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Crossing Uncle Tim's Bridge in Wellfleet, Massachusetts—a family vacation haven. Read more on page 21.

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Gigi's cupcake master Mike Irwin took his franchise to the top.

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Made from a fallen, centuries-old white oak tree base and a cherry wood top, this table is proudly featured in the historic home of Mary McGuire. Learn more about the McGuire house on page 20.

CONTRIBUTORS



NECEE REGIS

Necee Regis writes about travel, food and culture for various publications, including *The Washington*

Post, *The Boston Globe*, *American Way* magazine and *Tin House*. Recently, she's sampled paella in Valencia, Spain, and combed artist studios in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico. Read about her family vacations to Wellfleet, Massachusetts on page 21.



SUSAN HAUSER

Susan G. Hauser is a writer living in Portland, Oregon, with her dog, Daphne. Her articles have

appeared in numerous publications, ranging from *Ladies' Home Journal* to *The Wall Street Journal*. Turn to page 12 to discover the exclusive world of trained truffle dogs and learn if Daphne has potential to join the ranks.

(Photo by Meriwether Falk)



JAMES STURZ

James Sturz is the author of the novel *Sasso*. He contributed to *ROM Italy: The Best Travel Writing*

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NATHAN WELTON

Nathan Welton is an outdoor enthusiast and award-winning photographer and

journalist. His work has been published in *The Boston Globe*, *Natural History* magazine and *E Magazine*, to name a few. He's also an Our World photographer for Sigma Photo, one of the world's largest camera companies. Welton shares his Australian Outback adventure on page 18.

Wellfleet, Massachusetts— As American as Apple Pie

By Neece Regis



In the 1960s, my extended family of aunts, uncles, cousins, second cousins, great aunts and uncles, plus my mom, sisters and grandmother, would all pile into our cars and make the trip from the New York City suburbs to the little town of Wellfleet. I still remember Uncle Vincent's wood-paneled station wagon with enough room for suitcases and a gaggle of kids.

A decade earlier, Patti Page sang about the marvels of Old Cape Cod, and we knew all the words: *If you're fond of sand dunes and salty air...*

What we loved about Wellfleet was its small-town charms: fishing boats moored at the pier, sailboats out on the bay, an intimate downtown with a grocery store, a penny-candy shop, art galleries and rustic restaurants—some with live entertainment—where it didn't matter if you trekked a little sand inside while ordering chowder, fried clams or oysters on the half shell.

As kids, we were thrilled by the freedom a small town afforded. We ran wild on

the beach, especially when the tide at the harbor receded to the horizon. We dug quahogs (hard-shell clams) in muck that stuck to our feet and climbed sand dunes that towered as tall as anything we'd ever seen. On Wednesday nights, families gathered in the parking lot beside town hall for intergenerational square dancing, which was followed by soft serve ice cream at the pier or at PJ's on the highway (which still serves great ice cream).

In Wellfleet, we swam in crystal clear spring-fed ponds, learned to body surf in the steel blue Atlantic on the outer beaches, and at night, warmed by a bonfire, we huddled at the bay beneath blankets and the Milky Way, singing songs until the flames faded into glowing embers and our weary parents prodded us back to our pine-paneled cottages and into bed.

The next morning, we'd get up and do it all over again.

This may sound like an idyllic reminiscence of childhood, and it is. The wonderful thing

about Wellfleet is it remains much the same. Thanks to the creation of the Cape Cod National Seashore in 1961, more than 60 percent of the beaches and woodlands are undeveloped. Oh, sure, the beaches are more crowded with tourists, and the penny candy store burned down, never to be rebuilt, but the square dance, now held at the pier, still goes on like clockwork every Wednesday evening at 6:30 p.m.

Even the architecture is much the same, especially in the historic center and along the harbor on Mayo Beach, where Colonial-era style cottages have been lovingly restored. On Main Street, the 19th century Congregational and Methodist churches sit almost side by side, their white clapboard exteriors reflecting the bright Cape light. The Congregational church's bell still rings "ship's time" at half-hour intervals—a system I proudly mastered as a child and still recall.

And so, every summer, I pack my swimsuit and my expectations and return to old Cape Cod. My cousins come too, traveling from far-flung states for a week or two of bliss with their children, and sometimes grandchildren, in tow.

In particular, I yearn to be in Wellfleet for the 4th of July, a holiday celebrated in style. Each year, elementary school kids choose a theme for the parade. Last year, it was, "Gifts from the Sea." Local businesses, including restaurants, the library, the historic society, the fish market, and the fire and police departments decorate floats to strut their stuff.

Onlookers arrive early to claim a spot along the parade route, setting up folding chairs or perching on grassy hillsides and

A photo from author Neece Regis' family scrapbook—Wellfleet, circa 1965.



lawns to enjoy the pre-parade of antique cars. When the fire engines sound their horns, the real festivities begin. Costumed revelers on floats toss candy and beads to flag-waving crowds. Each year Paul Suggs, a local artist, dons waterproof yellow overalls and wheels an enormous, flag-bedecked sculpture of a steamer clam through the streets—this in homage to old-timer Joe Francis. Francis paraded this very bivalve long ago to promote his now-defunct Lobster Hut.

A trip to the drive-in movie theater is also in order. Though the sound system has greatly improved, there remains the thrill of parking on the still-warm blacktop with a bucket of popcorn and gazing to where the giant screen obliterates the stars. The littlest kids wear their pajamas and fall asleep before the second feature, while the older ones

gallop to the playground and snack bar at intermission.

The gift of visiting Wellfleet for me and my family is the remarkable opportunity to relive our childhoods as new generations learn to square dance, eat oysters and croon “There’s A Hole in the Bucket” while toasting marshmallows at a bonfire on the beach. It provides us with our own personal time warp.

Yet, we can’t deny that we’re growing older, becoming the ages our parents were when they brought us here. As we gather to sing, I can hear the voices of family from past trips—many of them no longer with us—reverberate across time, mingling with the high, sweet notes of my great nieces and nephews...*You’re sure to fall in love with old Cape Cod.* ■

Scenes from Wellfleet.
Photos by Necee Regis



EDITOR'S PICKS: ACCOMMODATIONS AND EATERIES

While you might not find a five-star hotel in Wellfleet, you will find tons of personality, amazing food and a true Cape Cod experience. Consider these Wellfleet favorites.

PLACES TO STAY

Aunt Sukie's Bed & Breakfast

Wellfleet, Massachusetts

800-420-9999

www.auntsukies.com

This charming and historic B&B features a private beach, multiple decks for water views and wireless Internet access.

Surfside Cottages

South Wellfleet, Massachusetts

508-349-3959

www.surfsidecottages.com

These rustic cabins provide knotty pine interiors, screened porches, fireplaces, kitchens, bathrooms, barbecues and enclosed outside showers. No Internet service and limited cell phone service give vacationers the chance to truly escape.

PLACES TO EAT

The Wicked Oyster

Main Street in Wellfleet, Massachusetts

508-349-3455

www.thewickedo.com

Experience breakfast, lunch and/or dinner at this local treasure, Thursday through Monday. Enjoy tasty menu classics like Oyster Stew and Clam Chowder, as well as more unique dishes, such as Shrimp Cakes and Venison Pâté.

Winslow's Tavern

Main Street in Wellfleet, Massachusetts

508-349-6450

www.winslowstavern.com

With twists on traditional favorites, such as Grilled Sea Scallop and Shrimp Skewers with Basil Crushed Peas, as well as pasta, entrees and salads, Winslow's offers something for everyone. Open for lunch and dinner from May through October.