

Christopher Klein

Before his publisher asked him to write *Discovering the Boston Harbor Islands*, Christopher Klein C'94 had never set foot on any of the 34 islands—from Sheep and Nut to Bumpkin and Hangman—that dot Boston's historic harbor. **BY LORI CHAMBERS**

You write that the Boston Harbor Islands are practically unknown. Why is that?

Boston has long been cut off from its waterfront and its nautical history, and Boston Harbor wasn't a place you would go for relaxation and rejuvenation. Many of the islands were pretty contaminated. The pollution was so bad that the harbor

became the butt of Massachusetts jokes.

Kind of like Jersey Turnpike jokes?

Yeah. Boston Harbor was cleaned up and designated a National Recreation Area in 1996. You'd never know that Spectacle Island was where Boston dumped horse carcasses and other trash for 150 years.

Dead horses aren't all that's buried on the islands, right?

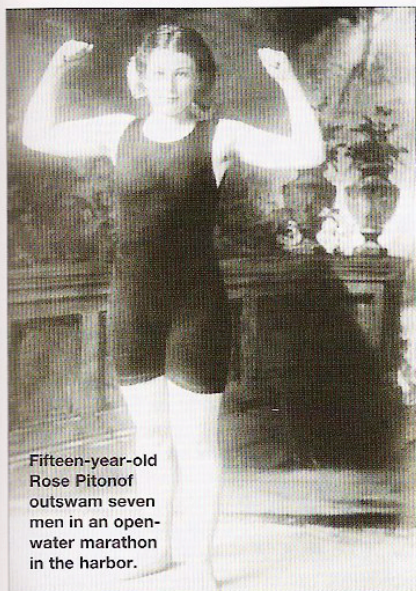
Pirates and shipwrecks are a big part of the local lore. Pirates would be executed in Boston,

then sent to the islands to be hung from gibbets as a warning to would-be pirates. One legend tells of a first mate hung on one of the islands for murdering a Captain Nix; he cursed the island to disappear under the waves to prove his innocence. Today, the island Nixes Mate is just a pile of rocks topped by a warning beacon.

What about true-life heroes?

Rose Pitonof: She was the first female—and some argue the first person—to swim the eight miles from Charlestown Bridge to Boston Light on Little Brewster Island, in 1910. A man named Alois Anderle made the swim the year before, but since it was low tide, he walked across the sandbars.

Union Park Press, 2008



Fifteen-year-old Rose Pitonof outswam seven men in an open-water marathon in the harbor.

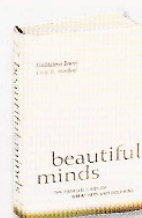


For more than three decades, the Pushcart Prize has honored writing published by small presses and literary journals around the country. This year's anthology includes "The Bridge," a short story by Tiphonie Yanique, an assistant professor of English.

First published in *The Sonora Review*, her story is a parable about a bridge that connects the islands of the Caribbean to Miami, and how island residents are affected, sometimes disastrously, by the bridge. One islander, Margo, who hopes to reach her estranged husband by crossing the bridge, "could still see where she was coming from, but where she was going was lost in the darkness."



Virginia Burrus has a challenge for modern-day Christianity—to embrace shame. Burrus, a professor of early church history, muses that it is what causes desire to be "caught like a deer in the headlights of self-scrutiny." In *Saving Shame: Martyrs, Saints and Other Abject Subjects* (University of Pennsylvania, 2007), she writes that "the hunt I am pursuing is this: There is no escape from shame, but there may be many possibilities for a productive transformation of shame and through shame." Using courageous martyrs and stories of ancient Christians' self-humiliation, Burrus digs deep to unpack the meaning behind this controversial topic—and lets you know why you should feel good about it.



How did dolphins and apes, vastly different mammals, evolve to be closest to humans in terms of intelligence and social complexity? In *Beautiful Minds: The Parallel Lives of Great Apes and Dolphins* (Harvard, 2008), Craig B. Stanford C'78 and his co-author,

Maddalena Bearzi, explore these fascinating creatures and "whether the reasons for dolphin intelligence and social complexity have parallels in the great apes", and therefore our own, evolution." Stanford is a primatologist and co-director of the Jane Goodall Research Center at the University of Southern California.