enrolled in Reserve to Watch for Landings on N. E. Shores**

Plans for enrolling hunt clubs, riding academies and active horsemen into a civilian mounted beach patrol to guard against enemy agents landing on New England shores, were being studied by Coast Guard officials here last night.

Personnel for the unit will be enrolled in a temporary reserve status and in certain areas, it is believed, will be expected to volunteer their own mounts for duty. Qualifying applicants will be instructed in patrol details and provided with uniforms and arms.

## **Army Warns of Anti-aircraft Shooting on Cape**

The Army today warned all owners and users of boats, ships and aircraft to stay out of the area off Scorton Neck, Sandwich, between 9 a. m. and noon, and 1 p. m. to 5 p. m., March 16 through March 31, as anti-aircraft guns will be firing. The zone extends 10 miles off-shore and is bounded on the east by a line running due north from Sandy Neck Light and on the west by a line joining Horn Light and Manomet Point.



View looking north from 65 Wing Boulevard West c1940s



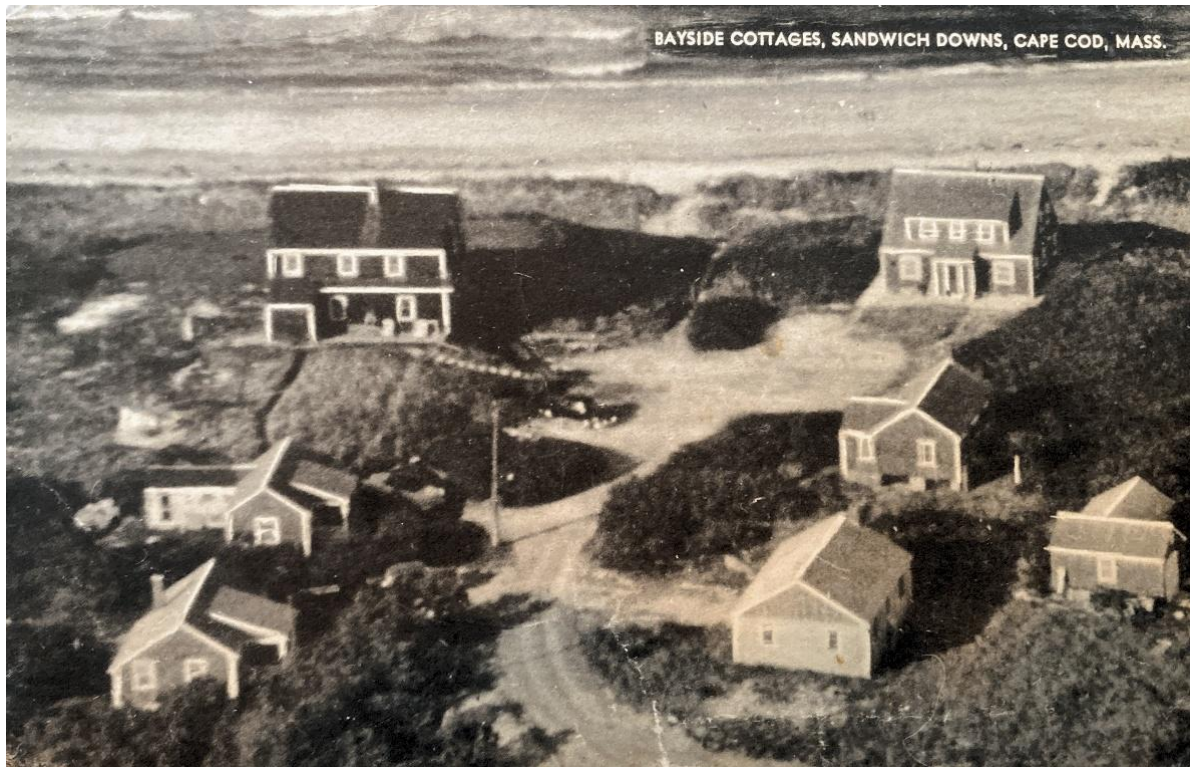
View looking north from 65 Wing Boulevard West c1940s



View looking NW from 65 Wing Boulevard West c1950s



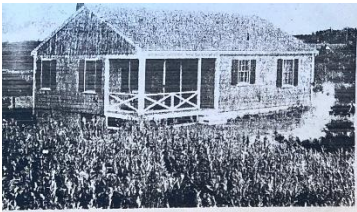
Here's a picture from 1960 of Greg Downs on the left and Craig Johnson and Pups on the beach between the Johnson house on the right and Nosworthy (now Chimento) house on the left. Note the end of Beachway West (near the boat) no stairs, just a walk over the dunes.



