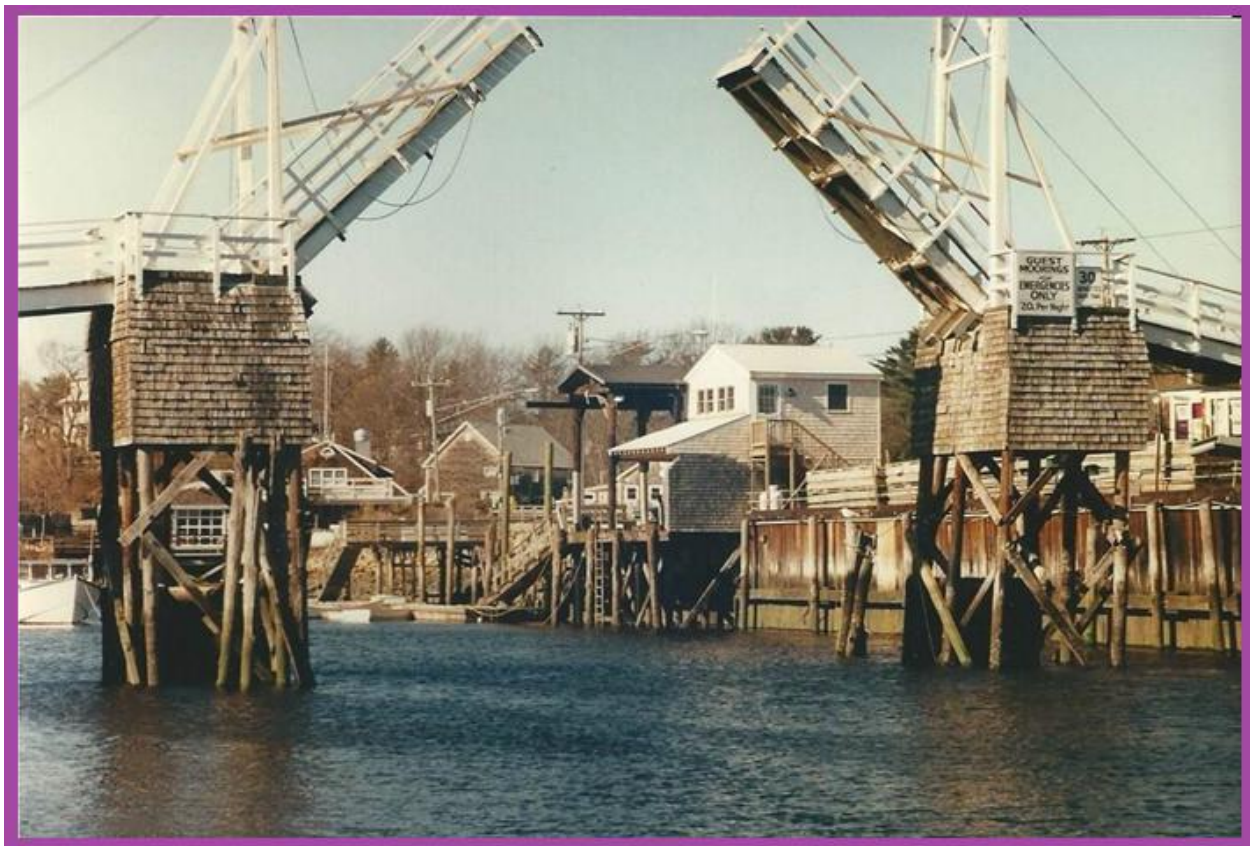


My Ghosts of Ogunquit

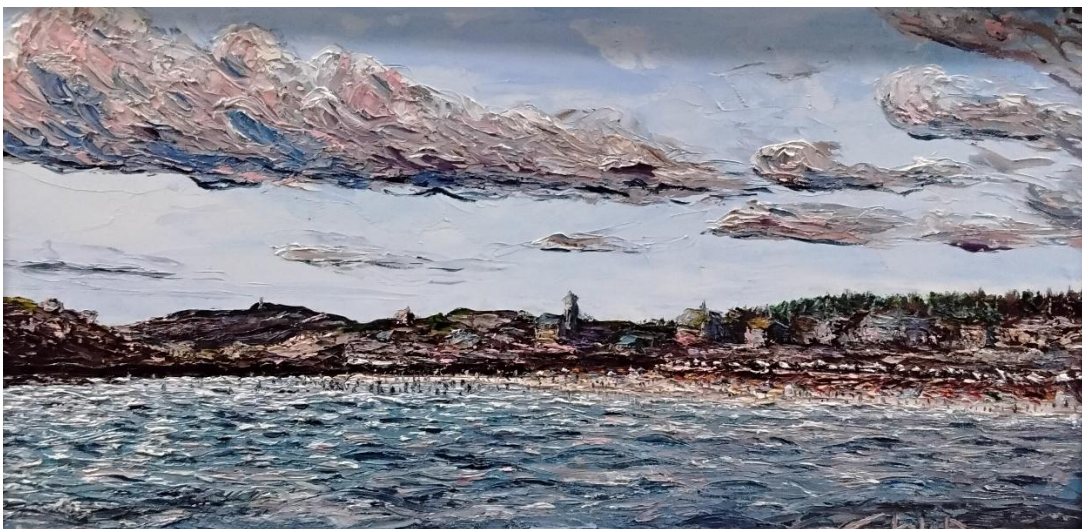


Lived and Remembered by Chip Cook

My Ghosts of Ogunquit

**A very personal account of my memories of life in Ogunquit,
Maine.**

Lived by Chip Cook and Family from 1914 to (2026) present.



The Last Sail of August by Chip



The Cove - 1936

Introduction

Ghosts can refer to a number of things. From unknown phenomena to a memory of something that happened yesterday. My ghosts consist of the full spectrum. At the age of seventy-seven, I have had a seventy-eight-year-old relationship with Ogunquit, Maine. I first came to Ogunquit's beach, in my mother's belly, in the summer of 1948.

My memories are more like ghosts than remembrances. Like how the pages of a book and the story it contains, images in my head are triggered as if they just happened. Older people are said to live in the past. The reason for this might be because they are the curator of their own history of relationships. So, I am the curator of the information that defines my life in the little resort of Ogunquit.

People come from all over the world to enjoy the beaches, the Marginal Way, Perkins Cove and The Ogunquit Playhouse. What they did not expect was the horrible downtown traffic knot. No rules, just push and shove, it somehow works. Nothing else has. This is only a tiny surface slice of craziness in "the Beautiful-Place-by-the-Sea."

If you could ask a million visitors to describe what Ogunquit means to them. You would have a million different stories. Any two of their stories are equally valid. This is my attempt at exorcising my ghosts of Ogunquit. I hope to transfer my curatorial duties to the written word.

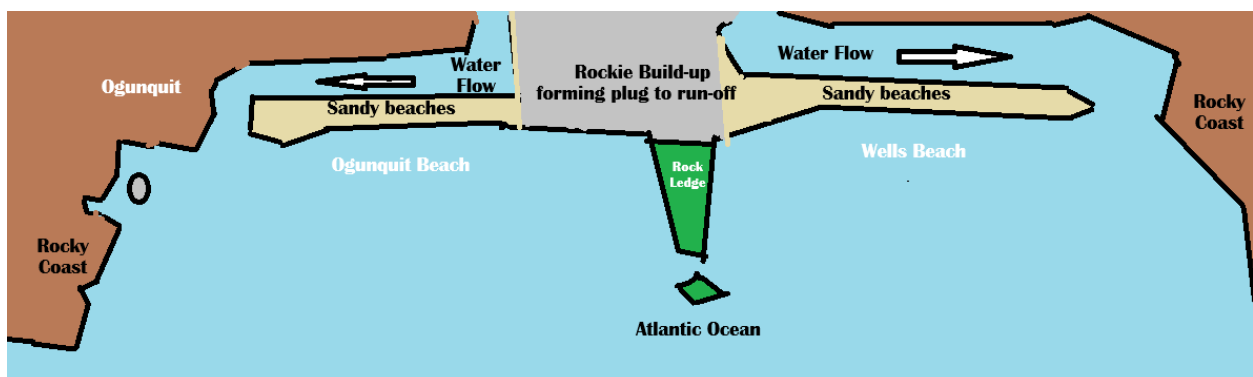
This memoir will include stories and histories that were told to me, or lived. I will do my best to recount these stories and describe the characters. This is not a formal history; it is my relationship with Ogunquit. Chip Cook – 2026

Early History of the Area (Ogunquit)

About 400 million years ago, the rocks of Ogunquit were forming on the ocean floor. It was where the North American and African continental plates were pulling apart. This process created a series of dikes made up of different rock excretion types. The continents crashed back together and pulled apart many times. As Pangea finally broke up, a piece of modern-day Morocco, Africa was fused to modern day North American plate. This formed the coastline running from Manhattan, New York to Portland Maine. The two continents are still very slowly pulling apart.

The tectonic action forced up a mountain range (the Appalachian range) on the east coast that was taller than the Rockies. Weather and glaciers over time, wore down these mountains to what they are today.

Much later, at the end of the last Ice Age, Ogunquit's had been under a mile of ice. The land had been compressed 70 feet just by the weight of the ice. As you walk along the coast it is clear a lot of fracturing occurred from this compression. The melting ice created massive run-offs of water. This action grounded rock into sand and rounded rock into pebbles. The out-flow from the rivers brought rocks and sand to the ocean. In my opinion, as the river's strength slowed, rocks formed a plug and the water was diverted into two directions. This formed Wells' and Ogunquit's beaches. The sand being the lightest was deposited as sandbars in both outflows. So, our beaches have been in a constant dance of creating and reforming ever since.



The Humans

It is assumed the area was visited by native Americans, though no known settlements seem to have been identified in the area. There is much debate about the origin of the name Ogunquit. The Chamber of Commerce says it means 'a beautiful place-by-the-sea.' However, native languages were often very descriptive and specific. The closest Indian word means 'a place where the river meets the sea, behind a beach,' does not sound anything like Ogunquit.

In the 1960s, my family and I enjoyed eating in York Harbour at a restaurant named Dockside. There on a wall was an old large map of the area. Being a curious teenager, I looked for Ogunquit. Instead, was the name Ogunkill...? The Dutch postscript for a village was -kill. No one seemed to have a better explanation. The name came from somewhere whether Indian or Dutch it does not really matter.

We do know about its start as part of a very large colony settlement. The English King took it by decree from the native Americans. As was the custom, Kings gave land to their subjects as payment for almost any reason.

This was the case with Lord Gorges. He was granted a parcel of land in what is today southern Maine. Wondering what exactly he got. He sent a surveyor, whose last name was Weare. For his effort of surveying the area from Kittery to Cape Elizabeth, Weare was given the land from Cape Neddick River to the Josias River bordered by the Atlantic Ocean. Possibly, not the most exchangeable asset in those days. However, over four hundred later, his descendants are still living off selling it.

I know personally, because I have built over ten houses in the same area. All of the deeds had a Weare on them at some point. For completeness, it is interesting to note there is still a hotel named Gorges Grant on Route One in Ogunquit.

While we are on the subject of the origins of names, Bald Head Cliff was an attraction that hooked me. Literally, at the age of twelve I was climbing it when my footing slipped. A point of rock gouged a thumb-size piece of me out leaving me bleeding all-over the place. I survived, but it hurt. Years later, at the Farnsworth Museum in Rockland, Maine, I was looking at old paintings of the Maine Coast. There was an early nineteenth century painting titled, *Rounding the Bald Head*, York, Maine. It was not a painting of Bald Head Cliff. It was a painting of the point where Nubble Lighthouse would later be. Interestingly, it looked exactly like a giant's bald head emerging from the sea. I checked early references to Bald Head cliff and found a slight change. The early maps called it the Cliffs at Bald Head. Today it does not matter what people call it. I mention it to illustrate how names and places change over time.



The Cliffs at Bald Head

Another example of name changing in the area is Mount Agamenticus. A small mountain, as mountains go. It is in our back yard, though. Under 500 feet, but it sticks up. In fact, when fishing out on Jefferie's Ledges the fishermen use it to navigate. It is the name that is interesting. The legend has it, the Mi'kmaq Indian Chief Saint Aspinquid was martyred and buried there. How one name turned into the other is a mystery to me.

Getting back to Ogunquit's early identity. It seems to have been not much of anything. First story about a settlement, had to do with a family trying to homestead somewhere near what is today, Wharf's Lane. This was in the sixteen hundreds. It was at a time when the Indians were trying to fight off the influx of the English.

The family was on guard for trouble. One night, something alerted them. In the moonlight, they fired at a shadow moving around the woodpile. Early morning showed signs of blood on the wood. They did the smart thing. Packed up as much as they could on their ox. Forging the Ogunquit River to get to the beach, they made their escape to a garrison house in Wells. Good judgement paid off. Halfway along the beach they could see smoke rising from where their homestead was. Not much of a story, unless you were Ogunquit's first tourist family. It can be said the local's real attitude has not changed much. The original anti-tourist attitude was killed off by disease brought over by Europeans in the 1600s. The resistance to the invasion was eliminated in the area by the late 1600s.

Maine was still part of Massachusetts colonies until 1820 when it got statehood. Trade was strong up and down the coast by ship. Maine had lumber, so shipbuilding was a natural industry. Also, Beacon Hill in Boston needed firewood to stay warm. Early Ogunquit tried to meet the need by shipping wood down to Boston. The Adams Family's relatives even found themselves living and trading in Ogunquit. At the mouth of Perkins Cove is the old Adam's Island House, from when it was on an island.



Adams' Schooner moored in the Cove by Chip

Wharf's Lane is so named because it was where the logs were brought to be loaded onto Schooners and shipped out.

Both the beach and the opening, to what is now Perkins Cove, gave some protection from the ocean.



A road called the King's Highway ran from Boston to Portland through Ogunquit. It created another new industry, other than wood, fishing and farming. Later railroad service was added, with stops in Wells.

A few taverns serviced travelers along the way. Ogunquit was not a tourist destination yet. The farms were spaced apart as one would expect. The fishing and shipping families were concentrated on the southern part of the current town. Names like Perkins, Maxwell and Littlefield were the norm. The Weare's lived on the other side of the line in York. Farms peppered the entire area. Today one can see stonewall everywhere in the woods. Once farms in the 1600s and 1700s, they were abandoned. In the early 1800s, better farm land opened up in the Northwest Territory.

