



# The Cachalotter

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

## A Lot Going On At Homecoming 2007

*Alumni General Meeting, "Wall of Fame" Kickoff, and Ranger Cabin Dedication All Planned for the Day*

Mark your calendars for Saturday, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2007, from noon until 6:00PM, for the third annual Camp Cachalot Alumni Association Homecoming. We've got a lot we'd like to go over with our members this year. Our last two Homecoming events have showed us that what Cachalot alums seem to be most interested in is reminiscing with other alumni, visiting the places they remember, and just seeing how Camp has or hasn't changed since they were there last—so we've left a lot of time open to do just those things, too. Guides will be on hand to walk along with you, if you're interested, and for those who require it we'll have transportation to get you around.

Best of all, this year's event is free to members and non-members alike! For those that are interested, lunch (burgers, dogs, and such) will be available for \$2 per person during the early part of the day. We'd like to see as many members of the Cachalot family as we can!

Arrivals begin at noon, and lunch will be on the grill from noon until 1:15PM. We're kicking off our day with a special event: the dedication of the Camp Ranger's Residence to the memory of Armand Guilmette, Cachalot's first full-time resident ranger and a long-time,

dedicated volunteer Scouter. The dedication ceremony will begin promptly at 1:30PM, and will be followed immediately after by the annual meeting of the Alumni Association.

We'll update you on the current state of the Camp Cachalot Alumni Association and what we've been doing over the last three years, and be looking for feedback from our members on what they'd like to see us doing over the next several years. We'll also be giving you some information on, and looking for suggestions for, our "Wall of Fame", which we hope will be a way to help remember those folks who have made significant contributions to Cachalot over the years. Please see the article on page 3 for more information about this project, including information on how to get involved yourself.

Once the meeting has closed, the camp is yours to explore. Guides and transportation will be available until 6:00PM, but alumni will be welcome to stay and continue exploring the property until 9:30PM, should they so desire.

As always, our History Committee will be on hand, to show our collection of over

1,500 photos of camp dating from the 1940s through the present day. They'll also be toting their laptops, cameras, and scanners, so if you have any old photos, slides, or camp memorabilia you'd be willing to let us take photos or make copies of, please bring them along. We can also handle most electronic formats, from CD-R to camera memory cards. If you've got a particularly large collection we may not be able to do everything at the event, but we've made arrangements with other alums in the past to borrow collections temporarily for such work. We have also handled videotape and film in the past. If you've got questions, please send us email at [curator@cachalotalumni.org](mailto:curator@cachalotalumni.org) and we'll get them answered.

Even though the event is free, we'd still appreciate it if those planning on attending would pre-register. Just visit our web site at [www.cachalotalumni.org](http://www.cachalotalumni.org) and fill out the form there. This is especially important if you plan on joining us for lunch, so we know how much food to have on-hand. If you have any questions about the event, you can reach the Homecoming committee via email at [homecoming2007@cachalotalumni.org](mailto:homecoming2007@cachalotalumni.org).

See everyone at camp! 🐾

## Homecoming 2007



July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2007 - 12:00PM through 6:00PM

### Alumni Homecoming 2007

Saturday, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2007  
12:00PM through 6:00PM  
Camp open until 9:30PM

Cachalot Scout Reservation  
Plymouth, MA

Free admission for  
members and non-members  
Optional lunch available  
for \$2 per person

Send email to  
[homecoming2007@cachalotalumni.org](mailto:homecoming2007@cachalotalumni.org)  
or visit [www.cachalotalumni.org](http://www.cachalotalumni.org)  
for more info.

## 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](mailto:cachaletter@cachalotalumni.org).

Editor  
Dennis J. Wilkinson, II

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Peter Ashworth  
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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



## Reach Out

*Thomas P. Whelan, Association Chairman*

With Spring in full bloom I find myself staring out the window of my office picturing how beautiful it is at Camp Cachalot right now. Cool mornings with the mist rising off the lake, the smell of the warming pine forest, and the sound of the lonesome whip-poor-will. Through the efforts of our Alumni the Camp is more beautiful now than it has been in the past 20 years, but only with your continued support will we be able to keep making these monumental improvements.