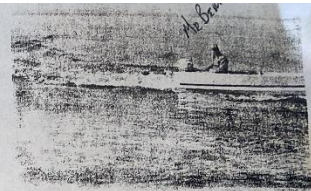
**Bemis Road c1940's**



**Bemis Road and Beachway West c1940s (note WW II kennels - center left)**



BAYSIDE is a group of cottages, some directly on the water front and others slightly to the rear, all having gas stoves, electric refrigerators, continuous hot water and showers. Blankets, silverware, dishes and cooking utensils are included in the rent. Linens are not included but may be rented from us by those who do not care to bring their own. We have adequate heating facilities for inclement weather.



Boats - Outboard Motors - Television

**BAYSIDE COTTAGES**

WALDO H. BEMIS  
East Sandwich Mass.  
Telephone: Sagamore 52-M4

Winter Address:

16 School Street Northboro, Mass.  
Telephone Exeter 3-8895

Drive into Sandwich Downs one half mile east of Scorton Creek Bridge on Route 6A in East Sandwich.

No Dogs Without Permission



BAYSIDE is located on the shore of Cod Bay just off route 6A about seven miles beyond Sagamore Bridge over the Cape Cod Canal.

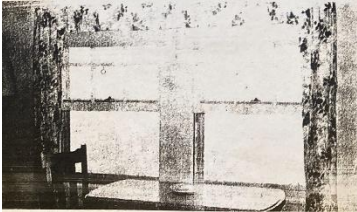
BAYSIDE offers you everything for a vacation comfort, private white sand beach, safe bathing and cool refreshing breezes.

BAYSIDE is centrally located for recreation, golf and sightseeing trip to historic Cape Cod.

Our cottages have from two to four rooms and will accommodate from four to six guests each.

Seasonal rates start June 1st and end September 30th. Take advantage of our reduced rates before and after these dates.

Waldo H. Bemis  
Florence J. Bemis



Our Efficiency Motel is on the waterfront



c1940s (Note-This brochure image is incomplete...we are looking for the original!)

**BAYSIDE COTTAGES**

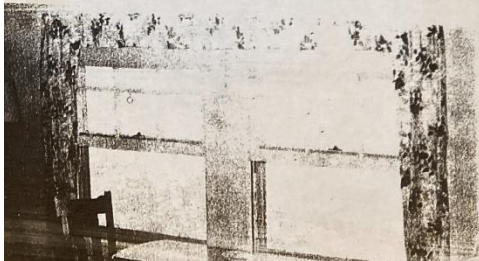
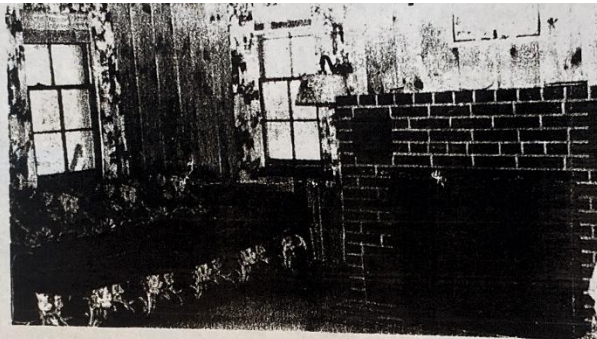
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c1940s



Flossy and Waldo Bemis - Owners of Bayside Cottages - c1940s



'Honeymoon Cottage' (Chris/Paula Downs - 5 Beachway West) - c1940s



Beachway West c1956



Beachway Road looking NE c1956



David W. Hartwell (73 WBW) and their cat (Chum) after a good day of fishing the ledge off Scorton Creek c1950s



