



Sound Waves

A Monthly Newsletter from Save Our Sound

JUNE 2025

Alliance News & Notes



I hope you had a great Memorial Day holiday. As we head toward summer, I am happy to share a new milestone in our ongoing efforts to permanently protect Nantucket Sound—we now have the full support of the Cape and Islands state legislative delegation for National Historic Landmark (NHL) designation.

Our State Senator who represents the Cape and Islands and all five State Representatives from the Cape and Islands district—are unified in their support for recognizing the Sound's cultural, historical, and environmental significance as a National Historic Landmark. Broad and growing support for

this designation at the local, state, national, and tribal level demonstrates to our federal delegation the critical need and interest for the long term protection and preservation of Nantucket Sound.

Since our founding, the **Alliance to Protect Nantucket Sound** has led the charge to preserve and protect this iconic waterway—not just for today, but for generations to come. The NHL designation is the most permanent pathway to achieving that—federal recognition that cannot be undone or altered by changing political landscapes or future administrations.

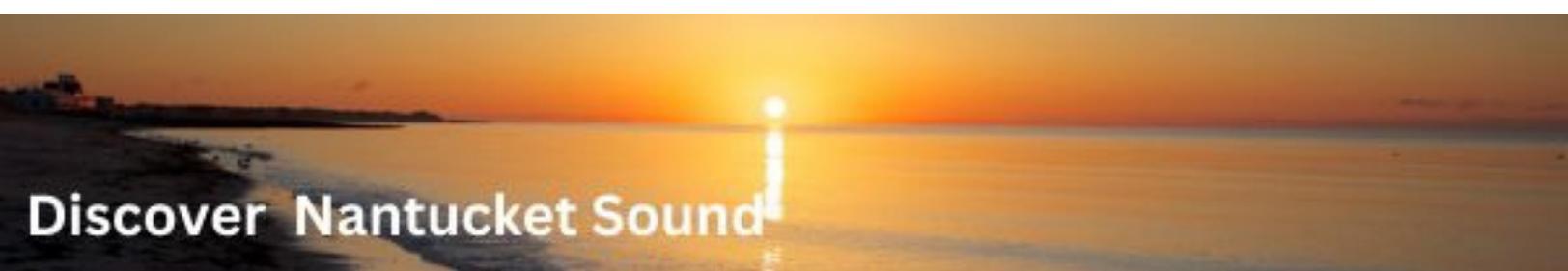
This progress is a direct result of years of advocacy, education, coalition-building—and your support.

Our donors, petition signers, volunteers, stakeholders, and advocates have made this moment possible. Your contributions have fueled expert research, legal work, public outreach, and legislative engagement. Together, we've elevated the voice of the community, spotlighted the Sound's national importance, and built a powerful coalition.

While there is still work to be done at the federal level, we are getting closer each day to federal enactment of our bill by having the unified support of our local and state leaders. From all of us at the Alliance...thank you. Your continued involvement—through donations, outreach, and advocacy—is what drives this progress. Let's keep up the momentum and cross the finish line together.

Warm regards,

Audra Parker, President



Sunsets Over Nantucket Sound

With longer days comes more time to enjoy the beauty of Nantucket Sound. Whether you're winding down after a beach day or looking for a quiet moment of reflection, there's nothing quite like watching the sun dip below the horizon. Here are some of our favorite spots to catch stunning sunsets across the Sound's tranquil waters:

1. West Dennis Beach (Dennis)

A wide, sandy stretch with ample space and big skies—perfect for watching the sun slowly set to the southwest over the Sound.

2. Craigville Beach (Barnstable)

This popular beach offers sweeping views across the water and often delivers vibrant skies during sunset, especially in late summer.



3. Seagull Beach (Yarmouth)

A local favorite, this beach offers peaceful surroundings and great western views for catching colorful evening skies.

4. Ocean Avenue Beaches (Hyannisport)

Smaller beaches like Keyes Memorial and Kalmus Park provide west-facing glimpses across Nantucket Sound with harbor activity as your backdrop.

5. Lobsterville Beach (Martha's Vineyard)

Though facing northwest, this Vineyard gem provides beautiful, glowing skies that reflect across the Sound as the sun sets.

6. Eel Pond or Menemsha Pond (Martha's Vineyard)

While not directly on the Sound, these peaceful spots often mirror the colorful skies above and offer tranquil views as the day fades.

7. Dionis Beach (Nantucket)

Located on the north shore, Dionis offers calm waters, sand dunes, and a peaceful spot to watch the sun sink low over the Sound. The angle is perfect for soft, pastel sunsets—plus it's less crowded than some other beaches.

Wherever you are along Nantucket Sound, take a moment this season to slow down and soak in the beauty of a Cape & Islands sunset. For more places to discover in and around Nantucket Sound, please visit our website at www.saveoursound.org/explore/.



*This month, we put a spotlight on historian **Theresa Mitchell Webster**. Theresa has authored books on maritime and cultural history, nature, science, and true crime. She is also a former history news-magazine editor for the award-winning *The Cape Cod Voice* which ceased publication in 2008. Her books, including **Nantucket Sound: A Maritime History**, are available on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and through Arcadia Press. If you'd like to learn more, visit **theresawebster.com**. Her work as an author follows an award-winning career in broadcast journalism at WIBC in Indianapolis and WEEL in Boston. She holds graduate degrees from UMass Dartmouth, Yale University, and Eastern Washington University. Theresa resides in Southeastern Mass. with her family.*

1. What does Nantucket Sound mean to you?

Nature comforts—and Nantucket Sound provides me with a big dose of it through its winds, waves, birds and sea life—something which as a human I need. This comfort, whether I'm on shore or on a boat, is like a hug from family or a friend. It's familiar, insanely beautiful, and the best part is that it's not going anywhere.

