

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE NEW BEDFORD WHALING MUSEUM

Winter 2018, vol.50, no.1

HARBINGER

NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY WWW.WPTHISTORY.ORG
PO BOX N188, WESTPORT, MA 02790-1203, WESTPORTHISTORY@WESTPORTHISTORY.NET



ANNUAL APPEAL

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Westport Historical Society is to engage the public in the exploration of the town's rich history and culture, to inspire a spirit of discovery through educational programs and encourage active participation in the preservation and interpretation of our past.

The Society collects and shares this history. Its goal is to foster the imaginative process of connecting to the past, making it relevant to our present and vital to the future of our community.

How can the Westport Historical Society, by its nature rooted in the past, remain relevant to the present needs of our community? How can an unfurnished historic house captivate a young child and yet engage an adult? Can we host exhibitions in the same space that provides a welcoming adventure to 300 excited young witches and wizards? Is it possible to create a place that an historical architecture aficionado, a summer tourist, or a long-time resident will each find meaningful and enjoyable? This year we have met these challenges head on at the Handy House.

The Handy House, with its robust visitor numbers and large scale vibrant events such as the Artisan Fair, is proof that historic house museums can play a valuable role in the community. By breaking the mold of established historic house museums, many of which offer a static object-centered experience, the Handy House has evolved into a place that enhances the cultural vitality of Westport and forges a strong connection to people of all ages.

WITH YOUR SUPPORT WE WILL CONTINUE TO EXPAND UPON OUR COMMUNITY OUTREACH. Please consider a gift that will help us to sustain our momentum into the coming year. The diversity of our activities, extending far beyond the Handy House, is remarkable. We have introduced first-graders to the Macomber turnip, hosted family workshops on our maritime heritage, provided after-school programs focused on traditional handi-crafts, and encouraged families to explore their town with Westport Summer Passport. Concurrently we have tackled questions of social justice at our Paul Cuffe symposium, launched an African American and Native American heritage trail and successfully organized our inaugural House Tour. Throughout the year, we have demonstrated excellence in reaching out to new audiences, breaking a few rules of traditional historic house museums, and embracing as many dimensions of the past as possible.



Don't forget to save your Lees Market receipts and bring them to the Westport Historical Society. Lees Market generously donates 1% of the total receipt value. You can drop them off at the Bell School or bring them to a historical society program.

continued on page 2



THE WESTPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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The *Harbinger* is published by the Westport Historical Society, a 501(c)(3) non profit organization.

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Find us on Facebook!



Explore Westport's Historic Streetscapes:

WESTPORT POINT AND THE HEAD OF WESTPORT

The Historical Society has been leading guided tours of Westport Point and the Head of Westport for some time. This year we decided it would be helpful for people to be able take these tours whenever they wanted, so we have developed self-guided tours of the two most historic villages in Westport.

These walking tours will show you historic architecture, from pre-revolutionary houses to stunning Greek Revivals and Victorians from the mid-19th century to a Powder House from the War of 1812 era. But more than houses, it's a walk through history, with stories such as the Westport "pauper" who became the richest man in New Bedford, and the restaurant that was swept away in the 1954 hurricane with the bartender still inside.

It's educational, it's fun, and it's free! Download your self-guided walking tours at