Interesting stories about the area included a ghost horse. It seems farmers living along, what is today, Pine Hill Rd, then the Old King's Highway; would hear the whinny of a phantom horse late at night. Whatever it was, by the time I lived there, in the late 1980's, it was gone.

The area along the coast had its own sea monster story, too. It was seen hanging out around Wells, but it was sighted as far south as North Boston. It was observed by many people and over tens of years. Then it was gone...

Another strange story was the account of an island somewhere off the point of the Marginal Way. It seems this island was large enough that farmers would somehow keep cows on it. Why, I don't know? One night, the residents of the area were awakened by the earth shaking. An earthquake? Possibly, because the next morning the island was gone. All that was left, were the confused cows walking around the beach. I only logical explanation was that the island must have been made up of unstable glacial rocks piles. An earthquake might have made the island fall apart.

I have checked maps of the area, looking for a change in the water depth. Only a slight difference in the approximate area; not really enough to indicate a possible island. Maybe it was just a tall-tale.

It was said lobsters were so plentiful you could pick them up off the beach. The prisons use to feed them to their inmates, until they rioted over the inhuman treatment. Now, they run more than \$35.00 / lobster in restaurants. I guess somethings are just a matter of prospective.



Prout's Neck Looking South, originally painted by Winslow Homer. Recreated by Chip



***Prout's Neck Looking North*, originally painted by Winslow Homer. Recreated by Chip**

By the end of the 1800s, the area was poised for another change. A famous American artist Winslow Homer had moved to a place called Prout's Neck, just up the coast. Maine was discovered by the artist community. They took interest in Prout's Neck, Bar Harbour, Monhegan and Ogunquit for their unspoiled rawness and beauty. In the 1890's, three things converged in the Ogunquit area.

First, Charles Woodbury was on his honeymoon in York, Maine. They took a horse and buggy ride up what is now Shore Road. Finding themselves in a beautiful spot they stopped to look around. Climbing an old cow trail, they came face to face with a cow. He later painted it back in Boston. However, it was the view over the cow that caught his attention.

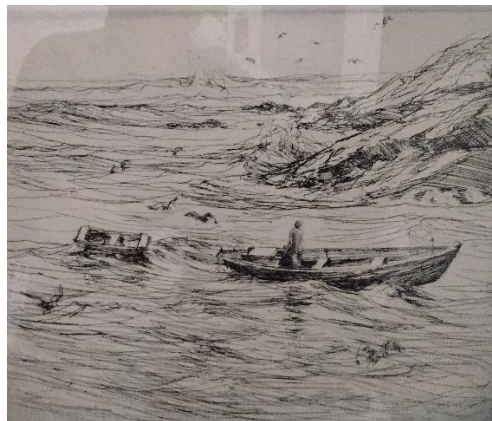


The "New" Cove in the background. Narrow's Cove in the foreground.

You might ask, how do I know this account? Seventy years later my family and I had the same reaction and we bought the cottage because of the view.

Charles Woodbury bought many acres of beautiful land for \$400.00. He sold his painting of the cow he saw that day, for \$400.00. Now, that was a very good deal. When the farmer who sold Charles Woodbury the land, found out. He was not very happy. So, continued the contentious relationship between locals and out-of-towners. It has been going on ever since.

Woodbury was an artist in the school of Winslow Homer and was known for his seascapes. He and his wife had a plan. They would make an artist school in this beautiful place and offer seasonal classes in the open air. It got attention, maybe too much attention.



An Etching by Charles Woodbury showing his style



Ogunquit's fishing boats pulled up on the banks of the Josias River. The house in the background became the studio of John Hawkins

The second event occurred a few years later, when Hamilton Easterfield, the creator of ART Magazine, came to town. He was investigating Woodbury's school. Impressed by the cove and village's beauty, Easterfield decided to start his own school of art. However, a school much different than Woodbury's school. In fact, the two schools were complete opposites. From accounts the schools lived side by side. However, they were constantly at odds with each other. Woodbury's traditional seascapes vs. Easterfield's flamboyant modern experimental style. Even the artists themselves formed two entirely distinctive groups. Woodbury's group wore formal attire from the 1800s, even while painting. Easterfield's group were early avant-garde, very informal. They even painted nude models on the rocks. The fishermen had a hard time not running aground.



One of Hamilton Easterfield's dorms for his students.



Easterfield bought a number of fishing shacks and made his school in the cove.

The old studios are now restaurants and gift shops.



***Boats in Cove*, unknown artist. Repainted by Chip**



Old Cove and Fishing Shacks / Studios

These two schools together formed a new category, The Ogunquit School of Art. In an art historical sense, it was only a "Cul-du-sac" in importance. Other movements out shined it, but for Ogunquit it was a turning point.



Ogunquit Memorial Library

Ogunquit became known. Artist and New York / Boston populist flocked to the little-known village. Hotels and restaurants popped up. It even had a library. Not bad for a small village.

Authors were drawn to the area for many reasons. Kenneth Roberts and Steven King, lived for a while in the area. They could not be any more different. Roberts wrote two books that had an effect on me. The first book was Boon Island. It told of an ill-fated voyage from England to Portsmouth, New Hampshire. It ran aground in 1703 on Boon Island. The poor survivors had to resort to eating their dead to live through almost 30 days marooned in freezing December. After reading the book, it was always a destination I wanted to sail to. However, it was just out of reach. The prevailing wind direction and the distance prevented me.

In the mid -1970s Steven King was unknown. He was also a face I remember from Ogunquit Town Meetings. Later, in *The Stand* he starts his story on the beach in Ogunquit. It really seemed like a bit part to me. You would think he could have come up with more of a story about Ogunquit.



**Painting from this time period artist unknown, recreated by Chip
(The mast of the sailboat visually bisects Woodbury's Cove Studio.)**

Visitors came by train for the entire summer. Fishermen who only tried to feed their families, were making money fishing to feed the influx of people."

Art studios / cottages also dotted the shoreline. Wealthy people saw the beauty and cheap land. They bought and built large discreetly invisible homes along the coast.

With this kind of growth, the stories about the artist's behavior were notorious. Two very good books on the subject are "A Century of Color," and "The Cove." The point is Ogunquit loss its innocence and became a business...a seaside resort town.



***The Beach* Recreated by Chip Original by Charles Woodbury**

Of course, the old timers felt the town was being ruined. They acted in predictable ways. Like passing laws having to do with alcohol and noise.

This did not stop the drinking, or the parties. Even my earliest memories of Ogunquit included artists going wild. Hidden from sight was the establishment of Ogunquit gay community. The art community was a part of a gay community. Hotels and restaurants do not usually employ family types. They work in Maine during the summers. Going south for the winters to work was invented by the seasonal nature of the work.



The Cove – 1900s

The Cove in those days was different from today. What is today the mouth of Perkins Cove was the Cove. A couple of Schooners and a few fishing dories, crowded the inlet. Ogunquit did create its own style of fishing boat, The Ogunquit Dory... what did you expect they would call it? Personally, it looked like many other dories of the time period. I was never sure what made it so special.

Farm land was being divided up to form a central village. You were either a native or you were a summer person.

For my story, Ogunquit expanded and was defined and redefined over and over again. For the summer people it was a playground. For the locals, it was a business for two months a year. Labor Day defined the end of the craziness... the summer people would be gone. Even in the 1960s and 1970s, on Labor Day weekend, some residence of Maine celebrated by string up signs over the I-95 highway saying, "Goodbye, you G.D. Tourist." The Chamber of Commerce went crazy. I thought it... said it all.

That brings me to the third event. It was small by comparison. An artist named Robert Henri, a fellow artist and friend of Woodbury, moved to the Cape Neddick area. He would later create New York schools of art, known as the Ashcan School of American Art and The Eight. He was part of the formation of what was to become American Modernism. It was one of the most influential movements of its time. Artists like George Bellows, Edward Hopper and Rockwell Kent were students in his school.

In the summer of 1914, an unknown artist, Edward Hopper, rented a place in Ogunquit. He painted a few paintings of the old cove. Little else is recorded. However, my having lived in the same area as he painted, fifty years later, gives me a different perspective on his art. I can feel his composition's relationship with the neighborhood. In my opinion from analyzing his work, it is clear he must have rented one of Woodbury's studios. His paintings of the cove are well known. Other paintings of his are more oblique. Two paintings point to Woodbury's Shore Road studio. "Houses and Rocks in Ogunquit" is painted from the studio's backyard (on right). His famous "A Road in Maine" was painted from the side-yard in the other direction (on left).



Hopper's "A Road in Maine" by Chip



"Houses and Rocks in Ogunquit" by Hopper

Though not identified as such, the painting is clearly the same composition as a painting by Charles Woodbury of Shore Road. The painting is important because it starts Hopper's open road series. Other paintings, not

identified, are of rock formations just south of the old cove. Two paintings, unidentified, depict a rock and sand beach. They are attributed to Monhegan. I know every inch of Monhegan and Ogunquit. Monhegan does not have any such beaches, but Ogunquit does.



My two recreations of Edward Hopper's paintings of Narrow Cove, also painted by Woodbury



"*Soir Bleu*," painted in 1914, looks like the type of artist parties common at that time in Ogunquit. (Note the sense of isolation... an outsider's perspective.)



"*Sailing*" by Edward Hopper, recreated by Chip

It was in the fall of 1914 when Hopper sold his first painting called "Sailing." To me, it had a feel of sailing along the Marginal Way in Ogunquit. These observations are considered by historians as pure speculation. For me they are lived facts. Besides, checking with Charles Woodbury's daughter-in-law India Woodbury, she said that Charles rented the studio that summer. She did not know to whom. After Charles' wife died, he had a girlfriend in York, Maine. He spent those years in York, hence his renting. Where Woodbury and Henri knew each other, and Hopper had been a student of Henri. It is not too much of a reach to assume a connection... or a word-of-mouth exchange about the studio. I was not an artist but the area was overflowing with energy of artists long passed. I may have been indirectly influenced by them. The area was again charging.



Original Compositions by Edward Hopper. These paintings were recreated by Chip

A few years before we bought our cottage on Juniper Lane, a museum was built just below our cottage. I use to watch the owner working like a slave on the grounds.



Henry Strater's Museum of American Art – 1950s

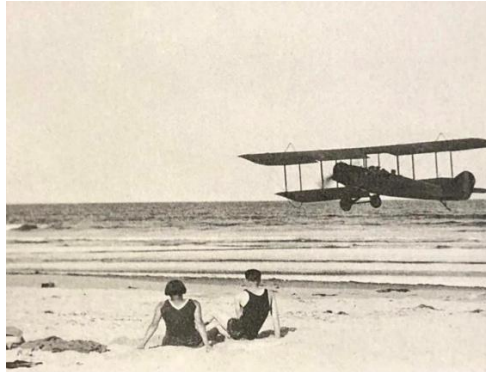
He was an eccentric rich man named Henry Strater. He painted in Paris in the 1920s and encouraged friends to come to Ogunquit. He also bought local art. The Henry Strater Museum of American Art was built to house his collection. Today it has been renamed The Ogunquit Museum of American Art. It looks right out onto the old cove and Narrow's Cove where I grew up during the 1960s.

I had heard stories of how his first wife found out he was having an affair with a model in the cove. She got into her big black Cadillac, sped down to the cove and rammed his studio. Henry, model and studio, all ended up in the cove. That was the end of his first marriage. I told you some of the people in Ogunquit were crazy.

The 1930s continued to redefine Ogunquit. The lifeguards at the main beach became sexual liberated. An unknown, Betty Davis, became Ogunquit's first female lifeguard. (Pictured centered below) She moved on to become a famous movie star and performed on stage at the Playhouse.



Other innovations were tried. As an example, Air Mail delivery was tried. Cecil Perkins, later to become our Police Chief, landed on the beach at low tide with the mail. It was novel, but did not stand the test of time.



A depression and another world war did not seem to affect Ogunquit's summer trade. It could have been the regulars were of a more mature age. Perhaps the war did not include them. People still came.



The Manhattan Theatre Colony (The Ogunquit Playhouse, later named) – 1934

Drawn to Ogunquit by the art community (birds of a feather) Walter Hartwig's started off-Broadway theatre in Ogunquit. It was in a garage (The Old Elm Street Garage) on Shore Road. It ran from 1933 to 1936.

It was clear more seating and space was needed. Besides it had been an old garage. Much later, I would have to deal with the same problems in the same building.

To make my point about Ogunquit's tourism not being affected by the depression. The timing of the Playhouse's expansion makes a good point.

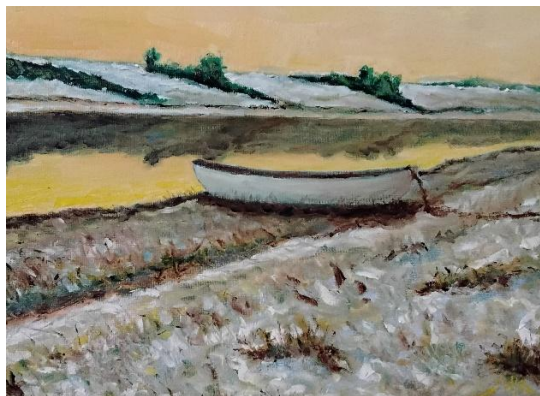


The New Ogunquit Playhouse on Route One – Late 1930s



Bathing along the Marginal Way. Ogunquit had rocks and stars.

Painted by Chip



Boat on the Ogunquit River repainted by Chip



Old Schooner in Portsmouth, New Hampshire Painted by Chip

Edward Mansfield Walker's Arrival

In 1914, our family also visited Ogunquit for the first time. My grandfather, Edward M. Walker, worked for the railroad. A side benefit was free passage on the train for the entire family.

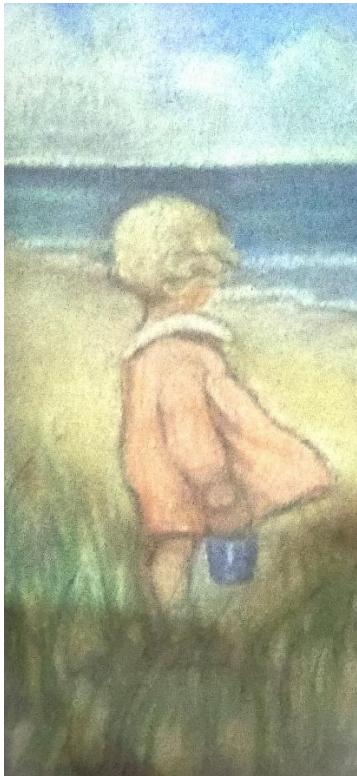
Ogunquit had been a place where his sister exhibited her art. Also, friends had recommended he visit the unspoiled place. His sister, Minna Walker, was Yale Art School's first female student. Later, she was admitted to the American Watercolor Society. Though she did not paint in Ogunquit, the village was a good place to exhibit art, it was becoming known by collectors.