Beachway East c1950's



End of Beachway West, 1955, Skid Schermerhorn (30), Bud (5), and Rick (4)



Gifford N Hartwell with granddaughters Joan and Joyce c1960s

## The ‘Biggin’

Our ancestors prepared for great ocean storms with candles and hurricane lamps. Hurricane lamps use kerosene. During Hurricane Gerda (1969), one fuel merchant sold kerosene for a nickel a pint; a fella didn’t need much fuel for a hurricane lamp. Other Cape Codders installed tape on windows and closed functioning storm shutters. Today, some Sandwich Downers prepare for storms with automatic, gas-powered generators. We’ve come a long way. But have we?

A 100-year anniversary is certainly a lot of years, and a lot of storms. When living on the ocean’s edge, gales and nor’easters and hurricanes are the threat we all accept. The following two photos (credit the Hendy family) document damage from “The Great May Gale of 1967”. The storm caused massive beach erosion and cut into the access from Beachway West (as pictured). At that time, the BWW path to the beach was all sand, no stairs, and without manmade drainage systems. Following this storm, the SDA filled the cut with concrete rubble, installed a drain pipe, and backfilled with sand, stabilizing further erosion from advancing upgrade. Then came stairs.



So, you wonder, what is the history of great storms impacting Cape Cod Bay? Well documented is “The Minot’s Light Gale” of 1851 (April), so named because it swept away the Minot Ledge Lighthouse (a recently constructed, but flawed, 70-foot iron structure), drowning its two keepers. The sea rose 18 feet in Barnstable and flood waters stopped just short of the furnace fires at the Sandwich Glass Company. Decades later, “The Great Gale of November 1898” caused even greater flooding and damage along the shores of Cape Cod Bay. A one-mile section of Route 6A in Sandwich was destroyed. It’s noteworthy, The Boston Globe theorized The Great May Gale of 1967 was comparable to the 1898 gale. These three great storms shared important characteristics: gale-force northeast winds, lingering events spanning multiple high tide cycles (possibly at the time of “spring tides”). The Biggin’, especially one with massive beach erosion east of Scorton Creek, is rare. Consider lighting a candle of thanks, while keeping a hurricane lamp close by. Pete Thalmann



Neighborhood Lobster Bake 1970s



Notice the height of the groyne in c1970



EAST SANDWICH RESIDENT CHECKS MAILBOX ON COUNTY ROAD OFF ROUTE 6A

(Photo by Stanley A. Bauman)

Oh my!

The caption is incorrect by stating they were on Old County Road. Those mailboxes are on Wing Blvd's entrance, east side. The closer big one is Hendy's. Tom Schermerhorn remembers it well!



**The Sandwich Downs Family Picnic,**

held on Saturday, June 26<sup>th</sup>, was a huge success thanks to so many people. This year, adults and kids alike, joined in the fun. Moe Ferris led the kids in games ranging from a bocce ball roll off to road races to a hockey shoot out! Moe was superbly assisted by his committee of Paul Larkin, Tom Moon, Skip Reynolds and Heather Hannah so thanks to all the Games Officials!



*(Moe Ferris & Skip Reynolds, what a team!)*

First place winners received hand-embroidered t-shirts (shirts donated by Meg Schultz and embroidered by Carol Ayotte). Second place winners received gift certificates to Twin Acres (donated by Edith Aucion) and every child at the picnic received a gift bag of goodies. The first place winners were:

Event	Age Group	1 <sup>st</sup> Place
Running Race	4 - 6	Noah Cate & "the Mystery Girl"
Running Race	7 - 10	Connor McLeod
Bocce	4 - 6	Sophia Hannah
Bocce	7 - 10	Ben Joaquin
Hockey Shoot	7 - 10	Mike McLeod



*(the "Mystery Girl" is in the middle with the hat! If anyone knows her name, please drop me a note...)*

Meg Schultz organized the picnic with the help of her committee; Edith Aucion, Bridget White & Anne Johnson.