As a social scientist—and a historian—Nantucket Sound to me is a living laboratory stretching from yesteryear to today. The term 'Sound' comes from the Anglo-Saxon or Old Norse word, 'sound,' which means swimming. In a geological framework, Nantucket Sound, about 500 square miles, is not a 'one size fits all' area. Its depths range from five to 85 feet around the southern side of Great Round Shoal Channel.

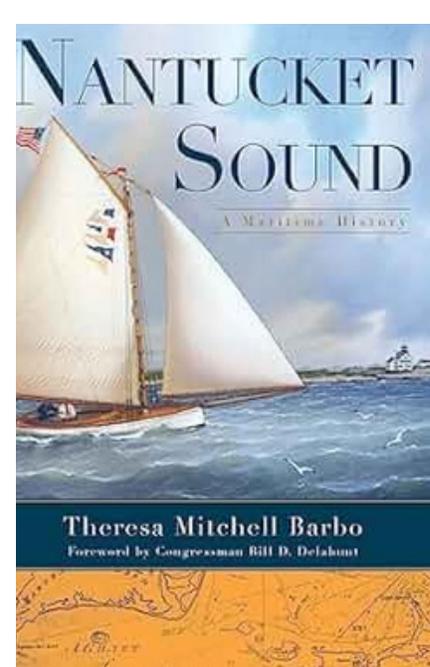
In the 19th century, like today, ferries crossed the waters between Cape Cod and the Islands delivering tourists, tradespeople, shoppers and residents between ports. These well-established routes are also transited by commercial fishing fleets and recreational boaters. Sadly, Nantucket Sound is also a graveyard of ships and people. Hundreds of wrecks lie forever beneath the waves. My maternal grandmother perished on the Andrea Doria in July 1956. Though the final resting place of that Italian liner is not in Nantucket Sound—but 50 miles south of Nantucket Island—I'm familiar with the feeling one's family feels when a loved one is lost at sea.

2. What are your favorite spots to visit around Nantucket Sound?

Years ago, one of my kids was a lifeguard for the Town of Dennis, so I got to know those lovely, smaller, beaches along Nantucket Sound: Glendon, Inman, and Haigis Beaches, and several others, when dropping off lunch or sunscreen. I appreciated the views of the Sound from those smaller vantage points. I remember seeing the bottom of the Sound and understanding just how shallow some parts far from shore can be. I'm also a fan of Dowses Beach in Osterville with its calm waters and its myriad of birds. I like Edgartown on the Vineyard and my husband and I need to get to Nantucket Island where our good friend, Sheila Lucey, is Harbormaster. She's promised us a tour of local beaches there!

3. Why do you support the ongoing efforts of the Alliance?

I've always supported the work of the Alliance from its earliest days in 2002 under Sue Nickerson's stewardship to the current, longtime, steadfast, and effective leadership of Audra Parker. Audra has a visionary tenaciousness that's unique and necessary to the cause. In its simplest form, I sense that the DNA of the Alliance's mission was and is to prevent the privatization of a public trust resource and restore the Sound's rightful place in maritime cultural history, ensuring its longtime protection and preservation. The Sound is the maritime gem of Massachusetts.



4. Can you tell us a bit about the books you have written and your fascination with writing about local history? Are you working on anything at the moment?

My work includes *Nantucket Sound: A Maritime History* (2009), *Cape Cod Bay: A History of Salt & Sea* (2008), and six others on cultural and maritime history. In recent years I've migrated from localized histories to more national subjects where science, nature, and human communities, merge.

Two new works are finished, but not yet published. *Symphony in the Wilderness* highlights national conservation efforts to preserve the Common Loon (*Gavia immer*), a waterbird which

winters in Nantucket Sound, spends most of the year on freshwater lakes in northern states and throughout Canada. The Common Loon is a species that's a key indicator of ecosystem health. I've been conducting field research in Florida, Maine, New Hampshire, Louisiana, Georgia, Washington State, Idaho, and in Yellowstone. This summer I'm due in Montana and likely, elsewhere.

The other is *America's Lost Son: JFK, Jr.'s Final Flight*, which details the July 1999 search and rescue for, and recovery of, John Kennedy Jr., his wife and her sister, who died when his plane crashed 7.5 miles southwest of Martha's Vineyard over the Atlantic. The book is a work of contemporary maritime history and not a mainstream Kennedy book. In other words, we do not focus on any biographical information or about anyone in the Kennedy family. My husband, Captain W. Russell "Russ" Webster, was Commander of Group Woods Hole at the time, and served as Incident Commander for Operations including overseeing the burials at sea. The Coast Guard worked closely with the Air Force, Navy and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

A third book, that's only half finished, is a history of the early years of the US Coast Survey, the ancestor to modern NOAA. Begun in 1807 through legislation enacted by the 10th Congress, the Survey charted the American coastline for the safety of mariners, to chart hazards to navigation, and to enhance tariffs to support and build a growing nation at a time when our national borders were not wholly sovereign. It was essentially the 'sister' mission to the Lewis & Clark Expedition. I've been researching the Survey for about nine years. The Survey book I see as my life's work. It's really the untold story of the building of America, one pair of surveyor's hands at a time. The human stories are remarkable. The Survey was part of every major American event in the early to the mid-19th century, from westward expansion to the treatment of Native Americans to the reason why the North won the Civil War.