Ye Old Village Studio – 1920s

Painting by Minna Walker

My mother was only three-years-old. In the spring, she and a friend had been playing on the back steps of family house in Detroit, Michigan. Her friend unexpectedly pushed her off steps and shattered her arm. Three attempts failed to set her arm correctly. Amputation was being discussed. Because of World War I, a new tool had been developed. The Fluoroscope allowed seeing the bones while they are being set. It was successful. Her healing process was part of the motivation behind going to Ogunquit. My mother needed to straighten her arm. The doctor suggested Polly should fill a bucket with wet sand and carry it to their place on the beach and dump it. She should do this exercise over and over again.



Polly with Her Bucket Unknown artist – 1914 Ogunquit



Ogunquit Square - 1914

They stayed at Scotch Hill Inn on Main Street. It was a popular inn for artists to stay. The town was very simple and an easy walk to the beach. Many years later, Mom said she could remember a young girl waiting on guest. What fascinated her was the fact the girl was pregnant. The girl was Florence Perkins; she ran the inn until she died in the 1980s. Mom being only three was the focus of a lot of attention. One artist touched by Mom's job of filling a bucket with sand, rendered a pastel of her with her bucket.



Old Elm Street Garage on the Ogunquit Square - 1920s

Mom could also remember church suppers, lobster and clam bakes, and dances at the hotels. She remembers going to the Ogunquit Baptist Church to roll bandages for the war effort. Near Perkins Cove was an artist, John Hawkins, who followed Mom's yearly visits. When I was born in 1949, he sent a little drawing to her as a gift.



Drawing of "Gulls and Rocks" Gift by John Hawkins 1949



Oarweed Cove in Storm by John Hawkins - 1914

There was a need for entertainment. The wheels were in motion to address it. By the 1920s, the Leavitt Theatre was built to show silent movies. The Old Elm Street Garage was built to sell and assemble cars. Banking was easier. The center of town was developing to service the needs of its summer visitors. These changes were welcomed by the locals as well. Dunelawn was a mansion built as a home between main street and the ocean. It was out of place in a small village, but it was not the only change. The art community combining with people of wealth triggered lawn plays, they became very popular.



Dunelawn

These events drew the attentions of play promoters, Walter and Maude Hartwig.

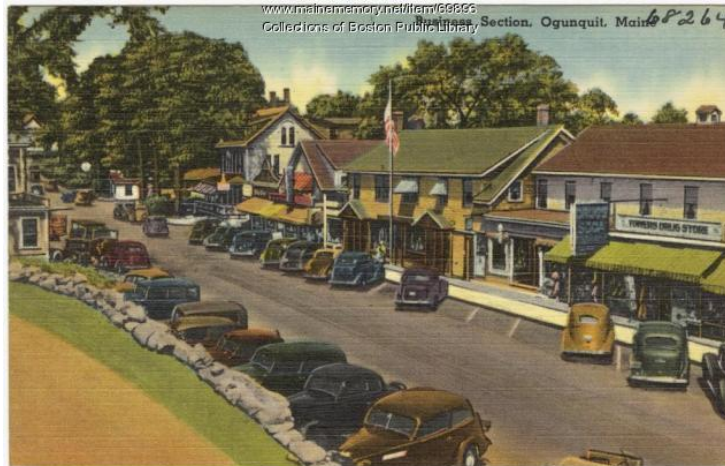
Going back to my family's early connections with Ogunquit. The Great Depression and World War II interrupted their yearly visit to Ogunquit. As a funny aside, on a trip to New York City the family ran into acquaintances from Ogunquit. They told them, "Don't go back to Ogunquit... it has been ruined." It seems the magic that is Ogunquit is a relative opinion.

My mother met my father at University of Michigan in 1928. They married in 1932. Times were difficult for almost everyone. They had my sister, Coe, in 1937. World War II was a very big deal. Dad enlisted as an office.

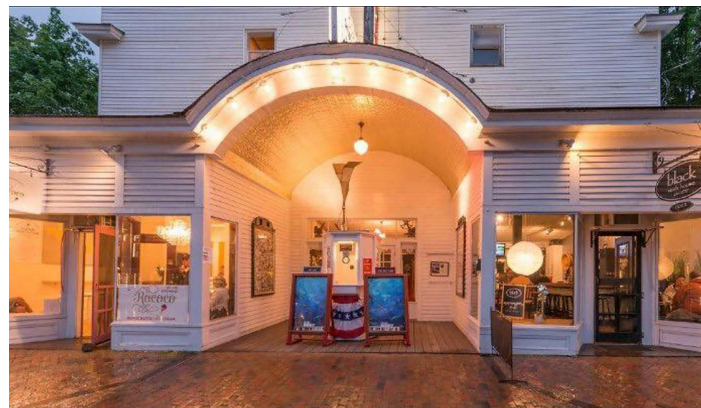
After Dad came back from the war, and they all got settled, the family traveled back to Ogunquit. We had our grown Scottish Hill Inn. Across the street, Dunelawn had just opened as a hotel. We found space in the converted stables for the whole family. George Smith inherited the mansion without the money to maintain it. His sister got the money. In my opinion, someone did not think this out. George married Herriot, and her three children. George seemed to be off fishing most of the time just on the other side of their front lawn in the Ogunquit River. They hired a small army of teenagers to be slaves. Herriot was their commander. She ran a tight ship. There was only one way... her way. Years later, I was on the receiving end of her rage. I got a summer job at Dunelawn as one of the slaves... it lasted two weeks. I quit.

She screamed, “I will fix it so you will not be able to work in Ogunquit ever.” In some ways I wish her curse would have come true. I have never stopped working in Ogunquit. But I am getting ahead of my story.

In the 1950s, Dunelawn was like a dream. The Ogunquit Playhouse housed their stars there in high style. Us common folk would wave as they passed by. Every week a new Hollywood or Broadway personality would sweep in to be gawked at. We had a front row seat. Dunelawn was also centrally located. The beach and ocean views on one side. The center of town on the other side.



Ogunquit Town Center – early 1950s



The Leavitt Theatre, built in 1924. Just across Main Street from Dunelawn.

The Leavitt Theatre was even closer. I went to my first movie there in 1954. As a curiosity, under the seats are racks for men’s hats. We had the beach during the day and movies at night. The two movie theatres acted virtually like a

modern-day multiplex. They not only got first run movies, but they rotated different moves every other night. Later, when we owned the Ogunquit Square Theatre, I found out the hard way, how such a trick was pulled off. The movies actually played every night, but in different venues. We had to play musical chairs with the heavy cans of film. However, for our business it was worth it.

When I was old enough to get the lay of the land, I realized just how organized our vacations were. A lot of planning went into our month-long visit. The movies had two-week line-ups of what they had to offer. The Playhouse had its' entire season posted. Even the Fire Station posted when they had BINGO Night. It was to raise money for new equipment. I thought it made good sense. Ogunquit was organized for maximum enjoyment. In hindsight, it operated more like a cruise ship than a little village. On the other hand, Perkins Cove was slower to catch on.



The Marginal Way

From town the cove was at the other end of the Marginal Way. Even in the 1950s the cove consisted of converted fishing shacks into art studios and a Lobster Shack. For me The Shack was the end point of a very long hot walk along the ocean. Nugrape Soda was always my reward. I would have loved a slice of blueberry pie, but I could not afford both. It was the only time in an entire year I drank it. I had to have it. In the 1950s, the cove was still a strange mix of working fishermen and bohemian artists. There was The Icehouse that was party central. Named for its former use as an icehouse for keeping fish

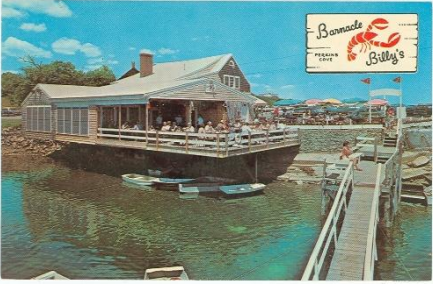
cold. Now it was a private club for getting girls drunk. Of course, at my tender age, I had no idea of the action. It was still notorious years later. And some of Ogunquit's upstanding residence were a part of its checkered history.

During this time, there were the last remanences of the Tea Houses. An informal gathering place, without alcohol. The Dan-Sing-Fan still looked like it was dropped onto the banks of the cove from Japan.



Dan-Sing-Fan Tea House overlooking the cove. – 1950s

The Cove with its footbridge seemed old. It was not. Until the late 1930s the cove basin was Perkin's haying field. Hence, the name Perkins Cove. It had only been that way for less than twenty years. The Josias River flowed by the field on its way out to the ocean. Boats could be pulled up on its banks to avoid bad weather. It was not much protection, but better than nothing. When the cove was dredged out, it made a big improvement for the fishermen. Fishing was becoming a real business. Beside tourism loved fishing too. Ogunquit was always on the move. By the end of the 1950s, two fishermen, Billy Tower and Captain Hubbard, joined forces to create a restaurant named Barnicle Billy's, and a pair of excursion boats called The Finestkind. My main interest was Billy's ice cream. I never liked Lobster meat.



Postcard



The Cricket (Finestkind) Repainted by Chip

Soon, more new restaurants and gift shops opened up. The cove was being transformed into a tourist destination. Parking was a big problem; there was not enough of it. Old farm fields, blocks away, were converted into very profitable parking lots. Fishing boats changed over to charters. “Tun-erring” was still very profitable and added to the atmosphere with fishy smells as well. On the lower dock were the bait barrels. In the hot summer sun, you can imagine the smell they created. In an interesting way, it all worked.



Tuna Time Original by Chip

At Dunelawn they had only one T.V. in the far end of the building. I was allowed to sit quietly and watch movies until midnight. The only sound was a large

grandfather's clock, slowly marking time with its loud tic-toc. Then everyone went to bed. This was a good way to catch up on old movies. The T.V. was black and white which was OK, because the movies were black and white too.

After the age of five, I was only interested in getting the latest comic books. I wore a path from Dunelawn to the local Drug Store. I have interesting memories of the smells. It came from a little hole-in-the-wall restaurant called, "My Sister and I." They were Greek sisters who ran the mini-restaurant. What I remember was the smell of what I would learn was Shish-Kabobs grilling. I never had one, but boy I can still remember that smell.



Painting of *Bessie's Restaurant* – Ogunquit – 1950s

For milkshakes, it was Bessie's. In the dead center of town, it was a favorite of both locals and tourists. It was open year-round, too.

When we would splurge, we went to Barbara Dean's Restaurant at the beginning of the Marginal Way on the Shore Road. It was old school, girls in ironed uniforms were exacting in their motion, no wasting of energy. It was home cooking with a view. The unique touch was a starter of a fruit cup with a little ball of orange sherbet on the top. Each customer also had a plate of three different mini-rolls. One coffee cake, one cinnamon roll and one snowflake roll. For some reason this little touch made the whole meal.



Barbara Dean's Restaurant – early 1950s

Church Suppers were another must do. A little like being bossed around by a distant relative, but the food was worth it. You never quite knew what you were getting into. Pot-luck was exactly that. The quality of the food went from very good to “the best I have ever eaten.” Usually, the size of the women in the kitchen was a good indicator. It was always family style, so you got a chance to chat with strangers. The churches coordinated the nights. There was never any conflict of interest that way. However, competition for the best cooks was cut-throat. The two main contenders were the Baptists and the Methodists. Behind the religious façade, it was war.

On the surface, life and summers were lived at a slower and a simpler pace.



Rowboats of Perkins Cove Original by Chip



Mom, Coe with Scott and me on Ogunquit Beach - 1959



Ogunquit Beach – 1960s

On the beach front, I was interested in the lifeguards' surfboarding. They tried to teach me to surf. I was a very good bodysurfer, but surfing on a lifeguard's board was cooler. The problem was size. I was still too small for a large heavy board. I became OK at it. Enough so that I started to save for my own board. In those days, the boards were more like paddleboards. After, cutting lawns and shoveling snow back in Detroit, I had the \$70.00 I needed to get my board. By the time I got it, we had a cottage in Ogunquit.



My painting of me on a storm wave – 1960s



Old Map of Ogunquit, drawn by an unknown artist

My Family Joining Ogunquit's Eccentrics

It was the summer of 1959. We had been visiting Ogunquit every year for only a month. Dunelawn was going up on their rents. So much so, we started thinking about buying a place.

Grandpa's sister, Aunt Minna, had died leaving him with some money and some of her art. We started cottage hunting. Ogunquit seemed like a second home anyway. So why not put down some roots. Detroit was becoming more fragmented. Change was part of our future there as well. Dad's new business required all of his time. I think Grandpa and Grandma wanted their own place. At least, for half of the year. Most other families were still buying their first house or having children. The second housing market was soft, so we had a lot to look at.

Our realtor was in her eighties and unmistakably local. Mrs. Perkins took us around looking at houses. Her favorite description was, "It is very disappointing on the inside." Most of the time she was right. However, once she was right, but it did not matter. The view was outstanding. A million-dollar view with a ten-cent house. It had been on the market for two years. The biggest problem with it was the lack of bedrooms, only two.



View from our Juniper Ln. cottage

The addition of a dormer would add three bedrooms and a bath. A new front porch, screened-in side porch and a twenty-foot flagpole completed the project. It was my job to climb the pole every year, to string the rope for the flag.

Surprisingly, it was quite an adjustment reorienting from our Ogunquit life near the beach to living near the Cove. There was always a hint of craziness in the stories we had heard about locals. It was more so with the summer people. We found ourselves in the middle of a funny farm. Every person was interestingly strange. They defied categories.

Like the neighbor in the house in front of us, Mr. Bush from Manhattan, N.Y. He had a New York City personality and a damaged rowboat. His business was making and selling ladies underwear. He told me if I would fix the hole, I could have it. I never could fix all the leaks. I named it, The Sieve. Some years were better than others. Every year required two bailers. Hay, it was free plus labor and martials.