We are helping preserve Camp history in addition to restoring the physical Camp. This year we commissioned a plaque to be placed on the Ranger's residence in memory of Armand Guilmette for the many years of service he provided to the Camp as Ranger. In the 1990s the Moby Dick Camping and Properties Committee voted to dedicate the building to Ranger

Guilmette's memory, but a plaque was never attached to the building. The Alumni Association Executive Committee voted to correct this situation and the plaque should be in place by this summer.

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### I'm asking each member ... to reach out to another Alumnus

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In order to continue restoring the Camp and preserving its history we need to increase our membership. Over the past 60 years several thousand Scouts and Scouters have enjoyed our wonderful Camp and many of these individuals are looking for ways to give back to the Camp. I'm asking that each member of the Alumni Association take a few minutes right now to reach out to another Alumnus and invite them to join. Benefits of membership include access to member only events like the Family Camping Weekends held at Camp over Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends, discount admission to Alumni Association events, and the satisfaction of knowing that you are helping preserve the place we know so well... Cachalot.

See you at Camp! 🐾



## Getting (Re)acquainted

*Peter W. Ashworth, Reservation Director*

On a recent weekend in May, the 2007 Summer Camp Staff was at Cachalot having a work weekend. It was a perfect day to be out at camp, since the sun was shining and a light breeze was blowing. It was our objective to get half of the tents set up that we would need this summer. The staff was working incredibly hard and actually exceeded this goal. But the thing that hit me the strongest was when I pulled a bunk into one of the tents in James West. As the sun heated the canvas, I inhaled a smell I hadn't in over 15 years. They say your olfactory memory is the strongest, and I was temporarily transported back to the days of my youth. I was home.

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### I look forward to welcoming you out to camp...

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Cachalot has been home to many boys and young women over the years. This year 7 new troops will experience our summer camp program. Hopefully they will find a new home in our beloved acreage.

On May 19th, we held a "Get Acquainted with Camp" day for new campers and their families. Despite the rain and cold, 65 people came out to tour the property and meet the staff. They began to feel part of the family as the staff sang and answered questions through out the day.

Of course, many staff members that have called Cachalot "home" are returning. Kelly Fitzgerald, who will return as Program Director, has labored long and hard to bring together a stellar staff. The areas directors have served on camp staff for an average of 6 years. They look forward to serving the 37 troops and over 400 boys that we expect to see this summer.

I look forward to returning to the camp staff I was a part of for 7 years in my youth. Having worked as Steward, a Scoutcraft instructor, Archery Range director, Program Commissioner and filling in everywhere else, I feel those experiences will serve me well as Camp Director. I look forward to welcoming you out to camp on July 14th at the Alumni Homecoming. This association has done great things in bringing the past and present together. As the song says "Though we wander through this wide world, your spell on us remains". I know that I am still under that spell. I hope that you will all find your way "home" to camp this summer. 🐾

# A Wall of Fame

## Remembering Those Who Have Made a Difference for Cachalot

At this year's Homecoming, one of the topics that will be discussed at our Annual Meeting will be the "Wall of Fame" program. As an Association, part of our mission is to preserve the history of Cachalot, and Cachalot's history is best told through the people who made the camp what it is today. The Wall of Fame is one of the ways we intend to fulfill this goal, but we need our members to tell us what they think makes someone worthy of a spot on the Wall of Fame. More on that later.

Every fall, nominations for the Wall of Fame will open up. Any member of the Association can put forward nominations, and nominations should describe how the nominee meets the ideals we eventually decide upon. These nominations will go before the Wall of Fame committee, and the following spring, those that meet the requirements will be presented to our membership, both in *The Cachalotter* and online at our web site. Members will be able to vote on the nominations, and any new Wall of Fame honorees will be inducted at that year's Homecoming.


