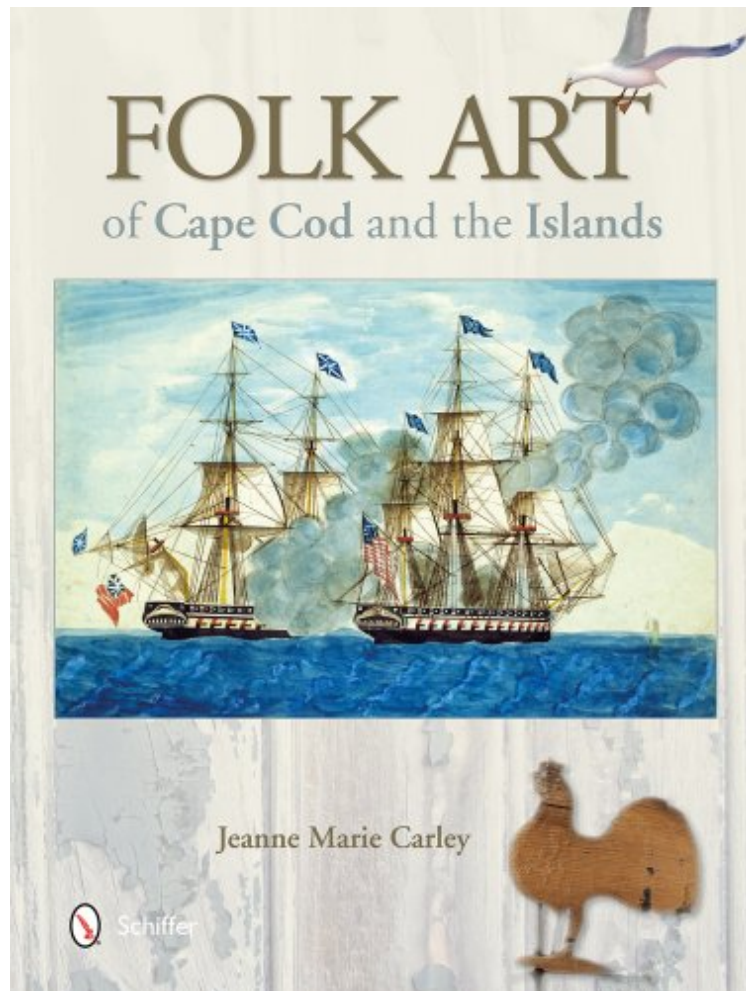


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## Folk Art of Cape Cod and the Islands

*Jeanne Marie Carley*

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**Jeanne Marie Carley : Folk Art of Cape Cod and the Islands** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Folk Art of Cape Cod and the Islands:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. A Rich Historical Tapestry By Donald Moffitt For generations to come, Jeanne's book will serve art fanciers and American historians as the most comprehensive, detailed, and historically contextual study of the Cape's and the Island's folk art and artisans. At 304 oversized pages with more than 500 color photographs and illustrations, weighing more than 4 pounds, it dwarfs most coffee-table books in heft and practically all of them in depth of content. Jeanne has confronted her subject with the eye and the technical understanding of an artist, the curiosity of an anthropologist and a journalist, and the obsession with relevant detail of a genealogist and social historian to produce a book with the color and texture of a rich tapestry. Besides the familiar works of the area's folk artists -- the formal ancestral portraits, the maritime paintings, the Nantucket baskets, the scrimshaw, the needlework, and the weathervanes -- other less obvious sorts of artistry and their methods of production

