100-Year Timeline for the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce
March 17, 1921  Business leaders form regional Chamber and elect Admiral Francis T, Bowles as president. First offices located upstairs in Barnstable town hall, now the JFK Hyannis Museum.

Click here for a complete listing of all the past presidents and board chairs of the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce.
1927 Chamber and Mass. Forestry Association form task force to study forest fire prevention and reforestation, a unique national model.

1929 Chamber raises $250,000 (equivalent of $3.9 million in 2021) to create Cape Cod Mosquito Control project, which continues to this day.

1935 Canal widened and new bridges erected; Chamber successfully advocates federal government control to assure maintenance of water, bridges and roadways.
1930s Chamber issues crop yield reports including peaches and turnips. Files legislation to ban billboards on Cape Cod.

1932 Chamber membership drops from 400 to 40 during the great depression.

1946 Post-war inventory of accommodations, services & facilities for vacationers conducted by Chamber.

1948 Month-long Cape Cod exhibition at NYC Grand Central Terminal staffed by Chamber office manager Doris Bassett promoted Cape Codder rail service and featured 100’ of real Cape Cod sand!

1951 Chamber president Benjamin Atwood promotes “Keep Cape Cod Clean” campaign and calls for “Trash Slingers” fines.
1956 Chamber relocates to a new building at the Rotary at Route 6, W. Barnstable. Nine years later, Exit 6 would be installed, and in 2021, the exit is renumbered to 68. (Chamber site is the small parcel on right hand side just above the former Craigville Motel’s “u” shaped building.) Eventually, the U.S. Post Office address is 3 & 5 Patti Page Way, Centerville, MA 02632.
1964 Chamber advocates for a new Cape Cod Planning & Economic Development Commission in county government to “preserve the character of Cape Cod.” Chamber executive, Norman H. Cook becomes first executive director of CCPEDC (forerunner of today’s Cape Cod Commission.)
1970  Michael Frucci becomes executive secretary.

1980s Cape Cod experiences unprecedented growth of residential and commercial properties.

1990  CCPEDC becomes Cape Cod Commission with regulatory power over land use.

1995  Route 25 Visitor Center 3 miles before Bourne Bridge opens.

1997  Frucci retires. Wendy Northcross is named interim executive director.

1997  Northcross appointed to the Community Working Group which releases consensus land use plan for Mass. Military Reservation (now Joint Base Cape Cod.) Plan forever preserves the northern 15,000 acres for habitat and drinking water protection.

1998  Chamber merges with county’s Cape Cod Economic Development Council. John D. O’Brien, Council executive, becomes CEO and offices move to 307 Main Street, Hyannis (co-located with Cape Cod Bank & Trust building.)

2002  Chamber CEO O’Brien retires, and Northcross tapped to succeed him.
2003 Chamber returns to a renovated and expanded building near exit 6 and constructs new visitor center at same site.
2005 Chamber pushing workforce skills, creative economy initiative, renewable energy, wastewater and transportation improvements in addition to tourism promotion in its annual action plan.

2006 Sagamore flyover replaces rotary. Chamber info booth at base of Sagamore bridge donated to Bourne Historical Society at Aptucxet Trading Post.

2009 Chamber pushes for new Canal bridges and improved road/pedestrian access after maintenance work causes unprecedented backups and delays.

2009 Chamber creates annual Quahog Day on first day of summer, to promote number of beach days ahead!
2010 February 26, Chamber’s address is changed to Patti Page Way after the artist who made famous the song “Olde Cape Cod.” Ms. Page was on site for the celebration, and shown here with Chamber staff and Doug the Quahog.
2012 In March, the board of directors vote to create the Wastewater Task force, concerned about federal lawsuits potentially forcing an overpriced and “under-scienced” sewer solution on Cape Cod.

2013 The Cooperative Bank of Cape Cod opens Cotuit/Marstons Mills branch (seen with Cotuit Center for the Arts director David Kuehn, Chamber CEO Wendy Northcross and Barnstable Town Manager Tom Lynch at ribbon cutting.)
2013 CCYP’s Back to Business Bash featured a pirate-themed networking presence by the Chamber.
2014 In November, ground is broken for a major renovation at Patti Page Way offices to expand meeting space and enhance ergonomics.
2015 New Sandy Neck Conference Room opens
2015 State House Day for tourism with the Chamber crew, honoring Arthur Ratsy for his years of service promoting Cape Cod.
The Blue Economy Project is launched alongside the Creative Economy Initiative including public art installations funded by state grants. Pictured: ‘A Whale of a Day’ in Orleans for the installation of the whale sculpture in the main business district.
Major Infrastructure Victories

2018 Chamber wastewater task force and Cape legislators draft and pass law for Cape Cod & Islands Water Protection Trust Fund to build wastewater systems, which alleviates tax burden on residents, protects property values and cleans up impaired harbors and bays.
In a virtual ceremony, Gov. Baker, Mass DOT and U.S. Army Corps agree to build/maintain new canal bridges and adjacent ways for bikes/pedestrians/vehicular roads. Federal infrastructure funds are last piece of the puzzle. Pictured: Congressman Bill Keating offers comments at the site of future bridges.
Major Infrastructure Victories

2021 First grants totaling $71 million dollars flow to Cape towns from the Water Protection Trust Fund, saving property taxpayers same.
2021 Chamber helps form and facilitate a regional COVID-19 Response Task Force with town, county, state, federal officials and business leaders – navigating 15 months of the public health crisis that led to business closures and restrictions. Task Force touted as a model of collaboration. Cape Cod is one of most vaccinated regions in the country.
2021 The Chamber’s Blue Economy Project constructs Expedition Blue – 10 waypoints in towns across the Cape and Islands showcasing our special connection to the water around us, from both social and economic perspectives.
Chamber's nomination for Old King’s Highway OK'd for National Scenic Byway Status, one of only four in Massachusetts!
In June, the INVEST in America Act, which includes language that allows new bridges to be considered for funding, passes in the U.S. House.

2021
2021   Northcross named Mercy Otis Warren Cape Cod Woman of the Year
2021  Northcross retires after 24 years and Paul Niedzwiecki, former executive of the Cape Cod Commission, takes the helm as CEO on 7/1/2021.