



The Cachalotter

News, Information, and Memories by and for the Members of the Camp Cachalot Alumni Association

Looking Back at Noquochoke

Winter Gathering 2008 Will Feature Both Noquochoke and Cachalot History, Plus a Member Update

On January 19th, 2008, from 11:00AM though 3:00PM, we'll be hosting our fourth-annual Winter Gathering at Fall River Heritage State Park. Like we've done in previous years, we plan to have some historic artifacts on display for folks to examine while they get together and chat with old camp friends. This year, we've decided to spend a little extra time focusing on Cachalot's most significant "predecessor" camp, the former Camp Noquochoke, which served the youth of the Fall River area from 1921 through 1980. We'll have the photos and film of Noquochoke that we've been able to collect so far on hand, as well as a collection of signs and plaques salvaged from Camp Noquochoke before its sale.

Our newest, and largest, display will be the last main camp sign from Camp Noquochoke, recently recovered by the Association through the graciousness of the Keefe family of Westport, who are the current owners of part of the old Noquochoke property. The sign is in



poor repair at the moment, the result of years of exposure to the weather, and we hope to find people interested in helping us restore the sign so that this will be the only time it will be displayed in its current condition.

In addition to the displays, we are pleased to have three guest speakers for the day: Brian Bastarache, who will speak to us about the

ecology of Camp Cachalot; Mike Vieira, who will speak about Camp Noquochoke's history from his upcoming book; and David Anderson, the Scout Executive of our parent organization, the Narragansett Council, who will speak about the impact the Association has had at Camp since its founding (see the sidebar for a little biographical info on our speakers.)

We'll also have snacks and drinks on hand through the course of the day, and we hope to get some pictures of our alumni while you're there. As with our other events, we'll have a station set up where we can photograph or scan in your memorabilia or photographs (we're especially interested in Noquochoke pictures) to add to our historical archive. Through the generosity of our members, we have nearly 1,700 photos in the collection so far, and it's growing all the time.

Hope to see you there! 🐸

Winter Gathering 2008

Saturday, January 19th, 2008
11:00AM through 3:00PM

Heritage State Park
200 Davol Street
Fall River, MA 02720

Free admission for
members and non-members

Send email to
gathering2008@cachalotalumni.org
or visit

www.cachalotalumni.org
for more info.



Brian Bastarache is an at-large member of the Association's Executive Committee, and a former Nature Director for summer camp at Cachalot. Brian is the head of the Department of Natural Resource Management at Bristol County Agricultural High School, holds a Bachelor of Science in Wildlife and Fisheries Biology from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and is currently pursuing graduate studies at Harvard University. He has acted as curator for the Bristol County Natural History Center at BCAHS for several years, and has been active both in Scouting and in several biology- and natural history-related organizations including the Society for Conservation Biology and the Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles.

Brian will be discussing the ecology at Camp Cachalot, including the nature of pine barrens in general, local flora and fauna, and current issues facing Cachalot including invasive species like phragmites australis, an aggressively-growing reed which currently has a foothold on the northern shore of Five Mile Pond.



Michael Vieira is a member of the Association, having attended both Camp Noquochoke in his youth, and Camp Cachalot as an adult. He served on Noquochoke's staff in 1969, then later on Cachalot's staff, serving as Camp Director in 1976 and, more recently, as Camp Commissioner from 1997 through 1999. He is the Dean of the Division of Business and Information Management at Bristol Community College, and remains active in Scouting. He has contributed articles to local newspapers, including his "Letters from Camp" series written from Camp Cachalot during the summer of 1998 (see our web site at <http://www.cachalotalumni.org/links/> to find links to the original articles.) He is currently writing a book about Camp Noquochoke.

Mike will be discussing the history of Camp Noquochoke and sharing personal anecdotes from his own time there.



David Anderson is the Scout Executive for the Narragansett Council BSA, the parent organization of the Camp Cachalot Alumni Association and the Council currently responsible for the stewardship and operation of Cachalot Scout Reservation. A professional Scouter for the last 25 years, Dave is himself a former Camp staffer from Camp Massawepie in upstate New York and numerous other camps.

Dave will be speaking to our members about the impact the Association has had both at Camp and within the Narragansett Council since its establishment.

The Cachaletter

The Cachaletter is the newsletter of the Camp Cachalot Alumni Association. It is published twice annually: once in the spring and once in the fall, by the Communications Committee.

Questions or other feedback related to *The Cachaletter* can be sent via email to cachaletter@cachalotalumni.org.

