

Truro cranberry farm being restored

(Continued)

"The house is in pretty bad shape right now," she said. "When they added the extra story the whole Cape look was lost." The house no longer classifies as an historic structure because of the addition, she said, but it would classify as a structure related to a historic industry. Eventually she hopes the museum will house tools and old photographs relating to the history of the cranberry industry on Cape Cod. Hicks is now asking people who have worked in bogs on the Cape to send letters detailing their experiences.

Cranberrying was big business here ever since the days of the Pilgrims, Hicks said. She said authorities at Plymouth Plantation are 99 percent sure that cranberries were served at the first Thanksgiving.

In 1677 the state sent King Charles II of England 10 barrels of cranberries, with other food from Massachusetts, as a token to appease his anger at the colonies for issuing the pine tree shilling without his permission.

Hicks cited a 1773 Provincetown law that states "any person . . . found getting cranberries before the 20th of September exceeding one quart should be liable to pay one dollar and have the berries taken away."

During the 1700s and 1800s cranberries were stored for as many as two years in barrels of fresh water. They were taken on ships as a source of vitamin C to prevent scurvy.

Hicks said the Pamet bog's most productive year was in 1953 when Haynes reported harvesting 26,600 pounds of berries, even though from 1952 on she only harvested the East bog. 1961 was Hayne's worst year, a 2500-pound harvest.

Hicks said 1959 was a crucial year for cranberries on Cape Cod because of an herbicide scare. The herbicide used to kill poison ivy was thought to be carcinogenic. All cranberry products were taken off the shelves. The industry took several years to recover, Hicks said.

Demoranzville said this year there will probably be a record crop of cranberries in Massachusetts, producing about a hundred 100-pound barrels an acre. Last year the average yield was 85 barrels an acre. In 1977 buyers paid a little more than \$18 a barrel. Demoranzville said he has no idea what this year's price will be.

This year's expected yield statewide is about one million barrels, he said, with the Cape producing between 10 and 15 percent of that. Demoranzville said the bog acreage on the Cape has declined slightly but has increased statewide. The Cape's bogs total between 1200 and 1500 acres, he said. He attributes the decline on the Cape to "people pressure" in the resort areas and the fact that the Cape has traditionally been short of water.

Cranberries are Massachusetts' largest export crop. Wisconsin is the only state that comes close in cranberry production. In 1975 Wisconsin outproduced Massachusetts. Demoranzville said Wisconsin always produces more berries an acre than Massachusetts because their entire acreage is wet-harvested. The bogs there are more level, he said, and the varieties they grow are twice as large.

New Jersey, Washington and Oregon are the other cranberry-producing states. In Canada, Quebec and British Columbia harvest cranberry crops.

Pine