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Seashore Memories with my Dad

by Darlene Carucci

Like the National Seashore, I'm turning 50 myself this year. I was thinking about which seashore memory I would like to share, and the answer was easy... my Dad.

My dad and I are a lot alike. The older I get, the more I realize this.

We share much of the same passion for history, nature and the National Seashore. He especially loves shipwrecks and lighthouses, which the Cape has plenty of.

Dad looks forward to our time together, but especially loves to head on Cape in the dead of winter. He loves how quiet it is and how easy it is to travel "without all the darn tourists around," he says. It breaks up the winter doldrums for both of us. We'd always turn it into an adventure of some kind.

Understanding how fast and fleeting life is, I always try to clear my day and think of something fun for us to do when Dad is coming on Cape. With that first cup of coffee I'd have prepared for his arrival, we'd talk about how we were going to spend the day. It would usually consist of some poking around the thrift shops, a drive to a beach somewhere to take in the view, followed by a lunch of his local favorites: fish, clams or "chowdah."

But this particular day I'm remembering was going to be a bit more special.

Like an accommodating tour guide, Nature had provided us with something exceptional to do! Just that morning, I'd read a local "breaking news" update online: a shipwreck – hidden possibly for centuries – had washed up onto Newcomb's Hollow Beach in Wellfleet from a nor'easter the day before.

Oooh, a shipwreck - Dad's gonna love this!



Darlene with her dad on Newcomb's Hollow Beach, Wellfleet

"Dad, I've got a surprise for you today," I tell him. "We need to dress warm and walk a bit, but I promise you will love this." The storm had passed and it was a majestic, crystal clear blue-sky January day. Journeying down the beach, camera in-hand we arrived at our destination. Looking like the ribs of a washed up whale was the skeleton of a 50-foot-long frame of a shipwrecked schooner.

It was beautiful!

We walked all around it, took photos and chatted with the other folks who were arriving for the very same reason. We marveled at the mystery of what kind of wood was used, the style of construction, how long it had been there, and what kind of boat it had been. What was its story?

Walking back to the car, I asked, "So, Dad, what'd you think?"

"Thank you," he answered. "I'm an old man. My stories are old. This is new. I've got a story to tell all week. Heck, this one could last all month! Make

sure you get me those photos!"

Darlene Carucci lives with her family in Harwich Port.

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