SDA Children's Olympics

August, 2004

Kevin McLeod and Earle Cate barbequed and Vin Maio followed up lunch with his Ice Cream Sundae stand scooping ice cream for anyone interested. We thought the kids would love this part of the festivities but it seemed the adults were far more interested! Many thanks go to all those who helped clean up including Marie Johnson, Maura McLeod, Jane Maio and many others! Many neighbors brought food and beverages to the event and some donated to the overall cost of the picnic. All balloons, gifts and prizes, ice, paper goods, ice cream and many food items were made possible by the generosity of the committee and some Board Members. **NO** monies from the Association funds were used to sponsor this event. So thanks to those who chose to make this event a success.



*(Moe Ferris, Games Master, gives out prizes and gifts to all)*

## Sandwich Downs 'Washashores' – Fall 2019



Mola Mola (a.k.a. Sunfish).



Minke Whale



Dolphin

## Other Noteworthy Events 'Washashores' and More

### Coast Guard Cutter Grounded

In 1960, the 125-foot General Greene Coast Guard cutter washed ashore in East Sandwich



### A Bad Year for Whales

In December 1987, a 40-foot male humpback (known as a “drift whale”) washed ashore near our beach. A single dead whale each year is not unusual but this was different. In just three weeks, eight dead humpbacks were found along Cape Cod waters and beaches. Red tide was suspected.

### Massive Ice Windrow

In early 2018, a major winter storm known as a "bomb cyclone" tore massive pack ice free from the southern edges of frozen Cape Cod Bay. Hurricane-force, onshore winds blew the ice ashore in East Sandwich creating ice walls up to 10-foot-high, called “windrows”. Locals described the scene as awe-inspiring, feeling the ground shake from the force of the waves hitting the ice, a spectacle unusual even for New England.

## Sandwich Downs Sky

How special is our Sandwich Downs sky? Let us count the ways:

Most special of all is our sweet spot location within Cape Cod Bay, where in the summer, we enjoy sunrises *and* sunsets, both over water.

Our panoramic big sky extends 180 degrees across water from horizon to horizon.

Moon light shimmering in the night waters.

Cloud watching is at its best in the big sky of Sandwich Downs.

At times, during summer storms, our vast sky becomes electrified with lightning.

With a new moon and little light pollution, the stars and satellites shine brilliant from horizon to horizon.

When the northern lights dip south into New England, prime viewing can be found in Sandwich Downs.

In the fall, great clouds of starlings perform their age-old ritual of murmuration.

Some enjoy the parade of planes, helicopters, and paraplanes.

Clearly, this list is incomplete. Feel free to annotate.