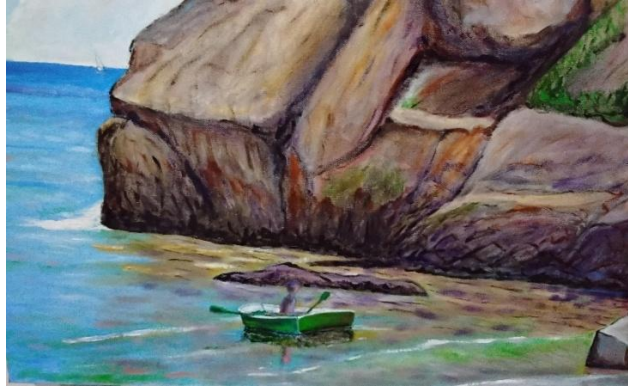
Grandpa, Grandma, Elsa and Me

From the above picture, you can see how high we were off the ocean. I would load the boat onto my shoulders and balance it while climbing down the path. I was not going to buy a trailer for just two trips a year. We did not have the room for one anyway. Besides it builds character, if you don't fall. At the time I did not realize it, but I was becoming one of Ogunquit's characters, too.

Narrow's Cove would become the center of my life. An art museum, swimming, rowing, diving, rock climbing and socializing all in my front yard. The regulars knew the routine. We even had a group of girls who enjoyed sunbathing topless, which is legal in Maine. It did not bother me one bit. It did prompt me to borrow my grandfather's binoculars on more than one occasion.



Swimming in the Cove by Chip



Rowing in the Cove Original by Chip

On the other side of the museum, lived David and Indea Woodbury, in a house painted a bright boysenberry color. When asked about the color, Indea claimed the cones of the sumac were that color for about a week in the fall. That was her logic anyway. When looking out of my bedroom window all I focused on was a boysenberry box. I got used to it. The eccentricity did not end there; they were avid John Birchers. We had to be creative about why we could not make the meetings. Being from Detroit, we had to develop being considerate of others as second nature. This open acceptance workout well, for both Indea and David kept a close eye on grandma and grandpa when we went back to Detroit.

On the south side of the house, lived Lloyd Silvernail. He had had three wives but was single at the time. I liked Lloyd. He was a character in a good way. He lived in his Beacon Hill town house when being a stockbroker. He transformed like superman into rags to fit in the coastal vibe for the weekends. Grace, his first wife's mother, lived with him during the summers. He had made her millions in the stock market. Relationships were built on less. Grace was made of tough stuff. She fell once climbing down to Narrow's Cove. My sister, Coe, ran to help her. Blood was running down her leg. Grace's bathing suit was missing parts. Coe saw more of Grace than Coe wanted to see. Grace just got up and continued to her daily swim. She returned and said the bleeding had stopped. The blood probably froze in Maine's cold water.

On the other side of Lloyd's house was the Flying Bridge. It was designed and built by the architect who built the museum in the valley... Ed Koch. He and his wife, Lizette, lived there for six months a year. It was a deck house with a 1950s Swedish minimalism decor. Lizette was an artist and became good friends with grandma. I liked her art, so for my birthday, grandma commissioned her to paint me in Perkins Cove. (Below)



I am rowing my boat with my dog Elsa -1960 Painted by Lizette Koch

To our west, were the Tackoff's. They lived in Boston and owned a meat packing company. Scott, my sister's son, was only three. He went on visits. Scott must have made a good impression. He always came home with pounds of hotdogs and hamburgers.

Most other people in the area kept to themselves. It seemed to be the Maine way of interacting, or not interacting. It was not that they were stand-offish. The people just respected each other's privacy. The Stein's we never met. Her sister, Miss. Flynn, we saw too often. She was in her late forties and was single. For some reason, she insisted on introducing me to another new kid to the neighborhood.

That is how I met Bill.

Bill and I had Miss. Flynn in common. We laughed at her insistence. It was strange match-making, but it somehow worked. She also had a young girl in toe, who seemed to be her ward. Bill already had three sisters to contend with. He did not need another. The poor girl seemed...odd. I was never sure about her...silent smiles. Having grown up in the allies of Detroit, one had to be able to read a situation just to survive. I could not figure her out. So, after a few attempts at group friendship, she moved on.

Bill and I became good friends. Between my surfboard, rowboat, Narrow Cove and the rocks on the point of Juniper Lane, we had one hell of a playground. The point was cut-off to most explorers. The wall of thorn bushes was so dense that the only way around them was a dangerous cliff climb down into a small cove.



Drawing of the cliff that had to be climbed down and up to get to the point.

Drawing by Don Gorvett



Our “Clubhouse” originally painted by Edward Hopper - 1914

Repainted by Chip

A little less than fifty years after Edward Hopper painted it (See painting above). Bill and I made it our clubhouse. Believe it; or not, it was very roomie. Great for fighting off pirates or Vikings.

In this “gap” in the rocks, the walls had two chairs. They were cut by nature into the rock. Perfect for Bill and me to conduct business. The “point” also had mini-coves. Depending on the tide and the sea, we could carefully row deep, out of sight, into the point. At the age of ten, my parents gave me a lot of rope to explore with. By comparison to Detroit’s allies, the rocks were safe. Ogunquit for me, shifted in nature from beach life to the cove and rocks.

The surfboard was the main reason for going to the beach. The two movie theatres were the other draws taking us to town. While there, the penny candy shop was a must stop. Boy, you could become fat on just a dollar per day. So, our visits were restricted to

once a week. The other fun stop was The Idiot's Delight, next to the Leavitt Theatre . You could buy fake plastic poop or vomit that looked real. They also had magic tricks and puzzles. It was like a carnival sideshow crossed with a gift shop.



Rocks at the Mouth of the Cove Original by Chip

The Great Cove Fish Fight

By the summer of 1962, Bill and I each had a rowboat; and we used them often. As mentioned before, my first rowboat The Sieve kept sinking. This required a bailer and three hands and a new plastic rowboat for rescue. Ironically "The Sieve" out lasted the new plastic rowboat, which cracked in 1969. Finally in 1970, I gave The Sieve and three bailers away to a deserving kid and wished him good luck.

Back to 1962, sometimes we would row from The Cove to the bell buoy and back. This totaled two miles. We went out in fog and in storms when other boats were being tied together to protect them from the wind. I loved going out late at night to see the minute organisms light up from our oars splashing in the water. We learned to maneuver narrow and dangerous passages between the rocks. Sometimes we would even row three miles to the beach. However, once we rowed to the bell buoy, then turned south and rowed another three miles to Bald Head Cliff and finally two miles back to The Cove. Our hands were bleeding from the six miles ordeal. It was difficult to define the line between brave and stupid at the age of thirteen. Most of the things we did our parents would not find out about until weeks or even years after the fact. It was better that way. It kept everyone happy. Life was good, but life was going to get a little out of control by mid-July.

Bill and I had taken the boats to Narrow Cove. We used them as a platform to swim from and also to see if we could capsize the boats. We learned just how hard it would be to right them. We thought this was all part of water safety. By three o'clock, we were done for the day and started rowing back to The Cove.



***Out Rowing* Original painted by Chip**

As we approached the first dock, I could see Ruthie, Bill's sister, drop-line fishing with three other girls. They had their hair up in large curlers covered with scarves. I asked Bill what the occasion was. He said it was Ruthie's Birthday, and she had some friends up to visit. Trying to be friendly I yelled, "Happy Birthday!" It was as if we were not there. They ignored us completely. What was this odd behavior? Was this "a sister thing"? Not wanting to be ignored, Bill and I just parked our rowboats right off the dock and started talking to them. Ruthie was mad; and at some point, she picked up an old bailer and tried to splash us. Bill and I had learned how to use the oars to really make a directed splash. The girls did not have a chance, and their feet got wet. It should have stopped at that, but it did not. Their screams were drawing a crowd of on-lookers. Some people began taking pictures, and one man even took a movie of our frolicking.

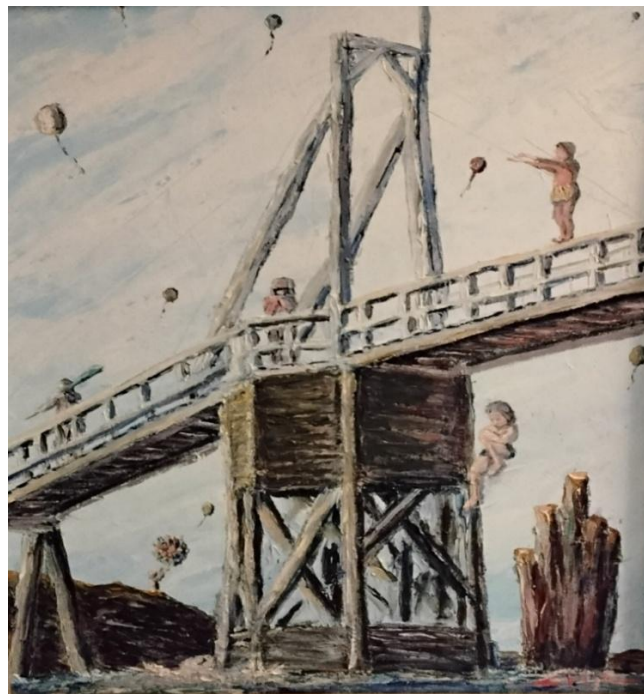
The girls got buckets, and the water fight was on. Water flew everywhere, and curlers were floating in the cove. Wet hair was everywhere. Then it went from bad to worse. I guess the girls had been fishing for something other than fish. Some guys showed up to help them, but they were not sure they wanted to get wet. On the backside of the dock were bait barrels. These bait barrels contained discarded fish creating an unbelievable stench. From one of the barrels, someone found a twenty-inch slimy projectile and hurled it at Bill. It landed on his back and head.

Now the real war started. More fish came from many directions. The rotten fish floated so we could retrieve and used to retaliate. One guy got creative, and he started throwing fish down on us from the footbridge. He needed to be taught a lesson, and Bill and I were going to deliver it. We tied the boats to the bridge and climbed straight up the bridge's scaffolding.

He was going to be thrown off the bridge, and he knew it. He made the right decision and ran. We never saw him again. Meanwhile the girls were out of control and incapable of forming a real sentence. We tried to dodge the girls' slaps. As we moved the rowboats behind the float, we realized the battle was not over. We had to use the oars as protection as we ran over the footbridge and up Woodbury Lane to the safety of Bill's house. They were like a swarm of bees on our heels. Since Mr. and Mrs. G. were still out shopping for Ruthie's party, the house did not afford much protection. Someone started spraying us with the garden hose, and another battle for the hose ensued. Finally poor Bill got control of the hose as two girls with handfuls of peanut butter ganged up on him from the rear. It was not a pretty sight. When he spun around with the hose and took it into the kitchen, I knew it was time to go home. Just then the G.'s came home, and I was out of there in a flash.

This was not the introduction to Ruthie's friends I had wished.

In fact, it guaranteed an "us and them" kind of relationship for the rest of her life. They were grounded for a week. I got away scot-free. I was lucky once again.



Fantasy painting of us playing on *the old footbridge*

By my teens, BINGO at the fire station, the farmer auctioneer and Tea Houses had all lost their appellee. Bill and I were looking for something else. As it turned out it found us via my surfboard. A guy came up to us while we were done surfing for the day; and introduced himself, as John. He asked if he could try it. Bill and I said sure. It was now 1963, John was a few years older than us. He worked at the Ogunquit Playhouse. He said it was a great place to work. They needed parkers and concession sales staff. That started a shift in our night activities. Plays and usherettes for a few hours of work, we were paid \$12.50 / week. Where do we sign up? (I worked there for almost ten years.)



The Ogunquit Playhouse in the 1960s

Of course, the usherettes were too old for us. We made friends anyway. Ogunquit was getting bigger for Bill and me.

It was on a bike ride home from a matinee; the next major milestone took place. Wanting a short cut, I rode into Perkins Cove and crossed over the footbridge with my bike. There silently criss-crossing each other were two small sailboats. They were in a dance with the wind. I was spellbound. I can still clearly hear my thoughts..."How do I learn to dance with the wind and make it real?" I had been saving money for years after buying my surfboard. A sailboat would require a different level of saving. I had never been sailing. None of that mattered. I knew I wanted a sailboat. No! I needed a sailboat. I had to make a plan.



The above view was exactly what I was, minus the two small sailboats. It turned out that the two boats were owned by a father and son. Clearly, they had practiced a lot. The dream was followed up with action. I got books on sailing. Worked a number of jobs that winter.



My Dream by Chip

My Sailboat and the summer of 1963

It was the middle of February 1963 as very cold wind blew in the doors at the Detroit Boat Show. A white fiberglass sailboat with its sails hoisted up its mast was just sitting on the floor at the entrance. I was just there to look and dream, but this fourteen-foot Pintail #50 was mesmerizing. In my imagination, I could “feel” it in action. My mind said, “Not time yet. You need to earn more money to pay for it. Buying the boat would be just the start of the expenses of ownership.”

However other things were going on in my mind at the same time. Even though I had never sailed before, I could imagine me sailing on the open sea. The tilt of the boat, the wind pushing on the sails and the pull of the rudder in my hands, was the dream of my dancing with the wind as I sailed. The salesman had a job to do, and he knew how to push my “buttons”. “For \$895.00, this floor model with a canvas boom cover would be a savings of \$250.00 over this summer’s price. It is a very good deal.” I was thinking fast, but I knew I could not make the final decision. The next offer was for a free lesson to seal the deal. “What about transporting the sailboat to Maine?” I asked. I got a blank stare and a pause. He said, “I can sell you a slightly used boat trailer for \$100.00.”

The honeymoon was over. Clearly, he was looking for an older customer with cash then having a conversation with a fourteen-year-old. I said, “Write it up so I can sell it to my partner.” He blinked only once and wrote the sales offer up in his order book. “Oh! Can you write in the free safety vests you have advertised on that card over there too? I need to do some selling of my own tonight.” I tried to sound serious. “First come, first served or the end of the show,” he said not looking very happy. “Thank you!” I said, and

started looking for Mom. We had some business to do at home. I needed to borrow some money for the first time. I would need almost \$400.00. I also had to work out a plan to repay the money with interest.

I shoveled snow that winter and cut lawns that spring and fall. I knew I was going to have a job at The Playhouse in the summer. Any Birthday or Christmas gifts would go directly to reduce my debt. Maybe this could work after all!

It was a successful pitch to my grandpa and Dad. Now I had to teach myself to sail. Mom did not say anything, but I could tell she was proud of me. I guess they all were. I found books on the subject of sailing and imagined myself physically in the act. The principle of sailing made sense, and I did not lack imagination for the feeling of sailing in my mind. However, I knew the act, the dance, was all together something different. Sometimes unexpected things just happen, and you need to be able to react in a second without thinking of what you are doing. I had read this skill is learned by practice, practice, and more practice.

