



# Newsletter

## Friends of the Truro Meeting House

*Dedicated to the Preservation of this Historic Truro Landmark*

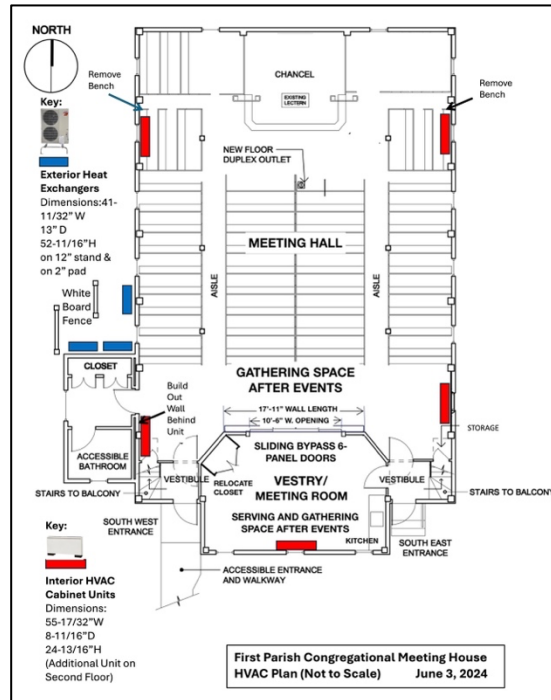


### Transforming Projects to Expand Our Role in the Community

History is being made this spring at the Truro Meeting House, thanks to a significant grant from the Cape Light Compact to the First Congregational Parish of Truro and thanks to town approval of Community Preservation Act funding requested by the Friends of the Truro Meeting House.

Through the Compact's Non-Profit Enhanced Incentive Program, a new energy-efficient HVAC heat pump system and insulation/weatherization have been installed that will cool the building in summer and heat it in winter. First Parish Moderator John Marksbury calls it the most ground-breaking accomplishment for the Meeting House since a coal-burning stove was installed in 1833. The historic building has been without a heating system since World War II when the church ended year-round services. The building was not electrified until 1955.

Through the CPA funded project the meeting hall space will be connected to the small vestry/conference room with a set of bypass sliding doors to create a



larger, more accessible gathering place for receptions after events. By opening the wall, which according to historic records was added in 1845 to create a room for winter gathering, this renovation will restore some of the expansiveness of the original design and provide new options for programming and community gathering.

The Friends and the Parish hope such improvements will play a role in ensuring the sustainability of the historic Meeting House as a community resource for years to come.

Both major undertakings are at no cost to the Friends or the Parish. The value of the HVAC system alone exceeds \$137,000, which includes feasibility and energy efficiency analysis, heat pump indoor and outdoor equipment, and weatherization of the Meeting

House. The CPA grant gathering space grant totals \$32,492.75.

Thanks to Mark Hammer, Hammer Architects, for design and working drawings and Cape Associates, Inc. for the construction of the meeting space expansion.

Thanks to Cape Light Compact and RISE Engineering for the energy assessment and management of the heat pump equipment installation, and weatherization.

Cape Light Compact represents all of the cities and towns on Cape Cod,

Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard that constitutes an aggregate source for providing a competitive energy supply to their users as well as providing a variety of energy efficiency services to homeowners, municipal and business customers, and non-profit organizations.



## Summer 2024 Events

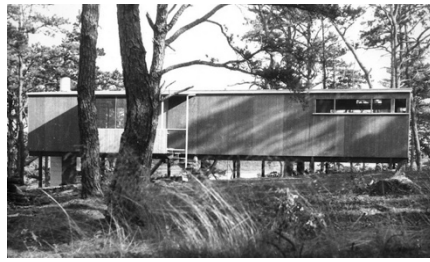


*July 7, Sunday at 7pm –*  
**Charles “Stormy” Mayo, Ph.D., Recently Retired from the Center for Coastal Studies – *Saving Right Whales at the Edge of Extinction.***  
The right whale is at the very brink of extinction, threatened by ship strikes and entanglement in fishing gear, and confronting the insidious effects of climate change. Dr. Mayo will describe efforts to understand and protect them.

*July 13, Saturday at 10:30am –*  
**Graveyard StoryWalk, Kick Off.**  
Based on Truro Public Library’s StoryWalk series, a self-guided tour of the Meeting House graveyard presents Truro people from the past who are remembered there. It is on view through July 20, 2024.