# Our Secret Place (Shhh)



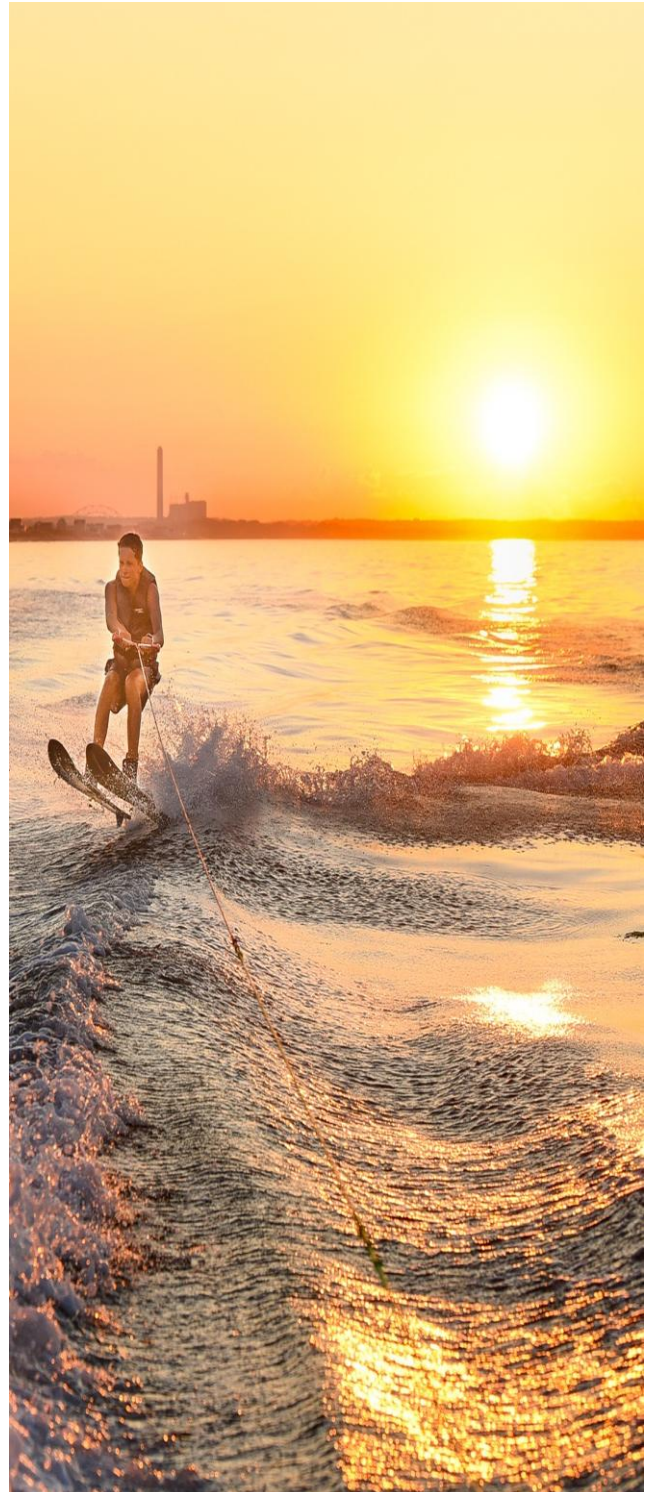
From Sunrise



To Sunset



Striped Bass at Dawn



Last Ride at Dusk

From Dawn to Dusk



## **Sandwich Downs Association (SDA) Chronology of the Association**

Welcome to Sandwich Downs: A Community with Heart and History

The story of Sandwich Downs began back in 1904, when Samuel D. Hannah—a visionary who started out in Boston’s real estate. He eventually came to Cape Cod and began purchasing land. One such purchase was of a tract of land stretching from Cape Cod Bay to Scorton Creek. His passion for real estate led to the creation of the Homestead Trust, which acquired many properties, including one from the Wing Family that would eventually become the Sandwich Downs we know today.

Fast forward to 1926, when the neighborhood started to take shape with official plans for lots and roads. Over the next century, Sandwich Downs grew and evolved, with lots and homes changing hands and new families joining the community. As of 2025, there are 131 residential properties, each with its own story and charm!

As Sandwich Downs grew larger, there was a need for a community management organization. Thus in 1955, members of the neighborhood reached out to attorney Kenneth Wilson with questions about incorporation, liability, and road issues. This led to an association meeting in June of 1955 in which it was decided to incorporate, which was done on October 1, 1956. The first SDA Board members were Edmund Dodd, President (Quincy), Wilfred Bachand, Vice-President, Florence Canning, Secretary, and Bernard Korites, Treasurer. The directors were William Hendy, Edwin Hannah, Agnes Dwyer, Gordon Sanders, Waldo Bemis, Gordon Bishop, John Perry, and Edmund Dodd (E. Sandwich). The Board was allowed to expend up to \$500.00 on any project other than usual current operating expenses. Finally on September 1, 1957 the first meeting of the Sandwich Downs Association (SDA) was called to order by the Edmund Dodd. Only 60 members were on the 1960 list having paid a \$15. membership fee!

The Association was originally started for 3 reasons, all of which are still in the Bylaws today:

- To promote a feeling of community and well-being among property owners, residents, and guests within Sandwich Downs.
- To maintain and improve, to the extent feasible, the roads, common areas, grounds, and beaches of Sandwich Downs, and to encourage and facilitate the

participation of all property owners in decisions related to such maintenance and improvement.

- To represent its members in dealing with the Town of Sandwich and other entities.

Association membership and voting rights are based on property ownership and payment of the annual maintenance fee. This fee is used for the maintenance of the roads, common areas, professional services, and the beach access stairs. Over the years, our residents have recognized the purpose and value of having maintenance managed by the SDA.