Editor
Dennis J. Wilkinson, II

Contributors
Peter Ashworth
Jeff Dumais
Thomas Whelan

The Camp Cachalot Alumni Association

The Camp Cachalot Alumni Association was founded in 2004 with the express purpose of supporting Camp Cachalot and being a social organization for the extended family of the Camp. Anyone who has ever had any involvement with Camp Cachalot, the former Moby Dick Council, or any of the predecessor camps or Councils is eligible for membership. It is a not-for-profit organization operated under the auspices of the Narragansett Council, Boy Scouts of America.

Our membership year runs from July 1st through June 30th, and all membership fees contribute directly to our endowment fund, the proceeds of which go directly towards the support of Camp Cachalot.

More information about the Alumni Association, including membership forms, back issues of *The Cachaletter*, Camp history, and online discussion forums, can be found online at our web site:

<http://www.cachalotalumni.org/>

We can also be reached via US Mail at the following address:

Camp Cachalot Alumni Association
c/o Narragansett Council, BSA
P.O. Box 14777
Providence, RI 02914



Signing On...

Jeffrey P. Dumais, Association Chairman

Greetings and Happy Holidays to all!

First, I'd like to introduce myself and welcome you all to another year with the Camp Cachalot Alumni Association. My name is Jeff Dumais, and I am the current Chairman of the Association. My first trip to Cachalot was during the summer of 1981, my Troop visited to use the waterfront and other camp facilities from our base camp in Myles Standish. Since then, I have spent numerous weekends and summers among the pitch pine and along the sandy beaches of "the place we know so well." I look forward to serving you as Chairman and would welcome any input you may have, and especially any help you would like to offer to our excellent Executive Committee.

...maybe your old
Scoutmaster hasn't
heard about us yet...

As the Chairman, it falls on me to look into the future of our organization in many areas. Probably the most important, and mentally time-consuming, is membership. In the coming year, we are looking to introduce several new features to help current members retain their status, including multiple-year enrollments, and Lifetime memberships by monthly or quarterly installment. Also in the 'Coming Soon' column are personalized invitations

to join you can send to former members of your Troop, Camp Staff or maybe even the neighbor who shares his fond memories of Camp with you over the fence while raking leaves. Please also consider a gift membership, maybe your old Scoutmaster hasn't heard about us yet, but would love to reminisce over a copy of the *Cachaletter*.

I invite you all to drop me a line at chairman@cachalotalumni.org and let me know what it is that we can do to make the Association the best it can be. Our commitment to the preservation of Camp Cachalot and the history of its predecessors will ensure many more young men and women can experience its unique magic.

Thanks to all you 'men of faith and courage!' 🤠



Summer Update

Peter W. Ashworth, Reservation Director

The canvas is packed, the sites policed, and season sixty-two is now history. The 2007 season saw 7 new Troops come to Cachalot to share in the excitement and tradition due to a joint venture with the Annawon and Cape Cod and the Islands Councils. Over 460 scouts were whooping it up as we played cowboy with our Old West theme. Our Eagle Camp had the largest attendance to date. We awarded over 2000 merit badges and other awards to our deserving campers. Our dining hall was full the first three weeks, with songs ringing in the rafters. The staff worked hard, and got rave reviews for their spirit and helpfulness. They made me proud to have them as my first staff as camp director.

Camp welcomed several alumni that have not been seen in many years at the annual summer gathering. Carolyn Griffiths, our assistant Waterfront Director, was extremely grateful to the alumni for her scholarship. Kelly Fitzgerald, the Program Director, and Patrick Canary, the Nature Director, were also awarded scholarships for their many years of service to camp. Unfortunately, Kelly will not be able to return next year. It is with a heavy heart that I must say goodbye. She was a great help and inspiration to me this summer and will be greatly missed by all.

... season sixty-two
is now history.

Day Camp had over 65 Cub Scouts in attendance. They had fun with BB guns, archery, sports, nature, crafts and swimming. This year they offered a new activity, rowing, for the boys to enjoy. In the middle of the week, dozens of Webelos stayed late for a special late night program. Singing and smiling faces could be seen all over camp all week. I would like to thank the over 30 hard working volunteers that made the program possible.

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...and Signing Off

Thomas P. Whelan, Immediate Past Chairman, Treasurer



I am honored to have been a part of the original committee that helped start this Association and I am proud of our accomplishments. This year the Association has a new Executive Committee with Jeff Dumais in the lead to forge our path ahead. Jeff is the new Chairman of the Association and I hope you will join me in congratulating him. My service to the Association will continue in the position of Treasurer during this next year.