Finally, the day had come to drive out to Anchor Boat Sales in Mt. Clements to get my first sailing lesson. Instead of a real lesson, the yard boy put my boat into Anchor River flowing into Lake St. Clair. From what I had learned and his skill, the two of us were able to rig the sailboat. He sailed back and forth on the 200-foot-wide river, and then he had me sail back and forth twice. To my surprise, the lesson was over. As he got out, Dad got in the boat. It was a good thing I did not know how notorious Dad had been during World War II for his lack of abilities when it came to handling small boats. Later I learned his men had called him Captain Crunch. He had been a supply officer, and this required no knowledge of sailing.

We sailed back and forth zigzagging as we practiced. The river was basically an access route from marinas to Lake St. Clair. Sailboats under power and speedboats formed lines in both directions like a line of worker ants. We were trying not to hit anyone. I have to admit I was very nervous, and sailing did not seem at all like I had imagined it. However, Dad was impressed with my faking it. We tacked down the river towards the lake. We sailed into the wind. If we had any problems, we could “run” back to Anchor’s dock.

We sailed for two hours, and that was just about all my nerves could take. It was like being in a shooting gallery. Since we did not hit anyone or damage the sailboat, Dad thought it was a successful day.

Friends of Mom and Dad offered to let us moor my boat at the Grosse Point Yacht Club until we were ready to drive it to Maine. I had three more chances to gain some experience on Lake St. Clair. It would have been easier if I had an outboard motor. Since I had spent all my money, a motor was out of the question. As it turned out, it was

a great test of my ability “to thread the needle.” The yacht club was very tight on space, and I was forced to be very careful.

One strange sailing event was a study in pure physics. On my last sail just off the entrance to the yacht basin, conditions were just right with wind speed, duration, shallow lake and wave action to create a phenomenon called standing waves. When you think of waves, usually one thinks of a chain of waves moving until they hit a shore. Standing waves are created when incoming waves reinforce outgoing waves. They resonate like when you blow over the top of a bottle. On the lake, this took the form of a surface divided into a pattern of evenly spaced peaks and holes. The peaks were about a foot high, and the holes were about a foot deep. The distance between peaks and holes was about eight feet. With regularity, the peaks became holes; and the holes became peaks.

In my books on sailing, nothing was said about sailing in these conditions. The oscillations acted effectively like breaks. It was very slow returning to the basin. This was a very good learning lesson for me. Don't panic! I was gaining confidence, and that was important.

The trip to Maine had all the normal ups and downs. However, hauling a boat trailer increased the 13-hour drive to 20- hours. The six cats and one dog just added to the fun and games of the trip. The cool June salt-air came as a welcome relief as we drove over the bridge from Portsmouth into Maine. We were home. Bill and family had not come up from Chelmsford, Massachusetts yet.

Boy! Was he going to be surprised with the new toy. Before even buying the sailboat, I had called the Village Office and inquired as to the availability of moorings. It was not going to be a problem, and the fee was only \$12.50 per year. It was a green light to go ahead and put the Spindrift in the water at the beach, and sail it around to the cove.

A day before the launch, I surveyed the route I was going to sail. One big problem was getting under the bridge at the beach. I needed an outgoing tide to float the sailboat without a mast under the bridge. Once on the other side, I would have to raise the mast and rig the boom and sails. The next challenge was trying to sail through the waves breaking into the river. All this work had to be done by only me. There was not a lot of time to spare. The day was beautiful, and the dance went off perfectly. The boat and I moved gracefully. Planning ahead was of great importance, and another vital lesson learned.

Being the new guy, in the cove with a small boat, put me on the bottom of the pecking order. I was assigned a horrible mooring at the opposite side of the cove. This was right under an open drainpipe from The Riverside Motel. I was not going to complain. I did not know the unwritten rules of any game the locals wanted to play. I could feel the

eyes, and my job was to fit in and blend. There she was anchored with her boom tent up to keep out the rain. I used my green Sieve to get me back and forth from the dock. I was a sailor with a world to explore. As I would expect from a real New England Yankee, Bill's reaction was guarded. However, his interest was obvious. It did not take him long to get the hang of sailing. However, a very nervous Mr. and Mrs. G. made the offer to buy a new outboard motor since most of their children were going out sailing on my boat. I guess they rationalized it as good insurance.

We sailed every day in good or bad weather. The learning curve was steep. Bill and I felt our parents did not need to know too much about the near misses. We were only thinking about them. I took Mom out only on good days.

When Dad came to Maine for his one- or two-week vacation, I did not have the time to be selective. Dad had some weight to him, and I placed him up by the mast. This would be easier for him and it would also balance the boat. Some excursions did get a little exciting, and he was glad to make it back to The Cove alive. However, he usually complained about me giving him a wet ass more than anything else. It became a family joke; but depending on the wind direction it was very true! My Ogunquit had expanded into the sea from the cove. We had many near mishaps.

Bill and I were now looking over the landscape of usherettes and dreaming. There were two sisters Pam and Phyllis from Orlando Florida who rented a room in a house up the street from Bill's house.

When they were not working at the playhouse, they worked at The Whistling Oyster restaurant in the cove. Both girls seemed tired and sad. Bill and I suggested going out after work for a row around the cove. After all, we had two rowboats. The girls had concerns about going out in the darkness, but we reassured them we had been doing it for years. Instead, they countered with an offer to play pool in the basement where they rented a room. This sounded like fun to us. The four of us became great friends. Eventually they loved rowing at night. As romantic as this might seem and despite our high hopes, our evenings with the girls remain PG.

Often, we would row out to the entrance of the harbor. This was defined by the green can buoy on our right and the red nun buoy on our left. Robin Richards' father owned The Hillcrest Hotel and Robin operated The Sandpiper, a bar with the Robin Hood Room. Since The Village was a "dry" village, The Sandpiper located just over the town line in York, was a very popular hangout. Robin also had access to the family sailboat, The Rorqual. She was a 40-foot two-masted schooner. It was a short walk from the bar to the Cove. We never knew each other, but our paths crossed often in the mouth of the cove.

Every night when we would be out rowing, The Rorqual would just appear like “The Flying Dutchman” ghost ship. It hardly made a sound as it slowly glided into the Cove. We would just stare at it passing by. Its deck was covered with intertwining bodies paying no attention to admiring onlookers. This was a man with a job I would love to have. He created it by the smart use of the resources available to him. Nothing got by me. I was learning.

Before coming to Maine with her sister, Pam told me about braking up with her boyfriend of three years.

She was tired, lonely and had not met anyone to fill the void in her broken heart. I listened to her as a concerned friend. In fact, she became my first real true female friend. We talked about our sorrows and cried together on the rocks of Narrow Cove.

She was leaving the day after Labor Day to start college in Florida. She did not say it, but she had hoped for summer romance. It made sense to me that she wanted to start dreaming again. She desired to see things “new.” Instead, she and her sister were hanging out with two fourteen-year-olds. What a disappointment this must have been to them. By the end of the summer, the girls seemed disinterested in us, but Bill and I understood.

Labor Day Weekend (My First ‘Dance.’)

Bill and I got the sailboat out of the water and put it away for the winter. Our last working night at the playhouse was on Saturday of Labor Day weekend. Bill and his family left Sunday morning to return home for the beginning of the school year.

My family waited until the holiday traffic was over to leave for Detroit. Since the car was packed, we waited with nothing to do. I now had time to wonder about Pam and Phyllis, and what they were doing.

I wanted to say good-bye, and I wanted to wish Pam best of luck as she started her first semester in college. From our pass conversations, I did not expect either girl to return to The Village next summer. To me, their world seemed to be sad and missing something. Or missing someone important.

I knocked on their door at 10:00 o'clock Sunday night. It was a dark foggy night. Pam answered the door and had just finished her packing. Phyllis was helping out at The Whistling Oyster in The Cove. Being the end of the season, the restaurant was short on

workers. Pam and I talked for a while, and I said I would like to say good-bye to Phyllis too.

The Oyster was only a half-mile walk down Pine Hill Road. Before we got to the cove's footbridge, our hands joined in the foggy darkness. Forgetting about Phyllis, we turned in the opposite direction and headed towards Narrow Cove and The Museum of American Art.

The fog obscured the floodlight's illumination on the museum. The ground and the rocks were as wet as our hands were sweaty. We found a shadowy nook on the north corner of the building. We did not talk about love. We did not talk at all. We kissed for the first time.

That kiss lasted over an hour! I had never French kissed before. In fact, this was the first kiss I had ever had outside the family, and family kissing did not count. She unbuttoned her blouse as I unhooked her bra. As her bra flew over a rock, her shirt slipped off her shoulders. I feed on her passion like it was a drug. From her body, I could tell she was doing the same. I wanted more. She wanted more. We both were wrestling with our own fears and desires. On a pile of flagstones in the nook, I pulled down her pants and sat her on my jacket. I had seen magazine pictures, and I had read the information. Now was the final exam! I wanted to ace it with 100% satisfaction. Until this moment I felt nothing could top the feeling of sailing, but boy I was wrong. This passion was pivotal.

Although I was not keeping track of time, at some point she wanted to take control of the sexual action. Her ravenous hunger was an equal to mine.

Finally, totally satisfied and exhausted, we dressed each other slowly and lovingly as if saying good-bye forever. We were not in love, but we sure had a wonderful time. At four o'clock in the morning, I walked her home without a word. As we tightly held each other in the sweet darkness we kissed for the last time. The sweet smell of her wafting into the fog left a lasting impression on me. With a simple "Good bye", we turned lovingly and departed in separate directions. So ended my first 'Dance,' I was learning fast.

Memories of my 'first dance'

By the time we left The Village on Monday, Pam and her sister were on a bus to Florida. I was still sleepy from the night before.

I wondered to myself if it had been a one-night stand. Since our romantic encounter was from Sunday night into Monday morning, this was technically a two-day episode. I laughed at the idea some people would have considered it statutory rape. I did not feel

violated in the least. It was quite the opposite. I was happy and thankful. I gratefully surrendered my virginity.

Since neither of us were going to tell the truth to anyone, that night of passion was our forbidden secret. She could not tell her friends or even her sister because of our age difference. Since she had sex with a fourteen-year-old, my hope was she would not think of herself as a loser. She was my winner!

As it turned out, we were a few years ahead of our times. "Free-love" would not be in vogue for a few more years. "The pill" was just becoming available. We thought we were being creative to avoid the risk of pregnancy. Little did I know we were not inventing anything new.

Boy what a summer! I had learned a lot... freedom of sailing and the freedom of desire. Ogunquit held many a story about love and the sea. I had just had a taste

The Playhouse would have a lot of stories about teenagers looking for something and not finding it. It was generally called a summer romance. Relationships with a built-in expiration date... the end of the summer as people went in different directions.

The ocean had its stories too. One stands out.



"After the sail," Original by Chip

Sailing in Storms

Bill and I sailed a lot. With adult family members, his sisters, with usherettes, and the occasional summer visitor. It became second nature to grab the sail bag, the oar and head out to pick up Bill as I passed his house on Shore Road. Woodbury Lane brought us down to the footbridge that crossed over The Cove and led down to the docks. The Sieve would be partially sunk of course, but chained up. We would drag it up on the

dock and just dump it out. I got very good at sculling my little punt. It was a method of standing up in the front and weaving the oar in a figure eight to propel the punt and us. At the sailboat, we would unhook the Boom Tent and fold it back on itself and put it away under the deck. The punt would be tied up to the mooring float, sails rigged to the mast, and motor started. Bow and Stern lines dropped and we were off. The mooring system in the Cove created rows of boats with tight channels. I had to 'thread the needle' very carefully. We would pick up any passengers at the dock. I would blow a whistle to get someone to push the button to raise the bridge. After clearing the bridge, we were off. Most of the time we enjoyed a steady southeast wind that blew straight into the Cove. That made raising sails and getting out of the harbor easy.



Raising the Bridge Original by Chip

By the summer of 1965, we could have done it in our sleep. The outings were not without its problems. Boone Island was due southeast of the Cove by ten miles, but the wind blew from that direction most of the time. Kennebunkport was due north of the Cove by ten miles, but the same wind concerns existed for the return trip. Simply stated, you couldn't sail into the wind. So, if you wanted to sail upwind, you would have to sail in a zigzag pattern (tacking). This made the trip much longer than was practical for day tripping in a small sailboat. Trying it was risky on a good day and insane on an "iffy" day.

On a beautiful late July morning, the wind was just right for a sail to Boone Island. Bill and I were up for the challenge. Jack Kraus, my sister's second husband, and Paul Harvey, our neighbor from Detroit, both wanted to come. Jack was a high school civics teacher and eat punks like Bill and me daily. We tolerated each other at best, but I was the captain on my ship. Bill and I reluctantly agreed to my mom's wishes. The four of us were off for Boone Island and a very long sail.

It was great! A direct shot to Boone Island and back would make it a twenty-mile sail...long, but we could do it. Mom watched us as we sailed down the coast. She wondered if she should have checked the weather for the day.

About two miles into the journey, the wind changed on us. Our plans had to change too. The new wind direction made a trip to Kennebunkport possible. With an eighteen mile

per hour wind the trip should take around four hours. We all thought that sounded fine, so with an adjustment to the sails, we were heading in the direction of Kennebunk. The wind stayed strong and my sailboat was flying over the water. Bright sun and blue skies marked our journey all the way to Kennebunk Beach. Paul and Jack had not sailed much. They were enjoying themselves. We did not try to go into the port because of the time issue...it was a little after 2:00 in the afternoon. Both Bill and I had to be back in time to work at 7:00 o'clock at The Playhouse. The wind changed again which necessitated our sailing along the beaches of Wells and The Village. Usually, in the afternoon, the wind starts to die down. We were looking at a stronger wind and the first signs of whitecaps. The skies were getting cloudy to the west, then darker than they should have been. By the time we were crossing Moody Point, a storm was to our west and coming on strong. We were riding up and over some pretty large waves. If this set of conditions were not bad enough, I could see rocks under the water where I had not expected rocks to be. We were more than a mile off the shore.

Luck was once again on my side and we had sailed over a shallow ridge of rocks on the crest of a wave that was on the verge of breaking. An hour or less later, we would not have made it because the tide was going out. Paul and Jack were scared. They should have been. Even though we were just off the beach on The Village-Moody town line a very big storm was about to hit us.