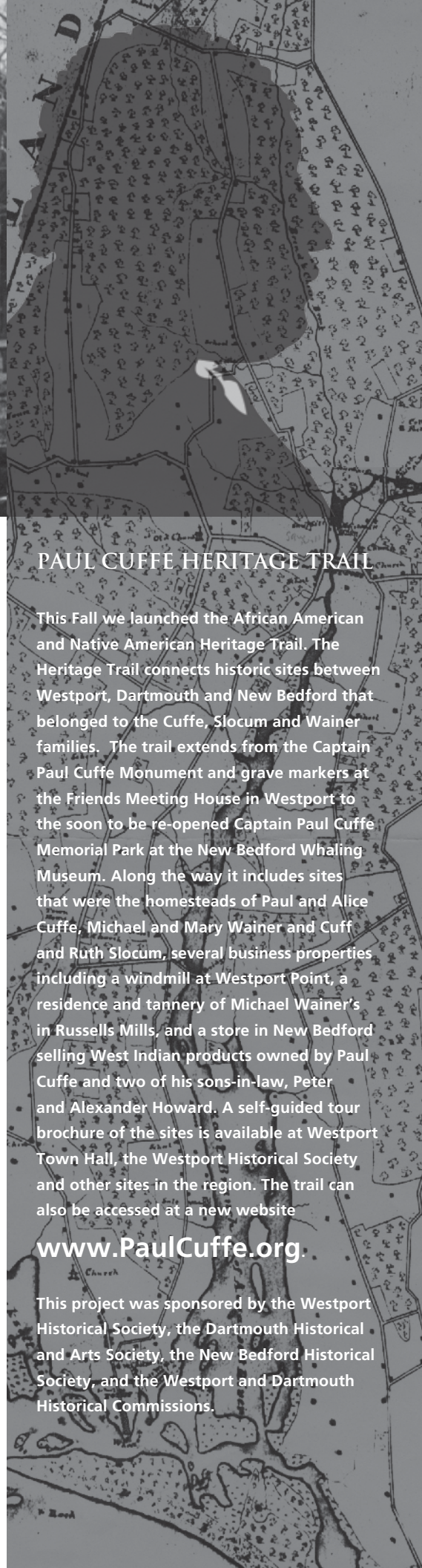
www.wpthistory/explore

Annual Appeal from page 1 continued

As a small non-profit organization with an increasingly large footprint and presence, your help is needed more than ever before. Our core mission remains challenging as our operating budget continues to grow along with our responsibilities. Your support for our annual appeal sustains many of the essential behind-the-scenes activities that form the foundation of our organization and mission: stewardship of our collection, maintenance of our two historic buildings, and funding for our dedicated staff.

As we strive to strengthen our role in the community, we remain deeply grateful for your on-going support of the Society. If you are a previous donor, please consider a move to a new gift level. If you are a new donor, please understand that your participation is critical to our success. Donations can be made securely online via our website www.wpthistory.org.

Thank you.



Education news

It is quite satisfying to walk down the hall at the Macomber Primary School carrying a paper sack overflowing with the leaves of a Macomber Turnip and receive smiles of recognition. These smiles come from faculty, staff, current Kindergarten students who have already learned about the history of this distinctive local vegetable, and, from 1st graders who remember it from last year when we teach them about local heroine Sarah Turner this year. What's even more exciting is interacting with students at the elementary school who remember learning how to hand sew or learning about Paul Cuffe. They say, "Hey! I remember something about that!" when we see them in later grades.

These cumulated layered learning experiences are meant to provide students with a better understanding of the history of their town in a fun and memorable way, so that they take that history with them throughout their lives and share it with family and friends. All of these lessons are linked to strands in the current school standards.

Thank you to Bob Pierce of Berry Hill Farm and JD Squires of Lees Market for donating our weekly Macomber Turnip; Sarah Gifford and Alice Huff for being such wonderful storybook readers, and Buzzy Baron for helping to reshape the Paul Cuffe lesson. It has been so much fun working with these wonderful volunteers! Thanks also to Principal Carolyn Pontes and all of the K-2 teachers and staff for so warmly welcoming us into the MAC.

PAUL CUFFE HERITAGE TRAIL

This Fall we launched the African American and Native American Heritage Trail. The Heritage Trail connects historic sites between Westport, Dartmouth and New Bedford that belonged to the Cuffe, Slocum and Wainer families. The trail extends from the Captain Paul Cuffe Monument and grave markers at the Friends Meeting House in Westport to the soon to be re-opened Captain Paul Cuffe Memorial Park at the New Bedford Whaling Museum. Along the way it includes sites that were the homesteads of Paul and Alice Cuffe, Michael and Mary Wainer and Cuff and Ruth Slocum, several business properties including a windmill at Westport Point, a residence and tannery of Michael Wainer's in Russells Mills, and a store in New Bedford selling West Indian products owned by Paul Cuffe and two of his sons-in-law, Peter and Alexander Howard. A self-guided tour brochure of the sites is available at Westport Town Hall, the Westport Historical Society and other sites in the region. The trail can also be accessed at a new website

www.PaulCuffe.org

This project was sponsored by the Westport Historical Society, the Dartmouth Historical and Arts Society, the New Bedford Historical Society, and the Westport and Dartmouth Historical Commissions.