Before each new year I take a look at my life and I ask myself a difficult question, "Am I a better person today than I was one year ago". This is a difficult question because it is hard to take an honest and objective look at yourself and it means that you may end up with an answer that you don't like. As our Alumni Association enters a new year (our fourth) it is important for us to ask, "Are we a better organization today than we were one year ago?"

Are we a better organization today than we were one year ago?

I believe the answer to this question is, "Yes, but only slightly". Attendance at events is higher, our finances are in good shape, and we continue to provide service to our Camp and our membership, but our membership growth has stalled and, once the final numbers are in, we may find that we are at our lowest level since our first year of operation. If you are reading this newsletter and your membership has lapsed, please go to the website and renew today or for those without internet access you can send a check to the Council office with a note indicating that it is for membership renewal in the Cachalot Alumni Association (\$10 Seniors, \$25 individual, and \$50 family). This would also be the perfect time to call a friend who has been talking about joining, but has not made the commitment. Membership is everyone's responsibility and I know that together we can grow this organization.

Only with all of our support can this Association continue to become a better organization. The next opportunity to show your support is at the Annual Winter Gathering (see this newsletter for more details). This year the Winter Gathering will be a free event for members and is being held separately from the Trade-o-Ree to allow us to focus more on the needs of our membership. During this event we will have plenty of time available for reminiscing about the past and planning for the future. I hope to see you all there! 🐸



Continued from page 2

And now the cycle begins again. We look to build the budget for next year, deciding what we need. Camp promotions will be starting soon to try to attract more scouts to camp. Staff hiring begins again, finding out who will be coming back and who else will be moving on. I would like to give a special thanks to the New Bedford Fund Raiser Gala for securing the funding for a new Sunfish and many other pieces of equipment. I look forward to seeing you at camp in 2008. 🐸

Upcoming Events and Important Dates

January 19th, 2008
11:00AM through 3:00PM
Annual Winter Gathering
Fall River Heritage State Park
Fall River, MA

May 23rd through May 26th, 2008
Memorial Day Family Camping Weekend
Camp Cachalot, Plymouth, MA

July 12th, 2008
Alumni Homecoming 2008
Camp Cachalot, Plymouth, MA

August 29th through
September 1st, 2008
Labor Day Family Camping Weekend
Camp Cachalot, Plymouth, MA

Executive Committee and Other e-Mail Contacts

Jeffrey P. Dumais
Association Chairman
chairman@cachalotalumni.org

Dennis J. Wilkinson, II
Association Vice Chairman
vicechairman@cachalotalumni.org

Thomas P. Whelan
Treasurer
treasurer@cachalotalumni.org

Rene Dupont
Secretary
secretary@cachalotalumni.org

Peter W. Ashworth
Council Representative
pashworth@narragansettbsa.org

Membership Committee
membership@cachalotalumni.org

Staff Scholarship Information
staffscholarship@cachalotalumni.org

Gathering 2008 Information
Thomas Whelan
Event Chairman
gathering2008@cachalotalumni.org

Family Camping Information
familycamping@cachalotalumni.org

To Submit Historical Information
curator@cachalotalumni.org

Other Inquiries
info@cachalotalumni.org

Summer Memories

Homecoming 2007 Brings Alumni Together for Remembrances, Food, and Friendship

What more could you ask for? A beautiful July day out at Camp Cachalot, with dozens of fellow alums to chat with, hamburgers and hot dogs on the grill, and a Ranger's residence dedicated to the memory of the man who built it, along with many other things at camp. That's the scene from our Homecoming this past July, and we hope everyone who attended had a good time!

With several dozen alumni (and a few "future" alumni) present, everyone assembled down by Tom Cullen Field to catch up with old friends, grab a burger and some potato salad, and see what had and hadn't changed since the last time they were in camp. We had a lot of new faces this year, and hope that this event continues to grow.

The crowd then shifted out of central camp for a special occasion. Our biggest activity at this year's Homecoming was the long-delayed dedication of the Ranger's Residence to the memory of Armand Guilmette, Cachalot's first resident camp ranger and a long-time Scouter from Fairhaven (please see the sidebar on the facing page for more information about Armand.) The dedication of this building had been agreed on prior to the merger of the old Moby Dick and Narragansett Councils, but had been lost in the shuffle as the merger took place. Armand's daughter, Rita Rodericks, as well as her daughter and son-in-law were on hand for the ceremony, with our Chairman, Tom Whelan, acting as master-of-ceremonies and giving us a brief speech on Armand's accomplishments. Tom noted that "the measure of a man...is in the impact he has on those who follow him", and Armand certainly left a long shadow behind him.