Many thanks to all who have faithfully served and will continue to serve on the board and on committees that help to improve the lives of all SDA neighbors. Sandwich Downs certainly is a welcoming place for all because of the tireless service of many over the years. Of particular note is the volunteer Roads Committee who provide many hours of free labor to maintain our roads. Pictured here is a 2022 photo of them:



Pictured here are Paul Larkin, Michael Meehan, Ken Tracy, Winchester Woollard, Brett Ayotte, Todd Shepherd, Tom Schermerhorn, Bud Schermerhorn, and Jeff Gorman. (The Boston Garden has their “Bull Gang”, and we are likewise blessed.)

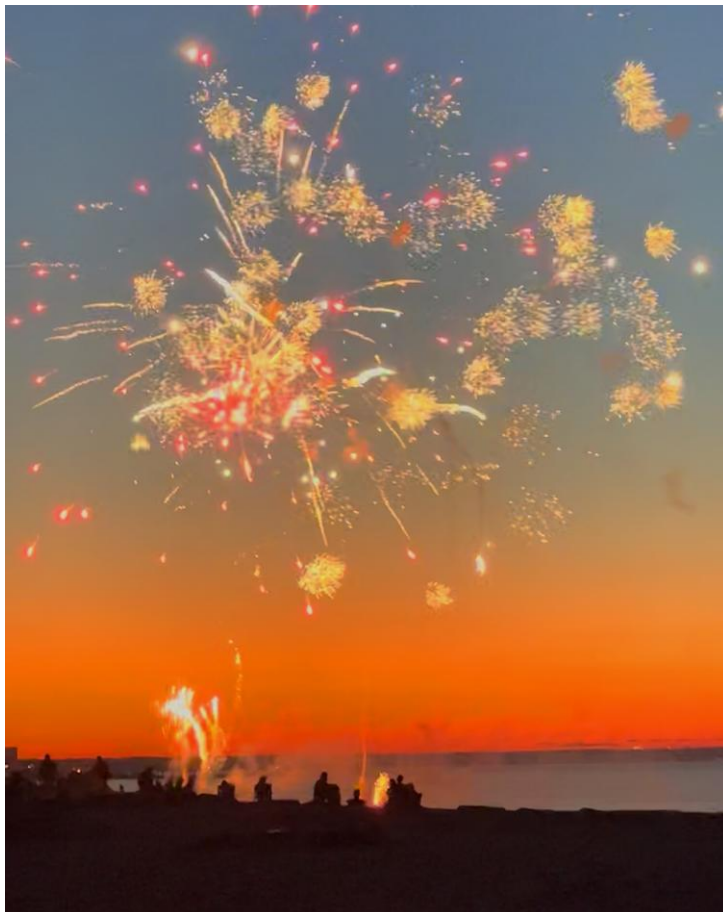
# Conclusion - What Might the Future Hold for Sandwich Downs?

This is a good question to ponder:

The fundamental character of our place—the careful integration of architecture and landscape, the sense of community fostered by thoughtful design, and the preservation of Cape Cod's natural beauty — has remained intact through the work of Samuel and Edwin, their children and the families who have made Sandwich Downs their home.

We, the owners will determine the answer to this question. Surely there will be many new and more expansive homes, the rising seas and other environmental changes will impact the neighborhood, older members will pass away, new generations will move in, tensions will continue over land rights, and so many other things will take place. But we trust that the positive neighborhood spirit will remain...may all of us continue to enjoy:

**A MEMORABLE SANDWICH DOWNS!**



# Notes

The committee has sought to record each entry in this booklet with great care. We welcome additions or corrections for publication in future editions to any of the committee members - Jeanne Lesperance, Frank Hartwell, Donna Hartwell, Pete Thalmann, Kathie Reynolds, Skip Reynolds, Bud Schermerhorn, Ilana Weiss, or Heather Hoganson. Their email addresses are on the uploaded copy of this Celebration Booklet posted on the Sandwich Downs Website.

No unauthorized use of any of the contents of this booklet may be used without previous approval of the editors.  
Cover/Back photos – Sandwich Downs Beach Fireworks 2024 & Jack Thalmann on the sandbar

First Edition - May 2026