The current year's honoree will have a photo, short biography, and explanation for the honor on display in a prominent location at Cachalot and on our web site. All past honorees will also be viewable at camp and on the site, and there will be a "traveling" version of this collection on display at alumni and other events.

What kind of feedback do we need from you? We want your feedback on what kinds of contributions someone would make that would earn them a spot on the Wall of Fame. Some of the questions we have are:

- Should we limit nominations based on a minimum number of active years of service?
- Should we exclude people who are still living from nomination?
- What kinds of contributions should a nominee have made? Should they be improvements to the physical property, impact on the program run at camp, been a long-term presence on summer camp staff, or something else?
- Are there other things we're not considering?

About the only thing that's been ruled out so far is that we're not planning on considering financial contributions to Cachalot as a factor for nomination, since those types of contributions already tend to be recognized through other means.

Rather than try to answer those questions directly, think about people who you think would deserve a spot on the Wall of Fame, and why you think they deserve it. We'd like as many specific suggestions as you have, so we can try to see what they do or don't have in common (it will also help kick-start the nomination process for the first few years worth of nominations.) We know there are a lot of potential nominees out there, certainly more that we can name ourselves, so any suggestions you can provide will help immensely.

If you're interested in helping with the Wall of Fame project, or you have ideas but will not be able to attend the annual meeting, please drop us a line at [walloffame@cachalotalumni.org](mailto:walloffame@cachalotalumni.org). 



## Upcoming Events and Important Dates

June 30th, 2007

End of 2005-2006 Membership Year  
Renew early!

July 1st, 2007

Start of 2007-2008 Membership Year

July 14th, 2007

Beginning 12:00PM

Alumni Homecoming 2007  
Camp Cachalot, Plymouth, MA

August 31st through

September 3rd, 2007

Labor Day Family Camping Weekend  
Camp Cachalot, Plymouth, MA

## Executive Committee and Other e-Mail Contacts

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# A Brief History Of...

## The Trading Post

Every first year camper learns, about 15 seconds into his first visit to camp, just where to go to get their merit badge pamphlets, t-shirts, basket kits, souvenirs, and, of course, enough candy and snacks to maintain a week-long sugar high: the Trading Post. They then have to try to budget whatever funds Mom & Dad have sent with them to stretch them the whole week. While there has always been a Trading Post at Cachalot, exactly where you'd go or what you'd find there has changed a bit over the years.

In Cachalot's earliest years of operation, very few buildings had yet been built. For those early years, the 21 Club served multiple purposes, including serving as the camp's Trading Post. The trading post inventory from the 1948 end-of-camp report lists items that would be familiar to a Scout at Cachalot this summer: handicraft and metalworking

supplies, pocketknives, and various items from the BSA's National Supply office.

The first dedicated Trading Post was built in the early 1950s, a small shed-roof building with swing-up service windows close to the camp waterfront. Used as the Trading Post from the early 1950s until the mid-1960s, and again later, this building exists today as the "Commissioner's Corner", and is used mostly for storage.

In early May of 1964, a foundation slab was poured for what was to become the camp's new combination Trading Post and administration building. Framing on this building was scheduled to begin on the 22nd of May—the same weekend that Cachalot was ravaged by fire sweeping in from Myles Standish State Forest and burning through camp on its way to White Island Shores to the east. This

building would eventually be built during the reconstruction following the fire, and was the longest-serving of all the Trading Posts, in use for over 20 years.