After the dedication, we gathered briefly to talk about the state of the Association, and to solicit ideas for establishing a "Wall of Fame" to remember and recognize other important figures in Cachalot's history. We're still looking for suggestions, so if you have ideas, on what might make someone eligible to be nominated for this kind of recognition, or, better yet, have names of people that you think should be on a Wall of Fame (and the reasons why), please drop us a line at walloffame@cachalotalumni.org. Afterwards, all of Cachalot was available for our members to roam, with several groups just getting together and touching base, sometimes after decades apart.

Thanks to everyone who joined us for the afternoon: after all, it's the people that make events like Homecoming worthwhile! Hope to see all--no, more--of you again next year!



Tom Whelan speaking at the Guilmette Ranger's Residence dedication

Some of the alumni present at the dedication ceremony, with the Guilmette Ranger's Residence in the background





Tom unveiling the dedication plaque

Armand Guilmette's daughter, Rita Rodericks, holds the dedication plaque while flanked by her son-in-law and daughter



Regarding Armand



Armand A. Guilmette
September 27, 1907 - August 21, 1995
photo circa 1950

On October 27th, 1967, Armand Guilmette received his 20 year service award at the Cachalot Council's annual dinner. While this makes him a relative latecomer to Scouting, putting his first year in Scouting at the age of 40, those had been prolific years, and were just the lead-up for what was to come. In those first 20 years, Armand had been a Scoutmaster, had helped lead a crew of Scouts and Scouters to the National Jamboree at Valley Forge in 1950, to working with so many others on the restoration of Camp Cachalot after 1964's devastating fire, and served on the Council's executive committee.

Armand's biggest mark on Cachalot began in 1969, when, soon after he and Fred Prefontaine completed the construction of the ranger's residence, he became Cachalot's first full-time, resident Camp Ranger. He was responsible for prodigious and varied work at camp during his tenure, ranging from building renovations to conservation projects. Armand retired as Ranger in 1975, but that wasn't the end of his Scouting career.

Following his retirement, Armand took a long-anticipated cross-country trip with his dog, Cindy, to tour the American Southwest and to see Philmont Scout Ranch. He did make it out to Philmont, but not without other adventures along the way. He made many stops to visit Scouting colleagues, staying in many Scout camps throughout the country, usually pitching in a bit to "pay his way". He even found himself helping to build a new Scout camp, the Double V Scout Ranch in Tuscon, Arizona, spending many weeks there working to set up this brand-new camp. Armand recorded his journey in a travelogue he titled "The Travels of Armand Guilmette". He made several return trips to Tuscon to continue work on the Double V in later years.

We can't think of a more appropriate, or more deserving, person for the Ranger's Residence to be named for. 🐾

A Brief History Of...

"A Brief History Of..."

No, that subtitle isn't a typo: this issue, we're going to break from our usual format a little and take a look back... at our own history. Since our first column, we've had both a few answers to our questions come in, as well as a few more questions for us to ponder. Let's start with the answers.

Way back in our first column, in the Spring 2005 issue, we weren't quite sure when the 21 Club had been moved to Cachalot from its original site in Westport, noting that we had references as early as the 1950s. We now know that the 21 Club was moved to Cachalot the same year that Cachalot opened, in 1946, and served a number of purposes, including acting as the Trading Post in the early years of Cachalot. Ever since, the 21 Club has been the very definition of a "multiple use" building, from year-round camping cabin to staff lounge, staff housing, and even housing different program areas during Summer Camp and Cub Day Camp.

In our Fall 2005 column on the various Waterfront Towers at Cachalot, we noted that the tower built in 1965 had been named for "Andrew Jackson, a Portuguese whaler who had been born Andre Cabrara. He had been shanghaied from his birthplace, the Canary Islands, as a boy of 9 years old." Ed Tavares pointed out to us that that didn't

make much sense, as the Canary Islands are not a Portuguese territory. Ed's quite right, and we mis-worded some information from our original source, the July 2nd, 1965 issue of the New Bedford Standard-Times. Jackson had been born in Portugal, but was living in the Canary Islands at the time of his being kidnapped at age 9.

