



CHATHAM HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Chatham, Massachusetts 02633



Town of Chatham
Historic Business District Commission



The
Chatham
Historical
Society, Inc.

2007 Chatham Preservation Awards



72 Main Street • Henry Pennypacker House
Owners: Larry & Marion Lenihan

The Henry Pennypacker house, 1891, was built on the site of Alfred Harding's Ice Cream Saloon across from the Chatham Light and high above Lighthouse Beach. The Saloon was moved to the corner of Main Street and Silverleaf Avenue by a Mr. Davis, who built this cottage and rented it out. Henry W. Pennypacker was one of the first tenants and decided to buy the house in 1901. He was at that time Headmaster of the Boston Latin School and later in the Administrative Department of Harvard University. In 1912, Pennypacker enlarged the house. On his death in 1933, his son Thomas inherited it. He had a career in the Navy and teaching at Boston Latin School like his father. Thomas also later worked for Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute as a radio operator on the research vessel "Bear". He died in 1977. His son Tim Pennypacker lived in the house after that. He was heavily involved in town affairs, first as a policeman and then as a Selectman and Chairman of the Board. In 1991 a revetment was built to protect this and other houses to the north, after the North Beach break in 1987. The Lenihans purchased the house in 2000 and spent several years renovating it. Their goal was to transform the small dark rooms into a light-filled open interior and to add a first floor master bedroom, while maintaining the exterior form and character of the original historic home. The original front door opened directly on to Main Street which is only a few feet from the front of the house and was unusable. The door was relocated to the northwest corner of the house and provides a much more comfortable and safe entry for the family. The second floor and roof were rebuilt with exactly the same shapes and details that had existed previously. Where structurally feasible, the original wood members were left in place, some of which were recycled lumber from old boats. New materials used in construction consisted of wood and stone products in shapes and size similar to those



of the late 19th century. The same is true for the scale and proportions of new elements such as the entryway. The new windows were hand made out of solid mahogany with details consistent with the age of the house. The owners went to great lengths to preserve the historic form and details of the old house and it still blends seamlessly into the streetscape along Main Street.

Architect & Contractor: Polhemus Savery DaSilva, Chatham, MA