This Trading Post was substantially larger than its predecessor: a main building containing a meeting room/office space; a rest room; a sales area that included both 3 swing-up service windows at the counter and a walk-in area with glass-front display cabinets; a Quartermaster's Store with its own swing-up service window, and a large attic storage space. The building also provided a large swath of covered space along two sides for patrons to shade themselves (or stay out of the rain). During its tenure, this building saw more Scouts than any other Trading Post in Cachalot. It even occasionally served as a program area, its covered space used for several summers as the Handicraft department, operating out of



The original Trading Post, seen here in the mid-1950s. (Photo courtesy Larry Harney)

View of Scouts from inside the original Trading Post. (Photo courtesy Larry Harney).



Construction begins on the 1966-1987 Trading Post. (Photo courtesy Dennis Prefontaine)

Siding work on the "admin" side of the 1966-1987 Trading Post (Photo courtesy Dennis Prefontaine).



The 1966-1987 Trading Post, nearly complete. (Photo courtesy Dennis Prefontaine)

The 1966-1987 Trading Post, seen here as the gathering point after a lost bather drill (LBD) in 1983. (Photo courtesy Conrad Rousseau)



the Quartermaster's Store; or as classrooms for the Waterfront when thunderstorms rolled through Cachalot.

In a strange twist, this Trading Post, built after the "Big Fire", would also meet its end in fire. One fall morning in 1987, the camp Ranger, Arthur Churchill, headed down the hill toward Tom Cullen Field to discover the still-smoking ruin of the Trading Post. A break-in the previous day had ended in arson, completely destroying the building and many summer camp program supplies, predominantly the Scoutcraft and Handicraft materials stored in the attic (only a few cast iron Dutch ovens were still usable.)

Planning to replace the building, on the same basic footprint, began almost immediately, but construction of the new building would take more than a year and a half and leave Cachalot without a Trading Post for the summer. To fill that need, the old Trading Post would be called back into service, as "The Geedunk", the name coming from Navy slang for a snack shop. The building had been used

in the preceding years as a senior staff residence, and required some refitting, but was ready in time for the 1988 summer camp season, complete with a small canvas awning for a seating area.

The new Trading Post and Administration Building, build of concrete block on the resurfaced foundation of the old, opened soon after. It contained a smaller service area for the Trading Post; a large conference room with adjoining offices for the Camp Director and Program Director; two rest rooms; and two storage rooms. The office furnishings were given in memory of long-time Troop 35 Onset Scouter Bill Joyce, and the main room was winterized and heated with an in-room furnace to make the building usable as a training center during the rest of the year. After a few years, a battery of hot showers was built on the back side of this building to help meet requirements put forth by the Plymouth Board of Health and to help the aging camp shower house meet the relatively new demand for separate facilities for men and women at camp.

While that building still stands, and presently sees use as the Handicrafts Lodge during the summer and for various purposes during the year, the camp administration decided after the 2005 summer camp season that both that building and the recently dedicated "Fox's Den" weren't being utilized as well as they might be. The Trading Post, in particular, was no longer being seriously used for administration, which most of its space was dedicated to. The "Fox's Den", which had only been recently re-purposed from the camp showerhouse, was transformed into the new Silver Fox's Trading Post, complete with a wood-paneled interior and large double doors with an intrinsic fleur-de-lis welcoming you into the building. It is dedicated in memory of Gerry "Silver Fox" Sylvester, frequent Camp Commissioner and the prime mover behind Cachalot's current Campmaster program. It opened for use for the 2006 summer season, and is about to begin its second summer meeting the needs of all the Scouts and Scouters in camp; whether they need a woodcarving kit, toilet-tries, merit badge pamphlets, a camp patch... or even a dose of sugar. 🍬



Scouts shopping at the 1966-1987 Trading Post. (Photo courtesy Conrad Rousseau)



The 1989-2005 Trading Post, construction nearly complete. (Photo courtesy Tom Bednarz).



The 1989-2005 Trading Post, after the addition of showers on the back side, just visible on the right of the bulding. (Photo courtesy Jeff Dumais)



Looking into the Silver Fox's Trading Post. (Photo courtesy Dennis Wilkinson).