WINTER HISTORY FORUM 2018
WAMPANOAG FAMILIES OF WESTPORT
PRESENTED BY R. ANDREW PIERCE

Saturday January 13, 10am
Westport Free Public Library
408 Old County Road, Westport

R. Andrew Pierce will present research into the Wampanoag families of Westport and south-eastern Massachusetts.

19th century New England genealogists largely ignored Native Americans, who despite centuries in the area, had been marginalized and forgotten. This missing history inspired Andrew Pierce and co-author Dr. Jerome Segel to compile comprehensive genealogies of Wampanoag families. The resulting massive two volume set "Wampanoag Families of Martha's Vineyard" is a definitive work presenting over 20 years' research at dozens of archives using vital statistics, census, land, probate, court missionary, military and maritime records.

R. Andrew Pierce has been a professional genealogist since 1984 and has worked for hundreds of clients, composed and contributed to books and articles, and lectured at conferences, seminars and workshops. His specialties are Irish-American connections, 18th and 19th century New Englanders, missing heirs, and Native Americans of southeastern Massachusetts.

Suggested donation \$5.



WESTPORT HISTORY 101

Saturday, March 10, April 14, May 5, 10-11:30am

Westport Free Public Library, 408 Old County Road

Besides Westport's incorporation in 1787, how much do you really know about our sleepy little town?

Lexington, Concord and even New Bedford may have grabbed all the historic headlines, but Westport has a rich past of whaling and fishing, farming, manufacturing, immigration and even tourism that has contributed to the fabric of the SouthCoast region. Westport Historical Society President Tony Connors will lead us on a fascinating journey through Westport's history. He'll begin with the glaciers that influenced the town's development then travel through time until the decline of the town's manufacturing base in the early 20th century.

MARCH 10 includes Westport's geological formation, the early Native American inhabitants, first European contact, Plymouth Colony and King Philip's War. We then discuss the early settlement of Old Dartmouth and end with the American Revolution.

APRIL 14 covers the incorporation and organization of Westport in 1787, but also includes early roads and transportation, the whaling and fishing industries, and early industrial development.

MAY 5 starts with Westport in the Civil War, the rise of cotton manufacturing and Westport Factory Village, the introduction of railroads and trolleys, and the development of Route 6. The course ends in the early 20th century with a look at major changes and trends.

Suggested donation \$5 per session.

DID YOU MISS OUR DECEMBER 1 PROGRAM ON WESTPORT'S FOUNDING FAMILIES?

Local historian and genealogist Richard Gifford explored the stories of the first generation of settlers in Westport in the 17th century who were drawn by an abundance of rich farmland, navigable waterways, and by the desire for religious freedom. He focused on the Tripp, Gifford, Macomber and Wing families, highlighting some surprising stories about these families. A video of this program can be viewed on the website of the Westport Historical Society <http://wpthistory.org/westport-historical-society-programs>.





Shipbuilding at Westport Point, drawing by Ray Shaw

WESTPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REPORT 2017

FROM THE PRESIDENT *What a year!*



In some ways it was a typical year for the Historical Society—over 1000 visitors to the Handy House, a full series of informative history programs, lots of interaction with school kids, a well-attended Artisan Fair, a fun spooky Halloween program, and great loyal support from our members. But it strikes me that we took the Historical Society to a new level in 2017. Our first-ever House Tour was a great fund raiser and the feedback was so positive, and support from local businesses so good, that we plan to do it again in 2018. Volunteer support was terrific: we needed over 60 volunteers for the house tour, and everyone reported they had a great time. We also instituted a Development Committee to ensure our fund-raising is aligned with our activities and plans for the future. This year's exhibit at the Handy House, "Headwaters to Harbor, Westport's Heritage of Water," was the most ambitious we've ever done, thanks to the curators Jenny O'Neill and Ray Shaw. (We also opened the Handy House every Saturday, rather than twice a month.) Finally, we completed the service building, with handicapped-accessible bathrooms, storage space, and a small kitchen for catering events. The style and modest size of this barn structure fits in beautifully with the Handy House.

It was a fine year indeed, and THANKS to all the volunteers and members who made it possible.

Tony Connors, President



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2017 was a year of “groundbreaking” events which included a new fundraiser, a symposium, a major exhibition, and a construction project. It was a year in which we saw some of our long-term plans come to fruition, such as our new building at the Handy House, and a year in which the Historical Society took an enormous step forward towards ensuring its own financial sustainability.