The sky to our west was blacker than black and the sand was pure white by contrast. Waves were huge and made the option of landing at the beach impossible. We were between two storms that were about to collide. My gut feeling was to drop sail and try to motor in the direction of the Cove.

I read the major wave action. I hoped that would be enough to guide me in the approximate direction. Jack started to panic. He wanted to turn the boat around and drive it onto the beach. Bill and I knew it was far too dangerous. Without a sound we looked at each and we both thought the same thing. If he tried to take charge, we would let him try and make it on his own to the beach. We were heading by motor back to the Cove completely blind.

The rain started like a Hollywood disaster movie. The wind was no longer blowing from just one direction. We were being rocked from all directions at once. I had two five-gallon buckets plus two large bailers, all of us got to work so we would not sink. For more than three-hours we worked hard. Once, I had to refill the gas in the outboard motor and that was the most dangerous point of some very dangerous few hours. It was cold and getting colder. I navigated by the big rolling waves. I kept them in the same relationship to my boat. It was my hope this would work. However, that seemed like wishful thinking.

At exactly 6:00 in the evening, the rain stopped and the visibility started to clear. To my surprise, we were heading straight for the red nun buoy at the entrance to the harbor of The Cove. Three hours of blind sailing and we were exactly where we wanted to be.

We could see all of the neighbors on Juniper Lane out on their porches waving as if we were there to save them. Mom and Coe were screaming with joy. We just wanted to get warm, eat and get to work.

Later I found out that Mom did call the coast guard about the weather. The storm was forming and was going to be very bad. She gave them the details about my boat and they sent a rescue ship to Boone Island to find us. We were not there. The coast guard also got a call from a house near The Village-Moody town line saying a small sailboat had capsized and needed rescuing. In the bad weather, they must have seen us lowering the sails in the mist and thought we had flipped. I am grateful our 'saviors' did not run us over in the zero visibility.

Neither Bill nor I felt any emotions during the trouble. Ever thing was just a matter of fact. We did what we had to do. We did not even find it strange at the time.

In recounting the event much later, I realize how much luck was involved. I remember Grandma's first prediction, "You were born to be hang!" Mom was concern with poor Paul. He had been completely silent. Wanting to make conversation she asked him if he had seen the sailor's prayer on the stern of the cockpit, 'Oh God! Thy sea is so great and my boat is so small.' Still shaken Paul responded, "Oh Mrs. Cook! I could not get pass, 'Oh God!' Thank you for the sail, but I don't think I will ever be able to sail again."

Jack did not say much either. I do not think I ever sailed with him again. Bill and I were a little later to work. We saw Mr. John Lane and Mr. Bill Traber doing our jobs. They had no idea why we were late. The rest of the summer and the rest of my life would seem tame, or so I thought. My life was to get strange... very strange.

In Detroit, my life was getting more complicated. I made friends with another young sailor.

Mark and I had similar histories on our finding a love of sailing. He had a boat at the Detroit Yacht Club, but did not have transportation. I had a boat in Maine, not in Detroit. Other relationships were built on less. We had bad influences on each other. We even formed a crazy club ourselves, B.I.B.C.P. Having to go to Ogunquit was probably a very good thing; less dangerous. These stories are more part of Surviving Detroit. I was off to meet up with Bill and a saner life.

The summer was looking very boring until the new summer people moved into Lloyd's little cottage. The widow, Mrs. S. had three children. They were Laura and Les, her two older attractive teenage daughters, and her young son.

Bill and I were stopped dead in our tracks. We introduced ourselves. We spoke to Mrs. S. and offered our services carrying in boxes for her. With a knowing smile she accepted our offer. The mating dance had begun. We did not have horses or hides to trade, but a helping hand was a good start. It gave an opportunity to present ourselves in a good light. We had wheels, which was very important. My sailboat in the Cove did not go unnoticed. The possibility of summer jobs at The Playhouse turned out to be a very big plus. It seems Mrs. S. was very interested in season tickets. This meant they were here for the summer. The trade of information carried with it the added advantage of not having to buy four season tickets. We were a useful source of both work and entertainment for Mrs. S. She must have had a good laugh at us drooling over her daughters. Both girls got jobs at the Playhouse, much to the disappointment of Cathy. We were a foursome and had wonderful times.

I had no illusion; most of the attraction Bill and I represented to the girls was usefulness for the duration of the summer. Under normal conditions they would not have looked in our direction twice. All summer romances have an invisible expiration date ending sometime in the fall. Some of us know this from experience. Some of us find out the hard way. Some of us know the situation, but pretend the outcome will be different. I was infatuated with Laura. I was in the last group.

By the midsummer nights, we would walk down Juniper Lane; turn left on Shore Road and head for our field around the corner. The field was beautiful at night with a rising Moon. It had banks on both sides. A small brook weaving down the center. If the night got cool a mist came up. It formed an imaginative river of fog flowing to the sea. From our location on the side bank, it was magical. We would kiss and touch for hours. We marked time by the movement of the Moon. A cool sweat was both our reward and our punishment.

It was common to get to bed around 4:00 o'clock. It was a dance of sorts. The illusion of love was enough. Every partner was different in her own way. I was a different person too. The physical was almost secondary to the dance of the spirit. That is the best way I can describe it. We would go somewhere else and melt into each other. I cannot go pass the field today without thinking of Laura. The field was not the only place for love. At the end of August, Nature put on one of the most incredible displays. Northern Lights filled entire sky. They glowed in what looked like a moving dome of light pulsating from all horizons to the center above our heads. To this day I have not seen anything in Nature that could equal it. We kissed on the roof under the lights. When we were not kissing, the four of us loved to catch a movie Sunday night at the Leavitt Theatre. Next

to the entrance to the theatre was a sub-shop named The Dugout. We lived there. Dining on pizzas and roast beef, pickles and mayo subs. We listened to the fantastic music of 1966. Laura and I had a song, "Oh Wouldn't It Be Nice." However, everything comes to an end and our summer fantasy did too. My 'dance' partner number eight was painful to lose.

In the fall she went off to Wheaton College for girls. We wrote each other, but the letters came further and further apart. Subject matter shifted from us to Dartmouth drinking parties. By January of 1967, our dance was definitely over.

Mark, John, Bill and I decided to create our own senior trip. Instead of the traditional trip to DC, we traveled to Maine. John had saved both Mark and my lives in the Detroit River when Mark capsized his boat. We stayed at my family's summer cottage. (no insulation, no running water and little heat). To add to this fun, we left Detroit in a blinding snowstorm closing everything in its path. We fought the snow all the way to Maine. If the trip had gone my way, we would not have stopped but for gas. However, Mark had another idea. He wanted to take advantage of the eighteen-year-old drinking age in New York. I had just turned the legal age. Albany was the city he chose to make our first great purchase.

As the three of us walked around the liquor store like children in a candy shop, the guy at the register was not being fooled. Nor did he really care.

I would ask Mark, "Do you think father would like this?" as I held up a half gallon of Vat 69.

I swear Mark was drooling. "Oh yes, father would really love that bottle."

"I think father would like this, too," John said. He held up his poison of choice. Since I did not drink, we ended up with four half gallon bottles of alcohol. Enough to kill poor old dad.

The drive from Detroit to The Village was 825 miles. Wouldn't you know we got the car stuck at the bottom of Juniper Lane. We had to hiked up the last 500 feet to the cottage. When the storm cleared, it had dumped a foot and a half of snow.

Bill lived in Chelmsford, Mass. He met us the following morning at his parent's house, just down the road. In those days, The Village was a real ghost town, even in early April. However, the ghosts had eyes. By morning the whole town knew the Cook kid and his friend Bill had two friends up from Detroit. India had seen us with her new binoculars. The phones started to ring.

Later that morning, we went to town and were greeted by people neither Bill nor I knew. The Post Mistress told us she got a call about us from one of her neighbors around

10:00p.m. It was clear we were under the microscope. The B.I.B.C.P. was going to have to keep a low profile.

As we left the Post Office, a very old and a clearly demented lady pointed at Mark. She started to cackle, "That boy has acne, that boy has acne, that boy has acne." It was a very strange thing to happen. We were caught off guard. However, it prompted Mark to rush to the drug store and stock up on Clearasil. It was at the end of our stay we got an explanation. It seems this woman had been a well-known skin specialist. She had even written books. The Village seemed to be where demented people go to spy on their neighbors. Mark just had the misfortune of randomly running into her.

We had our share of fun that week. Always under the watchful eye of India. After finding my nephew's plastic boat, we used it as a sled to make runs down the slopes of Juniper Lane. India called Detroit to report to my mother she was sure we were going to end up in the ocean. Mom only laughed.

Mark, Bill, and John drank a lot in a week, all of them using the cold as an excuse. We took showers at Bill's house, but lived up on Juniper Lane without any running water. Peeing was easy: we just went over the edge of the cliff after checking for India with her binoculars. Number two took some planning: we each had a different colored bucket. Also, a different place to hide it in the woods.

Mark wanted to meet Laura, queen of the field. I had her telephone number and, on a whim, Mark called her. Much to my surprise, she accepted Mark's invitation to come to our "party." Laura was no longer Laura and Mark replaced me as a person of interest.

It was all a bad idea, but I did not fault Mark. Laura was asserting her independence from the summer of 1966.

Years passed and I saw her only once for a sail in the summer of 1974. It had been eight years. She was devastated by a very long-term relationship going bad. Again, I was just a sounding board for her to cry out her anger. Not even a hint of my Laura could be found. She was just a sad ghost I took sailing for the last time. She did not want help. She wanted to live with her pain.

Ogunquit was getting busier with day trippers. Somedays when the beach and the cove were humming, I could just get on my boat and cross over an invisible threshold and sail quietly into solitude. Mostly, the sea was welcoming. Sometimes the unexpected happened. One time, I saw what looked like a small island...too small an island. Then a large fin moved from left to right disappearing. The motion was very smooth... it had to be a whale. A very big whale.

On another occasion, I spotted what I thought was a child's toy fin as I got closer it became clear this was no toy. It was a fourteen-foot shark, the same length as my 14-foot sailboat. It looked up at me with its dead eye and continued on its way.

In the odd weather department, we were sailing very nicely toward the cove about a mile away. Looking up toward the cliff at Bald Head, the water looked very odd. It was as if someone had drawn a dark line across the horizon. It was moving slowly towards us. It was about two feet high and the sea on the other side of it was filled with white caps. We still had a steady gentle wind. Not being dumb, I started setting the sails for a very strong gale and told everyone on board what to expect. The line was a two-foot difference in water level. I turned my boat into the wall of water and braced for the hit. Even with the sails let out the wind almost capsized us. I let the main flap like a flag and took off like a bullet with just my small jib for momentum. We took off like a bronco rider out of the gate. How a wind like that could be concentrated behind an invisible wall. I still don't know. We flew back the remaining distance to the cove. I was thankful it happened so close to home.

On another occasion, we came up on a giant sunfish, approximately eight feet in diameter. It was just sunbathing. We looked at each other at a respectful distance and went on our way. This was a part of Ogunquit you could only understand if you sailed.



***Sailing with Grandpa* by Chip. Inspired by Winslow Homer**

This is a story about my life in Ogunquit, not only about me. Ogunquit went through constant little changes. However, some major changes did occur at the end of the 1960s. The people who had visited for decades were growing old and dying. The general "feel" of Shore Road was one of many older visitors, dressed in black, slowly walking the walk they had done for years. They had introduced the next generation to

Ogunquit. Times had slowly changed. No longer did people come for the summer. They did not come for a month, unless they owned property. The average stay was only a couple of weeks. The check list of "must-dos" became shorter. Even we had a list. Going to York Beach still existed. The Goldenrod's saltwater toffee was a must, at least once a summer. While in the neighborhood, we swung by The Nubble Lighthouse just to say, "Hi." From my prospective, Ogunquit was just a playground for dating. We added driving two hours, or more, into New Hampshire and hiking up mountains. We climbed Mt. Washington once, 6,400 feet high. Once was enough. Mount Chocorua was 3,500 feet high and was a good afternoon climb. When some of the members of the B.I.B.C.P. came out from Detroit for a visit, we even overnighted on the top of it.

When dating moved to the next step, I had to say, "Goodbye to the freedom of summers in Ogunquit." That is in my book, Surviving Detroit. For two years I only came to it for a week. Finishing up my education at Oakland University and trying to be real in the dating world all came first. While this was happening, or should I say, not happening. Ogunquit was attracting new families. Baby strollers and young kids were everywhere.

By the time I got back to the area it was 1973. I was working at MIT's Lincoln Labs, in Bedford, Massachusetts. I owned a small house in Lexington, but I made the trip every weekend to Ogunquit. My family was rebuilding the cottage into a large year-round house. I needed to be their representative on site. This was a new twist, Ogunquit as hard work. As a village, Ogunquit was still very quiet in the winters. The summer kids were gone. Mark and his girlfriend still worked at the Riverside Hotel, but we were drifting apart. Bill was out at Perdu University, in the mid-west.

When my parents moved in to their new house, Ogunquit changed again for all of us. It was home. I was like other weekend visitors. Dad and family had bought the Ogunquit Square Theatre in 1970. Now we were making plans to run it; and add a restaurant on the side. Ogunquit was no longer the beach and sailing for fun, it was becoming our new business. Older people who defined Ogunquit, including my grandparents, the Woodbury's, the Kochs and Lloyd had died off. It seemed like the town had a population that never changed. Town meetings had characters that were on the edge of being nuts. From the millionaires to the town drunk everyone had the right to be heard. Meetings were often after a church supper.

Mom joined the Woman's Club, York Hospital Volunteers and the Ogunquit Flower Club. Dad joined the Ogunquit Rotary Club and became the editor of its Breeze Newsletter. No matter what, we were out-of-towners. A native had to have been born here, and have three generation in the graveyard. I will never be a native, that is just a fact.

Ogunquit was a draw for many other interesting types...the Mob for one.

Julio, or Billy, was only one example. Looking like an old Babe Ruth. He sported a long white cashmere coat and drove a large white Cadillac. Moving to Ogunquit, he wanted to redefine himself as a restaurant and bar owner. The rumors abound of his having been a mob enforcer. His story was simpler. He claimed to have made his money by selling watches outside factories in Rhode Island. Billy and Dad became friends over breakfast with the fishermen. He was trying to open a bar in the cove called, "On the Waterfront." Ok... nothing like being obvious. Another habit he had was flashing a wad of one-hundred-dollar bills. Dad claimed he had twenty thousand in cash. Looking as he did, he did not have to worry about being robbed. He could have walked right onto the set of the Godfather, without make-up, and blended with the other characters. Even in his late sixties, no one in their right mind would have taken a chance jumping him. Having said all that, he was really quite nice.