The fleur-de-lis design on the door of the Silver Fox's Trading Post. (Photo courtesy Dennis Wilkinson)



The Silver Fox's Trading Post, just prior to the opening of the 2007 summer camp season.. (Photo courtesy Dennis Wilkinson)



# Memorial Day Weekend

*Alumni Families Enjoy Time at Cachalot, Help Get Ready for Summer*

The sun was shining, Five Mile Pond was a (very) little bit warmer than usual, and the snapping turtles were out for the Alumni Association's family camping weekend this past Memorial Day Weekend. More than 40 people from at least 17 alumni families came out to this year's event, sharing fellowship, some good food, and more than a few camp stories and songs around the campfire. We also pitched in a bit around camp, putting in a new fence on the lagoon side of the waterfront; building several tent platforms; and helping assemble some new picnic tables to be used this summer.

Some of the alumni kids got a bit of a thrill on

Saturday afternoon when former Cachalot Nature Director Brian Bastarache noticed something moving by his feet while casting a line in from the sandbar by the lagoon. Moving fast, he reached down into the water and pulled out a very good-sized snapping turtle by the hind legs, while it hissed and snapped back at him. After keeping it up on the beach for a few minutes so the kids could get a good look at it, Brian returned it to the lagoon, probably to skulk in the muck for a bit while waiting for the next meal to swim by.

Unfortunately, no one was thinking fast enough to grab a camera and snap the snapping turtle, but we did get some pictures of

the other goings on over the weekend, and they're right here on this page and the next.

Look like fun? Remember—our family camping weekends are open exclusively to members of the Alumni Association, and happen twice yearly, once over Memorial Day Weekend and once over Labor Day weekend. There's no cost to attend (although you are on your own for meals), so save the date for the next one and join us!

Many thanks to Dave Goldrick for acting as the coordinator for the weekend! 🐢







# Camp Staff Scholarship Offered Again

*\$500 Award Available, Contributions Still Welcome To Help Make Fund Permanent*

The Camp Cachalot Alumni Association is once again making a \$500 scholarship towards post-secondary education available to a member of the 2007 Camp Cachalot summer camp staff. We began offering this scholarship in our first year of operation, and this will be the third award given.

Why offer a scholarship?

For many of you who have served on summer camp staff, the answer will be obvious: it takes a good number of skilled, motivated, late-high school and college-aged Scouts to run a high-quality summer camp program.. To make summer camp the best experience it can be, it is best to have most of your staff return from year to year, so your staffers continue to get more experienced and take on greater responsibilities.


Unfortunately, this leads to a conflict between what the people most qualified to serve on staff need, which is often help paying ever-increasing college tuitions and fees, and what a summer camp can pay—never a large sum, the result of a short summer camp season, the need to provide room & board, and the money available to a non-profit organization. Despite this, Cachalot has always been fortunate to have dedicated, skilled young men and women who choose to spend most of their summers running our camp.

To help resolve this conflict, even if only in a small way, the Alumni Association offers a scholarship to one of these returning member of the summer camp staff whose dedication to Cachalot is evident to all those who know them. Each year, we rely on our membership to contribute the necessary funds for the scholarship, and we try to raise additional

money which is invested as a permanent endowment, in the hope that in several years we will be able to fund this first scholarship in perpetuity, and possibly even offer a larger award or multiple awards in the future (we estimate that \$10,000 will need to be invested to permanently endow the scholarship.)

If you'd like to help, tax-deductible contributions to the Scholarship Fund can be made at any Alumni function or via our web site by visiting:

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

If you have any questions about the scholarship fund, please email us at [scholarship@cachalotalumni.org](mailto:scholarship@cachalotalumni.org). Summer camp staffers interested in applying for the scholarship will have applications made available to them during summer camp. 

## **Camp Cachalot Alumni Association**

c/o Narragansett Council, BSA

P. O. Box 14777

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