IMPROVING VISITOR AMENITIES AT THE HANDY HOUSE

With the completion of the “barn” at the Handy House, we are now able to provide visitors with essential bathroom facilities. This building also contains a storage and utility space to support the ongoing operation of the historic Handy House. The Historical Society is enormously grateful to the Manton Foundation, and to the many individuals who contributed to this project. A new septic system was funded through a Community Preservation Act grant.

TELLING THE STORY OF OUR TOWN

This year’s exhibition, *Headwaters to Harbor: Westport’s Heritage of Water*, explored our relationship with the river, beaches and maritime industries. The exhibition occupied four rooms inside the Handy House, each room presenting a different story: river journey, swordfishing, East Beach and shipbuilding. Although the Handy House is a challenging space in which to present exhibitions, with the help of co-curator and graphic designer Ray Shaw, it has been possible to develop methods of displaying objects and labels without disturbing the special architectural interiors within the house.



EVOLVING THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE AT THE HANDY HOUSE

Visitors were offered a more regular opening schedule as well as the opportunity to take a docent-led tour to supplement the self-guided experience. The Historical Society is fortunate to have retained a wonderful team of Handy House docents, who offer our visitors a warm welcome and knowledgeable responses to any questions. This summer we held a series of hands-on workshops at the Handy House geared towards families, which explored our maritime heritage including activities relating to knot tying, scrimshaw and wampum making.

PROVIDING NEW PERSPECTIVES ON PAUL CUFFE AND THE WAINER FAMILY

In September we hosted a symposium on Paul Cuffe in association with the New Bedford Historical Society, and a number of other local organizations. As part of this event, we launched the African American and Native American Heritage Trail, creating a brochure and a new website www.paulcuffe.org. This trail highlights locations relating to the family of Paul Cuffe and Michael Wainer, such as the windmill at the Point, the correct location of his property, and a number of other sites in Dartmouth and New Bedford. The Historical Society is very thankful for generous contributions from BayCoast Bank, Ralph and Calla Guild, Al and Cindy Lees and grants from the Westport Cultural Council and Helen Ellis Charitable Trust.

ENGAGING YOUNGER AUDIENCES

During fiscal year 2017, the Children's Heritage Education Program interacted with grades K-6 in the Westport Community Schools. We reached a total of 585 students and continued our long-term collaboration with the Westport Education Foundation and the Westport River Watershed Alliance. New programs focusing on the Macomber Turnip and Paul Cuffe were introduced to grades K-2. All programs were tied to grade level education standards. We introduced our first after school program



“Counted Cross Stitch” taught by volunteer Robin Winters and with enough volunteers for a 1:1 instructor to student ratio.

We also introduced our first summer program for kids at the Handy House, linking hands-on history to the water-themed exhibition. In addition to Westport public school students, this program brought in home-school students and students from other schools outside the district. Many thanks to Erika Hamer, Marilyn Packard Luther, Howie Gifford, and the 1850s Ladies for volunteering to teach these workshops. In total, this year, the Westport Historical Society Children’s Heritage Education Program interacted with Westport students forty-three times. Teaching local history and introducing students to hands-on learning is successful through the positive support of the Westport Community School District, especially Macomber Primary School Principal Carolyn Pontes, and, our numerous dedicated volunteers.

PRESERVING WESTPORT’S HISTORY

The Historical Society’s collection includes 5000 photographs, 4000 documents, 1500 objects and 377 books. This year our postcard collection, which is already very extensive, received two significant additions: a wonderful personal collection donated by Jan Hall; and the long-term loan of the Al Lees postcard collection from the New Bedford Whaling Museum. However, we still have some significant work ahead of us, especially concerning the need for adequate storage for our collection.

SECURING FINANCIAL STABILITY

The biggest event of the year, our inaugural House Tour, took place on August 6th. Seven private homes, 60 volunteers, 400 attendees and an absolutely perfect summer’s day combined to create a memorable experience for everyone. It certainly was an extraordinary way to showcase Westport to residents and visitors and, most impressively, raised \$31,000 (net) to further our mission. This event has positively



transformed what had been an uncertain financial future for the operating budget of the Historical Society. Plans are already underway for our 2018 House Tour!

