

Martha's Vineyard Timeline – With an emphasis on Chappy

- Note: This was assembled largely to help me keep track of things as I was discussing history with Edo Potter and attempting to reconcile the anecdotal history with the landscape.
- 1602: Gosnold arrives to Vineyard South with John Breveton in the Concord.¹
- 1672: William Vincent House built.¹
- 1680: "The Town of Edgartown declared a limit to the number of animals allowed to be pastured on Chappaquiddick per 'commonage': 400 cattle, 200 sheep, and one horse."²
- 1691: County of Dukes County shifted to Massachusetts.¹
- 1718: "Award granted to Benjamin Hawes from the sachem of Chappaquiddick, Jacob Seeknout: '1/8 part of all the herbage on Chappaquiddick annually from October 20th to March 25th.' Seeknout also granted Hawes '200 head of cattle, along with the privilege to feed and mow,' setting aside any salt grass growing in the award for the Chappaquiddicks."²
- 1723: "Cape Poge became attached to the remainder of Chappaquiddick by the Great Gale. The storm closed off the east end of Pocha Pond from the Atlantic."²
- 1750 Capt. Thomas Arey is the first white Edgartown resident to settle on Chappaquiddick, on part of Tom's Neck Farm.²
- 1764: A "pest house" is built at Cape Pogue to quarantine anyone with smallpox.²
- 1788: The Massachusetts Legislature created the Indian "setoff" by establishing a north-south division line, largely along what is now Chappaquiddick Road. The principal "Cleared Land Reservation" is approximately 600 acres on the northeast side of the Island. The "Wood Land Reservation," approximate 100 acres including part of Sampson's Hill, is southwest of the first.²
- 1797: Chappaquiddick has a total of 25 houses and 190-200 inhabitants, 75 of them Native American.²
- 1801: First lighthouse is constructed at Cape Pogue.²
- 1807: Chappaquiddick has 38 white families in 37 dwelling houses and 56 Native Americans in 10 frame houses and 2 wigwams (wetus).²
- 1826: "The final occasion of agriculture at Cape Poge. From this time on, Cape Poge was used mainly for sheep pasture, fishing, and hunting."²

- 1838: Cape Pogue Lighthouse is moved.²
- 1845: "The Poucha Pond Meadow and Fishing Company was incorporated and granted the power to construct a dike spanning the inlet of Poucha Pond to fuel the market for herring caught at the dike."²
- 1849: Massachusetts state census lists 85 Native Americans living on Chappaquiddick.²
- 1854: The final documented occasion of washing and shearing sheep occurs at Shear Pen Pond.²
- 1854-1855: 20,000 ships pass Cape Pogue Light.²
- 1869-1878: A complete allotment of the Chappaquiddick Reservations is made among the island's Native Americans.²
- 1882: General and Mrs. Charles J. Allen (St. Paul, MN) build first house in Edgartown expressly for summer use.¹
- 1883: First three bathhouses built in Beach Club area.²
- 1889-90: First land developments: Joseph Enos proposes 240 lots of 50-feet by 100-feet on 50 acres.²
- 1889: "Governor" Bill Handy builds a 22-foot high observation tower southwest of the Chappaquiddick Meeting House to promote land sales in his Samson's Hill subdivision.²
- 1890: Fifty bathhouses.²
- 1892: Cape Pogue is subdivided into a summer community named "Country Club Estates."²
- 1893: Present Lighthouse at Cape Pogue is built.²
- 1907: The nine-hole North Neck golf course is completed. Cape Pogue Lighthouse is moved back.²
- 1908: Menaca Hill House is taken apart at Katama, floated to and rebuilt on Chappaquiddick.²
- 1913: Promotional sales campaign for Chappaquiddick-by-the Sea, a huge development at Wasque.²
- 1923: Jeffers' Outlook Restaurant opened. Proposal for a bridge: proponents argue that the cost would be reimbursed by tax revenues from increased land values.²
- 1926: Petition for Chappaquiddick to separate from Edgartown.²

- 1930s: Blight destroyed eel grass in Edgartown Harbor.¹
- 1934: Jetties built at Cape Pogue severing it from the island and allowing boats to cut through the bay.²
- 1935: Wasque remained open as a sheep pasture.²
- 1936: Electricity brought to the houses on Menaca Hill. Fewer than 25 houses on Chappaquiddick.²
- 1938: Hurricane causes extensive flooding, wind damage and erosion at Wasque.²
- Early-mid 1940s: U.S. Coast Guard lives in the lighthouse keepers' house and patrols the beaches for enemy submarines.²
- 1945: Electricity and phone brought to Five Corners.²
- 1952: Opening of the dyke and building the Dyke Bridge. The Chappaquiddick Island Association founded because of concerns about Edgartown's pro-development direction.²
- 1954: Chappaquiddick has 75 houses. Hurricane Carol brings 125 mile per hour winds. Norton Point breaks though towards western end.²
- 1959: Edgartown voted (?) to open the dyke and install the bridge in order to increase the scallops. Over time scallops have decreased. Locals attribute a huge decline in seabirds due to the change and loss of freshwater grasses and plants (wild rice?)²
- 1960: Cape Pogue Lighthouse is moved back.²
- 1972: Islands Trust Bill.¹
- 1974: Martha's Vineyard Commission established.¹

¹Hough, H. B. 1982. *Martha's Vineyard Summer Resort, after 100 years*, Academy Books, Rutland, VT.

²Potter, H. 2008. Chappaquiddick: That sometimes separated but never equaled island. 2nd edition. Chappaquiddick Island Association. 347 pages.