*July 13, Saturday at 7pm –*  
**Hyannis Sound At the Meeting House.** Cape Cod’s finest a cappella group was founded in 1994 and named after this famed Cape marine feature. Hyannis Sound is composed of ten college-age singers from across the country who gather to perform on the Cape each summer. *Tickets sold at the door – General Admission \$15, Veterans, Seniors, Students, and Children \$10*



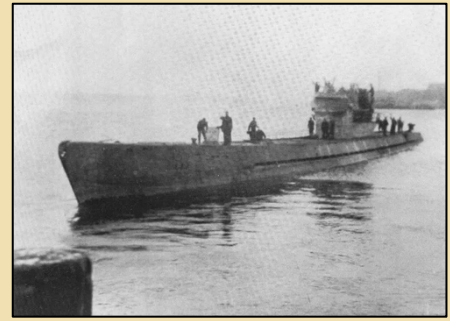
*July 21, Sunday at 7pm –*  
**Peter McMahon – Preserving the Marcel Breuer House.** Founder of the Cape Cod Modern House Trust (CCMHT), McMahon will present plans to purchase and preserve Marcel Breuer’s own summerhouse and its unique site in Wellfleet. Breuer is one of the 20th-century’s most important designers, and his house is one of the most significant modernist houses on the Cape. Though in disrepair, the house is entirely original, and the acquisition would include Breuer’s collection of art, furniture, photographs, and books, which will be made available to scholars and the public.



*July 28, Sunday at 7pm –*  
**Ellyn Weiss, “The Human Flood,”** Co-sponsored by Truro Center for the Arts at Castle Hill and Edgewood. Ellyn will discuss her current installation at the American University Museum in Washington, DC. Years of extreme heat, rising sea levels, wildfires, drought, and various climate catastrophes have made the environments in which millions of people once lived no longer able to sustain human life. The installation confronts the full experience of leaving a life behind upon migration and starting a new one elsewhere.  
*(Events are continued on page 4.)*

## HISTORIANS CORNER

Wartime Diary by Robert Nathan



Most Americans think World War II took place on some other continent – “over there,” either Europe or the Pacific. Few realize Nazi submarines were sinking vessels right off our coast. Though not directly menaced today, Truro’s tranquil beauty once again offers a stark contrast to the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East and the turmoil aroused in this country by global conflict.

Robert Nathan, a famous Truro author who lived on North Pamet Road in the old Congregational Parsonage House, chronicled life in Truro in 1943 during a harrowing wartime in his diary “Journal for Josephine.” He recorded a summer’s natural cycles and daily Cape life in contrast to the anxieties of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War that were impacting our coast in dramatic ways, which may surprise our readers. The following are excerpts from Nathan’s Journal when he served as an airplane spotter and his wife, given the fictional name Josephine, served as a first aider:

“AUTHOR’S NOTE: I hope that no one will blame this little book for not being all the things it isn’t. It was written for no other purpose than to set down the small adventures, the not-too-desperate anxieties, the ordinary observations of a war-time summer on the Cape. If it captures a little of the feeling of that summer, with deer in the garden and U-boats off the shore, if it lights at all with sun our low hills,

bayberry and plum, that is the most anyone need expect of it ...

MAY 14. Today we have our ration cards for gasoline – two A cards for the two cars. I painted the headlights of the station wagon, to leave only a small opening for the light; the station wagon is an emergency ambulance, and Josephine will have to drive it at night. We are not allowed to have driving lights so near to the sea.

The first tiny shoots have made their appearance in the garden – beets, onions, carrots, and lettuce. At this point, they look exactly like weeds, except that they are all in straight rows. Now we must be afraid of skunks and woodchucks, and even dread the sight of a deer.

JUNE 4. The news here is that two lifeboats from a sunken freighter have been landed at Nauset beach, with half a hundred survivors; and that there are two lifeboats still at sea, with the planes looking for them. We are losing at least three merchantmen a day, right under our noses; the Navy tells us so, with what almost seems like relish...

JUNE 6. The narrow road was all but deserted, the overnight cabins standing bleak and empty along the shore, and across the long pond, the dunes dim and mysterious in the evening light. The streets of town were half dark; it seemed to me that the sea-air was fresher and sweeter than it used to be, I suppose because there was no popcorn being sold to tourists in the square. Now that there are no visitors coming down for weekends and holidays, the little Cape towns face a season of desperate poverty, quiet, and natural grace...