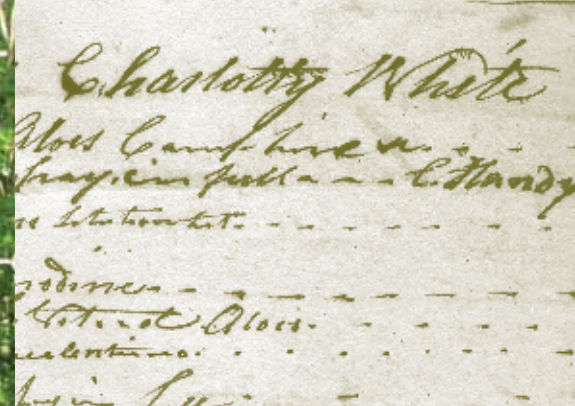
INCREASING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Crafting events and activities that engage all members of our community remains a core goal. Our audience is diverse in age, interest, and increasingly diverse in location through our website and Facebook page. New initiatives this year included a downloadable brochure for a self-guided walking tour of the Point and the Head. We continued to build upon initiatives such as Westport Summer Passport and to present a year-round schedule of lectures and our signature annual events such as the Artisan Fair and Halloween at Handy House, each attracting several hundred visitors.

LOOKING AHEAD

What follows such a groundbreaking year? In 2018 we hope to continue the theme of transformation. Visitors to the Handy House can expect much improved parking facilities, and an ever-deeper experience of local history with a special focus on archaeology. Our 2018 exhibition will use the thousands of fragments unearthed at the Handy House and the Waite-Kirby-Potter site to tell the story of life in 18th and 19th century households. As the Board prepares to embark upon long-range visioning and strategic planning, we remain grateful to our supporters and for the boundless curiosity and enthusiasm of our members, donors, researchers, volunteers and visitors.

Jenny O'Neill, Executive Director



STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

October 1 2016 – Sep 30 2017

REVENUE AND SUPPORT

Direct Public Support	\$57,148.01
Grant Revenue	\$12,400.00
Special Events	\$34,720.60
Investment income	\$16,800.00
Other	\$59.38
Sales of merchandise	\$1,380.26
Program Fees	\$2,823.00

TOTAL REVENUE AND SUPPORT \$125,331.25

EXPENSES

Fundraising	\$5,130.54
Contract Services	\$11,389.76
Facilities	\$1,519.35
Utilities	\$7,237.35
Operations	\$9,913.45
Program	\$17,175.79
Other	\$5,223.12
Payroll	\$52,917.92
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$110,507.28





thank you!



DONATIONS RECEIVED BETWEEN OCT 1 2016 - SEP 30 2017

We gratefully acknowledge the contributions by many individuals at all levels. Given space limitations we are unable to include all donors. This list includes contributors of \$100 plus.

\$100-\$249

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\$10,000+

Anonymous

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Westport Cultural Council
Helen E. Ellis Charitable Trust

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Westport Chiropractic Inc
Westport Federal Credit Union
Westport Point Neighborhood Assoc.
White's of Westport



Support LOCAL HISTORY!

The Westport Historical Society is supported by donations from individuals, foundations and businesses who care about preserving the special heritage of Westport. In addition to joining the Historical Society as a member, please consider these other ways you can support our mission:

CONTRIBUTIONS IN HONOR OR MEMORIAL GIFTS

Honor a friend or relative, commemorate a special anniversary or mark the passing of a loved one with a contribution.

BEQUESTS

Leave a lasting legacy for the future by naming the Historical Society as a beneficiary in your will.

CORPORATE MATCHING GIFTS

Please check with your employer to see if they offer a matching gift program.

BUSINESS SPONSORSHIPS

The Historical Society offers local businesses many different levels of sponsorship and recognition.

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Bay Coast Bank

A very special thank you to the following businesses for donating professional services:

Tim's Lawn Care
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 Evelyn Audet Lighting Design





Recent acquisitions

The following are some highlights of recent acquisitions. We are very grateful to all who have entrusted us with these gifts:



Expand your local history horizons! **Explore** Westport's history @ our Website

Share memories and knowledge @ our Facebook page

Connect with our collections @ our collections database

Visit www.wpthistory.org



2017.026 DONATED BY RICHARD DONNELLY

19th century correspondence belonging to Tripp family and Briggs family, schoolbook belonging to Maria Tripp, Temperance Song.

2017.027 DONATED BY JUDY LEPREAU KELLER

Postcard of Horseneck Beach.

