

Cuttyhunk and the Elizabeth Islands (Images of America)



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Five of the Elizabeth Islands-Naushon, Pasque, Nashawena, Cuttyhunk, and Penikese-date from 1602, when the Englishman Bartholomew Gosnold explored the waters of Vineyard Sound and Buzzards Bay aboard his ship the Concord. Although the small encampment Gosnold built on Cuttyhunk for trading with the Wampanoags was used for only a few weeks, journals kept by two crew members have survived and give vivid accounts of that voyage. Naushon, Pasque, and Nashawena are currently privately owned. Penikese, once a leper colony, is now the site of a school for troubled boys. Cuttyhunk is now the only island with a village center and easy public access. Captivating photographs and postcards in Cuttyhunk and the Elizabeth Islands trace the special experience of island life from the unspoiled habitat of Gosnold's time to the first invasion of summer folk in the 1950s. These vintage images not only show how the islands' rock-strewn landscapes reflect the hard lives of the early islanders but also attest to the pleasures of picnics and boating as tourism and summer residents brought a modest degree of prosperity. Many previously unpublished photographs of large estates on Naushon portray a life of privilege. Views of Penikese depict the barren dormitories of the lepers who lived out their lives there.

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