But the really big question comes from our Spring 2006 column on Cachalot's Dining Hall. Inside is a plaque apparently naming the building "Prescott Hall". Although we still don't know whether the Prescott in question was William Prescott or Oliver Prescott, we do know that "Prescott Hall" isn't the Dining Hall at Camp Cachalot.

The plaque has its origins at one of Cachalot's predecessor camps: a property once owned by the Cachalot Council on Rock O'Dundee Road in Dartmouth, Massachusetts. This camp, which we've heard referred to colloquially as "Camp Rock O' Dundee" and have seen named on Council documents as "Camp Warren", came into the possession of the New Bedford and Fairhaven Council in 1920, used mostly for year-round camping until its sale in January of 1953. While the camp property is still mostly intact, only the chimney of the original "Prescott Hall" still stands. We've been in contact with the current owner of

the property, and hope to be able to make another visit to the site to get a few pictures of any original structures still standing.

How did the plaque make it from Camp Warren to Cachalot's dining hall? Via Ed Tavares (yes, the same Ed mentioned earlier.) He had salvaged the plaque from the original building before the old camp was sold, and it made its way to Cachalot and was installed on the dining hall wall some time later. Eventually, people began to assume that the plaque was for the dining hall itself, finally leading to the error in our article.

Don't remember one of these articles? All of the back issues of the *Cachaletter* are available online, by visiting us at our website, www.cachalotalumni.org. While you're there, take a look at our "Brief History of Cachalot", available under the "Museum" heading. This is our first real overview of the camp's history, and hopefully will tell a few parts parts of our story that you hadn't heard before. We'll be continuing to add to our online history pages, so stop by and visit every once in a while, make a post or two in our history discussions, or drop us a line at curator@cachalotalumni.org and tell us your own camp stories or get involved with our research. We are in the process of researching Noquochoke's history, and can use all the help we can get! See you online!



Left: the 21 Club in 1966 (photo courtesy Vic Sylvia)



Right: the interior of the 21 Club in 2005 (photo courtesy John Woolley)



Above: not the Prescott Dining Hall (*photo courtesy Vic Sylvia*)
Below right: the plaque that led to the confusion



Above: Chimney of Prescott Hall in the early 1950s (*photo courtesy John Reale*)



Below left and right: the restored chimney of Prescott Hall in 2007 (*photos courtesy Vic Sylvia*)



Staff Scholarship Updates

Assistant Waterfront Director Gets 2007 Award, Scholarship Permanently Endowed at \$500 Level!

At the closing ceremonies of the last week of Boy Scout Summer Camp at Cachalot, we presented this year's Staff Scholarship to a very excited Carolyn Griffiths, 2007's Assistant Waterfront Director. This was our third annual presentation, and will apply \$500 towards Carolyn's college bill this semester. Carolyn's essay placed her at the top of a field of six very well-qualified applicants from the staff, and we extend a hearty "Congratulations!" to her and hope for her continued success both at Cachalot and her academic career.

Carolyn is a 2006 graduate of Old Rochester Regional High School and a member of the class of 2010 at Bates College in Lewiston, Maine, where she has not yet declared a major (Bates students typically declare during their sophomore year). She's active in several extracurricular activities at Bates, including sailing, and was the Secretary of the former Venture Crew 35 in Mattapoisett. 2007 was Carolyn's fourth year on Cachalot's summer camp staff, starting as the Assistant Eaglequest Director in 2004 and working on the Aquatics staff ever since.

We've had considerable interest in the Staff Scholarship since we first offered it in 2005. Our goal has always been to raise enough money each year not only to provide that

year's award but also to save additional money in the Scholarship Fund to eventually permanently endow the scholarship. We're very happy to announce that, via our past fundraising greatly assisted by a very generous donation, the Scholarship Fund has been endowed with sufficient funds to issue the \$500 award on a permanent basis! Going forward, the scholarship will be awarded as the "Thomas P. Whelan Chairman's Scholarship",

under the same guidelines that have been applied the past three years. We still welcome donations towards the Scholarship Fund from our members, and will apply those contributions towards additional awards for other members of our Summer Camp staff. Questions and comments can be directed to the Scholarship subcommittee via email at scholarship@cachalotalumni.org.



Carolyn Griffiths of Mattapoisett (Bates '10), our 2007 Scholarship recipient

Camp Cachalot Alumni Association

c/o Narragansett Council, BSA

P. O. Box 14777

East Providence, RI 02914