2017.030 DONATED BY DIANE CAMBRA

Agricultural newspapers dating from 1873-1885

2017.032 DONATED BY BILL AND HEATHER REED

Slides from the Westport Parade 1958

2018.001 DONATED BY MERRY CUSHING

Certificate of marriage between Thomas Brayton and Merry M. Borden, 1862

2018.002 DONATED BY LINDA LAMBIASE

Westport tax receipts 1907-1915

2018.003 DONATED BY DICK AND LOIS SPIRLET

Copy of menu from Remington Clambake

2018.005

DVD, copies of Westport maps, Dr. Handy's account books.

2018.007

A Proclamation by Governor Charles D. Baker: Paul Cuffe Day September 7, 2017.

CAPTAIN PARDON COOK OF WESTPORT



The best-known citizen of Westport is Paul Cuffe, a master mariner with African and Indian roots who rose to prominence as a captain, ship-builder, entrepreneur, philanthropist, and advocate for civil rights and school integration. Less well known is Pardon Cook, also an accomplished master mariner from Westport, who commanded more whaling voyages than any other person of color in the nineteenth century, and whose life intersected with that of Paul Cuffe through maritime ventures and marriages.

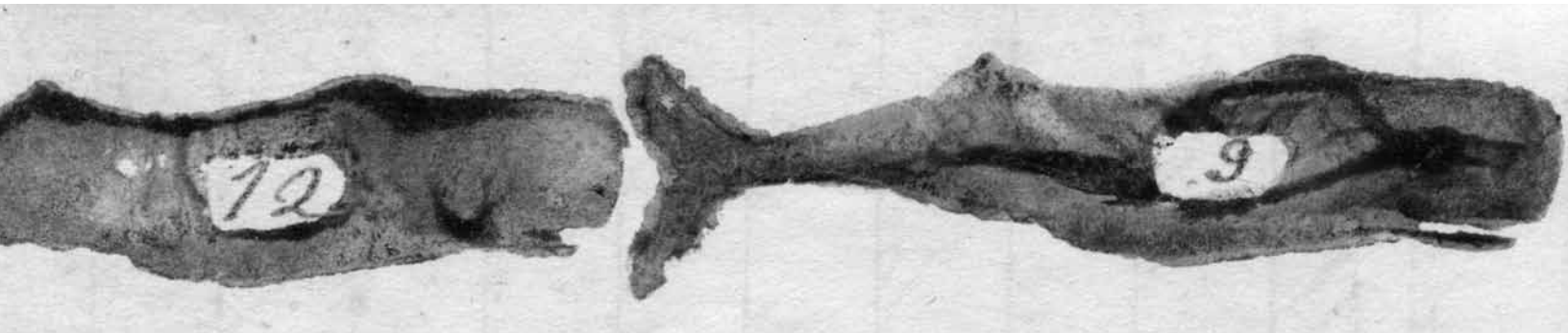
Pardon Cook's heritage begins in slavery. His ancestors were slaves of the Almy and Cook families of Tiverton, Rhode Island—some of whom were not only slave owners but also engaged in the slave trade in Newport. Many of the slaves and free blacks of this area intermarried with Wampanoag Indians. Both groups were socially and economically marginalized and found refuge and community with each other.

Pardon's father, Benjamin Cook, was born in Little Compton. Benjamin's father, Abraham Cook, was most likely born in Africa, and his mother, Mary Robbins, was Wampanoag. In 1790 Benjamin married Catherine Almy, daughter of Ned Almy, a freed African slave, and Mary Nunksue, a Wampanoag. Benjamin was a farmer and a mariner. He owned 20 acres of land bordering the Allen's Neck Meeting House in Dartmouth. He died in 1812 in a fall from the mast of a ship—probably a Paul Cuffe-owned vessel. After his death, Cuffe loaned money to

the estate to pay off creditors and keep the farm intact for Benjamin's widow. Thus Pardon Cook was a product of the African slave trade and a blend of Indian and African cultures—much like Paul Cuffe and Charlotte White, along with many others in southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island. He was born in 1795. Little is known about his childhood until he became a mariner.

Many jobs were unavailable to people of color, but going to sea—particularly whaling—was a good option for Indians and African-Americans. Indians had been whaling long before Europeans came to the region and they had a reputation as formidable harpooners. Black mariners tended to be relegated to roles as cooks or stewards, but they were generally paid on the same scale as whites. In the dangerous business of whaling, a captain was more interested in the skill of a crew member than in his skin color. And in small but significant numbers, black mariners worked their way up to the highest positions on whaling and merchant vessels.