have captured her attention: papersilhouettes, retail store signs, tombstones, carousel horses (and carousel bunnies and birds), "Nick-Nacks" and "whimsies" of shells and driftwood, and -- one of my favorites -- decoys and other bird carvings. In her discussion of the latter, you learn that the decoys represent the only form of Cape Cod art to have originated solely in the Americas, among Native American hunters. You'll learn how ship modelers produced standing masts far taller than the necks of the bottles that housed their models. You'll learn of the few Massachusetts artists who painted black Americans in formal portraiture. And you'll learn how the early federalist obsession with the Roman Republic and its ideals seeped from Constitution Hall and the architecture of Washington, DC., to the handicrafts of the Cape and the Islands. That's just a meagre sampling of the diverse byways that Jeanne has spent the better part of a life pursuing and compiling into her life's grand opus.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. An Unexpected Delight  
By Roger Ricklefs I didn't expect to find such a rich book on such a seemingly small topic. But Jeanne Marie Carley has shown how much you can uncover if you dig deeply enough in a narrow vein. Between its prodigious research and its 560 exemplary color photographs, this book will especially appeal to anyone interested in either folk art or New England history. It's hard to imagine that it won't be the definitive book on the topic for years to come. Focusing on just one region of one state, it covers everything from portraits to quilts to weather vanes to gory gravestones. Given the history of the region -- the site of 3,000 shipwrecks over the years -- maritime themes are common. I particularly enjoyed the wooden figureheads for ships -- sometimes featuring remarkably unappealing young women who surely deserved more skillful carving. When ironclad steamships replaced wooden sailing ships in the 19th Century, the shape of the new ships didn't leave room for figureheads and the business of carving the wooden maidens collapsed. Fortunately, Ms. Carley offers plenty of historical background. As she notes, countless 19th Century quilts were cranked out for fundraising to help the many worthy causes of the time. Who wouldn't want to pick up a needle to help the Boston Female Society for Missionary Purposes? Folk art even reached the graveyard. Until about 1720, many scary Cape Cod gravestones featured winged skulls with big teeth and large eye sockets. These reflected the Puritans' "lack of optimism about their souls' flight to Heaven," Ms. Carley reports. As the local citizens' Puritan gloom softened, graveyard skulls gradually became more benign.

Full disclosure: This book might not have caught my eye if I hadn't known the author. But I'm very glad to have it -- partly because it is such a beautiful volume. The wonderful color photos are a big part of the appeal, and Ms. Carley commonly offers two or three to a page. This is a classy looking book. Of course, as you might expect for a book on American folk art these days, it was printed in ... China.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. For Art, History and Cape Cod Fans and future Fans!  
By Cathlyn Carley Everybody I've shown this book to is very impressed. Even if it's not a topic you might normally be looking for, it makes for interesting reading since although very well researched and accurate it does not talk down to anybody but gives easy to read backgrounds of how folk art developed or was imported onto Cape Cod. The pictures make it lovely to look at even without reading. A great introduction to art for those who might fear the snobbery, I can recommend this for anyone who likes Cape Cod, Art or History. Yes I am related but I am writing the reactions of those whom I've lent the book.

With over 560 color photos and well-researched text, this book recounts the histories of the hard working, entrepreneurial people of Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket and their role in this nation, as told through the folk art primitives the residents produced from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries. The art displayed includes the works of itinerant painters, domestic weavers and quilters, seminary school watercolorists, and carvers in wood, metal, and stone. Among these fascinating items are: paintings including portraits and silhouettes, landscapes and genre paintings; maritime art such as sculpture and scrimshaw; trade figures and signs; carousel art; wood carvings; weathervanes and whirligigs; religious and decorative art; textiles, including quilts and samplers; and gravestones. All of these beautiful and compelling works of art speak eloquently of the human aspirations sparked by the freedom and prosperity offered by the coasts and the bold, clear visual language that ordered these craftsmen's world.

About the Author Jeanne Marie Carley (ne Gendreau) is a folk art historian and writer with a background in journalism, art and genealogy. A graduate of Marquette University's College of Journalism, with majors in journalism and English, she pursued graduate studies in fine art and literature in universities in northern California, New York, and London, England. She was graduated from the Folk Art Institute in New York and was named a Fellow of the American Folk Art Museum there. She has written about American and French-Canadian folk art for books and national magazine articles. A speaker on folk art and genealogy at museums and organizations, she has lectured at the Dublin Seminar for New England Folk Life (Boston University) in Historic Deerfield, Massachusetts, and the New England Regional Genealogical Conference. Ms. Carley was a Town of Hingham reporter for a Massachusetts daily newspaper, a magazine writer in Rye, Westchester County, New York, and contributed cultural features to the New York Times. She was a writer and assistant editor of WINE Magazine in London, England, and public relations officer for educational institutions in Westchester County, New York. Her family history pursuits included writing for three genealogy publications, and editing two award-winning genealogical journals. Ms. Carley is a native of Minnesota with French-Canadian and Silesian ancestry, and has lived in several states and in the UK (A Deerfield Descendant,

her only English ancestors were from Deerfield, Massachusetts, who were killed and captured in the 1704 French-Indian Raid). She is married to William M. Carley, a former investigative senior writer for the Wall Street Journal, and have three adult children and a bichon frise, Cheri. They are residents of Chatham, Massachusetts and Sarasota, Florida.