After the town had given Mom a hard time about getting a permit for a fundraising event, she was heading to her car in the black of the night. A big white Cadillac pulled up next to her and the windows rolled down. "That was horrible the way they treated you. Why give you a hard time over doing something good for the town?" Billy said.

Mom said, "I don't know, Billy. Thanks for your support."

"Who are you little lady?" he asked.

"I'm Polly." She spoke.

"What? Graham's little Lady? In surprise.

The next morning, Mom got a call from the town manger telling her to come in for her permit, it had been paid by an anomalous admirer. Obviously, Billy paid the fee. It was under the surface, but tension existed between the natives and the foreigners.

Another interesting story happened after Billy opened his restaurant. Billy and Jack were talking about Jack's youth. Jack was the local version of Billy... tougher than nails. It was night and Jack had had a few. They got into a friendly argument about whether or not Jack had swum out and back to the Bell Bouy...a two-mile swim. Billy betted him \$10,000.00 that he had not been able. That was motive for Jack to start stripping his clothes off as he ran through the restaurant and ran out into the black night.

Billy was having a bird; the water temperature must have been in the forties. "They will blame me for his death!" It took a while to find his keys to his speedboat and head out to find Jack, or his body. Jack had already reached the Bell Bouy and was heading back to the cove. Billy said, "Get into the boat."

"No, I want to win our bet." Said Jack.

"Here's your \$10,000.00. You S.O.B." Billy said as he pulled out his wad of cash.

Jack made his point and took his money. They stayed friends, but Billy never made another bet with him.

To complete the picture about Billy. Some local rednecks got drunk in Billy's bar and broke up the place without paying. Billy was not there. The bartender called Billy and Billy went to work. He found their house in the woods and took two bats out of the trunk. The three guys were left with heads bashed in minus the money Billy felt they owed him. Personally, I think Billy went easy of them. If it had been in the ally of a city, they would have been dead.

Ogunquit was a study in characters. When it came time to buy our equipment for our restaurant, Billy put in a call to Boston's Northend. We had a discount and VIP treatment. Billy was not the only mobster, at least four other colorful "made" men lived peaceful lives in the area. Enjoying old age.



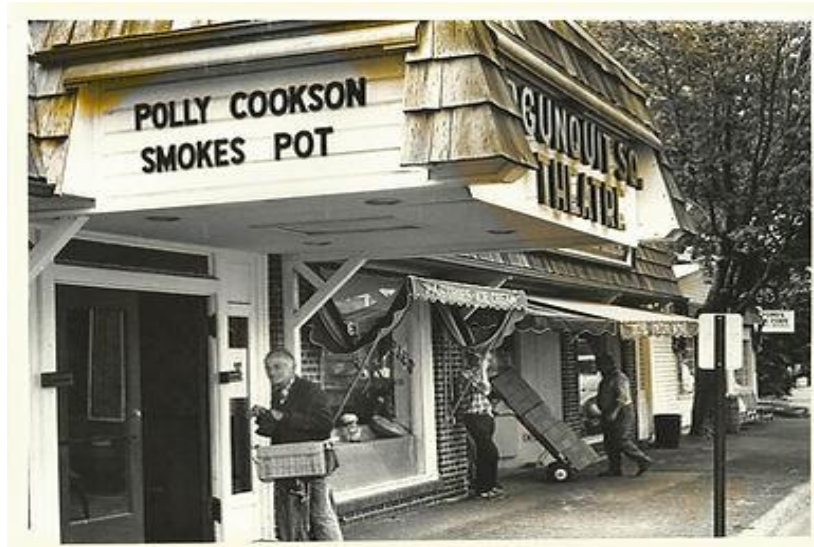
Perkins Cove Painted from my imagination by Chip

Our Venture into the Movie and Restaurant Businesses in Ogunquit, Maine

It was 1976, Dad had been cheated out of his share of the Detroit business. In the end he had to accept only \$175,000.00 for one-half of a business grossing over five million dollars. It turned out Johnnie, his partner, did not think he could run the business without Dad's personality as the front man. Billy offered to talk to Dad's former partner, but Dad declined. Without those assets, we were going to have to work and economize. The building was all paid for, but it was a wreck of a building. No foundation, leaky roof, poor usage of space; a real sow's ear. However, it was what we had to work with. We did the best we could with the dark and depressing theatre. We found old pictures of Ogunquit; enlarged them for the walls.

We recovered the old torn leather seats. Made a new lobby, concession stand and marquee. New lighting and the people loved it. Movies were going into its golden years and the crowds came to the movies. We often had lines down the street to get in. We kept the short runs to optimize our showings. The length of a visit to Ogunquit was shrinking to a week. We had to maximize our offerings. It worked.

For Dad and me, Ogunquit was all work. Even sailing was put second. We were doing well for one person with no mortgage; not three people and a mortgage. We needed to expand into the food business in the store next door in our building. The next year, after a lot of hard work, and a second mortgage, we opened The Square Marketplace. It was a food court. We sold all the drinks. We also had The Pizza Place and The Ice Cream Coner. Two concessions we rented out. The Rolling Pin...Deserts. Einstein's N.Y. Styled Deli for breakfast and sandwiches. The learning curve was steep. I had resigned from the Lab to go into full partnership. I knew it was going to be lean for a few years. I had no idea how difficult being your own boss was going to be. There were 27 job slots to be filled and trained. One hundred kids lined up for the jobs. I had taught myself many jobs in the past, but not so many different jobs all at once. Then I had to train the kids to do their jobs... making Pizzas for one example. This was different from teaching Math, learning how to write programs and running computers. Even sailing did not help. Managing teenagers were like "herding cats." A common complaint, "He looked at me funny." Somehow it all worked. I was dead at the end of the summer of 1977. However, the challenges would just be starting in September of 1977.



This was the front of our little theatre and restaurant in the background. Photo taken by a news reporter of Dad's prank on Mom. She was running for selectman and Dad did not want her to. It was up for less than an hour, but received world-wide coverage in the news.

(The town drunk, on bike in front, stopped to inquire if he could buy some pot. You cannot plan this kind of advertising.)

How would you define ... Strange?

If you have read my other books; you know that I have had many challenges. I have done the best job I can do to handle those problems. I would have traded the sea monster for what I had to deal with. The topper was it happened in plain sight. No one could tell anything was out of order. I am not talking about anything like horror stories. I am talking about phenomena that is philosophically...vexing. The result on me was major. I needed to find an explanation. These were questions plaguing mankind for centuries. As you can imagine this was not going to happen overnight, I am not going into the details here. It is all on my webpage,

<averystrangelife.com> *A Very Strange Life.*

It is enough to know, I really got an unusual education in the extreme. I went from scientific skeptic and Agnostic to explorer of the unknown the hard way... living it.

Ogunquit and the Kennebunks would never be the same to me. They were to become my "Rabbit Holes;" and Ann, my psychic friend, the White Rabbit.

For *My Ghost of Ogunquit*, an outline of strange events is required for continuity.

1. *Surviving Detroit* – was intended to establish a background of the author. The only unusual events were a string of incredibly good luck and hard work. Interestingly, my grandma’s advice did seem like a series of predictions in hind sight. In short, my life was what I would call, **normal strange (1949 – 1971)**.
2. *A Very Strange Life* – tells of my life’s trajectory being changed by a series of paranormal events. It starts with meeting a fourteen-year-old telepath while I was in graduate school studying Math. Telepathy was clearly a very real phenomenon, needing research, however science said ... NO, it does not exist. Do not believe your lying eyes! The full effect of this event was not exactly clear, but it was part of my decision not to go on for my PhD in mathematics. Telepathy was some kind of unknown communication but it did not seem to matter much to my philosophy. In other words, science’s credibility took a hit, but I was still an Agnostic. By that, I mean, “I did not presume to know the mind of God, if there exist one.” It was the philosophical equivalent of fence sitting.”
3. The other important event, at the time, was a strange relationship (with Diane) that ended poorly. At the time, the type of attraction, seemed odd. It turned into an obsession, because it did not make sense. What should have been only a broken heart; turned into a series of the strangest of events. This is where this story, “Ghosts,” and “Strange Life” converge. The two stories formed the start of **paranormal strange events (1971 – present)**.

I think an xerept from “A Very Strange Life” would be helpful.

“A Very Strange Life” - CHAPTER 3 September 1977

(Strange Event #2)

"You can't depend on your eyes when your imagination is out of focus."

— Mark Twain

I had made it to September, and I was still breathing. After Labor Day, business finally slowed. For once, I had time to relax and even read the local paper. I picked up a newspaper someone had left behind in the restaurant. On page two was a long article about a local psychic. Judging

by the tone, the reporter had been impressed. There was even a photo of a striking young woman beside a large spinning wheel. Her name was Ann, and she was new to the area.

The reporter gushed. He'd seen her ad on a local bulletin board and, as a skeptic, set out to prove how people could be duped into wasting money on nonsense. But after testing her, he left convinced. According to the article, her abilities were nothing short of astonishing.

Since my time with Laura, I hadn't spent much energy thinking about the paranormal. While Laura had faded into the background of my life, the memory of her abilities remained sharp. My written records of her telepathy still puzzled—and frustrated—me. Once I left Detroit, I entered a world that didn't include anything mystical. Still, curiosity got the better of me, and I clipped the article about Ann.

Surprisingly, her phone number was printed in the article. By late September, both the theater and restaurant would shut down for the season. If boredom set in, maybe I'd look into this new phenomenon.

Three days later, I called her. A voice in my head said, *just do it. What have you got to lose?* I booked an appointment for the following Monday at 11:30 a.m. Her house was on the way to the harbor—easy to find. The reading cost five dollars. Even if it turned out to be nonsense, it wouldn't break the bank.

The day before my appointment, I was cleaning up at the restaurant when the side door suddenly flew open. In walked a condo saleswoman I'd worked with earlier in the summer.

"You saved me twenty-five thousand dollars!" she shouted. "I owe you dinner! Are you free tonight? How about The Inn at seven?"

Caught off guard, I stammered, "Sure... but really, it's not necessary."

"Oh yes, it is! I'll see you there," she smiled before quickly heading out.

Even by 1970s standards, it was bold—but I was intrigued.

Dinner turned out to be great. She spoke non-stop, explaining how she'd followed my advice and contacted the people on the list I had given her. She decided not to reinvest her commissions in the condos she was selling. "The developer was furious I was the only salesperson who didn't invest," she laughed. "Two days ago, everything collapsed. Thanks to you, my money's safe in the bank. I don't know how I'll repay you... but maybe I will think of something," she grinned.

She expressed her gratitude—until 3:30a.m. Monday morning.

When the sun rose, I wanted nothing more than to stay in bed. I was wiped out. But I had that appointment with the psychic. Ann's house was twenty minutes away, and I barely arrived on time. The sun on this side of the bay was blinding, bouncing off the ocean. Her home sat beside

a river, with a scenic view toward the sea. Though charming, the old place seemed a bit too close to nature's wrath. It was lucky it had survived.



Ann's House

I climbed onto the wraparound porch and knocked on the first door I saw. Through the glass, I spotted Ann holding a young child. She opened the door in a flurry and gestured for me to enter, pointing toward the living room.

“What would you like in your tea?” she asked. “I always drink tea while reading. Please, sit anywhere on the floor.”

Not wanting to be rude, I replied, “Just a little sugar, thanks.” She disappeared into the back.

A few minutes later, she returned carrying two old mugs and a pot of honey. “Is honey, okay?”

“Sure... thank you,” I said, smiling.

She placed everything on the floor and sat cross-legged. Following her lead, I joined her.

Trying to break the ice, I said, “This is my first psychic reading. Do you need any information before we begin?”

“No. The less I know, the better,” she replied, handing me the tea and honey.

Then she picked up a deck of playing cards and began to shuffle. Several minutes passed. Then she asked, “Did you bring a tape to record the session?”

“No... I didn't realize that was an option.”

“It's okay,” she smiled. “I can sell you one for a dollar.”

“Yes—thank you,” I replied. Still, I wondered if this was part of a trick. But having a recording seemed like a smart idea.

“People often get a lot of information during a session,” she said, as if reading my thoughts. “They like to replay it to catch the details.”

That made sense.

She dealt the cards into a square, placing one in the center. The layout looked random. She studied them, turned on her recorder, and began to speak.

For the next hour, she spoke in broad generalities. Her words could have applied to me—but just as easily to anyone else. My thoughts drifted. How did a pretty woman and her daughter survive doing this?

When the hour ended, I must’ve looked disappointed because she asked, “Is there anything specific you’d like me to focus on?”

I figured the reading was a dud. She hadn’t picked up that my love life was a complete disaster— or that I’d had a surprise evening with the real estate agent. I even thought sarcastically, *if she doesn’t pick up on last night, she’s in the wrong line of work.*

Still giving her a chance, I asked, “Do you see any complications I might have in my love life?”

Let me step out of the story for a moment—imagine a Greek chorus interrupting the scene. What you’re about to read leads straight down a rabbit-hole—*Alice in Wonderland*-style. Everything was recorded on tape. I listened to it many times. The details were hard to accept—but impossible to ignore. Eventually, I transcribed everything into my notes.

Her predictions raised profound questions about the nature of reality. The problem? I’m the only person who witnessed them unfold. For years, their anecdotal nature kept me silent. But the implications never left me. What happened next launched me into my own wonderland—and transformed me into a full-blown scientific heretic.

Back to the story.

She looked distracted. I repeated, “Do you see any complications I might have with my love life?”

After a long pause, she said, “I see something connected to a school, about five or six years ago.”

Finally, something clicked with my past. I kept my face blank. Diane, the girl who broke my heart, was buried deep in my mind.

“There’s a woman you were very much in love with,” she said.

That could apply to many college students.

“She had a certain smile. In a photo, she’d look pretty—but it’s more than that. Did she receive over one hundred and twenty Christmas cards from strangers?”

“Yes,” I replied, still stone-faced.

That number—126—was a statistical anomaly. No one could guess that. Ann might have some of Laura’s telepathic ability.

“Do you know she still loves you?” she asked.

“No,” I said. “I didn’t know that.”

I couldn’t believe what I was hearing. My emotions stirred, even though I tried to remain calm.

“Yes... she does love you. You’ll see her in a month and a half.”

“I have no plans to see her,” I said.

“You will,” she said confidently.