We don't know when Pardon Cook began his whaling career, but his first recorded voyage was on Paul Cuffe's brig *Traveller* in 1816. He must have had some maritime experience before this, because instead of signing on as an ordinary seaman, he was second mate, one of the officers. He held the same rank on the Westport-based brig *Industry* when it sailed to the Cape Verde Islands in 1819. Two years later he was on the *Industry* again, this time as first mate. He was first



mate on two more Westport voyages—the *Almy* in 1822 and the *Traveller* in 1826. There were two more voyages out of New Bedford in which his rank was unknown (but not captain): in 1831 the *Two Brothers* brought back over 2,000 barrels of whale oil; and in 1836 the *Delight* was lucky to return after the ship lost both masts and whaling boats in a severe gale.

Around the time that he attained the rank of first mate, in February 1821, Pardon married Alice Cuffe, one of Paul's daughters. They built a house on property purchased by Paul Cuffe near the Cuffe and Wainer homesteads, on Drift Road south of Hix Bridge.

In 1839 Cook took the first of his four commands as captain of Westport whaling vessels. All had mixed black and white crews. On the *Elizabeth* (1839) his first mate was Rodney Wainer, and Samuel Cuffe was a black crew member. He took the *Elizabeth* out again the following year with Asa and Rodney Wainer as first and second mates. He had the same officers on the *Elizabeth* in 1841. For this voyage Cook and Asa Wainer held part ownership of the vessel. Unfortunately the voyage was only marginally successful, and the small brig was broken up in 1842. In 1843 he took the brig *Juno* to the Indian Ocean, with four black crew members (although the officers were white).

That was Pardon Cook's last known whaling voyage. On October 8, 1849, he died of typhoid fever, three days after his

son Pardon had succumbed to the same disease. He was 53 years old. Another son, Lysander, also died in 1849, most likely from typhoid fever as well.

Pardon had participated in at least eleven whaling voyages, almost all as officer or captain—possibly more voyages as captain than any other man of color in the first half of the nineteenth century. His legacy includes significant connections to Paul Cuffe and Absalom Boston (another black whaling captain, from Nantucket) through marriage and whaling, and he was a major figure in the extended Afro-Indian community that supported each other to succeed in a society and economy that marginalized them.

Pardon's sister Mary married Paul Cuffe, Jr. His sister Deborah married Nathaniel A. Borden of New Bedford, who ran for state representative in 1839, probably the first African-American to do so. He lost, but it was a bold attempt at political representation. His son Benjamin P. Cook married Chloe Wainer, and lived at the Paul Cuffe homestead. Their daughter Catherine was the last Cuffe descendant to own the family property.

Outside of his own tight-knit community, Pardon Cook was not well known. But in August 1843 he was featured in an article in *The Liberator*, William Lloyd Garrison's abolitionist newspaper. The writer, identified only as E. Smith, wrote: "Whilst in Westport I also had a pleasant interview with Capt. Pardon Cook, who married a daughter of Paul Cuffe. Capt.

Cook is the only colored man, so far as we know, who enjoys the distinction of commanding a whaler. Capt. C. is not obnoxious to the charge of being indebted for his abilities to any white blood that he possesses, for few are darker than he. He has performed three voyages from Westport, as master, and in every instance succeeded in making a good voyage.... He has invariably given satisfaction to owners and crew—has never been troubled with mutiny or other serious disorder among his men, and has always returned with the same crew with whom he sailed—a circumstance of which few whalers can boast. On the 22nd of June, Capt. C. sailed on his fourth voyage, in the brig *Juno*, of Westport, having one of his white neighbors as his mate. Hitherto, his voyages have all been made in brigs. We presume a few more trials will so far convince the public of his ability and trustworthiness, that he will be thought capable of managing a three-masted vessel...."

The article was not entirely accurate. Cook was not the only black mariner to command a whaleship: his brother-in-law Absalom Boston was captain of the whaler *Industry* out of Nantucket in 1822. And while he had no deserters on his first three commands, the voyage of the *Juno* would be plagued by numerous desertions. Minor errors aside, this is a fine tribute to a little-known but remarkable mariner from Westport.

Richard Gifford and Tony Connors

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