JUNE 8. I do not think that we shall lose the war. But I wonder with how much realism we shall face the future, afterwards. Are we going to

quarrel with Russia over ideologies? It is not at all unlikely; because we each call freedom by a different name. Shall we allow England to reassume "the white man's burden"? Will our senators raise the old flag of Isolationism again? Will all our troubles be blamed on the Jews?...

JUNE 12. On post: the fog drew back at the end of the third hour, leaving the water windy blue, and the whole, full sky like an immense robin's egg. The sun was warm, and there was a sweet smell of pine. At nine o'clock, three navy bombers came out of the haze in the west and flew south toward South Harbor; I missed one of them in the clouds, but reported them again, later, all three, circling over the Bay of Pines.

The Secretary of the Navy assures us that no submarine has dared to come within fifty miles of the coast, for at least two weeks. But I hear that a submarine was seen only a week ago, less than a mile from shore; and that another was sunk in the bay, just north of the canal. John W[orthington] says that he often feels the beach shake from depth bombs, as he sits in the office of the fishery...

JUNE 17. According to a neighbor, who lives nearer to the sea on our road, at least two ships went down, one here, and one off the bars...Sixty-eight soldiers and

sailors have been brought in to Land's End so far; this morning a bus took twenty-five of them up Cape, to Camp Edwards, but many are too badly hurt to be moved.

Two brown rabbits came hopping up to the house before supper, a large, thin, rather coltish male, and a smaller, plumper, and quite girlish looking female. I thought, There goes the garden...

AUG. 18. Little by little the Germans are approaching the old, prophetic plains of Armageddon. Then we shall have the last great battle, and the end of the world. I thought last night, not without satisfaction, of all the mosquitoes, bean beetles, corn borers, and anti-Semites who will perish in that catastrophe. The trouble is – is there really a world at all? or only what each of us dreams? Perhaps my own world will perish, and the corn borer's not. I would rather have it the other way round...

SEPT. 2. September: and the summer is almost over. The world has changed a great deal during these four months, and already our lives are different. Here, at home, we must learn to do without the things we are used to – without fuel, and heat, and comfort, and tools; even meat is to be rationed soon, at no more than one good stomach-full a week...

It is not too much to pay for victory, for freedom, and peace. But will our leaders know how to translate victory into either peace or freedom?"

*Robert Nathan, Alfred A. Knopf, 1943, New York.*

*Excerpts selected by Chuck Steinman*

*Airplane  
Spotter/South  
Truro, 1943,  
William L'Engle,  
Private  
Collection.*



**Friends of the Truro Meeting House, Inc.**

*A charitable non-profit 501(c)(3) organization*

PO Box 149, 3 First Parish Lane  
Truro, MA 02666

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*To make a donation or contact us:*

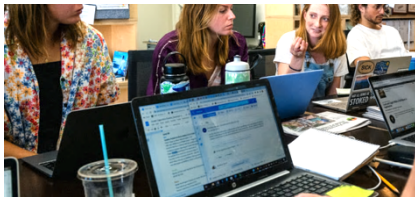
[truomeetinghousefriends.org](http://truomeetinghousefriends.org)

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6-6-24

**Summer Events**

*(August, continued from page 2.)*



*August 5, Monday at 7pm –*  
**Local Journalism Project Interns.**

The Provincetown Independent's *Local Journalism Project*, a nonprofit organization, educates aspiring journalists, provides opportunities and support for in-depth fact-based reporting, encourages civic engagement and research, and promotes new ways to make community journalism sustainable. We will meet some of the new intern reporters to hear their views on today's key issues like the climate crisis, the sustainability of the local economy, LGBTQ rights, and access to healthcare.



*August 18, Sunday at 7pm –*  
**Jazz Night at the Meeting House with Ken Field & John Lee.**

A unique mix of New Orleans repertoire, jazz standards, and Field's originals. Truro/Boston saxophonist/ flautist Ken Field and First Parish of Truro Music Director and pianist Jeongweon "John" Lee will team up to present an engaging and energizing program of well-known and lesser-known jazz standards, traditional New Orleans repertoire, and Field's compelling original compositions. The concert

will also feature a guest appearance by noted Pennsylvania-based saxophonist Dave Wilson.



*August 25, Sunday at 7pm –*  
**David Corn – Election 2024, Co-sponsored by the Truro Public Library.**

Just back from the Republican and Democratic Conventions leading up to the election of all times, David Corn will discuss how our votes will impact our individual freedoms and the future of our country's democracy.

*Most events are free unless otherwise noted. For updates, go to:*  
[truomeetinghousefriends.com/events/](http://truomeetinghousefriends.com/events/)