“Will she be glad to see me?” I asked, remembering how Diane used to run away when she saw me.

“Yes. She’ll be very glad.”

That prediction didn’t seem likely.

“She’ll touch your hand while you’re talking,” Ann continued, “and say, ‘I was sorry when you stopped sending me Christmas cards telling me what was going on in your life.’”

Only Diane and I knew that. No one else.

I was stunned.

Ann went on, “When you say goodbye, something will stir up a can of worms.”

She wasn’t wrong. I was already knee-deep in confusion. Was this a tea party in Wonderland?

Ann earned her five dollars—and the extra dollar for the tape. I left her house more baffled than ever. The things she shouldn’t have known were undeniably accurate. The things I couldn’t yet verify seemed just as impossible.

And this was only the beginning.

The very next day, I got a call from Bill, a childhood friend I'd known since we were ten. We hadn't spoken in years. He'd heard about the changes in my life through his mother, who had spoken with mine. But he didn't know the half of it.

While I had moved to Maine and started over, he had gotten married and taken a job at Ford Motor Company. They were living about five miles south of Oakland University in Michigan.

We caught up in a long, lively conversation. At no point did I mention the psychic reading. In fact, I hadn't told anyone.

Toward the end of the call, he asked when would be a good time to visit. He suggested the first two weeks of November.

Aha! That was exactly one and a half months away—just as Ann had predicted.

I tried to see if I had somehow influenced the timing, but the date was all Bill's idea. I had said nothing that could've steered him toward that suggestion. Still, I had to admit that by choosing to follow the path laid out by Ann's prediction, I was affecting the outcome. My curiosity about her reading had made this entire scenario possible.

With our family's businesses now closed for the winter, time flew by. Before I knew it, I was packing for my trip to Michigan. The drive felt longer than I remembered. I arrived at Bill's on a Friday, an hour after he returned from work. It's funny how easily old friends can reconnect—like no time had passed.

That weekend was filled with catching up, meeting his wife, and revisiting his version of Detroit. At some point, I played Ann's taped reading for him. I didn't expect it to blow his mind—and it didn't. But he was intrigued that the visit's timing had matched the prediction exactly.

I needed to distance myself emotionally. If more of Ann's predictions came true, it would raise serious questions about the nature of reality itself.

Science fiction writer Isaac Asimov once said the most exciting phrase in science isn't "Eureka," but "That's funny." Given what I was experiencing, "funny" didn't feel right. For me, "strange" was the better word.

On Monday, while Bill was at work, I decided to visit Oakland University. I wanted to see what, if anything, I could find out about Diane. It had been over five years since I last stepped foot on campus.

Physically, much was the same—except for a new building that threw off some of my spatial memory. Most of the people I'd known were gone, which was no surprise. I looked everywhere

but found no trace of Diane. I even combed through dozens of phone books in the library. Nothing.

As I wandered through the university bookstore, I remembered the last time I'd seen Diane—running away from me. Then, a book caught my eye: *The Crack in the Cosmic Egg*. The back cover intrigued me, and I bought it. It was the first time I'd shown real interest in metaphysics. My understanding of existence needed to expand—quickly. I was trying to hold onto my agnostic stance, the philosophical equivalent of sitting on the fence. But it was getting harder.

Emotionally, I was unraveling. I felt like I was back in Boston during my job hunt—sensing something big was coming without knowing what.

By the end of the day, I felt like I'd been chasing ghosts. No signs of Diane. It was getting dark when I returned to the parking lot. I was getting into my car, head down, when I heard a voice from the shadows.

“Chip... Chip Cook!”

I stepped out of the car to find Dr. Joy, Diane's former advisor. We'd met maybe six times, and not in the last five years. And now here he was—calling my name out of nowhere?

“Dr. Joy... how have you been?” I asked, startled.

“Good! I haven't seen you in years. How are you doing? What have you been up to?” he asked with an uncharacteristically warm smile. His tone felt a bit too friendly—it caught me off guard.

“I moved to a suburb of Boston and worked for MIT's Lincoln Labs in radar research. This past summer, I joined my family in a seasonal business. I'm just back for a short visit.” I didn't mention anything about a psychic or a rabbit-hole. But I couldn't help thinking: *What part are you playing in this psychic script?*

“I remember you were very interested in Diane,” he said, his voice tinged with concern. “It must've been a shock when she got engaged to John.”

“Did they ever marry?” I asked, hoping the answer would be no.

“Yes, when John came back from Egypt,” he confirmed.

“Did she ever become a veterinarian?” I asked, suppressing the ache in my chest.

“She's working on it now—she's studying at Michigan State,” he said.

That ended our conversation. After exchanging goodbyes, he headed to a late meeting. I drove back to Bill's house and shared the bizarre encounter.

The odds of that meeting felt astronomical. Was I part of some scripted play? Diane was married. She had fled from me in the past and ignored all my letters. What was I doing?

Even Bill agreed it was weird, but we were both too curious to look away. Objectivity was gone. I felt like a character in a drama I didn't write. Just like the book I'd bought—*The Crack in the Cosmic Egg*—the shell of reality was beginning to splinter around me.

Over the next day, I read the book. As thought-provoking as it was, it didn't provide a guide for my situation. That night, I debated whether to just drive back to Maine. Bill understood but had no advice.

Wednesday morning, I surprised myself by waking at six and starting the 100-mile drive to Michigan State. I had no plan. I didn't know how I was going to find her.

Once off the expressway, the campus opened up before me like a small city. I pulled into a gas station for a fill-up and saw a campus map on the wall. In the center was the veterinary building. A few quick turns, and I was there.

The parking lot was full. But as I pulled up, a car started and left—I slid into the spot directly in front of the building. I walked up the steps and entered.

At the front desk, a young woman was reading. "Excuse me," I said. "I'm looking for a Diane M. Could you help me find her?"

She looked up. "There are two thousand students here. I don't have a detailed class roster. You'll need to check with Enrollment across campus."

Just then, another student walked by.

"Excuse me," I asked again. "I'm looking for a Diane M. Do you happen to know where I could find her?"

To my amazement, the student replied, "Yes...., she is my roommate. We just walked to class together. I can take you to her in a minute."

I was already deep in the rabbit-hole. Ann's second prediction had come true: *You finding her will seem like a miracle to you.*

I couldn't think—I just followed.

We rode the elevator to the third floor and approached a large lecture hall. Her roommate asked me to wait and entered the room. "Who should I say wants to see her?"

"Tell her an old friend, Chip," I said, heart racing.

Moments later, Diane emerged.

“Chip! What are you doing here? Wait—I need to get someone to take notes. I’ll be right back,” she said excitedly.

Ann’s third prediction had landed: *She will be very glad to see you.*

As it turned out, this was a lecture she had already heard and just wanted to revisit. It was midterm week, and her free time was limited, but we had a few hours to talk.

Our conversation stayed light. I told her I ran into Dr. Joy. She took me on a tour of the labs. At one point, she showed me a cow with a window in its stomach—a hunter’s bullet had led to the unusual modification. The cow had become a teaching tool.

Everything felt surreal. As we walked, she casually mentioned she had season tickets to hockey games with her girlfriends.

That struck me as odd. She was married. So, I gently asked how that arrangement worked.

“We only see each other during the summers and holidays,” she said. “I have to study constantly. It’s not easy.”

That matched Ann’s fourth prediction: *She is married, but there is something distant about the marriage.*

Later, we sat at a table in the student lounge. While I talked about my life, she suddenly reached across the table, touched my hand, and looked into my eyes.

“I was sorry when you stopped sending me Christmas cards telling me what was going on in your life,” she said.

Word for word, Ann’s fifth prediction had just come true. I froze.

Was free will even real?

I don’t remember what I said next—just that I managed not to scare her off. We talked a little more. By 11:30, she had to return to her routine.

As we approached the empty lecture hall, I started my goodbye speech.

“Let me walk you out,” she offered.

There were two exits—one busy, one quiet. She chose the quiet route.

As I spoke, she walked over, wrapped her arms around me, and gave me a real goodbye kiss.

Ann’s sixth and final prediction had just come true.

A metaphorical can of worms burst open right then. I was overwhelmed. Ann's predictions weren't just guesses—they were pieces of information. They had to come from somewhere.

Was there a psychic information network?

I needed answers. The obsession had begun.

On the drive back to Bill's, I cried. Hard.

I couldn't stop picturing the whole scene, wondering if the ancient Greeks were right—maybe the gods really did toy with us. In my mind, the sky opened and I saw strings attached. Diane and I were puppets.

Bill wasn't home yet, and I didn't want to talk to anyone else. I stopped at a movie theater and bought a ticket for *Looking for Mr. Goodbar*. It was dark, the film was heavy, but I just needed to escape. Afterward, I returned to Bill's and told him everything. He listened quietly. Then he asked, "What are you going to do next?"

"I don't know. 'Next' doesn't mean what it used to," I said.

"You can't just go back to Maine. Nothing's resolved. Call her. See if she'll meet you again."

"She's married. She's in school. She's overwhelmed. It wouldn't make sense," I said.

"Nothing about this makes sense. What do you have to lose?" he pressed.

I'd said those exact words once myself. Now, the universe felt like it had turned on me.

I called her.

"Hi, Diane. It was great seeing you."

"Chip... it was such a surprise. Thank you for thinking of me," she said softly.

"Would there be a time when I could take you and John out for dinner?"

"No... I don't think that would be a good idea."

"Well, would there be a time when you and I could have dinner?"

"I think that would be an even worse idea."

"Well... you can't blame a guy for asking. Thanks again for today. Good luck with exams."

"Thank you," she said. And we hung up.

Bill and I talked long into the evening, trying to make sense of it all. But we couldn't. Ann's reading had created a deeply personal and unresolved philosophical mystery.

Maybe—just maybe—she could give me more answers.

I decided I would head back to Maine the next day.

Bill understood. Only Ann held her window into this unknown mystery. I guess I qualify at becoming the newest member of Ogunquit's list of eccentrics.



Chip and Ann

This was just the real start of my impossible journey. Many strange events would follow.

It suffices to say, Ogunquit was changing too. On one hand, it was now our business. On the other hand, it was as if the old Ogunquit was only the surface and the true mysteries started to become accessible.

I think a list of the strange will suffice:

1. Telepathy – Real
2. Precognition – Somehow real, but not fixed.
3. Psychic readings – Real... at times.
4. Ghosts – Real, but needing more context.
5. Healing – Real, but needing more understanding.
6. Clairvoyance – Real, knowledge without context.

7. Cyclops Experiment – Evidence of our imagination being part of the creative process, on the psychic level.
8. An Intent – Something was intent on giving me an education into the unknown.

Now that is what I am referring to as a strange education. My entire life changed. Having said that, what could I do with this new realization? Good luck trying to prove it. It was not going to happen. However, I knew it had really happened. Most of my life would be spent collecting more puzzle pieces, in physics and work with Ann and other physicists. I was sure a solution existed it just needed enough connecting pieces to see a larger framework. Ogunquit was an unlikely place for solving the fundamental understanding of how reality works .

As stated, this is the subject matter for *A Very Strange Life* and *Making More Waves*. AI has played an important part, too. Its abilities to exposed complex patterns were put to the test.

Getting back to Ogunquit, it kept its secrets. I was living between worlds, that were becoming harder and harder to explain. We continued for eight years in the ever more complicated restaurant business.

In an effort to expand my income and buy a house, I got into the house building business. The movie business was very strong, but if one was paying attention to the world at large, change was coming fast in many places... in particular, the entertainment business.

In the mid-1980s, we found we could make more income renting the space out than killing ourselves working the restaurant. By then I had a failed engagement, my parents ages were additional factors. Ogunquit was continually changing and you had to keep evaluating what business you were actually in. The workers were changing too. It seemed like American teens did not want to work. Workers from Jamaica were happy to take the jobs. Irish and Eastern Europeans filled the waitstaff positions. Then even the Russian came to town. If India and David Woodbury were still alive; they would have said, “See!” A lot of the locals were now gone, including within my own family. Again, these stories can be found in my other books.

On the passing of my mom, I had been given their blessings, by both my parents, to make major changes. The dump of a building we were having to deal with, needed major improvements. I had had a plan for over twenty years. Now it was time to proceed. The entire place needed rebuilding from foundations up. I had been building houses and had half the skills I needed. The other half was hired. As a team Noem and I worked well together. It took five years, working seven days a week, but we did it! Fortunately, the building was rebuilt without a movie theatre. The internet and cable were changing the

world again. Movies were still strong, but the way people viewed them had changed. This trend is still changing into the 2020s.

Along the way, I started to paint. I wanted to experience reflective fields first hand. An artist creating his art is a very good example of this process. The consciousness of the artist is one field and the physical canvas is the second field. Creating is the reflective process between the two fields. I restricted myself to control of my new obsession. On my father's death bed, he asked me to paint the view he had been watching through his illness. Below is the painting. I am standing on my boat waving up at my dad. Whoever looks at the painting, is seeing it through my dad's eyes.



***Dad's Painting* Original by Chip Cook - 1992**

I was in the business of renting out space in the center of Ogunquit. So, I built a building that could be efficiently rented. As if completing a cycle, I built my new home in the old tower, once used when the building was a playhouse. Now I was living back on the beach side of town, like in the 1950s. Gone were the sailing days, but a world of traveling was opening up.



The Golden horn in Istanbul, Turkey Painted by Chip



A Greek Island Painted by Chip

I have completed over eighty-seven trips for fun. Ogunquit had become my base for traveling the world. The town will continue to change.

In 2026, Ogunquit's beach was rated as number one beach in the U.S. The property costs have skyrocketed, not much less than a million dollars. This is a result of increase demand for housing in Ogunquit; and the dollar shrinking due to inflation. I don't know many people living in town. Most people I have known are dead. Only Bill is still around from those early days. The solution is to make friends with younger people who should outlive me.

Ogunquit seems to be positioned well in this changing world. I hope it survives; the changing politics. The Leavitt gives movies away for free, when they are not having Drag BINGO. Whatever that is? Alcohol has replaced soda, popcorn, candy and movie tickets as a source of income. Even The Scotch Hill Inn is still going strong. The next generation seems to be better equipped to deal with the changes.

At the old age of seventy-seven, I am married to Joan, with a five-and-a-half-year old. Our life has been changed like everything else. Ironically, I really need a vacation from Vacationland.

At some point in the future, I too will become just another ghost of Ogunquit. Not bad company if you ask me.

Chip Cook – 2026



The Michelle Lobster Boat by Chip (In memory of Michelle Knight)